

# Respect, Order and Harmony

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 24 April 2022

Preacher: Rev. Thomas Davis

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, as I said, we are continuing our study in 1 Timothy and we are doing so under the heading A Healthy Gospel Church. And we've come to the second half of chapter 2 and we'll be looking at the section from verse 8 to the end of the chapter, but let me just read verses 8 to 10 again. I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarrelling. Likewise, that the women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and golds or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness with good works. Now, this is a really fascinating passage. It's not necessarily the easiest passage in the Bible and it's definitely one that's provoked a lot of different opinion. And what I hope that we're going to see is that this passage is teaching us that a healthy gospel church is full of respect, order and harmony. And we'll unpack what I mean by that as we go through the passage together. As I say, this is a fascinating and a bit of a controversial passage. It speaks about some of the practicalities of life in a church community and in particular, it touches on the roles of men and women. And I want us to just look through three crucial lessons that I think this passage is going to give us. It's going to teach us a bit about how we read the Bible. It's going to teach us about how men and women serve in the church and it's going to teach us more about how God's plan of salvation works. And these are kind of the broad headings that we're going to follow through together this morning. So first of all, let's just spend a wee bit of time thinking about how we read the Bible.

This passage is full of instructions. We saw that as we were reading through it, but probably the most controversial is the one in verse 12 where Paul says, I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, rather she is to remain quiet. Older versions, the King James version, which says she is to remain in silence. Now, what's that teaching and what's that saying and how do we understand it? Many have used this verse to suggest that women should never speak in church, that their voices should not be heard. And this is really quite relevant to us because in the past year, as elders, we agreed that in our prayer meeting on Thursday evenings, we would have open prayer, which just means that one of us will say a prayer at the start and then I'll say a prayer at the end, but in the middle, we just have a time where anybody can say a prayer. And as elders, we agreed that that means anybody, men or women, can pray. And just to be frank, some people not in our congregation have criticized us for that and said that we shouldn't have done that because it says here women should be silent. So where are we right to do that? Is it okay for a woman to pray out loud in a prayer meeting like we do at our Thursday prayer meetings? Is it okay for a woman to come up here and do the Bible reading? So instead of me doing the Bible reading for a woman to have come up and read the Bible passage this morning? If there was a woman missionary visiting us today, would it be okay for me to take that woman to the front and say, tell us a wee bit about what you're doing? Or at our prayer meeting, as we've done many times, if a woman was to come who's serving as a missionary and come and give us an update of their work, is that okay? If we were to say the Lord's Prayer together, which I just realized I forgot to do, we usually do that with the children. I'm so sorry, I forgot for us to do the Lord's Prayer with the children. My apologies for that. I got carried away with my lilt. You know, usually we all say the Lord's Prayer together. Is it okay for the women to include that? Is it okay for the girls to say that? These are the questions we ask. It all raises the issue, how do we read, interpret and apply the Bible?

That's crucial for any passage of scripture, but it becomes especially prominent in a passage like this. And I want to suggest that there's three key things that should shape the way we read the Bible, and particularly how we should read a passage like this. So the first I'm going to say is that we need to read the Bible consistently. We need to read it consistently.

So as I said, we have been criticized and questioned because we've allowed women to pray. And I'm pretty sure that if I had invited a woman to come and read the Bible passage this morning, people looking on from other places would not have liked that. And their argument would be, well, it says women should be silent, therefore they shouldn't pray, they shouldn't read. And on the face of it, it can look like quite a scriptural argument.

But the big question we have to ask is, is that being consistent? That question of consistency is really, really important because you see it even in this passage. Look at verse 8.

[ 5 : 39 ] How many of the men in our prayer meeting on Thursday had their hands up? None of them.

Look at verse 9. Any women here today with a gold wedding ring on? Even more practically, you've got this statement here, costly attire. Does anybody have a warm, waterproof, Gore-Tex jacket that you've worn to church on a winter Sunday that costs a lot of money? Doesn't that be Gore-Tex? Any jacket? Anything. And when you start to look at it like that, you know, you think, oh, this is maybe more complicated than we thought. And even the whole question of silence, for 175 years, women have sung in the free church and rightly so. And so this whole question of consistency is a really interesting one. And it's interesting, you know, that allowing women to pray provoked criticism from people elsewhere. And yet I've never been criticized by the fact that I allow my men to pray with their hands down. It all raises the issue of consistency. And that means that if we're going to say that verse 12 means that women cannot speak in church at all, then you've got to be able to explain that. You've also got to explain why it's perfectly okay for us to pray with our hands down. You've also got to explain why we don't object to women wearing jewellery or clothes that half the world's population cannot afford. It all tells us that we must read the Bible consistently. And we mustn't kind of pick one bit and highlight it and then ignore another.

