

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 10TH, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

## ORDER, AUTHORITY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY (1 CORINTHIANS 11:1-6) IMITATE ME

Paul invited the church in Corinth, as well as others, to follow him as he followed Christ. **He set himself up as an example to be followed just as he had trained Timothy to do.**

- **“Set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity.”** (1 Timothy 4:12)

## WE NEED AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW

Ultimately, we follow Jesus, but we should be willing to say to others, “in the ways that you see me following Christ, imitate those things.”

- We are not the worthy example, Jesus is! People will and should be able to imitate us in how we follow Christ. However, **we must be careful to point them to the one we follow and not unto ourselves.**

## PRINCIPLE OF HEADSHIP

Verse 3 gives us **three examples of headship**: 1) Christ is the head of every man 2) The man is the head of the woman 3) God is the head of Christ.

- Since Paul had just commended the church on “holding fast to the traditions that were taught to them,” he did not feel the need to explain every detail of headship.

Since the “head” of each relationship is not just describing “source,” as some translations and commentaries state, we must see the practical reason that Paul wrote this.

- **This passage speaks to order, authority, and accountability.** His primary concern was that **Christ, husbands, and God were being honored in the church and in homes.**

## ORDER, AUTHORITY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

God has created a natural order to things with a purpose and established authority to bring about accountability.

- Though ideas, like submission and authority have a negative connotation in our society, they are given for our benefit. **When we dishonor the authority in our life, we dishonor God.**

## THE EXAMPLE OF SUBMISSION

Jesus set the example for Paul to follow in voluntary submission and he modeled it for the church. Jesus lovingly submits to the Father (John 5:19).

- **Being under the authority of a person does not mean you are inferior to that person.** Though Jesus was totally under the authority of God, he was equal to God (Phil. 2:5-6).

## UNDERSTANDING THE CULTURE

Head coverings were common to the Greeks, Romans, and it was required for the Jews. In these ancient cultures, a head covering showed that you were under the authority and protection of another.

- In their culture, no self-respecting woman would have been seen in public without one as it signified that she was a prostitute.

## APPLICATION IN THE CHURCH OF CORINTH

When Paul speaks of men and women “praying and prophesying,” he is speaking about their leading and participating in church while their head is covered or not covered.

- Though they were free from certain practices through Jesus, **Paul wanted them to consider how it was perceived by the unbelieving culture around them.**

## COVERINGS FOR MEN

Culturally, it was inappropriate for a man to lead in church while wearing a head covering because it gave the impression that he was under the authority of another person and was not in a position of authority to lead and teach others.

- **It dishonors Jesus (a man's headship) when we dismiss the authority he has established.**

## COVERINGS FOR WOMEN

Culturally, it was inappropriate for a woman to lead and participate in church without a head covering. It was as culturally unacceptable as having your head shaved.

- Since God established that man is the head of a woman, **it dishonors man (her head) when a head covering was not worn therefore claiming not be under authority of anyone.**

## NOT INDEPENDENT (1 CORINTHIANS 11:7-12)

### ORDER IN CHURCH AND HOME

Paul's intentions were to bring back the natural order by reminding the Corinthian Christians that God had made a difference between men and women, and each had a proper place in God's design.

- In his statements, **Paul never claimed that difference meant inequality or inferiority.**

### CREATED TO BRING GLORY

Both man and woman (Adam and Eve) were made in God's image and for the glory of God.

- Paul draws a distinction that man was the “glory of God” because man was created first from dust and woman came from man's body and is the “glory of men.” Again, **priority does not mean inferiority.**

## THERE IS A PARTNERSHIP

Paul makes it clear that there is headship in God's creation, but within that authority, there is also partnership.

- We are spiritually one in Christ (Galatians 3:28) and are dependent upon one another. **The woman may have come from a man in creation, but ever since it is a man who comes from a woman.**

## “BECAUSE OF THE ANGELS”

There is not any explanation of what Paul meant by this saying. One thought is based on the idea that the word “angel” being used is actually translated as “messenger.”

- Therefore, Paul is claiming that a woman should consider how she will be perceived by those who are bringing him messages from Corinth.

Another thought is that Paul is literally talking about heavenly angels and how they know their place and show respect when they worship God.

- In this context, Paul is saying that public worship is a serious thing, and we should always conduct ourselves in a way that respects and honors God.

## AN APPEAL TO NATURE (1 CORINTHIANS 11:13-16) “JUDGE FOR YOURSELVES”

Paul has implored the Corinthians to look at how nature and customs give women longer hair and men shorter hair in order to see that there should be a noticeable difference in lengths of hair so as not to confuse the sexes.

- **This speaks to more than the length of hair, but to the desire for a man to look like a woman or vice versa.**

## NATURAL HEAD COVERING

A woman's hair is her glory since it was given to her “instead of a covering.” Essentially, if local custom did not require a head covering, then a woman's long hair was evidence of her loving submission to God's order.

- **Be mindful of societal standards so that we are exemplifying our submission.**

## TITUS 3:9

To close this section of Paul's letter, he let the church know that if people (other churches) are contentious and want to argue, then, for the sake of the gospel, set their differences aside as each church has adopted their customs based on the truth of God.

- **We do not argue over the exterior and ignore the heart.**

## INVENTORY

- **Whose example do we follow? Are we inviting others to imitate us?**
- **Do we understand that God has created a certain order of authority? If we love God, then we honor him by lovingly submitting to authority He has placed over us.**
- **Are we willing to put aside minor differences in order to grow the kingdom of God?**