

THE

1 CORINTHIANS 11

HEADCOVERING

The 1 Corinthians 11 Head Covering:
A Church Meeting Observance Like the Lord's
Supper About the Special Ministries of Women

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About the Front Cover

The cover photo is reportedly a carving in the catacombs of a woman praying with her head covered, though I couldn't verify the source.

The special ministries of women in the home, the church, and society are like the precious perfume Mary of Bethany poured on the head and feet of Jesus after breaking its alabaster container.

Matthew 26:1-15. Jesus ... said, "... After two days is the feast of the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified." ... When Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, "To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor." When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, "Why trouble you the woman? For she hath wrought a good work on me. For you have the poor always with you; but me you have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. ... Wherever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done,

be told for a memorial of her." Then ... Judas Iscariot went unto the chief priests [to] deliver him. ... And they contracted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

Mark 14:1-10. After two days was the feast of the Passover. ... [And Jesus], being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious. And she broke the box, and poured it on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, "Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor." And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has wrought a good work on me. For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you will you may do them good; but me you have not always. She has done what she could; she is come beforehand to anoint my body to the burying. ... Wherever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she has done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.

Luke 10:38-42. When the time was come that

[Jesus] should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. ... As they went, ... he entered into a certain village, and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was encumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore to help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, you are careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful, and Mary has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

John 11:1-5; 12:1-8. Lazarus [was] of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. ... Jesus, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then Mary took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair, and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Then said one of his

disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, "Why wasn't this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

To Cora

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Women Mentioned in this Book

Anna
Chloe
Deborah
Elizabeth
Esther
Eve
Hagar
Jephthah's Daughter
Jezebel
Joanna
Lydia
Mary Magdalene
Mary of Bethany
Mary of Rome
Mary, Joseph's Wife
Midianites (Num. 31)
Persis
Phebe
Philip's Daughters
Priscilla
Ruth
Sarah
Susanna
Tabitha (Dorcas)
Vashti

Introduction

All my books are available to read free online at WayneODonnell.com. "Freely you've received, freely give," Mt. 10:8.

This booklet is included in and comprises a section of my book "The Special Ministries of Women: Pro-Headcovering, Pro-Remarriage in 1 Corinthians 11, Song of Solomon, and Jesus' Teaching on Divorce."

The context indicates the 1 Corinthians 11a Headcovering is a church meeting observance, like the Lord's Supper church meeting observance in the same chapter. The Headcovering observance symbolizes the church's submission to God-ordained authority and gender roles, which have a huge impact on families, churches, and society. This booklet is intended to be both practical and polemical; for women, laymen, and theologians; and as a contribution to the battle of loving patriarchy against the increasing egalitarianism in modern societies which does so much harm to women.

God uniquely created women for special ministries. These ministries include submission, modesty, quietness, affection, and chastity. Such

service is like the precious ointment Mary of Bethany poured on the head and feet of Jesus. Women have performed some of the greatest spiritual works of all time. Only a woman believed Jesus when he said he was going to die, and she anointed him for his burial (Mt. 26:12-13). And only a woman was given the privilege, not merely of being the first to see Jesus after his resurrection, but of seeing him before he even ascended to the Father (Jn. 20:16-18).

I think you'll see from these chapters, that I strongly believe in "giving HONOR unto [woman], as unto the weaker vessel," 1 Pet. 3:7. I also try to interpret the Bible according to "the law of kindness," Prov. 31:26.

All Bible quotations are from the King James Version, but I changed the archaic parts like "thou" to "you," etc. I also replaced "Christ" with "Messiah," because both are transliterations of words meaning "anointed," and everyone knows what a "messiah" is, but not what a "christ" is, except for its mostly harmful, religious overtones.



The Headcovering Observance

A Church Meeting Observance, Like the Lord's Supper

1 Cor. 11:2. Now I praise you, brethren.

1 Cor. 11:17. Now ... I praise you not.

1 Cor. 12:1. Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren.

Textual context is the most important factor in interpreting any passage of scripture. The book of 1 Corinthians is about local church issues. "It has been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you," 1 Cor. 1:11.

Chapters 11 through 14 are about church meeting issues. There are lots of references to church



meetings in these four chapters. 1 Cor. 11:17-21, 33, "You come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when you come together in the church, I hear that there are divisions among you. ... When you come therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper, ... [but each one's] own supper. ... Wherefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait one for another."

1 Cor. 14:23-35, "If therefore the whole church is come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that you are mad? ... When you come together, every one of you ... has a tongue. ... If there is no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church. ... As in all churches of the saints, let your women keep silence in the churches. ... It is a shame for women to speak in the church."

Chapter 11 is about the two church meeting observances, and chapters 12-14 are about the church meeting use of spiritual gifts. The first half of chapter 11 (11a), is about the Headcovering church meeting observance; and the second half of chapter 11 (11b), is about the Lord's Supper church meeting observance.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul used textual markers like



“Now concerning” to introduce new topics. For example:

1 Cor. 7:1, “Now concerning the things whereof you wrote unto me.”

1 Cor. 8:1, “Now as touching things offered unto idols.”

1 Cor. 12:1, “Now concerning spiritual gifts.”

1 Cor. 15:1, “Moreover [or ‘Now’], brethren, I declare unto you the gospel.”

1 Cor. 16:1, “Now concerning the collection for the saints.”

And chapter 11 verse 2, “Now I praise you, brethren, that ... you keep the ordinances.” Chapter 11 should begin in verse 2. The original Greek manuscripts didn’t have chapter divisions. They were added later, and aren’t inspired.

When you look at 1 Cor. 11, it’s obvious Paul is talking about one topic in the first half of the chapter, and another topic in the second half. God, through Paul, provided markers within the text itself to indicate the chapter’s structure. The beginning of the first half is marked by the phrase, “Now I praise you,” vs. 2; and the beginning of the second half is marked by the phrase “Now ...



I praise you not," vs. 17.

All of chapter 11, is tightly bound into one textual unit by the parallel phrases "I praise you," and "I praise you not." Paul praised the Corinthian church they were doing a good job keeping the Headcovering, and then started scolding them in verse 17 that they were doing a bad job keeping the Lord's Supper.

Since chapter 11 is one textual unit, you can't join the Headcovering of 11a with the non-church content of chapter 10, "if any of them that believe not bid you to a feast," 1 Cor. 10:27; and then join the Lord's Supper of 11b with the other church meeting content of chapters 12-14.

Since the Lord's Supper obviously belongs with the church meeting content of the following chapters, so does the Headcovering. And since we know the Lord's Supper is a church meeting observance, our initial approach to the Headcovering should be that it's also a church meeting observance. As soon as you approach the Headcovering from the perspective that it's a church meeting observance, like the Lord's Supper, the rest of the chapter is easy to interpret.

Like the Lord's Supper, the Headcovering is something you do "when you come together in



the church,” 1 Cor. 11:18, not out in society, where temple prostitutes supposedly are. It’s not about hair length, because you can’t get a haircut or grow your hair long as part of each church service. And it wouldn’t be much of a church meeting observance for people just to come to church wearing their hair the way they always do.

Like the Lord’s Supper, the Headcovering is something you do at appointed times, like “prayer and prophecy,” vss. 4-5 (also 13); but proper hair length is for all times.

Like the Lord’s Supper, the Headcovering is a symbolic observance. The broken bread and wine of the Lord’s Supper symbolize the Lord’s body and blood. The layer of cloth of the Headcovering symbolizes the layer of “authority on her head,” vs. 10, that woman is under (vs. 3b). The headcovering scarf symbolizes the indirectness of woman’s authority to God, even while praying directly to and prophesying directly from God (vss. 3b, 4-5). It symbolizes the indirect creation of woman, ‘like,’ ‘of,’ and ‘for’ man, as his helper (vss. 7-9).

Like the Lord’s Supper, the Headcovering symbols are manipulated during its observance to demonstrate our participation. We symbolize our participation in the benefit of Lord’s death for us



by eating and drinking the bread and wine. We symbolize our submission to the God-ordained chain of command (vs. 3), when the women wear head scarfs.

Like the Lord's Supper, the Headcovering is a memorial of a historical event. The Lord's Supper commemorates the Lord's death for us, and the Headcovering commemorates the unique creation of woman on the sixth day (vss. 7-9).

Wearing long hair looks like wearing a head scarf, so vs. 15 says a woman's hair is "given her for a covering [Greek 'periboleo,' translated 'vesture' in Heb. 1:12];" but that's for outside in "nature," vs. 14, not for in church meetings. Women wear headcovering scarfs in church, and God gave them natural ones to wear outside church.

So how can we understand what 1 Cor. 11a is about? God gave us a pretty good hint: just look at 1 Cor. 11b. The academicians who spend thousands of hours researching the historical, cultural context of first-century Corinth, should instead spend five minutes looking at the textual context of the Lord's Supper in the very next passage.

A pastor died and went to heaven. God asked him, "Why didn't you teach your congregation to



keep the headcovering observance? The pastor responded, "The first half of 1 Corinthians 11 seemed so vague, I wasn't even sure what it was about." God asked him, "Did you finish reading the chapter?"

A Well-Kept Observance, Unlike the Lord's Supper

1 Cor. 11:2. Now I praise you.

1 Cor. 11:17. Now ... I praise you not.

The most popular misinterpretation of 1 Cor. 11a is that Paul was scolding the Corinthian sisters for having short hair and thus looking like Corinthian temple prostitutes. But interpretations like those are impossible, because Paul was praising, not scolding, the Corinthians in 1 Cor. 11a.

Bible teachers love to talk about how bad the Corinthian church was, but Paul said, "I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you," 1 Cor. 11:2. First Corinthians is a letter about local church issues, and local churches, like families, are messy.

The epistle to the Romans is about the systematic theology of salvation, and the book of Ephesians



is about the mystery of the universal church. It would be out of place to discuss the dirty laundry of the church in those letters, but if Paul had discussed church problems in those letters we would think those churches were pretty bad too. If Paul had written a letter to your local assembly, the letter to the Corinthians might pale in comparison, possibly more for what you aren't doing than for what you are. The Corinthian church did a good job keeping the Headcovering observance.

It makes sense that in a letter about local church issues, Paul would have taken the time to praise the church for doing a good job keeping one of the two church meeting observances, especially to make them more receptive to the scolding he was about to give them about the other one. But it doesn't make sense Paul would have gone out of his way to praise the Corinthians for the nice job they were doing with their hair.

Paul also had to talk about the Headcovering in 1 Cor. 11a, even though the Corinthians were already doing a good job keeping it, because just as 1 Cor. 11 is the only place in the New Testament we learn the church is supposed to observe the Lord's Supper (except for five words in Luke 22:19, "this do in remembrance of me"), it's also



the only place in the New Testament we learn the church is supposed to observe the Headcovering.

An Apostolic Ordinance, Like the Lord's Supper

1 Cor. 11:2. Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered [ordinanced] them to you.

The Headcovering and Lord's Supper were part of the "all things," 11:2, Paul taught in every church. "For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy, ... who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which are in Messiah, as I teach everywhere in every church," 1 Cor. 4:17. Therefore, neither the Headcovering nor the Lord's Supper ordinances are cultural things local to the Corinth of that time, but are applicable to "every church," 4:17, "in all churches" 7:17, "in all churches of the saints," 14:33, in every age.

The words "ordinances" and "delivered" in verse 2 are the noun and verb forms of the same Greek word, meaning to 'transmit', or 'deliver.' Verse 2 could be translated "you keep the deliveries as I delivered them to you;" or "you keep the transmittals as I transmitted them to you," or



“you keep the ordinances as I ordained them to you.” The verb form is also used regarding the Lord’s Supper in verse 23. “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered [ordained, transmitted] unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread” The verb form is also used regarding the gospel in chapter 15, “I declare unto you the gospel ... for I delivered [ordained, transmitted] unto you first of all that which I also received,” 1 Cor. 15:1-3.

The Headcovering, the Lord’s Supper, and the gospel are all ‘apostolic transmissions’ that the apostles received directly from the Lord, and delivered directly to the churches; not cultural accommodations to first-century Corinth. Sometimes the Greek word translated “ordinances” is translated as “traditions,” because things can be passed from men to men, as well as from God to men. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees that “laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition [ordinances, transmissions] of men,” Mark 7:8. But ordinances from God through the apostles to the church are authoritative. “Brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions [ordinances, transmissions] which you have been taught, whether by [our spoken] word, or our epistle,” 2 Thess. 2:15.



The word “apostle” is a transliteration of the Greek word meaning “representative” or “messenger.” Sometimes a church, like the church of Antioch, sent out messengers like Barnabas and Paul on missions, “they are the messengers [‘apostolos’] of the churches,” 2 Cor. 8:23. But Paul was not only an apostle of the church of Antioch, he was also an apostle of Jesus Messiah, having been chosen directly by Jesus Messiah as his representative. “Paul, an apostle, not of men [like Barnabas], neither by man [like Matthias in Acts 1], but [of and] by Jesus Messiah,” Gal. 1:1. There are only twelve apostles of Jesus Messiah, and as his representatives, they had his authority.

In Acts 1, Peter was right in interpreting Ps. 109:8, “Let another take his office,” as meaning Judas would be replaced. And he was right that his replacement would have to “be a[n eye] witness with us of his resurrection,” Acts 1:20. An apostle couldn’t go around saying, “Peter says he saw the resurrected Jesus.” And Peter was right that Judas’ replacement had to receive the ordinances to pass on to the church directly from Jesus, as the other apostles had, when Jesus “had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen ... being seen of them forty days [after his resurrection],” Acts 1:2-3.