So we need to read it consistently. Second thing we need to do, though, is we need to read the Bible accurately. That means we have to consider carefully what each word means.

And that, of course, highlights the issue of translation. Bible wasn't written in English. Old Testament was written in Hebrew. New Testament written in Greek. And translating things can be complicated. So to take, for example, this word silence, what does that word actually mean? You can see that ESV hasn't translated it silence. It's translated it in terms of being quiet because it can mean both. It can mean silence. It can also mean quietness.

The same word appears here in 2 Thessalonians chapter 3. Such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. It's the very same verse that you have there. And there it clearly doesn't mean silence because there's not many jobs that you can do without ever talking. And so that means that we've got to hesitate. Before we jump to the conclusion, silence means silence. Women must never utter a word. That's not necessarily accurate. Another interesting question arises around related to translation is the fact that the word for man and woman in Greek is exactly the same as the word for husband and wife. So in English, we've got a word for man and a word for husband. We've got a word for woman and a word for wife. In Greek, you don't.

[ 9 : 13 ] Same word for both. So you could just as easily translate verse 12, I do not permit a wife to teach or exercise authority over a husband. Now, I'm not saying that's the right translation.

I'm saying it's a legitimate translation. And if that was the translation, then of course the whole implications of the verses, the verse changes. And that's why accuracy is really important. We need to think these things through. But then that raises the question, well, how do you know which is right? How do you know whether it should be man, woman, husband, wife, silence, quietness? How do we know that takes us to the third crucial lesson? We have to read consistently. We have to read accurately. But probably most importantly of all, we have to read the Bible contextually, contextually. Now, what I mean by that is that to understand any passage, you have to think about the wider context in which the statement is being made. Now that's true of every part of life. Take the phrase, Thomas shot at Neil. Okay. If that's the if the context of that is a football match and Neil's in goals, it means one thing. If the context is me and Neil 20 years ago playing, well, whatever the equivalent of Fortnite was 20 years ago, playing a computer game, the context is different again. If it's a courtroom where I'm on trial for murder, it means something very different again. Thomas shot at Neil can mean very different things. It all depends on the context. Exactly the same as true in the Bible. You've got to think about the wider context. You can't just kind of pluck a verse out from any way and say, it means this has to be taken in relation to the context it was written. And

there's two fantastic examples of that later in this letter. So one Timothy five 14 Paul says that younger widows have to get married. So we can take that verse out and we can say any woman who is young, we need to decide what young means, but any woman who is young, who loses their husband, they have to get married again. Period. You could do that. You could also go to verse 23 and pluck that verse out and say, it says there that if you're if you've got a dodgy stomach and you frequently have ailments, stop drinking water and start thinking a little wine. Again, you can pluck these things out and say, Oh, there's a ruler. Now the context tells us that verse 14 is related to the care for widows that was essential in first century

Ephesus, because then in that culture, if you know, those if you if you were married, if you lost your husband, you could very quickly become destitute verse 23 is the content of the fact that Timothy didn't have great health. And Paul is giving him some advice that he hopes will help him. The key thing is that the context is crucial. It's telling us that for all of us, when we approach the Bible, we need to do that with care, with effort.

And we have to make sure that we don't jump to conclusions too quickly. And perhaps even more so, we have to make sure we don't think that, you know, we know it all and that we've got everything right. Now these three points that I've highlighted, consistency, accuracy and context, they all work together as we try to understand the passage that we're looking at today. In terms of context, we've been highlighting throughout this letter that Timothy is trying to deal with false teachers. So he's got a church in Ephesus, there's false teachers who are kind of influencing people in that church and they're causing a whole host of problems. As you look through the letter, it seems to indicate that that one of the kind of things that the false teachers are doing is that they're influencing women and leading them astray and that that is causing more problems. Again, there's a couple of hints. You can see verse chapter three talks about women being dignified, not slanderers.

