

1Corinthians 18-07-22a

Good morning, welcome to the July 22nd, 2018 Sunday morning services at Grace and Truth Bible Church. We will be continuing this morning our study in 1 Corinthians, picking up in chapter 11. Chapter 11, fascinating chapter, much discussed, much debated, a lot of conflict, a lot of controversy.

We will be walking where angels fear to tread. Angels are in the context. Paul Simon has a line that says angels in the architecture.

There are angels in the architecture of this particular passage this morning, and we'll find out what their significance is, what the historic interpretations have been, having to do this morning with the order of worship, men and women, and head coverings. Debbie's good to go. All the rest of you all are in trouble.

Let's take a moment as we begin to ask God's blessing on our fellowship and on our study, and we'll get started. Father, we're grateful for every day that you give us and the restoration of our opportunities, the provision that you make, the challenges that you put in our path to encourage us, to challenge us, and to stimulate our spiritual growth. We thank you for the Lord Jesus and the standing that we have in Him to represent ourselves before your throne as we do at this very moment.

We thank you for your Holy Spirit and His ongoing work, both of conviction and guidance and direction and bringing our prayers, taking them from their inadequate and insufficient form and making them acceptable to come before your throne. We thank you for this passage of Scripture that is before us. We ask that as we look at it together that your Spirit will enlighten our hearts, help us to understand what it means and what it means to us so that we can make application and make progress as we endeavor to become more Christ-like in this life and more prepared for service and function in the life that is to come.

We pray these things in Jesus' name, amen. Well, just by way of a one-sentence review, you'll remember that last week we wrapped up the idolatry exhortation having to do with two different kinds of meals involving food and idols. One is the parties that were given in the temple marketplace, those actually in the temple precincts.

The other being food that was bought in the marketplace that may have at one time been up in the temple. But it has to do with provenance and with context. Where are you partaking of this food? If you are going up to the temple and participating, this actually is a fellowship of demons, Paul says.

If, on the other hand, meat has been up there but it is now offered in the marketplace, ask no questions for conscience' sake. So the upshot of the chapter in 10, it continues a thought that began a couple of chapters earlier, and that is we need to be sensitive to those around us when we make our free choices. All things are lawful, but not all things are edifying.

All things are lawful, not all things are helpful. Is it illegal for a Christian to go up and visit a party at the idolatrous temple? It's not illegal, it's not helpful. It dishonors the Lord Jesus.

It confuses people who are looking on, and it is for the sake of onlookers. So, as you think about this, I've had some personal discomfort with the notion that we are to sort of live our lives conscious that we're being watched. There's an easy path into putting on a show of righteousness because we're aware that we have an audience.

And there is a difference, and I think we all understand it, at least in the ideal and in the abstract, that I'm not going to fold my hands and shut my eyes and pray because I'm aware that everybody is watching. This is what the Pharisees were doing when they would make a show of prayer and of their offerings down at the temple, and they were doing it to be seen by men. And of course, they would justify it in their own minds and say, well, I'm setting an example, and they'll benefit by watching my righteousness in action here.

And it's a tricky thing to not deceive ourselves. Our heart is wicked at its core. It is unregenerate until the Lord Jesus touches it and places His Spirit within it and enlightens our spiritual conscience.

Ideally, we are not doing these things out of a sense of pride that, well, let me show them how it's done. I will help these poor godless pagans and these backward believers see how it's really done, but rather out of love to not create a stumbling block and to not make an issue where there shouldn't be one, not to make an issue of ourselves by things that might be lawful but are not edifying or not helpful or that are susceptible to, or make us susceptible to being controlled by them. You might say, well, I'm free to drink.

Well, you're not free to drink if you lose control to it. You're not free to engage in entertainment if that entertainment overwhelms your schedule, if it takes away from exercise of proper responsibilities to family and to work and to time and reflection and prayer. If you're a bad steward of your time, whenever you get into this one area, that area needs attention because it is starting to control us.