But Peter was wrong that he and the other



apostles had to choose Judas' replacement. And he was wrong that they had to choose him from "these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us," Acts 1:21-22.

Like Abraham tried to help God out by marrying Hagar because he couldn't wait for a miraculous fulfillment of God's promise of a son via Sarah, Peter tried to help Jesus out, not realizing Jesus would soon return to make his own choice of an apostle to replace Judas. Jesus had given the apostles a lot of authority, but no one has the authority to choose a representative for another person. Peter's mistake caused a lot of trouble for Paul who constantly had to defend his apostleship. "Paul, an apostle, not of men [like Barnabas], neither by man [like Matthias], but [of and directly] by Jesus Messiah," Gal. 1:1.

Paul received the apostolic ordinances, like the Headcovering and Lord's Supper, directly from the resurrected Lord, when "last of all, he was seen of me also, as one born out of due time," 1 Cor. 15:8, and when he "went into Arabia," Gal. 1:17, shortly after his conversion. Paul said, "the gospel which was preached of me is not after man,



for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Messiah," Gal. 1:12.

Paul delivered the apostolic transmissions to the Corinthians when he founded the church as recorded in Acts 18, "After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; ... and he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them," Acts 18:1,11. The Headcovering, the Lord's Supper, and the gospel are all apostolic ordinances, received directly from the Lord and transmitted directly to the churches.

So, the Headcovering ordinance is no more about some cultural practice like the supposed hair length of temple prostitutes in Corinth, than the Lord's Supper and the gospel are. All the historical research scholars have done on the dress, hairstyles, and customs of first-century Corinth to try to understand this passage are worthless. The secular society of first-century Corinth knew nothing about the apostolic ordinances, since they were given to the church, not the world.

Why are there so many different theories about what particular Corinthian custom Paul is supposedly condemning in 1 Corinthians 11?



Interpreters site all kinds of different stories about female Corinthian temple prostitutes that had short hair, or didn't put their hair up in buns, or didn't wear headcoverings or veils. And the admonitions of this chapter are first of all addressed to men. "Every man praying or prophesying having his head covered," 1 Cor. 11:4. Were the Christian men in Corinth running around looking like male temple prostitutes that had long hair, or put their hair up in buns, or wore hoods or veils? But Paul wasn't scolding the Corinthian brothers or sisters about anything at this point in the chapter, but praising them.

Secular history is not reliable. God wouldn't give us scripture that was dependent on secular history to be understandable. How would someone in China in 1000 AD understand 1 Corinthians 11 if its interpretation was dependent on Greek history, without access to Western libraries or the internet to do research? God didn't even preserve the writings of the so-called church fathers. The apostate Roman Catholic Church preserved only the worst of the early writings and destroyed the best. God preserves only his word. "His truth endures unto all generations," Ps. 100:5. We can correctly interpret this chapter without any knowledge of Corinthian history or culture.



It makes sense Jesus himself would have given the apostles the two church meeting observances he wanted passed on for the churches to observe throughout the church age, but proper hair length would hardly merit special attention by Jesus to the churches as an apostolic ordinance.

Symbolizes Authority and Submission

Profitable Only by Understanding its Meaning

1 Cor. 11:3a. But I would have you know ...

The word “but” in verse 3 doesn’t indicate Paul is ceasing to praise the Corinthians and beginning to scold them at this point, because he doesn’t stop praising them and start scolding them until verse 17, when he says, “Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not.”

What Paul is saying in verse 3 is that, even though the Corinthians were doing a great job keeping the Headcovering observance, he wants them to “know,” 1 Cor. 11:3, more about it, so they will gain even more benefit from observing it. Today, many churches have a brief meditation explaining the meaning of the symbolism of the Lord’s



Supper before or during its observance, so people benefit more from it. Occasional meditations during church meetings on the meaning of symbolism of the Headcovering observance are important for the same reason.

Neither the Headcovering nor the Lord's Supper observances are magic rituals that create some value just by performing them. They both only have value to the extent their symbolic message is understood by those who see them performed.

Male Authority is Directly Under Messiah

1 Cor. 11:3b. That the head of every man is Messiah.

The word "head" in 1 Corinthians 11:3, "kephale" in Greek, includes the idea of ruling. The Septuagint says, "Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and all the people made him head ["kephalyn"] and leader over them," Judg. 11:11. Egalitarians say the word "head" means "source," like the 'head of a river', and doesn't imply authority. Wayne Grudem has shown that of the thousands of occurrences of "kephale" he surveyed in Greek literature, not one meant "source." (Wayne Grudem, "The Meaning Of κεφαλή ("Head"): An Evaluation of New



Evidence, Real and Alleged," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44, no. 1, Mar 2001: 25-65.)

Verse 3 describes the chain of command from God, to Messiah, to Man, to Woman. God placed man in the position of authority directly under Messiah. One must be under authority to be in authority, as the Roman Centurion understood: "I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it," Mt. 8:9.

The Greek word translated "man" in verse 3 can mean either 'male' or 'husband'. We know it means 'male' in this passage because if it were consistently translated as 'husband', some verses wouldn't make sense. Verse 12, "for as the woman is of the man [Eve was taken out of Adam], even so is the man also by the woman," means all 'males' are born of 'females.' It wouldn't make sense to say "even so is the husband also by the wife," because even bachelors are born of women. Also, "if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him," 1 Cor. 11:14, doesn't mean having long hair is a shame only for husbands, but not for bachelors. 1 Corinthians 11a is about man/woman and male/female things, not about husband/wife things.



But the startling word of verse 3 is the word “every;” “the head of every man is Messiah!” In this authority structure in the physical realm, Messiah is the head of every male, even unsaved males; and he is not the direct head of any females [as females vs. as persons in general] even saved females. In the spiritual realm, both males and females “speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Messiah,” Eph. 4:15. But in the physical realm, “the head of every male is Messiah; and the head of the female is the male.”

We know the headship of Messiah over males exists only in the physical realm, because in the spiritual realm, “there is neither male nor female,” Gal. 3:28. But there are certainly males and females in the physical realm, or homosexuality would not be wrong. Authority structures are important, but they are of limited importance. It was much more blessed to know God spiritually as savior, like Joseph and Mary; than merely to be in a position of authority, like Caiaphas and Judas.

In Israel, even unsaved, ungodly males, like Caiaphas, Mt. 26:57-65, were able to be priests; but not even godly females were able to be priests. And in the church, even unsaved, ungodly males, like Judas, Mt. 10:4, could be apostles; but not



even godly females could be apostles. By the chain of command of verse 3, we can see that God has appointed for men to rule in the home, the church, and society.

HOME: In the home, “the husband is the head of the wife, even as Messiah is the head of the church, ... therefore as the church is subject unto Messiah, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything,” Eph. 5:23-24. It’s true Ephesians 5:21 says we are all to be “submitting yourselves to one another,” but all the following verses show that the way we submit must be different and appropriate to our roles. The wife sacrifices her will for her husband, while the husband sacrifices his welfare for the wife. The wife submits by submitting, while the husband submits by loving. “Wives, submit; ... husbands, love,” Eph. 5:22,25. It would be no more appropriate for a husband to submit to his wife by submitting to and obeying her, than it would be for Messiah to submit to the church by submitting to and obeying the church. By the way, wives are never commanded to love their husbands, but only to “be ‘affectionate’ (Greek) to their husbands,” Titus 2:4.

CHURCH: In the church, only males can be pastors and deacons. “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, ... that rules well his own house, having his children in



subjection with all gravity; for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" 1 Tim. 3:1-5. "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well," 1 Tim. 3:8-12. The KJV is correct to 'translate' Romans 16:1 to read "Phebe our sister, which is a 'servant' of the church" instead of 'transliterating' it to read 'deaconess,' of the church, since deacons must be males, "the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well," 1 Tim. 3:12.

SOCIETY: Deborah was a prophetess that judged Israel, but she made her prophecies in private under a palm tree while Barak lead the armies (Jdg. 4:4-5:31). God says women rulers are a curse on any society, and that they cause suffering in society, because they were created for a different purpose. "The LORD of hosts doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah ... the mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, the captain of fifty, and the honorable man, and the counselor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator. And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. ... As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead you cause you to err, and destroy the way of



your paths," Is. 3:1-12.

Even a good woman in public office would do more harm than good because of the example it would set. "Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command, ... therefore was the king very wroth, ... then the king said to the wise men ... what shall we do? ... Memucan answered, ... 'This deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes. ... Likewise, shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus, shall there arise too much contempt and wrath. ... Let there go a royal commandment ... that Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she. And ... all the wives shall give honor to their husbands, both to the great and small.' And the saying pleased the king and ... he sent letters into all the king's provinces, ... that every man should bear rule in his own house ... After these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti," Est. 1:12-2:1. The king was wrong to act hastily in his "wrath," and was wrong in his treatment of Vashti, but his "wise men" were right in their philosophy of male leadership, as the Bible testifies by providing so much detail.



Contrast Vashti with her replacement, Queen Esther. “Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, ... who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity. ... And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle’s daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter ... And the king [Ahasuerus] loved Esther above all the women, and ... he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti. ... Esther had not yet showed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him,” Est. 2:5-7,17,20. Esther had not only become married, but had also become queen of the Persian empire, and yet she still rendered submission and obedience to her adopted father, to the extent it didn’t conflict with her husband, the king.

Female Submission is Indirectly Under Messiah

1 Cor. 11:3c. And the head of the woman is the man.



There is a layer of authority between Messiah and woman in the chain of command: God - Messiah - Man - Woman. How can this be when we know “there is one mediator between God and people, the person, Messiah Jesus,” 1 Tim. 2:5? The answer is that 1 Timothy 2:5 is talking about salvation and spiritual things. “God our Savior desires all people to be saved, ... for there is one mediator,” 1 Tim. 2:5. But the chain of command is talking about the offices of man, woman, and Messiah in the physical realm.

The Greek word translated “woman” in verse 3 can mean either ‘female’ or ‘wife’. We know that it means ‘female’ in this passage because if we consistently translated it as ‘wife’, some verses would not make sense. Verse 12, “for as the woman is of the man [Eve was taken out of Adam], even so is the man also by the woman,” means all men are born of women, not all husbands are born of wives. Some men were born of women who were not wives when they gave birth. So, this passage is about all women, not just married women. ‘Male’ is the head of ‘female’ whether a woman ever marries or not.

“The head of the woman is the man,” 1 Cor. 11:3, doesn’t mean every female is under the authority of every male, but that all women have three special ministries in their roles as women: modest



dress, quietness, and submission.

HOME: Peter covered the three ministries of women as they relate to the home in 1 Peter 3. "Likewise, you wives, ... (Modest Dress:) whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, (Quietness:) even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, (Submission:) being in subjection to their own husbands: even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord," 1 Pet. 3:1-6. Sarah is here called a holy woman who thought of her husband as her lord, meaning her master. Her thoughts are recorded in Gen. 18:12, "Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I've become old shall I have pleasure, my lord [adonai, referring to Abraham] being old also?" In modern Hebrew and Arabic, the word for "husband" [baal], also means "lord" and "master."

God speaks disparagingly of showiness and excess in women's dress. "In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling



ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, the chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings, and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils," Is. 3:18-23.

The quietness and submission aspects in this 1 Peter passage also mean that wives are not allowed to teach their husbands. "Likewise, you wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word [without teaching or nagging] be won by the conversation [from French 'conversari,' meaning conduct, not words] of the wives; while they behold [not hear] your chaste conversation coupled with fear," 1 Pet. 3:1-2. Some Catholic monks so valued the virtue of quietness that they took vows of silence. They were wrong to do so however, because this ministry (in a less extreme form) belongs to women, not men.

CHURCH: Paul covered the three ministries of women as they relate to the church in 1 Corinthians. "Every woman that prays or prophesies (Modest Dress:) with her head



uncovered dishonors her head; ... let her be covered," 1 Cor. 11:5-6. "Let your women (Quietness:) keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak, (Submission:) but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also says the law," 1 Cor. 14:34.

The quietness and submission aspects also prohibit women from teaching in the church. God hasn't approved any women as Bible teachers, even for other women. Titus 2:4-5 is the only reference to teaching responsibilities for women. "The aged women," Titus 2:3, all of them, not just certain ones that are 'teachers,' are to "teach the young women," Titus 2:4. If every older woman should teach, then no older woman has an office of teaching. And the older women are not to be Bible teachers, per se, but "teachers of good things," Titus 2:3; specifically, of the special ministries of women "to be sober, to be affectionate (Greek) towards their husbands, to be affectionate (Greek) towards their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands," Titus 2:4-5.

Priscilla had a part, along with her husband Aquila, in clarifying some things for Apollos, but "they took him unto them," Acts 18:26, speaking with him in the privacy of their home. Women are



an invaluable asset in private discussions about even the heaviest topics and even in mixed groups, but they are not to be Bible teachers of even all-female groups. The women, as much as the men, need the teaching of the teachers God appointed by his grace to teach the church. The women shouldn't be separated out to sit under women teachers because then they'll miss opportunities they have to hear God-provided teachers. "He gave some ... teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Messiah," Eph. 4:11-12.

