

1Corinthians 18-07-22b

Let's resume our study now in this very interesting section of 1st Corinthians, 1st Corinthians chapter 11, talking about head coverings. Paul has helpfully provided us a key for interpretation here, and when you find the possessive pronoun on her head or his head, we refer back to verse 3 and we know that for the man he is talking about Christ, for the woman he is talking about the man, and this is whatever man has the assigned authority. This is a young woman's father, it is a married woman's husband, it is a widow's husband and Christ perhaps both combined, because if you have a Christian expectation you know that it is a brief separation, but I can tell you that my wife's not getting away if death parts us for a short time, as soon as we are both in the same place again I'm going to track her down and she's stuck with me for eternity and she might as well just get used to it now, and I think most of us feel that way.

In terms of picking up the story here, Paul says, I want you to know, verse 3, the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, the head of Christ is God. That's in the emphatic position. His underlying theme here is, this system isn't something that Paul made up.

The feminists largely hate Paul because he's the one that talks about submission and they think this means difference in value or inequality, and my easiest example I keep going back to is the military. Do you seriously think that officers are of an intrinsic higher quality? They make them officers because they're better men than enlisted? Anybody who's been in the military knows that that is rubbish, nonsense, a foolish notion. If anything, it's probably the other way around, and the same goes with the relationship between men and women.

Sometimes the best way to help somebody who's dangerously incapable of doing something is to give them a very able assistant, who's probably more able than they are, but it's a great synergistic system. Many times a weak husband succeeds because he's got a wonderful wife. You know the old adage about behind every successful man stands a woman.

That's the original form of it, behind every successful man stands a woman, and then later on they tacked on telling him he's wrong, but that's the original is what I like. So verse four, every man praying or prophesying having the head covered. When you see the italics there and a lack of personal pronoun, we're talking the physical realm, the head.

So let's talk about that, every man praying or prophesying having the head covered dishonors his head. Every man with the head uncovered. Now as was helpfully mentioned on the break, and as you remember, and I alluded to it briefly in the first session, in Israel wasn't it a custom, don't they to this day have the yarmulke they put on their head, and observant Jews cover the head when they pray, right? So what's Paul saying here? Was that wrong? Is the cultural tradition in Judaism wrong to cover the head? What do you think? Is Paul throwing that baby out along with the bathwater here? Go back to verse three, what does it say? The head of every man, notice he says every man praying or prophesying in verse four, the head of those every man is Christ.

Now, let me ask you something, is that true? Is the head of every man Christ? This gets into your biblical interpretation, what does every, any and all mean? What is our context here? What bunch of men are we talking about? What group, what category is it where every man has Christ as his head? Does Christopher Hitchens and Sam Harris and Richard Dawkins and those guys, is Christ their head? No. What does it say in Ephesians at the end of chapter one? Christ is the head of all things to the church. Just read the Bible, the Bible will interpret itself.

Christ is the head to the church, men in the church have Christ as their head. So when he says every, it's every one of this class we are discussing. Not every man on the planet, not every man that has ever lived.

Most men never had Christ as their head. Now, back to the Jews, back to the Old Testament. Was Christ the head of Moses? No, he was not.

Christ is the head of all things to the church. Is Moses in the church? If you ask a Baptist, they'll say yes, and they're wrong. I can say that because I'm a closet Baptist, I'm a recovered Baptist.

No, Christ is not the head of the Old Testament saints. To whom did they pray and how did they pray? Was Christ their high priest? Was Christ the high priest in Israel? Feel free to answer. Was Christ any part of the priesthood in Israel? No.

Who's the priesthood in Israel? Sons of Aaron, the Levites, right? And only a subset of them. Only a couple of Aaron's sons had the priesthood. The rest of them were doing other things in worship.

So there is an Old Testament priesthood defined in the law. Look at Leviticus, Leviticus. Levi takes that book, Levi to us, Levi, Leviticus.

It's the Levitical, it's the Levi code, this is how the priests operate. Jesus is not a Levitical priest. What does Paul say in Hebrews? I say that with a wink.

What does the book of Hebrews say? What order is the Lord Jesus' priesthood? After the order of Melchizedek, and I'd like to talk more about it, he says, It's all things I could tell you about this higher and greater and more extensive order of priesthood, the Melchizedekian priesthood. But at such time as you should be teachers, you have need that one teach you again the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. You need milk and not solid food.

I would love to go on. Wouldn't it have been great if the people he was writing to were so far along they would say, I'm so glad you're ready for this. Now I'm going to spend three chapters on the Melchizedekian priesthood.