And that maybe implies that, you know, these false teachers are kind of, you know, winding up the women, stirring up and then there's all sorts of controversy, all sorts of things being said about all sorts of people. Perhaps even clearer is the hint in chapter five, speaking about the implying that sometimes, you know, women, particularly widows, are being led astray. They're becoming idle, going from house to house, gossiping, being busy bodies, doing what they should not do. The same sort of thing gets highlighted in second Timothy. I won't read out the whole of this passage, but you can see here that he talks again about false teachers. He's saying to avoid the people. He says, among them are people who creep into households, capture weak women, burdened with sins and led us to say by various passions, always learning, never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. Now, all of this seems to be indicating that one of the things these false teachers were doing was speaking to women, perhaps targeting widows in particular, stirring things up and the result was all sorts of strife and tension and difficulty. And the result was that family and church order was being disrupted. And it's in the light of that, that we come to the verses that we're looking at today, that orderliness, that respect, that harmony has broken down. And it's not difficult for us to imagine the kind of problems that that would bring. The today's equivalent might be when people can launch into these awful arguments on social media, people having to go at each other because of all sorts of different things. But even in church, huge problems can arise when people want to be confrontational, when they think that they're the ones who know what's right and they want to dominate and control everything. Now, sometimes it's men who do that. Sometimes it's women who do that. And it seems to be the case that some of the women in Ephesus were starting to exercise, trying to exercise that sort of that domineering control. And that's highlighted by the verse, the word for exercise authority here in verse 12. That's a very unusual word and it can mean to govern, it can mean to exercise authority, but it can also mean to domineer. And I think that there's a good argument to suggest that that's the sense in which Paul is using it here. Now, with all of that context in our minds, you're thinking about false teachers stirring up women, you're thinking about arguments taking place, you're thinking about people kind of getting aggressive towards one another, trying to domineer and control, trying to get their opinion across, maybe even, you know, getting into arguments as a church family together comes together. With all of that in your mind, when we come back to our question, does silence mean total silence? Or does silent mean quietness in the sense of respect, order and harmony? I think there's a really strong case to say that it's the latter. It's not saying women must never open their mouth. It's saying that there needs to be this orderliness and a respect and a harmony in the life of the church. Now, some people might not agree with me on that and that's okay, but whatever your view on this or any other part of the

Bible, you need to be able to ensure that you can explain that answer consistently, accurately and contextually. Perhaps the key point of it all though, is that this behavior is damaging the health of the church in Ephesus. And it's reminding us all that a healthy gospel church is to be full of respect, order and harmony. The

[ 17 : 30 ] men should not be angry and quarreling, as Vershe told us. The women should not be muttering or domineering. Instead, we are to respect each other as individuals made in the image of God. Each was such a precious and important place in the church. We're to set aside our desire for control or for our desire to be the things, for things to be the way we want them to be and to recognize the order that God has set out and to do things the way he wants them to be. And we are to strive to maintain harmony as a family, brothers and sisters united in Jesus. And one of the things that's so important about that is that all of this stands in contrast to what we so often see in the world around us. So you can go to work tomorrow, you might have a committee meeting later in the week or whatever it may be and you can often come across the very opposite of what God wants. So in the culture around us, sometimes people will try to exercise power by being aggressive. Anybody here who works with the public will know what that involves. Anyone who has to deal with customers or clients or if you're on one side of a desk, whether that's in a shop or in whatever it may be in the hospital or whatever it may be, when you're having to deal with the public, often people can, when they're upset about something, they can be aggressive and they try to use that aggression to get what they want. And it's horrible, absolutely horrible being on the receiving end of that. So sometimes people try to use aggression to gain power.

Sometimes people try to use the power of being domineering. Now domineering doesn't necessarily mean being aggressive, but it definitely means being controlling. That can happen in lots of ways where you know what people can try and just control what people do, what they don't do.

Sometimes that can be done through the things that you say and sometimes it can be done through the things that you don't say. And you just control or try to exercise control whether by giving your approval or holding back your approval or whatever it may be, very easy to be domineering. So culture around us, you'll see people trying to use the power of being aggressive. You'll see people using the power of being domineering.