SOCIETY: Paul covered the three ministries of women as they relate to society in 1 Timothy 2. All of 1 Timothy 2 describes how we should behave in society. Paul doesn't start talking about church roles until 1 Timothy 3:1, "If a man desire the office of a bishop," etc.

1 Timothy chapter 2 has three parts:

1) All People in 1 Timothy 2:1-7. God's desires that, "prayers ... be made for all people, ... who will have all people to be saved." Salvation is God's desire for people everywhere in society, not just in church.

2) Men in 1 Timothy 2:8: "I will therefore that men ('males' in Greek) pray everywhere, lifting up



holy hands." Males are not permitted to be silent, though many would like to be. Public prayer is God's will for males, but not females, "everywhere" in society, not just in church.

3) Women in 1 Timothy 2:9-15. "In like manner also, (Modest Dress:) that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but, which becomes women professing godliness, with good works. (Quietness:) Let the woman learn in silence (Submission:) with all subjection," 1 Tim. 2:9-11.

God desires modesty, quietness, and submission for women everywhere, not just in church. "Braided hair," 1 Tim. 2:9, is only an issue out in society, because women's hair is covered in church meetings anyway. And women are to do "good works," 1 Tim. 2:10, everywhere, not just in church. The quietness and submission aspects also mean a woman cannot teach men even in secular society: "I suffer [permit] not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence," 1 Tim. 2:12. Women "shall be saved in childbearing," 1 Tim. 2:15, because the importance and honor of motherhood unites all society, since we all have mothers, but



“childbearing” hardly ever takes place at church meetings, and so it’s not only at church meetings that women are not permitted to teach or have authority over men.

Authority Structures are Good Even in the Godhead

1 Cor. 11:3d. And the head of Messiah is God.

Authority structures exist even within the Godhead. This is the ultimate argument against every egalitarian opposition to authority structures.

Authority structures are always comprised of one superior and one or more inferiors (inferior in position, not value). For example, God and Messiah, Messiah and the church, husbands and wives, parents and children, masters (employers) and servants (employees), and governors and the governed (Eph. 5:22-29, Col. 3:18-4:1, 1 Pet. 2:13-3:7). The basic duties are the same for all superiors, and the same for all inferiors. All superiors are responsible to lead, love, give, speak, teach, command, and send, for example; while all inferiors are responsible to follow, submit, receive, listen, learn, obey, and go, for example.



In value and essence, Messiah is equal to God the Father in every way. Jesus, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God," Php. 2:6. But externally, and in position, Jesus functions in the role that a son does to a father. The Father gives, the Son receives, "so has he given to the Son to have life in himself," Jn. 5:26. The Father teaches; the Son learns, "I do nothing of myself; but as my Father has taught me," Jn. 8:28. The Father sends; the Son goes, "he that sent me is with me," Jn. 8:28. The Father commands; the Son obeys, "I do always those things that please him," Jn. 8:29.

Messiah is not called the Son of God because he 'became' the Son of God at the incarnation. Messiah is called the Son of God because from eternity past, he 'functioned' in the role of a Son to the Father in the trinity. "His Son ... which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness," Rm. 1:3-4, Who was it that became flesh? It was the person who already was "his Son" as the beginning of the verse states. Also, he had to be "made," or 'become,' "the seed of David according to the flesh," but he only had to be "declared" "to be the Son of God" that he already was from eternity past.



And for eternity future, Messiah will remain in an inferior position to the Father. "When all things shall be subdued unto him [the Son], then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him [God the Father] that put all things under him [the Son], that God [the Father] may be all in all," 1 Cor. 15:28.

Dr. Glenn Butner thinks verses like "I do always the things that please him," Jn. 8:29, only indicate Messiah's obedience to the Father from the human part of him. Perhaps he thinks Jesus should have said, "My 'human will' always does those things that please him." But Jesus obeyed the Father before the incarnation also.

During the entire Old Testament period, the pre-incarnate Jesus went where the Father sent him, as "the Angel of the Lord." He appeared to Moses as the fire in the bush; "the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, ... and when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush," Ex. 3:2-4. He was also the fire in the shekinah glory cloud. "The angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them," Ex. 14:19. And God the Father sent him ahead of the people as they



journeyed to Canaan. God said, “Behold, I send an Angel before you, to keep you in the way, and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, ... for my name is in him,” Ex. 23:20-23.

Wayne Grudem lists many verses that indicate the Son was in submission to the Father before the incarnation, like at creation “God [the Father] ... by his Son ... made the worlds,” Heb. 1:2; meaning the Father used the Son to create the worlds, the Son didn’t use the Father to create the worlds. Grudem points out, “These relationships ... are never reversed, not once in the entire Bible. The Son does not predestine us in the Father, ... create through the Father, ... send his only Father into the world. The Father does not come and obey the Son’s will, ... sit at the Son’s right hand, ... pray to the Son.” (Wayne Grudem, “Biblical Evidence for the Eternal Submission of the Son to the Father,” in *The New Evangelical Subordinationism?* 6-15.)

Likewise, woman’s subordination to man did not begin at the fall, when God said “your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you,” Gen. 3:16, any more than man’s labor began at the fall, when God said “in the sweat of your face shall you eat bread,” Gen. 3:19. Man started laboring as soon as God created him and “put him



in the garden of Eden to dress it and keep it," Gen. 2:8; and woman started submitting to man as soon as God created her as "a helper," Gen. 2:18, and "brought her unto the man," Gen. 2:22; he didn't bring the man to her. What changed at the fall was that man's labor and woman's submission both became wearisome, instead of always being easy and delightful as it was before sin entered the world.

Servants have the same nature as their masters, so although Paul requires all servants to obey their masters while they're servants, he recommends they gain their freedom when possible. "Are you called being a servant? Care not for it: but if you may be made free, use it rather," 1 Cor. 7:21. But Paul never recommends women try to gain equality of position with men, because of the nature of woman, and the purpose of her creation.

Butner also thinks Jesus' submission to the Father will end in eternity future, including an "elimination of the mediatorial roles of kingship." (Butner, "Eternal Functional Subordination," 145.) But since, as stated earlier, Butner believes the humanity of Jesus submitted to the Father, doesn't he know the incarnation will never be undone? The Bible says "The Word was made flesh," Jn. 1:14, but never says "flesh will be remade into the Word." And if that happened,



what would happen to our salvation and physical, glorified bodies that are based on our union with him? Besides, Revelation 21-22 indicates plenty of hierarchies will continue into the eternal state. "The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into [the New Jerusalem]," Rev. 21:24. Messiah "will be [each overcomer's] God, and [each overcomer] shall be [his] son," Rev. 21:7. Messiah's "servants shall serve him, and ... reign for ever and ever," Rev. 22:3-5.

And woman's submission to man, like Messiah's submission to the Father, will not end at Messiah's return. Only males will be in leadership positions in the Messianic Kingdom. The 12 apostles (all males) will "sit upon twelve thrones judging the tribes of Israel," Mt. 19:28; Israel will "serve ... David [a male] their king, whom I will resurrect unto them," Jer. 30:9; the priests in the millennial temple, "the sons [males] of Zadok ... shall enter into my sanctuary ... to minister unto me," Ez. 44:15-16. Women will not receive any cities to rule during the Messianic Kingdom as a reward for faithful service, as some men will, "you good servant, ... have you authority over ten cities," Lk. 19:17. But women's rewards will be just as rewarding, like eternal glory, recognition, and opportunities for service.



This is not to say that any specific male-female relationships, like a specific husband-and-wife relationship, will continue forever because, “in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage,” Mt. 22:23-33. A husband’s authority ends at death, “for the woman which has a husband is bound by the law to her husband [only] so long as he lives,” Rm. 7:2.

Authority relationships are susceptible to abuse during this age; but the problem is not with authority relationships, but rather with our sin and weakness. Authority structures will not be removed in the future, but sin and the weakness of the flesh will someday be removed, and then such inequalities will be blessed indeed, as they are now within the Godhead.

Modern men deride authority and inequality; but inequality is essential for unity. Without inequality, there can be no unity, because each person will go his own way. “Can two walk together unless they are agreed?” Amos 3:3. Someone has to give up the direction he wants to go, or soon both will be walking alone. The woman, in submission, chooses to follow the man, instead of choosing her own way. And the man, in love and self-sacrifice, chooses to lead in the direction that is best for the welfare of the woman, rather than that which is best for himself. If we



were not different, we would all soon be alone.

For example, a husband must love his wife even when she doesn't submit to him, but he's built so that lack of submission to his leadership is the one thing that makes it most difficult for him to do so, because logically there's no responsibility where there's no authority or ability. On the other hand, while a wife must submit to her husband even when he doesn't love her, she's built so she can naturally endure a lot of second-best decisions as long as she's greatly loved and appreciated. By following God's commands, "wives, submit," and "husbands, love," married couples avoid the things that naturally cause the greatest difficulty to each other. Also, to say a husband should lead doesn't rule out leadership by consensus. It would be foolish for any imperfect, human leader not to trust and use the advice and talents of his crew, like Captain Kirk does.

Before the creation of all created things, "the Word was with God," Jn. 1:1, in perfect harmony and unity. "I and my Father are one," Jn. 10:30. The Son is always "in the bosom of the Father," Jn. 1:18. Perfect unity can only exist where there is a superior who loves with perfect unselfishness, and an inferior who submits with perfect obedience, as within the Godhead.



Vertical relationships, not horizontal ones, bind people together. We are one with each other in the church horizontally, only because we are all in our same Lord vertically. Egalitarianism is like flat sand, spreading out horizontally, from which nothing can be built.

Egalitarians don't truly appreciate women, because they don't appreciate women as women. They consider women's special role of submission as demeaning, and only value men's special role of leadership. Egalitarians don't even try to learn or train their own spirits to submit to God or others, because they don't value submission. Egalitarians don't truly care about the welfare of women, but only care about their own philosophy. Their campaign to get women to live as men, in contradiction to women's created nature, is like trying to use clothes dryers as washing machines, which not only doesn't work very well, but also harms the clothes dryers.

According to the Bible, women are weaker than men. "Likewise, you husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life," 1 Pet. 3:7. It's not really kind to give those who are weaker the right to compete on an equal footing with those who are stronger, to require all women athletes to



compete with all male athletes, for example. No more restrictions on one hand, but no more protection or preference on the other. Making 'every man for himself' is not being kind to the weaker vessels, but puts them at an unprotected disadvantage in the world.

Much suffering has resulted from society's disregard of the role of women. Men today give their wives the 'right' to be separated from their children all day at an office or factory, and then to do most of the housework at night; and then those men feel no obligation to stay married to them because everything's 50-50. Men who push for 'equality' for women don't do so because they care about women, but because they want to escape their own obligations to care for their mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters, and to escape from being under any authority themselves.

Egalitarians think only those who are actually superior to others, God over men, smarter over less smart, more talented over less talented, etc., should rule, based on each person's individual merits, apart from any gender considerations. But the Bible teaches the Son submits to the Father even though they are equal in person, and that superiors don't become superiors because they're



more talented, virtuous, or worthy, but because, “the authorities that be are ordained of God,” Rom. 13:1, and that they’re worthy of obedience simply because of their positions, not because they deserve obedience because they’re better in some way.

Servants are to serve men who are less virtuous, less talented, and less wise than themselves simply because, in God’s providence, they are masters. “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, ... in singleness of your heart, as unto Messiah, ... as the servants of Messiah, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men,” Eph. 6:5-7. “Servants, be subject to your masters, ... not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward, ... for conscience toward God,” 1 Pet. 2:18-19.

Egalitarian Bible teachers oppose authority structures because their teachings are part of “the mystery of lawlessness [ASV]” that “doth already work,” 1 Thess. 2:7. The Amplified Version says, “The mystery of rebellion against divine authority and the coming reign of lawlessness is already at work,” 1 Thess. 2:7. “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents,



unthankful, unholy," 2 Tim. 3:1-2.

Authority relationships exist in the physical or external realm, not the spiritual realm. God said a husband and wife are "one flesh," Eph. 5:31; not 'one spirit'. Things in the physical realm, like authority structures, are important; but not as important as spiritual things. "The time is short: it remains, that both they that have wives will be as though they had none [because there is no marriage in the resurrection]; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not," 1 Cor. 7:30.

There is no spiritual advantage to being placed in a superior or inferior position. More authority means more responsibility. It's how we use the vessels, whether weaker or stronger; and the offices, whether higher or lower; we've been placed in, that's important and that determines eternal rewards. "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Are you called being a servant? Care not for it: but if you may be made free, use it," 1 Cor. 7:20-21. Paul did not deserve to be an apostle; God picked him by grace (1 Tim. 1:15; 1 Cor. 15:10). Are we envious of the Apostle Paul because he's an apostle and we aren't?



Most things in this life, like washing a pot, are neither moral nor immoral, but rather amoral and neutral. But when we perform a work, like washing a pot, in submission to authority, we aren't only washing a pot, but also obeying the word of God to submit to authority. We receive no reward for washing the pot, because it just gets dirty again, (as the book of Ecclesiastes teaches us, "all is vanity"), but at the same time, obeying the word of God to submit to authority is a spiritual act, that produces eternal rewards. So being under authority gives us a chance to turn amoral, neutral things, that would pass away, into spiritual works, that will last forever, and "he is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

Women can "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in all things give thanks," 1 Th. 5:16-18, just as well as men, and these are the kinds of things that really matter. Women have performed some of the greatest spiritual works that have ever been done. Only a woman believed Jesus when he said he was going to die, and she anointed him for his burial. "For in that she has poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Truly I say unto you, wherever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman has done, be told for a



memorial of her," Mt. 26:12-13.

