

## **Women Preserved Through Child Bearing**

Scripture: 1 Timothy 2

Code: BQ060412

**But women shall be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint. (2:15)**

**Preserved** is from *sozo*, the common New Testament word for salvation. The word can also mean “to rescue,” “to preserve safe and unharmed,” “to heal,” “to set free,” or “to deliver from.” It appears a number of times in the New Testament without reference to spiritual salvation (cf.. Matt. 8:25; 9:21–22; 10:22; 24:22; 27:40, 42, 49; 2 Tim. 4:18). Paul obviously does not intend to teach that women are eternally saved from the wages of sin **through the bearing of children**. That would contradict the New Testament’s teaching that salvation is by grace through faith alone (cf.. Rom. 3:19–20). The future tense and the use of the plural pronoun **they** indicate that he was not even referring to Eve. The plural and the absence of any connection to the context show Paul was not referring to Mary, the mother of Jesus, as some suggest.

Paul teaches here that although a woman precipitated the Fall and women bear that responsibility, yet they may be **preserved** from that stigma through childbearing. The rescue, the delivery, the freeing of women from the stigma of having led the race into sin happens when they bring up a righteous seed. What a perfect counter! Women are far from being second-class citizens because they have the primary responsibility for rearing godly children. Mothers spend far more time with their children than do their fathers, and thus have the greater influence. Fathers cannot know the intimate relationship with their children that their mother establishes from pregnancy, birth, infancy, and early childhood. Paul’s point is that while a woman may have led the race into sin, women have the privilege of leading the race out of sin to godliness. That does not mean that God wants all women to bear children; some He doesn’t even want married (1 Cor. 7:25–40). Paul speaks in general terms. The pain associated with childbirth was the punishment for the woman’s sin (Gen. 3:16), but the joy and privilege of child rearing delivers women from the stigma of that sin.

For women to reverse the blight that has befallen them in the Fall and fulfill their calling they need to raise a godly seed. To do that, they must **continue in faith and love**, where their salvation really rests. And they must continue in **sanctity** (Holiness) **with self-restraint** (The same word translated “discreetly” in verse 9). It is the very appearance, demeanor, and behavior demanded of believing

women in the church that becomes their deliverance from any inferior status, as they live godly and raise godly children.

In this passage we see how God has perfectly balanced the roles of the sexes. (For a complete discussion of the design of God for men and women in the church, see my book *Different by Design* [Wheaton, Ill.: Victor, 1994].) Men are to be the leaders in the church and the family. Women are kept from any accusation of inferiority through the godly influence they have in the lives of their precious children. For the church to depart from this divine order is to perpetuate the disaster of the Fall.

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