So it's not a matter of what has come to be known in the recent time of the church, modeling. I will model Christian behavior. I'm on the runway and everybody is watching, so I'm going to put my hand behind my ear and strike a pose here of righteousness.

Not at all. There is always balance. We can't just disregard the people who are watching either, but our regard has to be motivated by love and a desire to not confuse or cause to stumble, not to educate.

Let me show you. I wouldn't ordinarily do this, but since you're watching, I'm going to do it. That's, of course, not in view.

That brings us now to chapter 11, and you'll remember that we decided the first, I decided arbitrarily because I get to by talking up here, that the first verse of chapter 11 is the last verse

of chapter 10. It concludes and sums up everything that he said there. If I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of? Whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, verse 31 of chapter 10, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God, not the glory of me.

I'm not trying to get people to be impressed with, boy, he can really pray or he can really preach or he can really go out of his way to do whatever it is we think is instructive to others. Do it to the glory of God. Give no offense, no cause for stumbling to those who are inside or those who are outside or to the church as a group.

Just as I endeavor, and he's explained this a chapter and a half earlier, I endeavor to not make an issue out of things that are issues for different groups. There are certain things that are issues for the Jews. Paul avoids creating rabbit trails and sidetracks and controversies that are off point.

His point is Jesus Christ and Him crucified as the way to the Father, as the way to life, as the way to righteousness by faith. And if something is going to create a side issue and a distraction, Paul will leave it off. He's not going to sit down to a big fat pork chop when he's trying to communicate with Jews.

And he's not going to make a big deal out of taking a Nazarite vow or something when he's trying to talk to Gentiles. Keep the decks clear. Try to focus on the issue.

Keep things simple and helpful and edifying to the glory of God. Not seeking my own prophet, but that of many that they may be saved, that they may be delivered, that they may be drawn to Christ and drawn to the Father through Christ. And his summation here in 11.1 is imitate me just as I also do Christ.

He's not saying imitate everything. There was a time when I was a child where consciously or unconsciously so many evangelists and even pastors wound up having sort of a Billy Graham type of style to their preaching. It was just infectious.

He was so successful and so well known that pretty soon you would hear a lot of people and say, boy, he didn't used to talk like that. He's starting to sound like Billy Graham. And that's not what Paul is talking about.

He's not saying imitate my bald head and my squeaky voice and beat yourself up to have a lot of scars. He says imitate me in the sense of, in the context here of endeavoring to do whatever it takes to make the gospel clear and to make the word of God clear without distraction, without deflection, without making an issue of myself. The messenger ought to, as much as possible, get out of the way.

And you notice all of the things that Paul has talked about, whether it's making an issue of foods or making an issue of rituals or making an issue of, you know, the missionaries that went to the jungle immediately wanted to get clothes put on them. They were just shocked that they were running around half naked. And they said, well, you know, you've got to put clothes on.

Well, why don't you concentrate on helping them understand the Lord Jesus and sin, righteousness, and judgment that they're being convicted of and give them the message. And these things will come as they learn Genesis and Adam and Eve and fig leaves and skins. And that will come.

But if you start and say, well, I can't even talk to you all until you put some clothes on, you're making an issue out of something that offends you in their life. This is where the whole idea that people have delayed making a decision for Christ because they say, well, I'm too much of a sinner. I need to get rid of a bunch of my sins and then I can come to Jesus.

Well, that's our fault in many cases. The church at large often makes an issue of morality to the point that Jesus did not. Jesus didn't say, well, if you quit being a publican or if you quit being a prostitute or if you quit being a sinner, I'll share the good news from my Father with you.

He shared the good news. People responded and they left off. Look at Zacchaeus.

Look at a lot of the others that were surrounding him. And coming to faith and coming to Christ is the cause of leaving behind sin and evil practice. But putting those things up front obscures the message.

So Paul says, imitate me in this regard of refusing to make an issue out of things that are not central, just as I do following Christ's example of so doing. Jesus took flak from the holier-than-thou crowd for associating with what they consider to be low lives. So that's verse 1. Now we pick up in verse 2 with our chapter 11.

