

I Timothy 3:11 – Who Are These Women?

Introductory Remarks

- The first word of the verse is the common Greek word for w_____ or w_____. There is no p_____ a_____ (“their”) in the text.
- Here are various translations with alternate readings:
 1. KJV and NKJV – “their wives” (their italicized)
 2. ESV – “their wives” (wives or women)
 3. NIV – “their wives” (deaconesses)
 4. NASV – “women” (i.e. deaconesses or deacons’ wives)
- It does not s_____ l_____ that Paul would be r_____ all wives or women in the middle of his i_____ regarding the q_____ of deacons.
- Note similar wording in our text:
 1. “dignified” (3:4 and 8)
 2. “sober-minded” (3:2)
 3. “not slanderers” and “not double-tongued” (3:8)
 4. “faithful in all things” and “those who serve well” (3:13)
- Note also a repeat of “must be” (3:2 and 8) and “likewise” (3:8).

Three Possible Identifications

I. Deacons’ (Their) Wives

A. Arguments for This View

1. It fits the c_____ of a d_____ and his f_____ (verse 12).
2. Deacons’ w_____ often serve a_____ their h_____.

B. Arguments Against This View

1. The text does not include “t_____” or “d_____”.
2. It seems u_____ that Paul would s_____ qualifications for deacons’ wives without doing so for e_____ previously. Calvin thus concludes these are both deacons’ and elders’ wives.

II. Deaconesses

A. Arguments for This View

1. “L_____” and “m_____ b_____” demonstrate a t_____ o_____ is in view here.
2. In Romans 16:1, P_____ is i_____ as a d_____ (RSV).

B. Arguments Against This View

1. The word is “w_____” or “w_____” not “d_____.”
2. P_____ is a s_____ of Christ just like E_____ (Colossians 4:12), T_____ (II Timothy 2:24), P_____ (Romans 1:1), J_____ (James 1:1), P_____ (II Peter 1:1), and J_____ (Jude 1)
3. We do not read of w_____ being o_____ to o_____ anywhere in the New Testament, and such would be c_____ to Paul’s t_____ concerning the r_____ of w_____ in the church (I Timothy 2:11-12, I Corinthians 11:1-12, and 14:34-35).
4. Acts 6 would have been the i_____ s_____ for d_____ (Note Acts 6:3 – “pick out from among you seven men”).

III. Women

A. Arguments for This View

1. W_____ is a l_____ m_____ of the word without a possessive adjective. This does not mean all w_____ but those who a_____ deacons in their w_____.
2. Deacons' h_____ are more likely to be c_____ in a b_____ p_____ way as is the case in verse eleven than those who serve as c_____ o_____ like deaconesses.
3. The w_____ who are e_____ in I Timothy 5:9 may be such h_____.

B. Arguments Against This View

1. It is "o_____ s_____ and i_____."
2. "It is g_____ out of the w_____ to avoid the o_____ t_____ of w_____ in o_____."

Concluding Thought

The women of Grace OPC in Costa Mesa remind me of Dorcas (Acts 9:36-42), Lydia (Acts 16:11-15), and Phoebe (Romans 16:1-2), true servants of Christ who would assist deacons well.