

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Saved In Child -Bearing

(Jerry Fite)

Assuring women, Paul writes, “*but she shall be saved through her child-bearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification and sobriety*” (I Timothy 2:15). Is Paul assuring women that one of the conditions of their salvation is bearing children? Is a woman’s salvation less secure if she adopts? Is a godly woman’s salvation dependent upon her children remaining faithful to the Lord? These are questions that might arise when seeking to take God’s truth into our heart.

But these are troubling questions. What if a woman is not physically able to bear children, is the free gift of eternal life never to be hers in the Lord, even when she wills to be saved (*Romans 6:23, Revelation 22:17*). Is this the only place in Scripture where we learn that our personal salvation depends upon the faithful living of our children? Is Paul not talking about spiritual salvation, but assuring the godly woman that she will be saved physically from the life-threatening realities of child-birth? Is it true that no godly woman ever dies in giving birth (*Genesis 35:16-19*)?

What is Paul teaching us in this verse to Timothy? Some say Paul is emphasizing that salvation will come through child-bearing, pointing to the virgin birth of Christ. Eve, who fell into transgression in the garden, will be saved through Mary giving birth to the Saviour, Jesus Christ. Jesus was “*born of a woman*” (*Galatians 4:4*), and a virgin giving birth gives weight to His unique position as being the one through whom God would save the world from sin (*Matthew 1:18-25*), including Eve.

Is there an understanding Paul wants to convey relating to child-bearing more immediate than jumping from Eve to Mary? Contextually, Paul is addressing the distinctive rolls for the man and woman. He is restoring God’s order in the minds of men and women which was violated by the first man and woman, Adam and Eve

A woman not teaching or having dominion over a man is based upon two facts from the beginning: Adam was created first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived by Satan, but Satan beguiled Eve, who fell into transgression (*I Timothy 2:13-14, Genesis 3:1-6*). As God addresses

child-bearing in connection with the husband’s headship and rule over his wife in the beginning (*Genesis 3:16*), Paul connects the child-bearing of the woman with the headship of the man in I Timothy 2:11-15.

Men and women are different in bodily makeup, and have a distinctive roll to fulfill. A woman’s role is not to teach over or have dominion over a man. God has given man headship over the woman (*I Corinthians 11:3*). But she has her unique roll of giving life through child-bearing.

Paul’s intent is to restore God’s order between the sexes. He therefore highlights the distinctive rolls of men and women. Speaking of a woman bearing children includes all women who identify with the same sex. Therefore, he moves easily from the singular (she) to the plural (they).

Women will be saved as they live in faith, love and holiness with a sober mind. Manifesting a sound mind, saved women will dress modestly (*I Tim.2:9*), refrain from teaching over or having dominion over a man, and be content with a roll the man cannot fill: bearing children.