And only a woman was given the privilege, of not merely being the first to see Jesus after his resurrection, but of seeing him before he even ascended to the Father to offer his blood in the heavenly tabernacle. "Jesus said unto her, 'Mary.' She turned herself, and said unto him, 'Rabboni;' which is to say, Master. Jesus said unto her, 'Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.' Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her," Jn. 20:16-18.

The Lord gave the church the Headcovering ordinance to help preserve the church in this age when, "the mystery of lawlessness is already at work," 2 Th. 2:7. When women wear headcoverings during church meetings, the whole church symbolizes our humble submission to our God-appointed roles, especially gender roles, and thus act as salt and light in the midst of a rebellious world that has almost finished throwing off every vestige of God-ordained authority.



With Headcovering Scarves

Men's Naked Heads Symbolize Direct Authority

1 Cor. 11:4a. Every man praying or prophesying ...

The reason prayer and prophecy are mentioned, is that they're activities that everyone, men and women, go directly to God for, in contrast to the chain of command of verse 3.

Prayer is man talking directly to God, and prophecy is God talking directly to man. Or we could say, prayer is man representing man to God, and prophecy is man representing God to man. Both prayer and prophecy involve authority. Messiah granted all Christians authority to pray in his name. "In that day ... whatever you shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you; prior to this you have asked nothing in my name," Jn. 16:23-24.

By the way, we see here that we pray to the Father in Jesus name. It's not scriptural to pray to Messiah. There's not a single instance in the New Testament of anyone praying to Messiah. Jesus taught us to say "Our Father ... ," Mt. 6:9. "Seeing



that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, ... let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace," Heb. 4:16. We don't pray to, but rather through, a high priest.

(It would be appropriate for men to wear headcoverings in church meetings if the purpose of the Headcovering observance was to symbolize that even though men pray to the Father, the Messiah is a layer of authority between them and the Father. But the purpose of the Headcovering observance is to symbolize the roles of men and women, not Messiah and men. Also, even while praying to the Father, we pray through, and in the name of Messiah; but church women don't pray through or in the name of church men.)

Prayer is the humblest and most widespread of authorities given to people; it's been given to all. Prophecy is the greatest (besides being an apostle of Messiah) and rarest of authorities given to people; it was given to only a few, "God has set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, ... diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? ... Do all speak with tongues? ... But covet earnestly the best gifts," 1 Cor. 12:30.

Messiah gave some Christians authority to



prophecy. "When he ascended up on high, he ... gave gifts unto men, ... and he gave some ... prophets," Eph. 4:8-11. Prophecy is always direct divine revelation, and is equally authoritative with scripture. The issue is not 'foretelling' vs. 'forth telling,' but rather direct revelation vs. commentary. We are not talking about mere preaching or teaching here. People that preach or teach are called "evangelists, ... pastors and teachers," Eph. 4:11, not prophets. We aren't talking about merely expounding on scripture, but of speaking with equal authority to scripture, "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes," Mt. 7:29.

1 Cor. 11:4b. Having his head covered ...

The word "covered" is not actually in the Greek of verse 4 about men. It doesn't say "having his head covered," but "down upon [kata] his head having." It means "anything on his head having." "Kata" is used in the passage where Mary of Bethany came to Jesus with the alabaster box of ointment and "poured it on ['kata'] his head," Mk. 14:3. According to verse 4, a man must not have 'anything' on his head during church meetings; merely not 'covering' his head would still be a violation. Wearing even a small kippah or yarmulke, as many of our dear Messianic Jewish brethren do, is prohibited.



On the other hand, men can have their own hair on their heads, because their hair is part of their heads. Some Catholic monks went so far as to shave a circle of hair off the top of their heads to avoid having anything on the top of their heads. If verse 4 was talking about hair, men would not be able to have any hair at all on their heads during church meetings, not merely not have long hair. “Kata” refers to something “down upon” men’s heads, not something “down from” their heads. Also, since we saw that the Headcovering is a church meeting observance, if the observance was about hair, all the men would have to shave their heads as part of each church service.

1 Cor. 11:4c. Dishonors his head.

We saw verse 3, that man is directly under the authority of Messiah in the chain of command God ordained in the physical realm, which means man is in authority over woman, who is not directly under Messiah in that authority structure. For a man to wear some article of clothing on his head during church meetings would be to symbolize he isn’t directly under the authority of Messiah, and thus not in authority over woman. He would thus be rebelling against and dishonoring authority, his own God-ordained authority, which should be honored. He would



not only be symbolizing the rejection of his own position of authority, but also be symbolizing his rebellion against the God who appointed him to this office.

There is a certain amount honor that rightly accompanies authority. "You ... have crowned him with glory and honor, you made him to have dominion over the works of your hands: you have put all things under his feet," Ps. 8:5-6. Men are to be the leaders in the church. The burden of the ministry rests on them. Some of them don't want to step forward and "pray everywhere lifting up holy hands," 1 Tim. 2:8, but they must do so anyway. Some may wish they had the ministry of silence that women have, but they must speak out. God has given them authority, and authority always carries responsibility.

Men can't avoid responsibility by pretending they don't have authority. "He which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew you that you are a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the earth: Look, there you have that is yours. His lord answered and said unto him, You wicked and slothful servant," Mt. 25:24-26.

We've all heard it said that women have to take



on church ministries, because the men aren't doing them. This does more harm than good, because then the men feel even less need to step forward and do the work. The bare heads of the men during the Headcovering ordinance proclaim 'the buck stops here'.

There's nothing inherently dishonorable about a man having something on his head. Before the Headcovering ordinance was delivered to the church, the high priest had to wear a miter, and all the other priests had to wear bonnets, when they ministered in the tabernacle and the temple. "You shall make the miter of fine linen [for Aaron the high priest] ... and for Aaron's sons you shall make ... bonnets," Ex. 28:39-40.

The 24 elders of Revelation 4 may indicate resurrected church men will continue to remove their crowns whenever there is a worship service in heaven during the seven-year tribulation period. "When [at certain times] those beasts [the Cherubim] give glory and honor and thanks to him ... the four and twenty elders fall down before him ... and worship him ... and cast their crowns before the throne," Rev. 4:9-11.

But when the Lord returns, the Headcovering ordinance, like the Lord's Supper ordinance, will end, "you do show the Lord's death, till he come,"



1 Cor. 11:26. In the Messianic Kingdom, the priests will again cover their heads when they minister. "But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, ... shall enter into my sanctuary, ... they shall have linen bonnets upon their heads," Ez. 44:15-18.

Things that are inherently wrong, like pride and theft, are wrong in every time and place. Other things, which are external in nature, like dietary regulations, are wrong only during the time and for the people that God prohibits them. God told Adam he could eat only plants, "I have given you every herb ... for food," Gen. 1:29; then he told Noah he could eat every kind of meat, "every moving thing that lives shall be food for you," Gen. 9:3; then he told Moses he could eat only some meats, "these are the beasts which you shall eat," Lev. 11; then he cleansed all meats, "thus he declared all foods clean," Mk. 7:19 ASV; then he told the church there are some things we can't eat, "abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled," Acts 15:29; 21:25.

If these things were inherently right or wrong in and of themselves, the commands couldn't change. The Headcovering ordinance is an external requirement that had a definite starting point when the church was created in Acts 2, that will have a definite ending point when the Lord



returns, and that is only applicable to the church, not Israel or the world. Only during the church meeting Headcovering observance is it wrong for males to have anything on their heads.

Women's Covered Heads Symbolize Indirect Authority

1 Cor. 11:5a. But every woman that prays or prophesies ...

Women didn't lead in prayer publicly, in church, or anywhere else. "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, ... in like manner also, that women ... be in silence," 1 Tim. 1:8-12. But women do pray along silently with everyone else who is not leading in prayer at the moment.

And women didn't prophesy aloud in church, "for you may all prophesy one by one, ... let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak," 1 Cor. 14:31,34. But female prophets prophesied silently to themselves during church meetings, just like male prophets did whenever it was inappropriate for them to speak. "If anything is revealed to another that sits by, let the first hold his peace. ... The spirits of the prophets are subject to the



prophets," 1 Cor. 14:32.

Tongues was also prophesy, receiving revelation directly from God; but it was a less desirable gift than prophecy, because it needed a second person, an interpreter, to be of any value. "Follow after love, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that you may prophesy. For, he that speaks in an unknown tongue ... no man understands him; however in the spirit he speaks mysteries. But he that prophesies speaks unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort," 1 Cor. 14:1-3.

The word "mysteries," in Greek ("in the spirit he speaks mysteries"), doesn't mean something hard to understand, but something previously hidden, but now revealed. The church at the time of the apostles didn't yet have the complete New Testament, so God provided the assemblies oral revelation during their meetings via spiritual gifts. But for tongues, like for other forms of prophesy, it was common for men to have to speak silently to themselves, and it was always the case for women. "If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God," 1 Cor:14:27-28.



By the way, 1 Corinthians 11-14 shows that early church meetings were extremely participatory. "When you come together, every one of you has a psalm, has a doctrine, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation." 1 Cor. 14:26. You can't have a healthy body if the members of the body aren't permitted to exercise their ministries to each other. The early church meetings were like current day Plymouth Brethren meetings, except that the early church didn't restrict participants to sharing only about the Lord's Supper, as Plymouth Brethren do today.

Also, the early church met in houses. House churches today are usually very participatory, but they often do worse than non-participatory churches by abandoning the role of Bible teachers. I'm sure when Paul taught all night at Troas (Acts 20), he wasn't just asking what everyone thought about the passage he was teaching on. Frank Viola does great harm to house churches, because he teaches people to abandon the authority structures that the Headcovering ordinance says are good, and because he makes the unsaved, Roman Catholic mysticism of 'the Messiah within' inseparable from 'organic church.' This is the same 'light within' that the Quakers chose over the 'light without,' meaning the Bible, and it



led to where Quakers today don't even believe that God, per se, exists.

Women sometimes did prophesy aloud in the Bible, but only in private. Elizabeth prophesied "with a loud voice," but it was in the privacy of her home. "Mary ... entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth, and ... Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, and she spoke out with a loud voice," Lk. 1:39-42. Anna was "a prophetess," that spent her time in the temple, but there's no record she prophesied there publicly. Even Simeon's prophecy may have been heard by only Joseph and Mary (Lk. 2:25-38). Philip, the evangelist, had four daughters "which did prophesy," Acts 21:9, but there's no indication they prophesied publicly. While Paul and his fellow travelers were staying at Philip's house, Agabus had to come down from Judaea to prophesy regarding Paul's imminent capture in Jerusalem, when it would have been more convenient to have one of Philip's daughters do it, if it had been appropriate (Acts 21:10-11).

1 Cor. 11:5b. With her head uncovered ...

We saw in verse 4 that the word "covered" was not actually in the Greek, and that men have to not only avoid 'covering' their heads, but to have absolutely nothing on their heads during church



meetings. But when verse 5 talks about a woman's head being 'uncovered,' the word "uncovered" actually is in the Greek. If a woman's head is anything less than covered, her head is 'uncovered,' and the commandment is violated. Wearing a little hat or doily won't fulfill the command. Having long hair won't count as covering her head either, because hair is part of a person's head (which we saw is why men don't have to completely shave their heads to have 'nothing' on their heads). Also, a woman is to cover her head, 'kephalee' in Greek, not face, 'prosopon,' so these verses are talking about headcoverings, not veils.

It's common for Bible teachers to interpret the word "uncovered" in verse 5 as meaning 'to have short hair.' But the Greek word translated 'uncovered' is 'a - kata - kalupto,' literally 'not - down upon - covered.' The noun form of "kalupto," is "kaluma." A 'kaluma' ('covering') is a "veil," 2 Cor. 3:13; an 'epi - kaluma' ('over - covering') is a "cloak," 1 Pet. 2:16; a 'peri - kalupto' ('around - covering') is a "blindfold," Lk. 22:64; and thus a 'kata - kalupto' ('down upon - covering') is a pretty good description of a headcovering scarf.

If I said to you, "Please uncover your head"



would you think I wanted you to get a haircut? The New Testament considers hair as part of our heads. "The very hairs 'of' your head are numbered," Mt. 10:30, not "the very hairs 'on' your head are numbered." If Paul wanted to talk about whether or not a person had long hair, he could have used the Greek word "komao," meaning "long hair," as in verses 14 and 15, but he didn't.

Another problem with the hair-length interpretation, is that verses 4 and 5 talk about prayer and prophecy, which happen during church meetings, but proper hair length is required at all times. You can't change your hair length just for church meetings.

The purpose of the Headcovering is to symbolize male authority and female submission by doing something symbolic, just like the purpose of the Lord's Supper is to symbolize the Lord's death for us, by doing something symbolic. Everyone just continuing to wear their hair to church the way they always do would not be a good way to symbolize anything.

Philip Brown has shown that almost every Bible teacher before the 1900's interpreted the covering of 1 Cor. 11:4-5 to be a headcovering garment, not hair. (Brown, A. Philip II, "A Survey of the



History of the Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16,” additional session, Aldersgate Forum, West Harrison, IN., Oct. 25-27, 2011, 12.) After all, where do you think the old custom that women have to wear hats to church came from?