Paul says to the Corinthian church, now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you. But 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 was created for the man. For this reason, the woman ought to have, notice a symbol of *is in italics*, and I would encourage you to cross it out, it's been added.

The text says, Paul says, for this reason the woman ought to have authority on the head. Her isn't even there. Authority on the head.

The woman ought to have authority on the head because of the angels. There's our architectural angelic presence. Nevertheless, verse 11, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man in the Lord.

For as woman came from man, even so man also 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 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.

That's the 15 verse section we're going to take a look at beginning this morning. Hopefully finishing this morning. So, Paul begins with a positive note.

He says, you've done a good job in remembering me in all things and keeping the traditions just as I delivered them to you. Now, remember the preceding verse that was the end of the preceding section. Imitate me as I do Christ.

I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things. To the extent that Paul has communicated the things of Christ and the Corinthians remember Paul and follow his exhortation and his example, they are commended. Then he says in verse three, now I want you to know, and doesn't this seem to sort of come out of the blue? I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God.

You think, well, he says, I appreciate that you remember me and keep the traditions that I delivered to you. Now, here's something I want you to know, which evidently you don't know. And maybe this is not a part of the tradition he's already communicated.

So he's going to go further. So he's introducing something new and it creates anticipation. We say, well, why is he bringing this up? Doesn't have anything to do with meat offered to idols or going to the temple or even in this case living in a way that doesn't confuse onlookers, whether they are Jews or Gentiles or the church.

That's been his subject and he has spent the last three chapters really emphasizing that, right? Then he says, there's a lot of areas that I don't need to talk to you about. You remember what I taught you. You're following it.

Good job. Now, here's something we need to talk about. This is something fresh.

Didn't come up when Paul was there before. He hasn't talked about it before. It's not a tradition he has taught.

He doesn't say, now, I do not praise you because what I taught you about this, you're not following. This is something that has come up after Paul departed. He was there nearly three

years.

He left. This is a practice. This is an issue that has arisen more recently.

So he's going to lay a foundation, as he so often does, of theology and then get into practice. You see this in the book of Ephesians. He spends the first three chapters of Ephesians hammering home doctrine after doctrine after doctrine and principle after principle after principle.

Remember Ephesians chapter one where all of the things that we have in him and I pray that you may come to know the power of God, the power of his resurrection, coming to the fullness in Christ. He is the head of all things to the church and all of this teaching. Then in chapter four, he turns the corner into application and he talks about husbands love your wives and children obey your parents and slaves and masters, masters and slaves.

But the theology is up front with that teaching fresh in their minds. He says this is how you apply it. This is where it goes and what it means.

He's going to do the same thing in miniature here. So he's going to lay a foundation. What is that foundation? I want you to know that the head of every man, he doesn't say do you not know.

When he says do you not know, this is stuff he already talked about. But he says here's something I want you to know. Head of every man is Christ.

Head of woman is man. And the head of Christ is God. Isn't it interesting that he doesn't put them in a sequential order? When you say the head of Christ is God, the head of man is Christ, and the head of woman is man.

Or he could do it the other way. And he could say the head of woman is man, the head of man is Christ, and the head of Christ is God. He doesn't do it that way.

He shuffles the deck here. He begins with the head of every man is Christ, and the head of woman is man. This is what is seen, right? You see men, they have an invisible head who is Christ.

You see the woman, they have a visible head who is the man. You see men and you see women in the earth. You don't see Christ and you don't see God.

So you have the invisible on the outside here. Christ is the invisible head of man. God is the invisible head of Christ.

So that's the sort of unique structural key here. Christ and God are the outside brackets of this. Man and woman are on the inside.

You see it? It's important. Now he's going to get to the issue. Every man praying or prophesying

having the head covered dishonors his head.

Now think about this. As soon as I read this sentence, I'm thinking about some sort of a hat. And then I realize they don't wear, I mean, we call it a cover in the Marine Corps.