But he has to only allude to it because they're not ready. Well, the head of every man is Christ is in the church, in the church age. Doesn't pertain.

So, bowing down into the dust and covering your head in prayer would make sense for Israel.

How many people prophesied in Israel? The prophets, right? Prophets prophesied. What did their head look like while they were doing it? I don't know.

John the Baptist was the last great prophet. We know a little bit more about his appearance than we do some of the other prophets. It says he had the hairy suit and ate grasshoppers and wild honey.

But it doesn't tell us that he had anything on his head or not. I don't know what the rules were for that. I do know that probably this custom of respect and of covering the head in prayer has its roots in the Old Testament.

And that's fine. They are not dishonoring their head. An Old Testament man is not dishonoring his head by covering it because he doesn't have a spiritual head.

He's functioning under the priestly rules and under the Old Testament economy. If a man wants to pray as David prays, he's free to do so. But he's in a different economy.

It's a different point being made in the Old Testament. The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. After Christ, God is demonstrating and communicating new things in a new way with new paradigms.

And part of that paradigm is in the church now where marriage is barely mentioned in the Old Testament. And where do we get all of the folly we're all about? Well, you've got to have a pastor presiding and there should be a ceremony and you should take vows and make promises and we're gathered in the sight of God to unite this couple. None of that's in the Bible.

Old Testament or new. It's all cultural, right? Marriages are handled differently in parts of Europe. Arranged marriages and babies born, well, I'm telling you, 17 years from now, your daughter's marrying my son or my daughter's marrying your son, whatever.

It's different in different places. And the Bible doesn't speak. You kind of have to figure out when do the two become one flesh in the eyes of God and what are the implications of that.

For example, what if the first act of physical union constitutes marriage in the eyes of God? Somebody dallies around in high school and consummates an act. Is that a marriage in God's eyes and everything afterward follows the rules of, you know, you're in adultery and fornication and all the rest of it because that was it? I don't know. It's an interesting idea.

It would certainly motivate chastity to me to think, you know, the first time you engage in that particular and complete that act, you're married in the eyes of God. For a believer, that ought to make a difference. The Bible doesn't say that either, by the way.

But it does say when the two become one flesh, man leaves his father and mother. That's as close as the Bible comes to talking about when are you married. So, be that as it may, God is gracious and I think He overlooks a lot in our ignorance.

But we're back to chapter 11 here and every man praying or prophesying, notice, praying and prophesying, these are the activities under which this head covering thing pertains. Context, context, context. We're in the church and there are two specific activities taking place.

Praying and prophesying. This is public prayer, public prophesying in the assembly. Right? We're not talking about a guy that falls off his donkey into the ditch and he says, Oh Lord, oh wait, let me make sure my head's not covered.

This is in the assembly. This is forms of worship. This is practice in the assembly.

Every man praying and prophesying in the assembly with a congregation that is mixed with men and women. They're both there. And if the head, his physical head, is covered, he is dishonoring his head, Christ.

Hold that thought. In some way, shape, or form, if I am in Corinth and I stand up and pray with a shawl over my head, I am dishonoring Christ. Hmm.

Okay, let's just put that on a shelf and we'll come back to it. Verse 5, But every woman who prays or prophesies, Notice two things here. Either men or women can pray and prophesy.

There's no prohibition against women prophesying. How does that comport with, I will not suffer a woman to speak in church, let her remain silent, ask her husband at home. Here's the thing, and we don't have time to turn to it or I'll never finish, but in the thing about woman remain silent, it goes on to say let her ask her husband at home.

What's going on there? In what sense does she need to remain silent? As soon as they cross the threshold, nobody talks. Nobody says, Hi, how are you? Nice dress. Nobody says, Oh, can I sit with you? Or, Have you got a tissue? Or, How's your kids today? Silent in church? It goes on to say, When she has a question, let her ask her husband at home.

Silent with questions. Silent with questioning. Silent with potentially undermining or subverting the authority of the teacher who is teaching or the preacher who is preaching or the prophet who is prophesying in those early days.

And for a woman to question that or to second guess it or are you saying thus and so and to have a hand in modifying the direction of the service, Paul said, if you've got a question, your husband is the one who is supposed to be understanding this. If anybody is going to speak up and say, Can you clarify that it should be your husband, he can explain it to you at home. So, that partakes of this same thing and we'll see how as we go forward.