R. J. Sproul has an explanation for the recent changes in interpretation. “What has happened in the last fifty years? We’ve had a feminist movement.” (R. C. Sproul, “Should Christians Only Sing Psalms in Local Churches?” Christianity.com video, 2012, <http://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=FF0MMMNU>.) In other words, the majority of Bible teachers always let their current culture determine their interpretation of scripture, rather than letting scripture condemn the sins of our culture.

Headcovering scarves are incompatible with the feminist movement. In 1968, the National Organization for Women said, “NOW recommends ... all women participate in a “national unveiling” by sending their head coverings to the task force chairman. ... These veils will be publicly burned to protest the second-class status of women in all churches.” (National Organization for Women, *Issues Policy Manual* 1969-1996, 277, accessed December 15, 2016,



content/uploads/2014/01/NOW-Issues-M-Z-Policy-Manual-1966-1996.pdf.) NOW doesn't get upset about women wearing long hair in church, because that would proclaim nothing; it would just look like some women like to wear their hair long. But when even a few women wear head scarves, it's obvious to NOW and everyone else, the church is promoting some kind of inequality.

1 Cor. 11:5c. Dishonors her head.

It's a shame for any person to portray themselves as holding a higher office than they actually hold. "When you are invited of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest seat; lest a more honorable man than you be invited of him; and he that invited you and him come and say to you, 'Give this man place,' and you begin with shame to take the lowest seat," Lk. 14:8-9. "The great whore ... has glorified herself, ... for she says in her heart, I sit a queen, ... and shall see no sorrow," Rev. 17:1;18:7. When women don't cover their heads in church, they symbolize an equality of authority they don't have.

On the other hand, when women cover their heads in church, they put the men on the spot. "You men are the ones that must lead the church into the work. Look at our covered heads: you are responsible for our welfare too. You must "stand



fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong," 1 Cor. 16:13. "Awake out of sleep! ... The night is far spent, the day is at hand," Rm. 14:11-12." Men need to be exercised by such responsibilities in order to mature into what God created men to be.

Women's Uncovered Heads Would Symbolize Shame

1 Cor. 11:5d-6. For that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman is not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

In verses 4 and 5a, Paul gave a parallel description of the parts men and women perform in the Headcovering observance. Verse 4, "Every man praying or prophesying with anything on his head dishonors his head." Verse 5a, "But every woman that prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head." He didn't say regarding men after verse 4, "for that is even all one as if he had long hair. For if the man have anything on his head, let him also have long hair: but if it is a shame for a man to have long hair, let him have nothing on his head." But now Paul adds this additional warning regarding the part women perform in the observance.



Like the shabbat candle lighting in Rabbinic Judaism, it's the women of the church that perform the main actions of the Headcovering ordinance; the men merely have to 'not' do something. And women are rightly more concerned about their appearance than men are, since modest dress is one of the special ministries of women. These verses serve as an encouragement to give courage to women to dress in a way people around them might denigrate, but with which they can enjoy the approval of their Lord Messiah.

"God looks on the heart," 1 Sam. 16:7; but he also sees the outward appearance, especially when it represents intentions of the heart. As women picture themselves standing before the throne in God's presence while singing praises in the congregation while wearing headcoverings, they can be thankful they don't look bald to God as they would without a headcovering. There's a natural shame in baldness for women. Some entertainers and women's equality protestors shave their heads for the shock value it has, and to symbolize defiance.

These verses also provide guidance as to what headcovering garments should look like. To be less than completely covered is like baldness. Little Mennonite doilies and fancy hats don't look



like short hair to God, but like baldness, because they fail to symbolize the submission they're supposed to symbolize. Historically, the move away from wearing head scarves, to wearing fashionable hats that symbolize nothing except, "you're supposed to wear a hat to church," was probably a big step towards losing the meaning, and then the whole observance of the Headcovering.

Paul is still praising the Corinthians at this point (vs. 2), and doesn't start scolding them until verse 17. The Corinthian women were wearing head scarfs. But as part of his fuller explanation about the meaning of the Headcovering observance (vs. 3a), and for the sake of future generations that might be tempted to discontinue the observance, he describes how the absence of headcoverings would symbolize dishonor.

And although these verses can be an encouragement to women to see themselves as they look to God, they aren't addressed directly to women. "Let her ... be shorn. ... Let her be covered," 1 Cor. 11:6, because it's the duty of the congregation as a whole, and especially of the elders, to determine whether or not the Headcovering is observed, not of individual women. The Headcovering observance is a



church observance, not a woman observance. Individual women have no more responsibility for whether or not the Headcovering is performed, than they do to bring their own piece of bread into the church for their own Lord's Supper.

The men of the congregation love their mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, and all the sisters in the church. Nobody wants the sisters to be shamed before God. Pastors, when you look out across the congregation of women without headcoverings because of your failure to teach and lead in this observance, picture it as it looks to the Lord. You've shaved the heads of the women in bold defiance of the apostolically-delivered commandments and of all God-ordained authority structures. You're presenting the women as "loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house," Prov. 7:11. You're like "Aaron [who] made them naked unto their shame among their enemies," Ex. 32:25, while Moses was away. What good is all your teaching about brotherly love if this is what your labor looks like to God?



As a Memorial to the Creation of Woman

Gen 1:26. Woman's Indirect Pattern of Creation: LIKE Man

1 Cor. 11:7. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and GLORY OF GOD: but the woman is the GLORY OF THE MAN.

The Headcovering observance is based on the historical account of the indirect creation of woman on the sixth day of creation. In Genesis 1:26-28, God said "Let us make man in our image." The word "image" in the Hebrew usually refers to a molten image, like the one in Daniel 3. The Greek word for "image" in 1 Corinthians 11:7 can also refer to a molten image, like the one in Revelation 13. In Matthew 22:20, it's used of the picture on a coin, "Whose is this image and superscription?" It refers to external appearance. In external appearance, males look like God, and females don't. Spiritually, women are as much like God as men are; but images are physical, external things, and women look different than men.

In Genesis 1:26, God says he'll create males in his



image, but he's careful to avoid saying he'll create females in his image. "God said, 'Let us make man [singular, man alone] in our image, after our likeness: and let them [plural, man and woman] have dominion.'" The same is true for Genesis 1:27. "God created man [singular, man alone] in his own image, in the image of God created he him [singular, man alone], male and female created he them [plural, man and woman]."

Like external appearance, authority relationships, while very important, are at the same time, relatively unimportant. Everyone can "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks," 1 Thess. 5:16-18. These are the important things. Spiritually, men and women are identical. Human authority relationships exist only in the physical realm. For example, your pastor has the authority to decide where the church will meet, but not what you will believe; he can only teach and try to persuade. It will be an invalid excuse when we meet God, to say my pastor, boss, husband, or parents told me to believe this or that doctrine.

God is always male in the Bible. He is our heavenly Father, not our heavenly mother. Whenever he appeared in the Old Testament, he appeared as a male, as the Angel of the Lord: To Hagar in Gen. 16:10-13; Abraham and Sarah in



Gen. 18:1--19:1; Jacob in Gen. 32:24-30; Moses in Ex. 3:2-4:26; Joshua in Josh. 5:12-15; Samson's parents in Jdg. 13:8-24; and the shekinah glory in Ezek. 1:26. And angels are all male. They were often mistaken for young men, never for young women. And Messiah is male. He's the Son of God, the Son of Abraham, and the Son of David.

The testimony of Genesis 1:26-28 is that the pattern of woman's creation is indirect, just like her position in the chain of command. Man is the "glory of God, but the woman is the glory [not the 'image'] of man." Women not only don't look like God, externally, but don't even look like men. But both man and woman share in the glory of mankind's dominion over the rest of the earth. "God said, ... let them [plural, man and woman] have dominion." "What is man, that you are mindful of him? ... For you have made him a little lower than the angels, and have crowned him with glory and honor. You made him to have dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet: ... the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea," Ps. 8:4-8.



Gen 2:23. Woman's Indirect Manner of Creation: OF Man

1 Cor. 11:8. For the man is not OF the woman; but the woman OF the man.

The key word in this verse is the word "of," or "out of" in Greek. 1 Corinthians 11:8 refers back to Genesis 2:21-23, again concerning the indirect manner of woman's creation. "Adam said, 'This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man,'" Gen. 2:23.

Woman's creation was unique out of all that God created. The angels were created directly by God, "who makes his angels spirits," Heb. 1:7. The animals were formed out of the ground. "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air," Gen. 2:19. Adam's body was formed of the dust of the ground. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground," Gen. 2:7. But, Mrs. Adam ("he ... called their name Adam," Gen. 5:2), was made completely out of a piece of Adam. "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the



man," Gen. 2:21-22.

God could have made Eve directly from the dust of the ground, as he had made Adam, or he could have created each person who would ever live, directly, as he did the myriads of angels. God made woman out of man, so that authority structures would be created, because inequalities are essential for unity, and "it is not good that man should be alone," Gen. 2:18. This doesn't mean that everyone should marry, but rather that God saw the need for everyone to be born into authority structures and family relationships, extended families, churches, neighborhoods, countries, etc.

Philosophically, the source of something is greater than that which comes from it; and that which existed earlier is greater than that which exists after it. John pointed to the pre-existence of Jesus as proof of his superiority, "after me [in time] comes a man which is preferred before me [in prestige]: for he was before me [in time]," Jn. 1:30. Jesus is lower in rank than the Father, because he is 'of' the Father; the Father is not 'of' the Son, "I came forth from the Father," Jn. 16:28. The Bible says that "we are 'of' God," 1 Jn. 4:6; but it would be incorrect to say God is 'of' us. If Jesus had been merely of David, instead of being the



pre-existent Son of God, he couldn't have authority over David. "If David then call him [the Messiah] Lord [in Ps. 110:1], how is he his son?" Mt. 22:45.

Gen 2:20. Woman's Indirect Purpose of Creation: FOR Man

1 Cor. 11:9. Neither was the man created FOR the woman; but the woman FOR the man.

Man was created for a purpose, and then woman was created for the purpose of helping man fulfill his purpose. The key word in this verse is the word "for." 1 Corinthians 11:9 refers back to Genesis 2:20, "there was not found a help meet 'for' him." Woman was made to be man's helper, not his leader or teacher. This word "help" in Genesis 2:20 is the best description of the special roles of women in the home, the church, and society.

And purpose is important in determining rank. "The Sabbath was made 'for' man, and not man 'for' the Sabbath. Therefore, the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath," Mk. 2:27-28.

Genesis 2:20, "There was not found a help meet for him [Adam]," doesn't mean unmarried



women don't fulfill the purpose of Eve's creation. Far from it! Paul said if a person has enough self-control to avoid fornication, he can serve the Lord even better by remaining single. "To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. ... But every man has his proper gift of God, ... The unmarried woman cares for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit; but she that is married cares for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but ... that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction," 1 Cor. 7:1-40.

If a woman remains single, she fulfills her role as helper in her extended family, in the church, and in society even better; but both married and unmarried women can serve. Women helped Jesus. "Certain women, ... Mary called Magdalene, ... and Joanna ... and Susanna, and many others, ... ministered unto him of their substance," Lk. 8:2-3.

Lydia, Paul's first convert in Macedonia, gave lodging to the missionaries. "When she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the



Lord, come into my house, and abide there.’ And she constrained us,” Acts 16:15. Priscilla provided Paul lodging while he started the church Corinth. “After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; and found a certain Jew named Aquila ... with his wife Priscilla, ... and because he was of the same craft, he abode with them,” Acts 18:1-3. It’s a lot of work and interruption to family routine for a woman to have guests stay in her home; but it can also be a great spiritual service to God. Of course, women should not jeopardize their safety or propriety to do this service.

After they moved back to Rome, Priscilla and Aquila also helped Paul by hosting church meetings, and they also risked their lives for him at some point. “Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Messiah Jesus, who have for my life laid down their own necks, unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise, greet the church that is in their house,” Rm. 16:3-5. Hosting church gatherings involves a lot of sacrifice by the hostess and her family.

Paul asked the church in Rome to help Phebe with the secular business she had in Rome, and described her as “a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea [Corinth’s eastern harbor], ... for she has been a succorer of many, and of myself,” Rm.



16:1-2. Also, in Rome, was “Mary, who bestowed much labor on us,” Rm. 16:6; and “the beloved Persis, which labored much in the Lord,” Rm. 16:12.

In Joppa, there was “a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and alms deeds which she did.” When she became sick and died, the disciples sent for Peter who “when he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them,” Acts 9:36-42. And God allowed Peter to resurrect her back to life.

In 1 Timothy 5:9-10, Paul said, “Let not a widow be taken into the number [to receive regular financial support from the church] under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, well reported for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints’ feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.”

Women were created to be helpers. It’s a role women excel at, which they enjoy, and which is extremely needful. The home, the church, and



society should provide safe spheres for them to do this work, and recognize the value of it, rather than demeaning helping roles, as egalitarians do.

A Memorial to the Indirect Creation of Woman

The Headcovering is a memorial celebration of the unique creation of woman on the sixth day of creation. Verses 7-9 all refer back to that event. It's also a memorial celebration of the creation of the church, the Bride of Messiah, which began at Pentecost.

The Jewish Sabbath commemorates God's rest on the seventh day, but wasn't celebrated until God gave the observance to Israel at the Exodus, because it also commemorates Israel's rest from slavery in Egypt (Deut. 5:1), and also looks forward to the future Messianic Kingdom rest. Israel considers the Sabbath a Bride, and only women may light the Sabbath candles. The Sabbath was given only to Israel, not the Gentiles (Ex. 31:16-17).