Whether it's your fore and aft cap or your frame cover, it's a cover. It's got the quadrifoil on the top for officers and you've got the chin strap and the scrambled eggs if you're field grade and all of that, right? But when I think of your head covered, you just immediately go to that. And you think, well, yeah, but in the ancient day, it wasn't like fedoras and things, cowboy hats and such, ball caps.

And you've seen movies where maybe when Jesus is getting ready to pray or something, he'll take his shawl and he'll pull it up over his head and he covers his head to pray. And he'll lift up his hands and bow his head and pray. And I've seen one movie in particular where every time Jesus addresses his father, he pulls the thing up over his head and it was like a Jewish custom.

So when Paul says, every man praying or prophesying having the head covered dishonors his head, you think, well, I'm already confused for two reasons. First of all is I thought that in the Jewish world, they did pray with their head covered, kind of like we bow our heads and close our eyes as a tradition. Bible never says bow your head and close your eyes, does it? Never ever.

But since I was old enough to understand English, that's what everybody around me has always done. Bow your head, close your eyes. And it's just like for concentration, but it's just tradition, right? It's a cultural thing in our day.

But here's the thing, and this is what is often forgotten. What number of verses is this? It's verse four, right? Every man praying or prophesying having the head covered dishonors his head. Talking about la cabeza here, right? The thing that sticks up above your neck.

No, we're not. What did he just say in verse three? What is the head of the man? The head of every man is Christ. I want you to know, he gives us the key at the beginning.

It's like a color code for a map. It's like a legend that says when you see this kind of a marker, this color, this is what it means. So what did he just tell us? What's the key? The head of every man is Christ.

Every man praying, having the head covered dishonors the head. Having the head covered dishonors the head. Every man praying or prophesying, specific context, not working, not singing, not sweeping, not picking up the hymnals, not dunking somebody in the water.

There are two things that the man is doing, and the head should not be covered. Because if the head is covered, the head is dishonored. What is it? Praying and prophesying.

What do those two things have in common? They're spoken. Remember in the Bible, prayer

isn't mental. It's spoken.

So if you're praying, you are communicating verbally in the vertical direction. If you are prophesying, you are speaking in the horizontal direction. Praying vertical, prophesying horizontal.

What is it that we should be praying to God? What should be reflected in the content of our prayer? We're claiming promises. We are calling before God's throne, God's own word. We're claiming it by faith.

We're saying, Lord, you have promised. Here's my situation. I'm laying claim to your promise.

I am trusting in you. You have said you will never leave me nor forsake me. You've said that the righteous won't go hungry.

Their seed won't beg bread. You've said that you will never leave me nor forsake me. You have said that the Lord Jesus said, Lo, I am with you all way, even to the end of the age.

I need your presence. I need your power. I need your provision.

That's a great little alliterative list. But praying or prophesying, having the head covered, dishonors his head. Now, remember, what did we just cover in the last three chapters about idolatry and meat offered to idols? And he says, there is an earthly reflection here where you are sitting down and eating and drinking, but it is the cup of demons.

It's a real cup, but the cup of demons is an abstract. It's a figurative thing, right? And so, yeah, there is a physical cup involved, but what you're really doing is having invisible fellowship with invisible demons, right? So there is food, but if somebody says, this was offered to idols, now they've made it an issue and you don't eat that physical food. But it is emblematic, not so much symbolic as it's an association.

But the issue is not the cup. The issue is not the food. The issue is the invisible association.

What is that going to communicate to the person who says, you know, this was offered to an idol? And you say, well, for his conscience sake, I'm not going to partake of this physical food. I'm not going to drink from this physical cup. I'm not going to go to this physical temple because it has immaterial, spiritual, moral implications.

And that's the real issue. A building is just a building. An idol is just a rock.

Food, God made it all. But when it is tied to the invisible in a certain way, it's out. Now he says, 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 the head covered, dishonors his head. Now notice, one of these has possessive and the other does not.

