

## Where is the focus?

- This is a hard passage!
  - and no doubt discussion over coffee afterwards will be stimulating!!
  - but probably the **greatest danger** we face in dealing with such a passage is **being diverted by the controversial away from the core of what Pauls is dealing with**
- Let me suggest that the key question in grappling with this whole passage is:
  - **where is Paul's focus?**
  - what is it that he concentrates on, or brings Timothy round to considering, as he deals with the different issues that he deals with?

## On Worship

- Context seems to be something about what the Christian people in Ephesus are to do when they get together:
  - it does have wider applicability than that - to personal prayer, for example - but that seems to be the context Paul is addressing (Timothy a church leader...)
- He urges prayer - **that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness** (v.2)
  - because **this is good and places God our Saviour** (v.3)
  - in other words, his **focus** is on **what God wants**
  - not on the church's own interests, nor those of its senior pastor...
  - the focus is on what God wants, and what God wants is all encompassing
  - not limited to his people, but to the whole world that he made
  - a desire for the well-being, the wholeness, the OT word would be **shalom**, of everyone
- John Stott tells of being on holiday or at a conference somewhere and slipping into a church... and their prayers were focused on the physical health and family struggles of three or four particular families within the church
  - not that those were unimportant!
  - but neither should that be the whole agenda!!
- Supremely God's desire is the full salvation of everyone:
  - so came in Jesus Christ to mediate, to give himself as a ransom...
- Men in prayer:
  - do we lift our hands?!

## On Women

- *Now this is where it gets controversial!!*
- I assume Paul's continued context is corporate worship (though some commentators disagree)
  - question again is **where is the focus?**
  - in vs.9-10, he's dealing with women who are drawing attention to themselves by their dress and decoration...
  - Paul's challenge is to draw attention to God by their behaviour
  - he's not principally dealing with a dress code, but about where what we wear directs attention!
  - (I was once subject of a complaint at an annual congregational meeting for what I wore...)
- So we've had a couple of culturally conditioned, specific instructions focusing on a bigger concern to get the focus back on God
  - that's how we should then approach vs.11-15...
- Christianity has liberated women, radically changed their status compares to the wider society:

## **1 Timothy 2:1-15**    **Of Worship (and women!)**    **Fintry, 28/2/2010, pm**

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- the ripples from that transition are still settling down as Paul writes
- and it seems that there was an **over liberation** so that in Ephesus at least, perhaps also Corinth women were talking back during worship...

- *(Note: notes not complete...)*