Likewise, the Headcovering commemorates God's creation of woman out of Adam on the sixth day, but it wasn't celebrated until God gave the observance through the apostles to the church,



because it also commemorates the creation of the church, the Bride of Messiah, at Pentecost, from out of his body through his death on the cross (Eph. 5:30-32), and also looks forward to the future marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 18:6-9). Like the rabbinic Sabbath candle lighting, the Headcovering is performed only by women. Like the Old Testament specially honors women with the books of Ruth, the Song of Solomon, and Esther; so the New Testament specially honors women with this observance.

The Jewish Sabbath, the Headcovering, and the Lord's Supper all point back to historical events recorded in scripture, and not to first-century Corinthian customs. Paul doesn't mention a single cultural factor in this chapter about the Headcovering ordinance. He says its meaning is based on authority principles, like the eternal headship of the Father over the Son in the Godhead, and on the historical event and account of woman's creation in Genesis, and these things don't change from age to age or culture to culture.

Woman's submission to man is based on the purpose of her creation. As mentioned earlier, if people evolved from animals over millions of years, woman's relative physical weakness served its purpose in the survival of the species, but now



modern technology and economics allow women to change their roles to be the same as men's. But if God created women with certain characteristics, to fulfill a special purpose, then changing women's roles is harmful to women individually, and to society as a whole.

I doubt anyone who believes Adam evolved over millions of years, also believes God literally performed surgery on Adam at a specific point in time and formed Eve from a piece of him. The Headcovering celebration of the manner and purpose of woman's creation on the sixth day helps protect the church from "oppositions of science falsely so called," 1 Tim. 6:20.

As a Testimony to Everyone

A Testimony to Serving Angels

1 Cor. 11:10. For this cause ought the woman to have [the symbol of] authority [KJV "power" means "authority"] on her head.

A woman can't have the concept of "authority" on only her head, because authority affects a whole person. The only way a woman can localize 'authority' on her head is by wearing something



that symbolizes authority; not a crown to symbolize being in authority, but a head shawl to symbolize humbly being under authority. Instead of saying “for this cause ought the woman to have a headcovering on her head,” Paul said “for this cause ought the woman to have authority on her head,” so that when we see women with headcoverings on their heads, it looks to us like they have authority on their heads, and are thus under authority.

Some egalitarians teach that covered heads symbolize authority women have over their own heads to do whatever they want. I welcome them to wear headcoverings to church meetings, and see if it feels like a symbol of self-empowerment or of humble submission.

Headcoverings symbolize that women are under male authority, and the indirect manner and purpose of woman’s creation, and like a layer of cloth, the layer of male authority between Messiah and woman in the chain of command, and the existence and goodness of authority and submission in authority structures. We should see all that and more, when we see women wearing headcoverings. That’s why it’s important to have occasional meditations on the meaning of the observance, as Paul said, “I would have you



know," 1 Cor. 11:3, its meaning.

Just as the bread and wine are the symbols of the Lord's Supper, the headcovering is the symbol of the Headcovering. Just as the bread and wine symbolize the body and blood of Messiah, the headcovering symbolizes authority. Just as we eat and drink the bread and wine to symbolize our participation in the benefits of the Lord's death, the women of the churches wear headcoverings to symbolize the whole church's participation in all God-ordained authority and submission.

Both the Headcovering and Lord's Supper use physical symbols that people can exercise their wills to use during a specific period of time to symbolize their truths. Like the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper, a headcovering scarf can be used, by putting on and taking off, at will for the observance, but proper hair length cannot.

1 Cor. 11:10. Because of the angels.

It's not only people who learn from the symbolism of the Headcovering; angels also learn by watching the church. "God, who created all things by Jesus Messiah, to the intent that now unto the principalities and authorities [KJV: powers] in heavenly places might be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God," Eph.



3:9-10. When women wear headcoverings they testify to angels that frail men have been transformed by the work of Messiah, and that the church, the Bride of Messiah submits to authority, while the painted-faced Jezebel of the world mimics the prideful rebellion of Satan himself.

Physical things can be significant symbols to angels, like the blood on the Israelites' doorways, when the Lord passed through Egypt to smite the firstborn sons (Ex. 12:21-23). Angels' are very interested in authority and the chain of command. They were created for service. "Who makes his angels spirits, his ministers a flame of fire," Heb. 1:7. The "principalities and authorities in high places," Eph. 6:12, that we wrestle against are fallen angels. By showing symbolizing our submission, we demonstrate the justness of the future judgment of rebellious fallen angels.

And angels are interested in things relating to creation, especially the creation of woman, the only spiritual being that is female, and the one Satan used to get to Adam. They were there when God "laid the foundations of the earth ... when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God [the angels are all male] shouted for joy," Job 38:4,7.

Some interpreters have speculated women are



supposed to wear headcoverings in church meetings to keep angels from lusting over their hair. :) This is quite a humorous interpretation. If angels were really tempted to lust after women, they could use their invisibility to go around and peek at more than hairstyles.

But angels aren't tempted by those kinds of things, but by doctrinal things, and things having to do with authority. When Satan and his angels fell, their sin was that of rebellion against God. Angels are interested in promoting false doctrine and warring against God's authority, not in fleshly sins, except as a tool. "The LORD God said unto the serpent, ... I will put enmity between your seed and her seed," Gen. 3:15. Jesus didn't have an earthly father, and neither will the Antichrist. Satan will impregnate a woman to produce an imitation of Messiah to deceive mankind, but not because of lust.

Angels are present at church meetings during the Headcovering observance. Nations have both good angels and bad angels assigned to them, which war against each other. "Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel, ... your words were heard, ... but the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me. ... There is none that holds with me in these things, but Michael



your prince,” Dan. 10:12-13, 21.

Churches also have angels assigned to them. “Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write ...,” Rev. 2:1. And the guardian angel of every child in the church meeting is watching also. “Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven,” Mt. 18:10. And since angels are “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation,” Heb. 1:14, they’re definitely present at church meetings where the “heirs of salvation” gather.

Angels are sometimes called ‘watchers.’ Angels watched the Lord’s ministry. “God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory,” 1 Tim. 3:16. Angels watched the apostles’ ministries. “For I think that God has set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men,” 1 Cor. 4:9. Angels watch pastors’ ministries. “I charge you before God, and the Lord Jesus Messiah, and the elect angels, that you observe these things without preferring one before another,” 1 Tim. 5:21. And angels watch the women’s ministry of



the Headcovering observance in the church, so one reason we do it is as a testimony, "because of the angels," 1 Cor. 11:9.

A Testimony of Mutual Interdependence

1 Cor. 11:11-12. Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman: but all things of God.

Paul has been teaching the principle of male authority, and he knows such teaching is vulnerable to abuse by sinful men; so he tempers the teaching with the admonition of these verses. Men and women are not only completely equal in the spiritual realm; but even in the physical realm, God created mutual interdependence along with the inequalities. Therefore men shouldn't think of themselves too highly, or use their rightful authority as a cloak for their own selfishness and meanness.

Every person except Adam and Eve have been dependent on women for their existence. Eve came into existence by means of Adam's rib, but since that time, every man, including the Savior, came into the world through women. The role of



childbearing is the salvation, not spiritually, but physically, of women in the world. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness with sobriety," 1 Tim. 2:13-15. This is not to say a woman must give birth to obtain this benefit. God has ordained that we all come into the world through mothers, so that the status of all women is improved. This way men are taught to treat all women with respect, "the elder women as mothers; the younger women as sisters, with all purity," 1 Tim. 4:2.

Ultimately, both men and women were and are dependent only on God for their existence. Adam merely slept and provided the raw materials, but God made Eve. Women suffer through labor, but God fashions the bones, veins, and ligaments of children in the womb. "You have covered me in my mother's womb, ... I am fearfully and wonderfully made," Ps. 139:14. "He ... made us, and not we ourselves," Ps. 100:3. And we are not only made 'of' him, meaning he is our source, but we are also made 'for' and 'to' him, for his purpose. "Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever," Rm. 11:36. Let all males remember this as they exercise



their duties and responsibilities of authority, in humility, and love, and in fear of him to whom we must someday give an account.

A Testimony in Harmony with Beauty and Nature

1 Cor. 11:13. Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

There's nothing inherently wrong for women to pray without headcoverings. It only became wrong during church meetings after the apostles transmitted the Headcovering ordinance to the church. But even outside church meetings, women's long hair makes it look like they're wearing headcoverings. God naturally covered women with long hair to symbolize their indirect position under Messiah in the chain of command, and their submission to male authority, even while directly praying to God outside church meetings.

1 Cor. 11:14. Doth not even nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair it is a shame unto him?

Through most cultures and times, it's been shameful for men to have long hair. David's



rebellious son Absalom cut his hair only “at every year’s end,” 2 Sam. 14:26; and his attempt to overthrow his father ended ignominiously when he was caught in battle as his “mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak,” 2 Sam. 18:9. Men, like Samson, who took the Nazarite vow had long hair, but they were exceptions, and were not allowed to drink wine, or eat grapes, or go to funerals either (Num. 6:1-8). The priests in the millennial temple will not be permitted to “shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long; they shall only poll their heads [trim their hair short],” Ez. 44:20.

Jesus definitely didn’t have long hair, based on this chapter, 1 Corinthians 11. The Roman coins of his time pictured the Roman emperors with short hair, and though Jesus was Jewish, artists probably didn’t standardize painting Jesus with long hair until around the 6th century; and I don’t recommend looking to the art world for your guidance in life. Even though this passage is not about hair length, this part of the passage is authoritative for all who would go against nature as regards hair length.

1 Cor. 11:15a. But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her.



Long hair has always been a glory to women. In the Song of Solomon, the King compares looking at his wife's flowing hair to the beauty of watching a flock of goats lazily wend their way down the side of distant Mount Gilead on a warm, fragrant evening. "Your hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead," Song 4:1, Song 6:5. Solomon also compared burying his fingers in his wife's hair to being in a palace gallery surrounded by luxurious, flowing, purple curtains. "And the hair of your head like purple; the king is held in the galleries. How fair and how pleasant are you, O love, for delights," Song 7:5-6.

How long is long? Mary of Bethany's hair was long enough she could anoint the feet of Jesus with costly spikenard for his burial, and wipe "his feet with her hair," Jn. 12:3. In general, longer than men's; probably longer than Absalom's after one year's growth. Also, notice that once the text mentions a woman's hair is a glory to her, it never says she should cover it to avoid distracting from the glory of the men in the church. :) This interpretation is almost as humorous as the one about covering it to keep angels from lusting.

1 Cor. 11:15b. For her hair is given her for a covering.

Women were naturally given hair that lends itself



to being worn long, like a headcovering. Until recently, forensic hair tests couldn't differentiate male and female hair shafts, but in the last few years, it's been discovered that male and female hair consistently contains differing amounts of some chemicals.

At the same time a woman's long hair is beautiful and a glory to her, it's also a natural headcovering that naturally symbolizes women's position under male authority. Long hair isn't "given her for a covering," vs. 15, for the Headcovering observance, but for out in nature. Women with long hair look like they're wearing headcovering scarves, and most women have naturally looked this way through all ages and cultures. This is a witness to the appropriateness of the headcovering scarf as a symbol of the Headcovering observance.

It also means a headcovering garment should look like long hair. It should be a shawl or a scarf; not a hat or a doily. The word 'covering' here ('periboleo' in Greek) is translated 'vesture' in Hebrews 1:12. A headcovering should be something you can fold; "as a vesture [peribolaiou] shall you fold them up," Heb. 1:12. Paul doesn't say the headcoverings have to be a solid gray color, or anything like that. Women's



natural concern for beauty means their headcoverings can be individual and beautiful, just so they drape over the head like long hair.

A Testimony Resisted by Power-Hungry Critics

1 Cor. 11:16. But if any man seem to be contentious ...

The word translated “contentious” is the Greek word ‘philo-neikos’. ‘Philo’ means ‘love of,’ and ‘neikos’ means ‘strife’ and ‘conquest’. So ‘philo-neikos’ carries our concept of ‘love of power,’ and of being ‘power-hungry.’

The only other place this word appears in the New Testament is in Luke 22. “There was also a strife [philoneikos] among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But you shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be AS the younger; and he that is chief, AS he that doth serve. For which is greater, he that sits at meat, or he that serves? Is not he that sits at meat? But I am among you AS he that serves. You are they which have continued with



me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father has appointed unto me; that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel," Lk. 22:24-30.

In Luke 22, the apostles were behaving in a power-hungry way, because they didn't yet understand authority. The Headcovering ordinance helps us understand authority as Jesus taught it in Luke 22. Jesus didn't say authority structures are bad and he would abolish them. He remained the "Master," with all authority, even while he acted AS a servant and washed the disciples' feet.

"You call me Master and Lord: and you say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do AS I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, 'The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him,'" Jn. 13:13-16.

Jesus taught that masters remain greater than servants in position and office, even while they serve LIKE servants. If Jesus were an egalitarian, he would have abdicated his position as Lord, rather than just act like a servant. He told the



apostles to behave AS servants, but also gave them “all authority” Mt. 28:18-19, as his representatives during that time, and in the future Messianic Kingdom when they will “sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel,” Lk. 30.

Power-hungry, contentious men give make two kinds of errors in response to authority structures. The first is that they strive to be on top, and give only grudging submission when they are under authority. The second is they try to do away with authority structures, and resist things like the headcovering observance, because they don't understand the goodness of authority structures.