See one the is in italics. Every man praying or prophesying, having the head covered, that's the head sticking out of his neck, dishonors his head. The his goes back to verse 3, the head of every man, his head is Christ.

So the head is down here, his head is Christ. Look at the next verse, it will become clearer. But every woman who prays or prophesies with the head uncovered, dishonors her head.

Where you have the possessive, you go back to verse 3. What's her head? The man. You see it? When it says his head for the man, that's Christ. When it says her head in verse 5, that's in verse 3, the head of woman is man.

Every woman who prays or prophesies with, you could say, the physical head uncovered, dishonors her spiritual head. The man praying or prophesying, having his physical head covered, dishonors his spiritual head. For a man to pray with a shawl or a covering over his head, dishonors Christ.

You just substitute what the key tells us. The woman praying or prophesying with her physical head uncovered, dishonors the man. The man who is her head.

Who is the man that is the woman's head? It's her husband, right? What if she's not married? Who's her head? Her father. Every woman in a normal circumstance. Now, what if the husband is gone? What if it's a widow? Guy's not gone, he's absent.

I mean, he's not inexistent, he's just not present. Woman might come to church and her husband's not present. Well, it doesn't matter if he's not present because he's down the street sick or he's gone to glory.

A married woman, her husband still exists and to pray with her physical head uncovered would still dishonor him. Doesn't matter if he's gone to glory or not. Doesn't matter if he's in the church or not.

She is a married woman, right? So, look at verse 6. If a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. And this is the back side of the key. The front side of the key is the spiritual key.

Verse 3 is the spiritual key. The head of every man is Christ, head of the woman is man, head of Christ is God. There's no physical heads involved in any of that.

That's all spiritual, right? Now, when we get down to verse 6, Paul is going to clarify the physical head key. If a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. Now, you can't spiritually shave a woman's hair, right? This is the physical head.

So, if she's not covered, and the context here is still praying and prophesying. If she's not covered, the head is not covered, then the head should have all the covering removed, which is the hair. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered.

The hair is a built-in head covering for the woman of sorts. Verse 7, a man indeed ought not to

cover the head. See how consistent Paul is? He doesn't use the possessive when he's talking about the spiritual side.

A man indeed ought not to cover the head, since he is the image and glory of God. But woman is the glory of man. Man is not from woman, but woman from man.

And this is the Genesis creation account. Something is taken from Adam, God fashions the woman and brings her to him. Man was here first, woman came second.

For this reason, the woman ought to have, cross out a symbol of, a woman ought to have authority on the head, on the head, because of the angels. Because of the angels, of course, has been a great crux of discussion for centuries. Tertullian has a whole treatise on this back in 200 AD, and it comes forward from there.

So let's try to clarify this for ourselves just a little bit. When we studied the idol thing that is in the preceding context here, did we say, okay, our practical application is, we're not going to any idol temples, and we're not going to eat any meat that has been in or around idols, if somebody points it out to us in the modern day. We're culturally out of that realm now, right? You'd have to really stretch to find some physical manifestation of idolatry.

I'm not going to go into somebody's house if they watch too much TV, or, well, this DVD's been played 20 times in my house, I'm worshiping it. I can't think of a situation where we make direct physical analogy to the food offered to idols. And that really rather quickly died out in the first few centuries of this age, the years of our Lord, what they call the Common Era now.

Idolatry didn't last very long after the Roman Empire. So we don't have any difficulty understanding that the meat in that for us, and for most believers down through the centuries, has been consideration of others. That's the issue, right? It had a cultural expression in Corinth with the temples of Artemis and Isis and all the rest of it.

But we extract the timeless principle from that and go forward, right? In this chapter, hear me now, it is the very same thing. In the way that it wasn't about idols and food, it's not about hats and shawls. Hats and shawls were the current cultural expression of those invisible truths.

Idols and association with idolatrous practice and food was cultural at that time. The culture has changed, but the principle has not. We still, if somebody's going to make an issue out of something that we do or might do, and it's going to conflict and hinder the message of Christ and cause them to stumble, then I'm going to refrain.

