

# Meditation #14: The CHILDBIRTH that Changes Everything

## What does it say?

STUDY: I Timothy 2:1-15

GOLDEN TEXT: I Timothy 2:12-15 = *I permit no woman to teach with tyranny over a man; she is to be calm. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through The Childbirth, provided she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.* [Literal]

## What does it mean?

Tragically, subtle male chauvinism has biased many translations of this critical, liberating text. To understand the meaning that the Holy Spirit gave to the Apostle Paul, we must simply go back to the original meanings for four key words, as recorded in all our best ancient texts. The net result will be a liberating perspective for everyone—men and women, and all of creation.

1. Is child-bearing what saves women, or is it “*the birth of the Child,*” or “The Childbirth,” the birth of Jesus, as the original text says (verse 15)? Is it important that the Baby Jesus developed for nine months inside Mary, “the woman”?
2. Why is the same word for “silence” for women in verses 11 and 12 better translated “*calm*” when earlier applied to men in verse 2? Would “calm” men and women be better able to handle the personal and environmental issues we should be addressing?
3. Why is the original word for “authority” here “*tyranny*” (verse 12)—an extreme word that is used nowhere else in the Bible? Is tyranny all that Paul here prohibits for women? Can non-tyrannical women now add needed leadership for creation-care?
4. Does the human birth of our Savior Jesus affirm the creation? Is it significant that the Creator himself chose the normal nine-month process of fetal development? Would any other entrance into humanity have been superior? What differences might alternative means of his coming into humanity have made for the redemption of us humans? And the redemption of creation?

## What are we going to do about it?

5. Are we tempted to try to ignore natural processes—and their consequences—and willfully try to push for our preferred “results”? How important is respect for creation and its God-ordained processes? Does Christmas help celebrate God’s creation? Should we also honor the Creator’s chosen processes? How?
6. Since the Apostle Paul lived in a more biased and less informed time, why did he still elevate women and honor all of the creation? What excuses do we have if we silence women or suppress the creation? What should we do instead?
7. When Gabriel first explained the divine plan, why did Mary say, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word” (Luke 1:38)? Is this a great model for following the Lord’s instructions? Should we obey the Creator’s creation-care commands with the same level of commitment? What might be the results?

Truth To Celebrate: *Jesus Christ’s birth can cancel all curses and bring peace into all relationships, starting with the relationships among men and women and with the Creator, and his creation.*

Advent-Action: *Either eat it—or compost it for a garden—your non-meat meal leftovers and food scraps, and reduce your solid waste garbage by 23%.*

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