You'll even see people trying to use the power of being seductive. And I think that's part of what Paul is getting at when he speaks about braided hair, gold, all that kind of thing. He's recognizing what's true throughout the whole of human history and the fact that in some ways, men are stronger than women. We could probably lift more. But in other ways, it's not actually hard for a woman to get a man around her finger. And often that's done through the power of being seductive. And I don't need to tell you that our media, even our politics, it's full of all that kind of stuff. We all know what it can involve.

And it's just another way of trying to exercise control over other people, trying to gain influence, trying to push yourself into a position of influence. The Christian community should be the opposite of all of that. And that's why it's so, so tragic if you come into a church and find people being aggressive or domineering, or maybe even if you find people trying to seduce. Now, when I say that, men can do that just as much as women, just in different ways. And what we need to recognize is that that in the Christian community, the great emphasis is not on controlling others. The great emphasis is on controlling ourselves, of control. That's what we want to focus on. My heart, my inclinations, my weaknesses, my feelings, my temptations, my blind spots, that's what I need to try and gain control of by the grace of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit. That's what we need to focus on. And of course, these things, respect, order and harmony, that is actually what the world around us is longing for. It's a great reminder that the Christian church is just to be a beacon of something brilliant in a world that's so broken. So there's a lot of good lessons here for us in terms of reading the Bible. And I hope that you find that helpful, but please, if you want to talk about any of that more, either we can chat about it after the service, as we have our cup of tea, or if you want to talk about it, we'll be looking at this in more detail on Thursday evening at our prayer meeting. So again, any questions about that, please come and ask. Let me come on to our next two points, which we'll just do more briefly. We've also been taught here about how men and women serve in the church. Those of you who are perceptive will be horrified that I've got a capital there and small case here and here. That's just awful. A graphic designer will be having a fit looking at that. So my apologies there. The role of women. So all these verses, speaking about the wider role of men and women in the church. Now different Christians have different viewpoints on this, both in

terms of the church family, both in terms of the home family.

Some see quite clear distinctions between the roles of men and the role of women. Other people don't think that these kind of distinctions are appropriate at all. Now there's lots of different opinions, but there's two main viewpoints. And the viewpoints are known by these terms, complementarian and egalitarian. Now don't worry if you've never heard of these words before, but the kind of things that you'll maybe come across if you go online or if you read a book that talks about the role of men and women in the church. Some people are complementarian.

[ 23 : 54 ] Some people are egalitarian. Now let me just explain what these mean.

Complementarian is basically saying that men and women are equal, but they're not identical. And they therefore have different roles that complement each other. And that's why there are some things that are appropriate for men, some things that are appropriate for women. These roles are to be complementary to one another, but they're not identical. And that's the position of our church. And that's why we have some roles that are just for men. And there are some things that we prefer to be women responsible for. And that's why we only have, part of the reason why we only have men as ministers and as elders. So that's the complementarian position. The other position is egalitarian, which emphasizes that men and women are equal and there should not be distinctions between their roles. So we shouldn't say there are only certain roles for men, only certain roles for women. They should all should be allowed to do any. And so churches with those positions would be quite happy to have women as elders, happy to have women as preachers. As I said, we are complementarians in our church. And

I'll say a little bit more about that. I just want to say one we think about egalitarian, you'll know that obviously if our church is complementarian, it means that we're not egalitarian. I think that it is nevertheless still important to just ensure that we always maintain a really clear respect for that. I can honestly say, I can say that one of the best books I have ever read that's helped me most was written by a woman who is a preacher. And so she would have been an egalitarian, but it's a fantastic book. The book is called *Out of the Salt Shaker and Into the World*. It's a book on evangelism, probably the best book of evangelism on evangelism that I've ever read. The other thing I would say is that I have a very dear friend who I think I can honestly say is I think the godliest woman I've ever met. She's a woman who preaches and she's also a woman who I'm pretty certain has prayed for me every single day since the day I applied for ministry. So I may have different viewpoints. They may be egalitarians. They're incredible servants of God. So I just want us to be careful, you know, you mustn't say over there them and wear this. We're good. They're bad. Really gotta can't go doing that word at all. Anyway, that was a wee side-track. Another important thing to say is that both these viewpoints regard men and women as equal. It's not that complementarianism is not saying that women are second to men, that men are first, women are secondary. That is not complementarianism.