But here, in terms of speaking in the assembly, it doesn't mean no vocal activity on the part of women. If a woman prophesies, he doesn't say, If a woman prophesies, shut her up. A woman should remain silent in church.

It's okay for a woman to prophesy. Now, what's the difference between I want to have a woman

speaking in church, let her remain silent and go home and ask her husband, and when a woman is prophesying? What's the difference? What's the direction of the flow of information? If a woman is prophesying, if she's got a word from the Lord, because remember, there's no Bible. They're getting together.

How would it be if we all got together for church? Well, go to a Methodist. I shouldn't say that. Go to many churches.

And if you want to find out what it's like to worship with no Bible, go there. Politics, news of the day, sentiments, sweet stories, anecdotes, you know, cat videos. I don't know what they do.

But if you're not talking about the Bible, why are you there? It's Scripture. Well, in the New Testament church, they've got no New Testament. They may have some Old Testament scrolls, but this is a new and living way.

The veil has been parted. Christ is the head. You've got the Holy Spirit.

And so, until the New Testament epistles can be collected and circulated, God would send the New Testament via people in the congregations who were susceptible, who were qualified, who had a pure heart and a contrite spirit, who were vessels into which God could pour his word, and they could take it to the group and pour it back out, just like pastors are supposed to do today. And so, they were an intermediary. They are like an angel who is given the word of God from heaven, brings it down to the interested parties, and delivers it.

The angel is not speaking from himself. He is a messenger. He is a telephone communicating the voice of God.

In the early day, without Scriptures, that's how they got it. That's why it was a temporary gift. When that which is complete is come, that which is in part is done away.

They didn't stand up there and recite Matthew 1, 1 through Revelation 22, 16, or whatever it is. They didn't go from the index to the maps. They spoke a word that was needed at that time.

And it was the same doctrine, the same principles, the same promises that are now reflected in the word. A woman could do it. Fine, no problem.

When a woman prays, she can stand up and pray publicly in church. You can have a woman open in prayer. Paul doesn't argue against that.

He doesn't aver against that at all. A woman can stand up and prophesy. No problem.

What can she not do? And what does Paul say in the other context? I will not suffer a woman to have authority over the man. And to question the man is to seek to overturn the authority of his message and the authority of his position, the authority of his office. You can question, but not in a way that subverts or undermines authority.

And authority is the issue here. Head coverings are merely emblematic. They reflect a bigger principle.

So, every woman who prays or prophesies with the head uncovered, dishonors her man. Head equals man when you've got the possessive. So, if the woman and the covering is authority.

As we read further down, verse 10, For this reason the woman ought to have, cross out a symbol of, the woman ought to have authority on the head. Notice it's not her head. It's the head.

A woman ought to have authority on the physical head. Authority on the physical head. Not authority over her husband.

Look at the possessive in the absence thereof. The woman ought to have authority on the head. And so, in that day, the emblem, the expression of recognition of authority.

In our culture, what is the recognition of marital authority? How do we express it? With this ring, I thee wed. Generally speaking, I'm trying to find an analog. It's not an exact match.

You exchange rings. But, that's kind of a late development. In earlier days, the man put a ring on the woman, and there wasn't necessarily a ring on the man.

You look at old photographs from the 1800s, men typically didn't wear wedding rings. Women wore the ring. It's jewelry.

It distinguishes the woman as married. I have a husband. Leave me alone.

Don't proposition me. Don't treat me like I'm available. Look, I'm married.

It's a symbol of authority. It is a cultural expression. I have a husband.

And, if you're going to deal with our household, if you've got any questions that require authority to answer, you need to go talk to the guy that gave me this. So, every woman who prays or prophesies in a way that disrespects her husband's authority, if it undermines him, if the two are sitting there, and she's going to out-speak him, she's sort of wearing the trousers in some way, shape, or form, when she prays or prophesies, Oh, Lord, please help my husband, Uriah, be more of a man. He is such a wimp, and he doesn't have a job, and he's constantly being hornswoggled in business, and people take advantage of him.

And, Oh, Lord, please help Uriah. I don't know exactly what form this would take. You can fill in the blanks.

But there is a way that a woman can act that disrespects her husband and undermines his authority. If you take the reins in transactions that implicate the household, if you act without consultation, and he didn't make the decision, you made it, and you're just going to make him go along, or no supper for you for a week, or whatever. It has to do with not belittling the man.

What she does reflects on him, and it should reflect positively. And it should honor him. It should lift him up.