As we saw from verse 3 at the beginning of this chapter, even in the Godhead, “the head of Messiah is God.” God doesn't remove authority structures, as the world tries to do, but rather teaches those in superior positions to love and serve unselfishly. Those who rightly serve in positions of authority have to make greater sacrifices than those who are under their authority. Godly leaders sacrificially labor for the sake of those under their charge, not to exploit them.

Everyone except God the Father is under someone's authority. A good heart is glad to serve without envy of others' positions. I believe most



women really like their place in God's order. They like to have the freedom to perform their own service within safe environments full of love, appreciation, and respect without having to spend their time fighting to keep those environments safe. We shouldn't ever criticize or ridicule "women's libbers". It's our Bible teachers who keep sliding along with modern culture in their interpretations of scripture, and the male philosophers of this world, who have led women into the 'women's lib' movement. Women follow faithfully, conscientiously, and fervently in whatever direction men lead them.

The world vehemently hates patriarchy and God-ordained authority structures, and so it vehemently hates the vision of a church meeting full of godly, submissive women wearing headcoverings. It's part of "the mystery of lawlessness [ASV]" that "doth already work," 1 Thess. 2:7. The Amplified Version says, "The mystery of rebellion against divine authority and the coming reign of lawlessness is already at work," 1 Thess. 2:7.

The Headcovering observance, and the doctrine of submission taught by it, is certainly subject to abuse because of the sinfulness of men. But godly men will be humbled by the responsibilities they



learn about from the observance, rather than be emboldened to subjugate women. It's important we not only keep the observance, but also continue to explain its meaning, and use it to teach the saints about authority and submission, as Paul did, "I praise you that you ... keep the ordinances, ... but I would have you know ...," 1 Cor. 11:3.

1 Cor. 11:16. We have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

The most common assault against the Headcovering is the claim that it's a culturally-derived custom. The context provided by 1 Corinthians 11:2 shows the Headcovering is an apostolically-delivered ordinance, and its principles are based on the unchanging, historical account of God's creation of woman, not culture. Paul only mentions one custom in this entire passage, the custom of rebellious contentiousness against the Headcovering observance, that no church of Paul's day, not even the church of Corinth, was guilty of.

"If any man seem to be contentious, we [the apostles] have no such custom [sunetheian], neither the churches of God," 1 Cor. 11:16. "Sunetheian" is the same word used in, "you have a custom that I should release unto you one at the Passover," Jn. 18:39. As for the worldly custom to



“be contentious,” 1 Cor. 11:16, against authority and the Headcovering, Paul says neither the apostles nor any of the churches have such a custom, which means all the churches of Paul’s day were keeping the Headcovering observance, and so should we today.

I’m amazed, when I think back, that the first time I heard the long hair interpretation, wasn’t from some liberal, modernist theologian; but from the pastor of the conservative, fundamental Baptist church I started attending after I accepted the Lord when I was fourteen. Almost all pastors today, except for Plymouth Brethren pastors, reject the headcovering scarf interpretation. One reason might be the ridiculous explanations of 1 Cor. 11a, like ‘women should cover their heads to keep angels from lusting after their hair.’ The main reason, though, is that most pastors in all ages interpret the Bible according their own culture. Also, pastors know if they believe and teach the headcovering scarf interpretation, almost everyone will leave their congregation, because nowadays, church meetings are evangelistic outreaches to the world, instead of gatherings of born-again believers.

God was wise to give the church a symbolic observance like the Headcovering, to force each



generation of the church to face the issue of how much we will accommodate the always increasing egalitarianism of the world. The Lord probably had Paul write this passage with enough ambiguity to allow people to misinterpret it if they would be unwilling to obey it anyway. But the passage has enough indications within the text itself, to understand it, when there's no egalitarian agenda to impose on it.

Pastors, you who believe that whatever God commanded is important, please restore the Headcovering observance to your assembly's meetings, as a teaching tool about authority and submission for the edification of the saints, and as a testimony to the world to slow the spread of lawlessness and rebellion. There are precious testimonies at <http://headcoveringmovement.com/testimonies>, by individual women who have chosen to go against the crowd and wear headcoverings to church meetings, but it's not their job to restore this observance. It's a not a woman's observance; it's a church meeting observance. Pastors, except during times of physical persecution, it's your job to restore it!



Why the Headcovering Can't be About Hair or Customs

It's a Church Meeting Observance, Like the Lord's Supper.

Textual context is the most important factor in interpreting any passage of scripture. The Headcovering of the first half of chapter 11 is tightly bound to the Lord's Supper of the second half, by the textual markers "I praise you," about the Headcovering in verse 2, and "I praise you not," about the Lord's Supper in verse 17. Since the Lord's Supper has to go with the rest of the church meeting chapters 12-14, so does the Headcovering. Since the Headcovering is textually bound to the Lord's Supper church meeting observance, our first approach to the Headcovering should be that it's also a church meeting observance.

The Lord's Supper is something you do at appointed times, and the Headcovering is something you do at appointed times of "prayer and prophecy," vss. 4-5 (and 13); but proper hair length is for all times. You can't get a haircut or grow your hair long as part of each church service.

The Lord's Supper uses the symbols of bread and



wine to symbolize the Lord's broken body and blood, and the Headcovering uses the symbol of the layer of cloth on women's heads to symbolize the layer of "authority on her head," vs. 10 (and 3b), that woman is under. During the Lord's Supper we eat and drink the bread and wine to show our participation in the Lord's death for us, and during the Headcovering the women wear head scarves to symbolize our submission to God-ordained authority and gender roles. Headcoverings upset equal rights advocates, because they obviously represent different and subordinate roles for women, but no one is upset by women having long hair.

The Lord's Supper is a memorial of the historical event of the Lord's death for us, and the Headcovering is a memorial of the unique creation of woman on the sixth day. The headcovering layer of cloth symbolizes the indirect creation of woman, 'like,' 'from,' and 'for' man, as his helper (vss. 7-9). It acknowledges the indirectness of woman's authority to God even while praying directly to and prophesying directly from God (vss. 3b, 4-6). But seeing long hair usually reminds us of nothing, because lots of women wear long hair just because they like to.

Wearing long hair looks like a wearing a headcovering scarf, so vs. 15 says a woman's hair



is “given her for a covering [‘periboleo’ in Greek, translated ‘vesture’ in Heb. 1:12];” but for outside in “nature,” vs. 14, not for in church meetings.

It’s an Apostolic Ordinance, Like the Lord’s Supper.

The first few verses of any passage are usually the most important for understanding what it’s about. The text says, “you keep the ordinances, as I ordained them to you,” 1 Cor. 11:2. The ordinances are the special commandments the twelve apostles, Messiah’s official representatives, received directly from him to be passed directly on to the churches, Therefore, the Headcovering has nothing to do with first-century Corinthian hair length or culture.

The Lord’s Supper is also an apostolic ordinance. “I have received of the Lord that which also I ordained unto you,” vs. 23. It makes sense Jesus himself would have ordained the two church meeting observances he wants the church to observe throughout the church age, but proper hair length would hardly merit special attention by Jesus as an apostolic ordinance to be given to the churches.

All the research scholars have done about Greek history to understand 1 Cor. 11a has been a waste of time and even harmful. God only preserves his



Word. The best church histories were destroyed by the apostate Roman Catholic Church. It isn't possible God would have had passages like 1 Cor. 11a written in a way that would require present day knowledge of secular history to understand them, or a person in China in 1000 AD, without Western libraries and the internet, would have had no hope of understanding the Bible.

It's Something Paul Praised the Corinthian Church About.

Paul said, "I praise you, brethren, that you ... keep the ordinances as I ordinated them to you," 1 Cor. 11:2. He wasn't scolding men for looking like male temple prostitutes by having long hair, or wearing veils or head scarfs; and scolding women for looking like female temple prostitutes for having short hair, or not wearing veils or head scarfs. He wasn't scolding the Corinthians for anything at all, but rather praising them for doing a good job keeping the observance. He just wanted them, and us, to understand its meaning better, "but I would have you know ...," vs. 3a.

It makes sense that in a letter about local church issues, and in a section about church meeting issues, Paul would have taken the time to praise the church for doing a good job keeping one of the two church meeting observances, especially to make them more receptive to receive the scolding



he was going to give them about the other one. But it doesn't make sense Paul would have gone out of his way to praise the Corinthians that their hair length is good.

If it's About Hair, Men Have to Shave Their Heads.

The word "covered" in the ASV, ESV, KJV, NIV, NKJV, and RSV versions is not actually in the Greek in 1 Cor. 11:4 regarding men, "having his head [covered]." But it actually is in the Greek in 11:6 regarding women, "let her be covered."

The Greek in 11:4 for men is "kata [down upon] kephalys [head] echon [having]." The Darby, GNV, and NMB versions translate it "having [anything] on his head." The AMP, CSB, CEV, HSCB, ISV, LEB, NASB, NRSV, NTE versions translate it "having [something] on his head." If the "anything" and "something" Paul is talking about in 1 Cor. 11:4 is hair, men can't have any, not even some, hair on their heads.

But of course the "anything" and "something" Paul is talking about on men's heads in vs. 4 doesn't include hair. If I told an audience, "Please take everything off your heads," would they think I meant for them to shave their heads? Hair is part of one's head. Jesus said "the very hairs OF your head are all numbered," Mt. 10:30, not 'the



very hairs ON your head are all numbered.’ Men are permitted to have hair on their heads in church, but not not even a small kippa. On the other hand, women aren’t “covered” simply by having a hat or little doily on their heads.

There Are No Cultural Arguments in the Passage.

In 1 Cor. 11a, Paul talked about the goodness of the eternal submission of the Son to the Father in the godhead (vs. 3c); the historical account of the creation of woman in Genesis 2, ‘like,’ ‘of,’ and ‘for’ man (vss. 7-9); the testimony of women to angels (vs. 10); and the agreement with the natural world order God created (vs. 13-15). None of these things are cultural or change from age to age or place to place. Seeing long hair on women doesn’t make us meditate about the submission of the Son to the Father, or the manner of woman’s creation as a subordinate to help man. But women wearing head scarves in church meetings makes us think about why they’re doing that.

It’s About Authority and Submission, not Culture.

Paul talked about the layers in the chain of command, God - Messiah - man - woman, in verse 3. About honoring and dishonoring authority in verses 4-6. About woman being created in a subordinate position ‘like,’ ‘of,’ and ‘for’ man in



verses 7-9. About the woman being under “authority on her head” in verse 10. And about the resistance of power-hungry [philoneikos] men in verse 16, who hadn’t learned the goodness of authority structures and how to rule by serving like Jesus in Luke 22:24-30. Nobody gets upset about women wearing long hair, but women wearing headcoverings in church clearly testifies - to the brethren, the world, and the angels – that the church believes in different, God-ordained roles for men and women.

Like the Lord’s Supper

The Lord’s Supper, Not the Church’s Supper

1 Cor. 11:17-19. Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that you come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when you come together in the church, I hear that there are divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be manifest among you.

The Corinthians were, “not for the better, but for the worse,” for going to church meetings, than if they had stayed home. First of all, there were the



divisions Paul said he heard about in chapters 1 - 4. "For it has been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them of the house of Cloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you says, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Messiah. Is Messiah divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul," 1 Cor. 1:11-13. What's wrong with saying, "I am of Messiah?" That's the worst of all because we ought to say, "We are all of Messiah," all that are born again believers, not just my group.

Secondly, there were divisions because there were heresies where some men wanted to be "approved," 1 Cor. 11:19, and held in esteem, by their own group of followers, for their own novel doctrines. If these men had learned the lessons of the Headcovering ordinance, they wouldn't have been seeking preeminence.

1 Cor. 11:20-22. When you come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating everyone takes before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunk. What? Have you not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise you the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.



All the early churches ate the Lord's Supper as a full meal at their church meetings. The word translated 'supper' in 1 Corinthians 11 means the chief meal of the day, usually taken in the evening. It's sometimes translated as 'feast' in the New Testament. The same Greek word is used to refer to the "marriage 'supper' of the Lamb," Rev. 19:17. I hope they serve us more than a cracker and a thimble of grape juice at the marriage supper of the Lamb!

The phrase 'breaking of bread' often refers to the Lord's Supper. "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers ... and they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart," Acts 2:42,46. Likewise in Acts 20, "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ... when he therefore ... had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed," Acts 20:7,11.

Jude and Peter said, "For there are certain men crept in unawares. ... These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear," Jude 1:4,12. And, "spots



they are and blemishes ... while they feast with you," 2 Pet. 2:13. Would Jude and Peter be able to refer to the Lord's Supper at your church as a 'feast?'

The problem with the Corinthians' observance of the Lord's Supper was that they disrespected the meaning of the observance by their behavior at the meal. Some were gluttonous and some even drunken. Those that were wealthy enough brought an abundant amount of food and wine to the meal for the people sitting at their tables; while the poorer brethren, "them that have not," 1 Cor. 11:22, went "hungry," 1 Cor. 11:21. They also started eating as soon as their clique was ready, rather than waiting for everyone to begin the meal together. "Everyone takes before other his own supper," 1 Cor. 11:21-22. Individuals were so focused on eating their own suppers, and so ignored the symbolic meaning of the meal, that it didn't even count as the "Lord's Supper," but only counted as their "own supper." "This is not to eat the Lord's Supper, for in eating, everyone takes before other his own supper," 1 Cor. 11:21-22.