That is heresy. It's not biblical at all. As I say, though, our church is complementarian and this is this passage is one of the passages that we see as the basis for that. And one of the reasons we emphasize and we see this as the biblical approach is because if you look at Paul in this passage, some of what he refers to is specific to the local needs of emphasis. But at the same time, he does also point us back to Genesis one and two and to the creation of humanity. You can see that in these verses towards the end. He points us back to Adam and Eve. And our conclusion is that that's indicating that that different roles are part of the way in which God created men and women. And so therefore it's something that applies across all of time. And the the emphasis behind that is that together, men and women complement each other. They undertake roles which side by side help one another and glorify God in their homes, in their church, and in everything that they do. Two important things to say about this. One is that within complementarianism, there's a role of leadership and headship given to men that applies in the home family, whereby we'd say that a husband is the head of the home. And it applies in the church family where eldership, whether it's a ruling elder, like the elders in a congregation or a teaching elder or a minister like me would be a role kept for men. Now that can instantly sound offensive, especially today. But what I want to highlight is that never for one second does this mean that men can domineer or control women. Never is this an excuse for that kind of behavior. And the reason for that is because in the Bible, authority is not about power or control or domination.

Responsibility is about responsibility and care. And so when the Bible teaches that the husband is the head of the home, that's not to make the wife second class. It's saying husband, this woman is

so incredibly precious that from this moment until the day you die, you are responsible for making sure that she is safe and secure and loved. And that does not make women secondary. It highlights how precious you are. The second thing to say is that you can be a complementarian and still get this whole thing wrong. So there's a range of opinions in the church as to what men and what women should or should not do. And different churches come to different conclusions. Some people who are complementarian will say, well, a woman shouldn't preach, but they can do absolutely anything else. And so you know, sometimes even several free churches, you could go to them and you'll have women saying a prayer during the service. You'll have a woman doing a reading. But some churches will say, well, we probably wouldn't do that much. So in St. Columbus, for example, women would do the reading, but they didn't feel it was appropriate for a woman to do the prayer in a service. So that's just different conclusions. Different churches come to different considerations as to what they want to allow and not allow. And they've got the right to make that decision as biblically as they can. What we've got to be really careful, though, is that we don't go way too far the other way and not allow women to do nearly enough. And in our culture and in our setting, that's probably more of a danger. And we've got to be careful that our opinions and our decisions as a church for us here and around us are shaped by scripture and not shaped by culture around us and not even shaped by traditions that may be very longstanding. So, you know, again, a good example of that is, you know, we, the question of women praying in the prayer meeting, that's something that's not really been done in our island very much. And yet, you can go to 1 Corinthians chapter 11, verse five, and there's an explicit reference to women praying. Another issue that you'll sometimes see in the church, you're not maybe so controversial, but some churches will have women on the door, like we do, as a welcome team. Some don't. And some would say, well, you know, women shouldn't be on the door. But yet in Acts chapter 12, when the church had a prayer meeting and Peter knocked on the door, who answered it? It was Roda, the servant girl. Now, I'm just using these as little examples just to say that, that, you know, I want us to go to scripture to make our decisions. I want us to make sure that that that we think carefully about what we do and don't do. And I want us to make absolutely sure that we are never in the position as a church whereby we have got women ready and able and gifted and willing to serve. And they never get the chance. That can't be right. One of the reasons I'm a complimentarian is because I believe that it elevates the place of women, not that it reduces it. Because complimentarianism emphasizes that women have a unique role and a crucial role to play. Now, I'm a little bit hesitant to say this because I know that it can probably sound patronizing and I really, really, really hope it doesn't. But you would hear an egalitarian say something like, there's nothing that a man can do that a woman can't. And that would be a strong basis for them saying, look, why are you denying women the place to do that?

