

Parson to Person

1 Corinthians 11 – Part 4

(Submission in the Created Order)

“I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God. Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God” (1 Corinthians 11:3–16 NKJV).

First Century Application?

Far too many pastor/teachers have suggested that this passage (and several others) are cultural and limited to the first century. However, these verses, and all others, are divinely inspired Scripture and therefore eternal. We must agree together that heaven and earth shall pass away, but the words of the Lord shall remain forever (see Matthew 24:35).

Church Age—and Beyond!

This passage contains first century applications, pre-Church age applications, and applications that will carry over into eternity. Moreover, the teaching given here also predated some of the applications—for at least 300 years—and still does today. Sadly, segregation of worshippers in Judaism, Islam, and certain Christian sects did develop in the 4th century. It seems that egalitarianism in Christian circles did not develop until the 20th century. This passage deals with the problem of segregation in worship. It also addresses the benefits believers are afforded through the grace and mercy of God. *“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus”* (Galatians 3:26–28 NKJV). Egalitarianism is clearly covered by the fact that a clear distinction is made between men and women.

Beware of Reasoning About the Word of God—Obey It.

Admittedly, I am grieved by the lack of Biblical scholarship in the Church and grieved all the more when pastors and leaders who know the Scriptures ignore and/or manipulate and modify the clear teachings of the Bible.

Those who segregate the salvific experiences of men and women and those who fail to segregate the distinct roles of men and women err and misrepresent the Lord.

Because of The Angels

Much has been written and many arguments have been made concerning what the first century Corinthians may have understood by Paul's comment about the angels. If they did understand it, they must have known something we don't know today.

I can suggest the following:

- 1) Angels are present among us. (Hebrews 13:2)
- 2) Angels observe our activities. (1 Corinthians 4:9)
- 3) Angels have an interest in the unique workings of God in the Church Age. (Ephesians 3:10 and 1 Peter 1:12)
- 4) Angels are attracted to a woman's hair and may be enticed to sin. (Extrapolated from Genesis 6)
- 5) Angels understand the created order. (1 Corinthians 11:10)
- 6) Angels are offended by believers who discount God's word and disobey Him. (1 Corinthians 11:10)

There may be more we could develop. However, we are left to speculation and must accept that there are things we do not know, and will not know, until we are with the Lord.

If Anyone Seems Contentious

Four things must be considered when explaining the last verse of this section: *"if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such*

custom, nor do the churches of God” (vs. 16). Moreover, varieties of bible translations have not helped us with this. Therefore, let us allow the hermeneutics to speak.

- 1) If we are to suggest that God is not concerned about the created order or the distinctions between men and women, we have a lot of other Scripture to contend with.
- 2) If we are to suggest that God is not overly concerned about the length of a man’s hair or the hairstyle of a woman, we have room for agreement.
- 3) If we are to suggest that *“if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God”* means that women should wear a veil, shawl, or hat, we have no other passages of Scripture to support the position.
- 4) If we are to suggest that *“if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God”* means that a man cannot wear a hat or head covering, we have no other New Testament passages to support the position.

Therefore, it seems best to suggest that God is far less concerned about hats and head coverings than He is with the created order and the distinctions between men and women. He desires that we obey the clearly communicated role designations of the Bible. There are differences between men and women.

May we always be careful not to reason about God’s word. Let us obey it! All that God does, and all that He says, is good! We glorify God and benefit ourselves when we obey.

“The head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.” “[Man] is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. [The] man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. For this reason, the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God.”

I love you all,
Pastor Paul