If I think that wine is going to—I use this all the time because it's a fairly innocuous and common—opinions vary among Christians about whether or not one ought to have wine. How public should you be? Should you go out to a restaurant and, yeah, bring another carafe? Is this something in the privacy of your home? To what extent—there's people that think, you know, lips that touch liquor will never touch mine, and, you know, I teetotal. I think Jesus made grape juice, which is fine.

You know, go with God. But that's sort of an area where if I thought having a glass of Cabernet Sauvignon was going to cause somebody to stumble, I'm not going to have it. I'm not going to have the bottle sitting out in my home if they're over.

I'm not hiding. I'm not being secretive. I just don't want to create an issue for someone for whom that might be a problem.

People have grown up in homes with alcoholics, and alcohol scares them, and they like the idea that the Bible says, don't drink, don't drink, don't drink. Go with God. If that's your understanding, I would never try to talk you out of it.

I would never say, well, you know, you can really just be as free as you want to be in that area. It's not my place, not my job. It's not an essential.

It makes no difference. What would make a difference is if I caused them to stumble. If there's alcoholism in their household, and you keep talking about freedom, and freedom, and freedom, and they start drinking, and they become an alcoholic, now how are you going to feel? They've got a natural weakness in that area.

Maybe it's congenital. Everybody's got congenital challenges. It doesn't excuse us from giving in to them, but it does tell you where your area of challenge or temptation might be, and where the strength from God is going to come to counter it.

But it's the same thing here. Keep in mind, it doesn't matter if you wear a hat in church. I'm just going to say that right now.

Hats in church are not what Paul is talking about. It was hats in church in Corinth in the same way it was idols and food offered to idols in Corinth. That's not the issue now, and we don't have any trouble saying, well, that was then.

This is now. It's not idols. It's other things.

I could say, how about music? Instead of food, let's talk about music. If I'm going to have a Christian gathering, but I'm going to play the music that accompanies secular parties, and it's got a lot of suggestive, innuendo, and outright overt, immoral reflection in it, does it mean that if a song comes on the radio in my house, I've got to rush over and turn it off? Well, it does if somebody's there, and that might be an issue. And they say, I can't believe you're listening to this rap guy, and he's talking about shooting cops and so on.

I would go turn it off. You're right. That shouldn't be playing in my house.

You see what I'm saying? Whatever the current cultural reflection is of this principle, if this is something that's associated with drug parties, do you want to watch Cheech and Chong movies in your house and have them laying around because they're all up in smoke and big marijuana cigarettes and everything just permeate that humor from back in those days? If it's stuff with

drug humor and drug associations or promiscuity and illicit fornication and stuff being reflected in something in our culture, is that something you want to associate with around people who say, well, I thought you were different. I thought you belonged to Christ. I thought you listened to something different, watched something different, associated with something different.

And if somebody comes up and says, hey, I find this in your periphery, you say, you're right. I don't believe in that. I don't care for that, and I don't choose that.

Same thing here. You've got to carry that all forward. These last three chapters were ahead of this for a reason.

So what is the spiritual issue that is timeless and doesn't change? Authority. There is an authority structure that God has created. This week I read several websites that are Christian feminism and all the rest, and how do they take 1 Corinthians 11? How do they parse this? Very interesting.

I won't go into all of it. The ability of the human mind to squirm away like trying to nail jello to the wall is really impressive. This is the most confusing passage in the whole Bible, they say.

I found two or three, four different websites. I think this is the hardest verse in the whole Bible to interpret. It's the hardest verse in the whole New Testament to understand.

It's so confusing. Sorry, no. It's not confusing at all.

It's only confusing if you're trying to find a way around it. If you're trying to say, no, I'm equal. I'm just like the man, and there's no authority over me.

My authority is Christ, just like the man's. The passage is not confusing. The passage is distasteful if you are trying to embrace a different ethos and a different structure, and you see yourself in other than a scriptural light.