We are not to show favoritism. Paul charged Timothy to lead and serve the church without, "preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality," 1 Tim. 5:21. James said it is wrong to



treat people in meetings “with respect of persons, for if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and you have respect to him that wears the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit you here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand you there, or sit here under my footstool [since the early churches always met in houses], are you not then partial?” James 2:1-13.

In Luke 14, while sitting at a meal, Jesus gave three different parables about meals. One of them talked about our attitudes towards the poor and handicapped. “When you make a dinner or a supper, call not your friends, nor your brethren, neither your relatives, nor your rich neighbors; lest they also invite you again, and a recompense be made you. But when you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and you shall be blessed; for they cannot recompense you; for you shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just,” Lk. 14:12-14.

We are not to prefer one person before another, but we are to prefer others before ourselves. “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another,” Rm. 12:10. “In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves,” Phil. 2:3. The Corinthians



suppers which should have been “feasts of love,” Jude 1:12, and unity, were tools of unkindness and division. Paul said, “shall I praise you in this” kind of keeping of the Lord’s Supper? “I praise you not,” vs. 22.

Symbolizes Messiah’s Death

1 Cor. 11:23-26. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, ‘This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do you, as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Lord’s death till he come.’

The main point, mentioned twice is this passage, is that the purpose of the observance is to remember the Lord. We use the symbols of the bread and cup to remember him. It doesn’t explicitly say so in this passage, but the bread we use to symbolize his body should be unleavened. Spiritual things are more important than physical things, but if God tells the church to symbolize



something spiritual through something physical, then the physical item we use for the symbolism is important.

Leaven is consistently used as a symbol of sin and false doctrine in the Bible. We know the bread Jesus held up when he said, "this is my body," was unleavened because the last supper was a Passover meal. "Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, 'Where wilt you that we prepare for you to eat the Passover?'" Mt. 26:17. Even though Paul didn't say, "as often as you eat this 'unleavened' bread" in verse 26, we know he explained the Jewish feasts and their symbolism to the Corinthians while he was with them because he refers to them in 1 Corinthians.

God gave seven feasts to Israel in two groups; the four spring feasts represent the first coming of Messiah, and the three fall feasts represent the future second coming of Messiah. The four spring feasts representing Messiah's first coming all have some relationship to leaven, and all four were mentioned in 1 Corinthians.

First comes Passover on the 14th day of the first month of the Jewish calendar. "Your lamb shall be without blemish, ... and they shall eat the flesh that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread,"



Ex. 12:5,8. "You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the feast of the Passover be left unto the morning," Ex. 34:25. Jesus fulfilled this feast by dying on the cross the same hour the Passover lamb was offered by the priests in the temple (which is different from the lamb eaten in homes the night before). Passover was mentioned in 1 Cor. 5:7, "Messiah our Passover is sacrificed for us."

Then comes the Feast of Unleavened Bread on the 15th through the 22nd. "And on the fifteenth day of the same month at even is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days must you eat unleavened bread," Lev. 23:6. "Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses," Ex. 12:19. This feast was a symbol of Messiah's sinlessness, and his offering his sinless blood in the heavenly tabernacle. That's why Mary could not touch him immediately after the resurrection. "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father," Jn. 20:17.

Moses patterned the tabernacle on earth after the real tabernacle in heaven which God showed him. The tabernacle Moses made was purified with animal blood, but Jesus purified the "true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched," Heb. 8:2, in heaven with his own blood. "It was therefore necessary that the patterns [on earth] of things in



the heavens should be purified with these [the blood of calves and goats]; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Messiah is not entered into the holy places made with hands," Heb. 9:23-24. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5:8, "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

The third spring feast is the Feast of Firstfruits. The numerical day of the month changed from year to year, but the day of the week was essential. It had to be observed on the Sunday after Passover, which always fell on a day during the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread. "And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it," Lev. 23:11. This feast was fulfilled by the resurrection of Messiah, the firstfruits from the dead, on the Sunday this feast was being observed in Israel. The Feast of Firstfruits was mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:20-23, "But now is Messiah risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept, ... but every man in his own order, Messiah the firstfruits; afterward they that are Messiah's at his coming."



The fourth spring feast is the Feast of Weeks, also called Pentecost. It occurred fifty days after firstfruits. Leaven was also conspicuous in this feast, not by its absence, but because it was required. "You shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD," Lev. 23:17. This feast symbolized the birth of the church which is made up of sinful men redeemed from among Jews and Gentiles, the two loaves. The Feast of Weeks was mentioned in 1 Cor. 16:8, "But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost."

The three fall feasts that will be fulfilled by the second coming are: Rosh Hashanah (New Year's Day, Feast of Trumpets), when the rapture, or catching away of the church will occur, (1 Cor. 15:52) (we don't know the specific day because we don't know which year); Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), which represents the 7-year tribulation period which will start on Yom Kippur when Israel makes a treaty with the Antichrist; and Sukkot (the Feast of Tabernacles), which represents the Messianic Kingdom, which will start on Sukkot right after the tribulation period.

Leaven consistently represents sin and false doctrine in the Bible. Three groups opposed Jesus and eventually delivered him to Pilate: the



Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Herodians. In Mt. 16:6, Jesus said, “beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees”; and in Mk. 8:15 he warns of the “leaven of Herod.” “Then understood they how that he bade them not beware the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees,” Mt. 16:12.

Two characteristics make leaven an excellent symbol of sin and false doctrine. First, leaven is pervasive. If you put a little leaven in one part of some dough, pretty soon the thing the whole thing becomes leavened, and sin in a group is pervasive. “That he that has done this deed might be taken away from among you ... know you not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump,” 1 Cor. 5:2,6. False doctrine is also pervasive. Matthew 13 says that false doctrine will dominate the earth by the time Messiah returns to set up the Messianic Kingdom, “The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman [who is not supposed to be teaching] took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened,” Mt. 13:33. (If you think the seven parables of Matthew 13 are all about good things, remember that after the abnormal growth of the mustard seed, birds lodge in its branches, and the birds were interpreted by the first parable to be “the wicked one,” Mt. 13:19.)



Secondly, leaven is old. "Purge out the old leaven that you may be a new lump," 1 Cor. 5:7. Yeast is comprised of one-celled fungi that reproduce by budding or splitting, rather than by dying and germinating like wheat. The yeast in the bread we eat comes from other living yeast in an unbroken chain back to Eden. In contrast, the wheat in the bread got here by a life and death purification cycle. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it die, it brings forth much fruit," Jn. 12:24. For Messiah to qualify to be a sacrifice for sin he could not himself inherit the sin of Adam as we did (Rm. 5:12). He had to be the virgin-born seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15), not of man.

Leavened bread is a very poor symbol to use for Messiah, "who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God," Heb. 9:14. Messiah was the fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrifices, but Old Testament sacrifices couldn't include leaven. "No meat offering, which you shall bring unto the LORD shall be made with leaven: for you shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire," Lev. 3:11. God has given the church very few physical symbols, compared to Israel, so we should be faithful in the few we've been given. In symbols, the external details really matter because



symbols are externals. We should never symbolize our Lord as having sin, which is what we do if we use leavened bread at the Lord's Supper.

If we're going to perform an observance God has commanded us to perform, we ought to perform it the way he told us to perform it. "Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD, when they offered strange fire before the LORD," Num. 3:4. Saul obeyed God, but not the way he was commanded, and it cost him his throne. "Saul said, ... 'I have performed the commandment of the LORD.' And Samuel said, 'What means then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears. ... Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has also rejected you from being king,'" 1 Sam. 15:13-23.

Our modern custom of using grape juice instead of wine is not as bad as our use of leavened bread, since at least it's still 'the fruit of the vine,' and it doesn't symbolize our Lord as having sin, but it's still wrong. Psalm 104:14-15 says God brings, "forth food out of the earth, and wine that makes glad the heart of man." I don't think anyone's heart gets made especially glad from drinking grape juice.

Some people in our society today don't know how to drink wine without abusing it, so grape juice



should also be provided for those who want to avoid wine. Some people say that the wine back then was mingled with water to weaken it. Fine, mix it with some water, and then drink it. Don't be unwilling to drink wine just because of Fundamentalist Baptist, and other, customs of men that contradict the word of God.

And Sacrilege Will Be Judged

1 Cor. 11:27-32. Therefore whoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

In most church meetings today, these verses are used to say Christians should confess their sins before they eat of the Lord's Supper. However, in context, the eating and drinking "unworthily" means to eat and drink 'in an unworthy manner,' like being disrespectful towards the poor, and



forgetting the purpose of the meal. It means to commit sacrilege, not to eat and drink with 'unconfessed sin'.

The only passage in the New Testament that seems to imply Christians should enumerate their sins to God is 1 John 1:9, but one of the purposes of that book was to help us know who are Christians and who aren't. "These things have I written unto you ... that you may know that you have eternal life," 1 Jn. 5:13. We can know someone is not a Christian if they are self-righteous, "if we say that we have no sin," 1 Jn. 1:8. But 1 John 1:9 says you can know someone is a Christian if they admit they're a sinner and trust in Messiah's righteousness, "if we confess [meaning "agree about"] our sins."

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank you that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican, ... The publican ... smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other," Lk. 18:14. All unbelievers are self-righteous and trust in their own righteousness, while all believers agree with God (confess) they are sinners, and trust in God's provision of "the righteousness of God," Rm. 1:16.



(More information on 1 John 1:9 in its context is available on my website.)

All our sins, even the ones we haven't committed yet, were future to Messiah when he died for them, so all our sins, even ones we haven't committed yet, were forgiven when we believed on him. We are counted as, and will always be counted as, perfectly righteous in Messiah. If we have to confess our sins to be clean enough to observe the Lord's Supper, then we can never be clean enough, because we can't even confess all the sins we're aware of.

It's sad that the observance to remember the Lord's substitutionary death that washed away all our sins, is used to teach people they need to take additional steps to be clean, when one of the first things we should learn as believers, is that our sins are already forgiven. "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake," 1 Jn. 2:12.

The word "damnation" in verse 29, "he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body," should be translated "judgment," because it refers to the physical judgment described in the next verse, "for this reason many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep," 1 Cor. 11:29-



30. Many Christians were sick and many died in Corinth because of the physical judgment they experienced because they observed the Lord's Supper improperly, not because they ate it with 'unconfessed sin'.

But how well does your assembly keep the Lord's Supper? We should call it the Lord's breakfast, because we eat it in the morning. We should call it the Lord's snack, because it's smaller than hors d'oeuvres. We don't have any problems with gluttony or drunkenness at our Lord's Suppers, because we've gotten rid of both the supper and the wine!

Paul could write to us, "When you come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For a cracker and thimble of grape juice are no supper." Of course a full meal is more inconvenient than passing around tiny plastic cups, and nowadays we generally don't want to be inconvenienced by spending too much time gathering with the brethren.

So Fix the Problem

1 Cor. 11:33-34a. Wherefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, tarry one for another.



And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that you come not together unto condemnation.

Paul says, “when you come together to eat.” The Lord’s Supper was not an occasional add-on to the real business of preaching, singing, and having church. The fellowship with the brethren, and the remembrance of the Lord around the table at the full love feast, was the primary purpose of the gatherings. Paul is simply telling them to fix the one specific problem this passage mentions: “in eating everyone takes before other his own supper,” 1 Cor. 11:21. He said they could fix it if they “tarry one for another,” 1 Cor. 11:33. He didn’t tell them to stop having a full meal, the sterile solution we’ve adopted today.

If the Corinthians had the teaching portion of their meeting first, like Paul did in Troas, that might have solved the problem. “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ... and continued his speech unto midnight. ... When he therefore ... had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed,” Acts 20:7-12.

Biblically, all days start in the evening and end the next afternoon, “The evening and the morning were the first day,” Gen. 1:5. The first day of the



week, Sunday, starts at sundown Saturday evening. So the Acts 20 passage shows churches common met on Saturday nights. The Troas meeting couldn't have started Sunday morning, have Paul preach all the way to midnight, and then through till Monday morning. So if the Corinthians met on Saturday evenings, and some people were too hungry to wait for everyone to arrive before they started eating the Lord's Supper, they could eat a little at home before they went to the meeting. "If any man hunger, let him eat at home," 1 Cor. 11:34.

The Corinthians experienced the physical judgments of weakness, sickness, and death because of the way they kept the Lord's Supper. We are probably experiencing some of the same things today for having virtually thrown out the "supper," part of the observance. And if the improper observance of the Lord's Supper exposes a congregation to physical judgment, what about complete non-observance of the Headcovering ordinance? The Lord has given the church only two church meeting observances, and we aren't keeping either one. Elders, lead the way to restore the proper obedience of these ordinances to your assemblies, to help ensure "that you come not together unto condemnation," 1 Cor. 11:34.



1 Cor. 11:34b. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

The last phrase of verse 34 ends the second half of the chapter on the Lord's Supper, and also ends the whole chapter on the church meeting ordinances. Paul told the Corinthians they were doing a good job keeping the Headcovering ordinance, but he wanted them to continually gain a fuller understanding of its meaning. He said they weren't doing a good job in the way they observed the Lord's Supper, and then he closed by telling them there were more things he would correct when he returned to them.

What else would Paul need to "set in order," 1 Cor. 11:34, in your church meetings if he were to visit? Are your meetings participatory like the meetings described in chapters 12-14?