

Letters to the church in...



Corinth

Focus: 1 Corinthians 11:1-34

Lesson 11—Men, Women, and Reverent Worship

➤ How are men and women counseled to worship God reverently? (v.1-16)

- (v.1-3)(v.1)—*be imitators inasmuch as he was imitating Christ. (v.2)—something to praise for.(v.3) “But I would have you know...” (something that was important) An authoritative order is given here. (Just as you would give authoritative order in the Military—General, Colonel, Major, Captain, etc.). This is reinforced very clearly in the book of Ephesians 5:22-24. (Ephesians 5:25,28,29 then explains the husband’s duty to his wife). This entails a loving, nurturing, and caring relationship of the husband towards his wife. Having a self-sacrificing love for her. (this means that a husband will not be overbearing and dictatorial towards his wife, but caring, strong, and leading by love). The FEMINIST Movement is actually a rebellion against God’s order! (it’s okay treat each other with a loving sense of equality in Christ, but to complain about the Divine order which has been established is a sin against God). IMAGINE if the OWNER of a Company went away on a Business trip. He had TWO employees. He pointed to one and said, “You’re in charge while I’m gone.” Then imagine that the employee who received the subordinate role began to complain about it after the owner left on his journey. (they decided to establish their own authority). Who do they have to answer to when the OWNER of the company returns? (and for the one left in charge, who must they answer to for how they use the responsibility given to them?)*
- (v.4-10) (v.4-7)—*It is here stated that a man should have his head uncovered when praying or preaching (likely a reference to hair length, v.15, but may also apply to taking his hat off out of respect for the Lord). A woman should apparently keep her head covered (as with hair, a veil, or bonnet) as a sign of respect in worship—we don’t find this portion of the instruction at any other place in the Bible. (v.8,9)—a reference is here made to the Creation Order which God had established (Genesis 2:7,18-25). (v.10)—This verse has baffled many Bible scholars (as very few Bible verses have), the different views on it have been pretty diverse. But perhaps one of the more plausible and simplistic of explanations is this: “A woman ought to have a covering on her head as a sign or symbol showing her meekness and submission to God and her husband.” —this is also “because of the angels.” (It has long been believed from the earliest days of the Jewish faith that the angels are very interested in the affairs of men, and some of them are present at the worship gatherings of men—like our guardian angels, etc.—a reference to guardian angels can be found in Matthew 18:10).*
- (v.11-16) *It seems like Paul was dealing with an issue that did exist particularly in the Corinthian church. “Judge in yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray unto God uncovered?” (v.13) “Does not even nature itself teach you...” (v.14) (a shame for man to have long hair, but it’s a glory for the woman). “For her hair is given her for a covering...” (v.15). (in all these verses Paul is apparently referring to proper appearance of males and females by their choice of hair length). (v.16)—but, we have no custom to be “contentious” about things! (don’t have a spirit of grumbling, complaining, bickering, arguing, or fighting about every little thing—we should just*

strive to be faithful to principle). **One other thing is very clear in the Bible—God calls every man and woman to uphold their male or female qualities (respectively)!!** (Deuteronomy 22:5).

- **How does 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 fit into this discussion?** Do women have a place in some kind of ministry? Sure. (See about Philip's four daughters, Acts 21:8,9; Deborah, Judges 4:4,5; Anna, Luke 2:36; Acts 2:17,18). But, you never find a woman being chosen as a Bishop or Pastor of a church. That is not biblical. All of the Levitical priests were males. All of the 12 Apostles were males. Paul said to Timothy, "A Bishop should be the husband of one wife...ruling his own household well..." (1 Timothy 3:2,4,5). The man was called to be the head of the household and the head of church matters. (1 Cor. 14:34,35 is NOT saying that women are not to talk at all at church. It is telling us they should not be whispering and chatting and making noise during the service. They should be meek and quiet. If they want to ask questions about things, they should do so later).
- **Counsels for the church concerning the partaking of the Lord's Supper (v.17-34) (Communion)**
 - **(v.17-19)**(v.17)—this thing I do not "praise" you about (as compared to v.2).—*bad church meetings!!* (v.18,19)—*problem of "divisions" and "heresies" among them!*
 - **(v.20-22)**—*problem with gathering for the Lord's Supper—they were "shaming those who had nothing [the poor]"* (v.22). *Some came hungry, some came stuffed, not orderly, not eating it together at the same time, but at various times. No unity!*
 - **(v.23-26) The communion service—a very important service of "remembrance" of what Christ has done for us. We are to follow the exact tradition and example of what Jesus showed his disciples on the night of his "last supper" with them (this would also include the "foot washing" ceremony of that night which Jesus did for His disciples—an act of humility and service, John 13:14,15; 1 Timothy 5:10).****(v.24)-Christ blessed the food and broke it, in an orderly way, as all were gathered together for the service. Then it was given to each of them. (v.26)—an important service "showing the Lord's death, until He comes!" "For as often as you eat this bread and..."**(The Bible does not say exactly how often this special service should be performed. HOWEVER, it seems logical that it should never be practiced less than once a year—at the barest minimum!! The **Passover ceremony** which was replaced by the Lord's Supper (Communion) was **directed by God to be held annually!!** (at a certain time every single year). It seems though that this Christian service was practiced much more frequently than that. Some churches today practice it every single week, some (as in the Catholic church) practice it at every single service. Others practice it a little less frequently to keep it more special, and not so routine (in which case it could lose its meaning/significance to our minds).—Some do it quarterly, about 4 times a year. **"...You proclaim the Lord's death till he comes" (v.26)—this service draws our hearts closer to Jesus Christ!!** And it keeps Calvary fresh and vivid in our minds!
 - **(v.27-30, 31-34) It is a fatal sin to cheapen and disrespect the Lord's sacred service** (such a sin has brought death and sickness to some). We should **search our hearts** and always "discern" [meditating and thinking about] the fact that this represents the Lord's body which was broken for us. (v.31-34)—*keep all in reverence and respect—the Lord rebukes and chastens those He loves so that we might repent of our sins and be saved—Revelation 3:19.*

Question (s) for the Heart:

Do you wish to embrace the Lord's natural order of things, and to be reverent in the worship of God?