But if you think about that, is that not also the same as saying there's nothing a woman can do that a man can't? I, for one, I'm never going to say that. I'm never for one second going to be so arrogant to think that there's stuff that I can just do any of the things that women can do. I know that for me, I only have to look at myself to know that that's not true. And that's why that's one of the reasons I'm a complimentarian and one of the reasons why I think complimentarian is the biblical position because when we recognize that women and men are equal but not identical, equal but not interchangeable. We're not keeping women in their place. We're giving them their rightful place as God's amazing, unique creation that a church can never function without. And that brings us to my last point, which

[ 33 : 52 ] I'm going to just say very, very briefly. We're going to come to the hardest verse of all, verse 15. What does this mean? Especially that bit at the start talks about the woman being deceived, the woman becoming a transgressor in verse 14, yet she'll be saved through child bathing. Loads of different opinions have arisen on this one. Some people say that this means that they'll be kept safe during childbirth. I don't think that's true. Well, it's obvious that that's not true. Some people say that this means that they're to focus on their role instead of getting led astray by this false teaching. Maybe I'm not so sure about that. Some people think that it's the idea of just being a kind of model woman, model of godliness, model of what God intended them to be. Well, maybe, but actually, I don't think it's any of those. I think this is pointing us to something much bigger. I think it's pointing us to a key aspect of how God's plan of salvation works because Paul, as we said, is pointing us back to Genesis. He's pointing us back to what happened in Genesis one and two with Adam and Eve. Now, at first glance, it looks like he's saying that it's Eve's fault because he said the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. But yes, the woman was

involved. And yes, she wasn't an innocent party, but was deceived. That language is the language of something done to her by someone else. So she was a victim just as much as she was a villain. What I want us to focus on, though, is the fact, the wonderful fact that just after Paul says that she was deceived, she became a transgressor. I wish I'd put verse 14 on here. At the end of verse 14, it says became a transgressor. My writing's so awful. I'm sorry. You know what I'm trying to say. Became a transgressor, yet she will be saved. And it's that contrast that I want to highlight. She became a transgressor, yet the thing he says next straight away is that she is going to be saved, reminding us that this is a great statement, not about blame, but about salvation. And a key means through which that salvation is going to be accomplished is through childbearing. Now, what on earth does that mean? Well, I don't think it means individually. It's not saying that women who have babies are going to be saved, those who don't. It's not saying anything like that.

I think it's talking collectively. It's talking about God's big picture, and it's highlighting the fact that a key aspect of God's redemptive plan is the bearing of children. In other words, for God's plan to be accomplished, he needs women. And you look at the Bible's storyline, you see that that's absolutely true. One generation to the next, to the next, to the next. God's plan of salvation has worked out through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, all the way through to the coming of Jesus Christ, born of a woman, the one through whom God's saving plan is accomplished. Now, I've run out of time, and it's so frustrating, but I just want to say one or two things. There's a couple of things that I just love about this. One is that if you think about Eve, Eve completely stuffed up by sinning, and yet straight away, God says, I'm going to make you an utterly indispensable part of my plan of restoration. The second thing is that it's reminding all of us men that out of their existence, God's plan of salvation, the mission of our church, the coming of our savior, none of that would happen if it wasn't for women. God's placed women and motherhood at the heart of his plan of salvation. Now, all of that is reminding us that we are completely dependent on each other. That's through biologically, it's through socially, and it's also through in terms of God's plan of salvation for us. We're all totally dependent on one another.

Now, I've got to say here that this absolutely includes, in terms of the church, in terms of the life of the church, this absolutely includes women who've not yet had children.

It's not in any way excluding them at all because in the church family, motherhood, bearing children, never involves actually giving birth because the new birth part of becoming a Christian is something that the Holy Spirit does. Motherhood, childbearing, childreading in the church involves nurturing, feeding, caring, raising up, and that's something that every woman can do no matter what their marital status or whatever it is, maybe it's all about us growing and serving together. It's a reminder of how dependent we are on one another, which is why a healthy church has to be full of respect, order, and harmony. If we leave this building today thinking that we don't need each other, then we're completely wrong. God's building us up as a family where we need him, where we need one another. That's why the respect, order, and harmony that these passage highlights is so important for the health of our church.

Amen. Let's pray. Father, we thank you so much for what your word teaches us here, and we pray that you just help us to understand it and to apply it more and more. And we just want also, Father, to recognize what an incredible gift to the church women are. And we thank you for everything that has been done here in Carlyway and to the ends of the earth by women who have served you so faithfully. And for those here, and also we know that there are many women who are at home today who have served here for so many years and yet aren't able to come to church now. And we just pray for them as well and we thank you for them.

[ 40 : 08 ] And we pray that we would just be full of love for one another and that respect, order, and harmony would shape everything that we do as a church. And all of this reminds us of how wise, how wise and how good you are. And so we praise and thank you. Amen.