Yeah, it's confusing because the Bible is saying, wake up. I like it when the Bible tells me to wake up and do something different. I like to be corrected and instructed in righteousness.

I don't try to deflect and see lawyer away. As they used to say at school, you're a sea lawyer. Somebody's trying to tell you how to do a thing or what's right and what you did wrong, and you're trying to explain away that, no, I was really right, and this is just as good a way.

No, it's not. Absorb correction. Receive instruction.

Be rebuked. Absorb the doctrine. Live by it.

Look at the positive side of it. You remember, to the extent that whatsoever things are pure, noble, true, lovely, good report, to the extent that. If you find that something is kind of a cross to bear, if it's difficult, well, A, the difficulty is good for your faith and patience, and B, there's

always an outcome.

There's an ekposis. There's a positive side. Look for the positive side.

Well, I want to be a Christian feminist, but I see that the Bible says I need to be submissive, and it says it more than once. Darn that Apostle Paul. He's always saying, you know, wives, submit to your husbands and, you know, have authority on your head.

Look, find the positive. Find where you can excel. Find where this can be an occasion to look at the glass half full.

It's actually a totally full and running over glass if you understand it properly, and we're going to understand it properly here. But here's my point. If we have trouble with a scriptural teaching, one thing that we don't want to do is what you see so many believers doing, whether they are homosexuals, whether they are Christian feminists, whether they are, you know, freethinkers of whatever kind and ilk.

Those are the two that come to my mind. Start by saying, I don't want to resist God's will. I want to know God's will, because I think everybody would agree that there's one absolute authority that you can't argue with, and that's God.

If you're a believer, God's the authority. God's way is the way. It's the only way.

God's truth is the only truth, and God's life is the only life, and it's in Jesus Christ. It's no accident that Paul started this by saying in verse 3, the head of every man is Christ, and the head of Christ is God. This authority structure begins with God and comes right down.

You can't be an enlisted man saying, you know, I don't understand this whole enlisted officer structure. I'm just as good a man as this guy that's a captain or a major, and just because I'm a sergeant, he's not better than me. Why should I have to do what he says? Why should it be under his authority? I think we ought to have a meeting.

I think we ought to take a vote. I think it ought to be democratic. Before we go charging up the hill into a hail of bullets when the lieutenant says charge, I think we ought to talk about this.

It ought to be equal. We should all have a say. Well, we'd all be slaves speaking some foreign language if that's the way that our military worked.

There's a good reason to have authority, and it says nothing about quality. In my humble opinion, the best people in the Marine Corps are the enlisted people. They get more done with less.

They are more inventive. They are more creative. They have more fun than officers.

And I'm an officer, and I will tell you, the enlisted have a wonderful, they are the heart, soul, heartwood of the Marine Corps. And you've got no Marine Corps if all you've got is officers.

Officers, there's a lot you could say.

They're climbing over one another. They're ambitious. They're insensitive.

They don't remember the men in some cases. There's great officers as well. But you have to really be careful in authority about those over whom you exercise that authority.

And those under authority have to remember that the authority doesn't reside in the obnoxious person exercising it. The authority comes from the President and the Constitution and the laws that govern this nation. And it's not the person.

It is the rank he has on his shoulder and on his collar. That's what I'm saluting. That's what I'm obeying.

This guy may not be worth the powder it would take to blow his nose, but he represents something bigger than me and something that I respect and something that I honor and I will perform regardless of who's occupying that slot. It's the same. Wives may have husbands that are idiots.

You think about Abigail and Nabal. But it's the office that the husband holds and God has a purpose in it. We are going to see this in this passage in detail.

This is, I think, if I get my job done well, this is going to really become very crystal clear and we're going to understand what it means when Paul says, because of the angels. Because of the angels? What do they got to do with it? Your husband says, honey, I want the dishes done at night instead of in the morning. Well, because of the angels? She's going to pray or prophesy a certain way because of the angels? What is that about? We'll see it when we come back from the break.