The way to understand this is go back to the key. What does it say in verse 3 about men? Who's the head of the man? Christ. How should a man act? Is he going to disrespect Christ by not acknowledging Christ in his life, not acknowledging that we serve the Lord Christ? We honor his authority.

We follow his teaching. We are submissive. We submit to the teaching of Christ.

That relationship that all of us have to the Lord Jesus Christ, women are to also have to their husband. Now there's a sizable difference in perfection. When you have he who was tested in all points yet without sin, well, okay, that's easy.

He's sinless. I have no trouble submitting to his authority. My husband, on the other hand, is a piece of work.

Think about the military. It is husband rank. You are submissive to that office, that function.

Why? Because there is a colonel above that major, and there is a general above that colonel, and you are looking to and through the chain of command to God himself. The head of the man is Christ, and the head of Christ is God. And the woman honoring the husband, being submissive to the husband, isn't saying, I'm not equal and I'm inferior.

She's saying, I respect him in order to respect Christ, in order to respect God who put this system in place. And to disrespect that function, all you have to do is go back to the Old Testament. Remember Korah, Dathan, and Abiram? Remember the incident of the strange fire? Well, we're just as good as the people that God said are the priests.

Why can't we bring fire of our own making? Well, those guys, their smoking remains got carried out on their capes. They pick them up by their cloaks and carry what was left out. Those who murmured against Moses and his authority, like Miriam did.

He was her brother, but it doesn't indicate that Miriam was married. But Moses was the authority, but Miriam said, Hey, I came from the same parents as this guy. I can be co-equal with Moses.

And she started belittling Moses and trying to run her own little feminist movement there. What happened to her? To disrespect Moses was to disrespect the God who appointed Moses and assigned him his authority. And she was outside the camp with leprosy, and it was only because of Moses' intercession that she didn't die.

So to make the issue about personal quality, I am as good as, I am as smart as, I am as capable as, misses the point. And Paul is going to point that out when we get down to verse 10. We're coming up to because of the angels.

But you see the point here, I think you get it pretty well. To honor the authority structure that God has put in place because God put it in place. The Lord Jesus Christ, read Philippians chapter 2, did not think equality with God was the biggest issue.

He didn't plant himself on that and say, Well, Father, I'm as good as you are. Why should I have to go down? He emptied himself. He took on the form of a servant, and he came in the likeness of men.

To be submissive, ladies, to your husband or your father is Christ-like. You are more Christ-like when you do that than at probably any other time because you are sacrificing your equality on the altar of God's will and God's desire. You don't want to make that sacrifice? It's too precious? You want to keep it back and say, My equality means too much to me? I will not sacrifice it on God's altar.

I'm not going to present myself a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is my reasonable service. No, it requires too much. It wounds my pride.

It belittles me. It demeans me. Ask the Lord Jesus how it feels to leave glory and come down and be a human being and get crucified for your trouble.

Look at the Old Testament with the people who wanted to be priests. Look at the New Testament with the Lord Jesus Christ and His example to please His Father. He did not think equality with God was a thing to be seized and held on to.

He let it go. He emptied Himself. And He took on the form of what? The form of a glorious, conquering King? Servant.

And He came in the likeness... You look in heaven and say, I know man reflects the image of God and all the rest of it, but that's a great come down. That is subordinate. Man is lower than the angels.

Man is lower than what? Say it. Thou hast made Him... We just saw it in Psalm, Psalm 8. Thou hast made Him a little lower than what? Lower than angels. Is Jesus less than angels? He was for a time.

How hard is that? You're the God that created the angels. You're the God that created the universe. You're the God that put everything in place and now you're going to become subordinate not only to God, not only to angels, but you'll be delivered into the hands of men.

And men are going to manhandle Him and spit on Him and scourge Him and mock Him and deride Him and nail Him to a cross. And He submits to that. I've mentioned before the song, He could have called 10,000 angels to destroy the world and set Him free, but He died alone for you and for me.

He submitted Himself to the will of the Father, which was to be submissive to the Father, to

angels and to man to accomplish God's will. And it's the biggest thing that's ever been done. That act of humility accomplished the arm work of salvation.

God used His humility and His subservience and His willingness to be obedient even to the death of the cross. And now where is He? For this reason God has highly exalted Him and given Him the name that is above every name. He went to the very depths and He is now at the highest height.

And He is the head of all things to the church. If we are to be Christ-like, we don't think about, well, that demeans me. We think about, I can follow Christ.

If any man would come up after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. Take up his cross. Who built the cross? Who tells you to carry it? You're subservient.

You're submissive. So, if a woman is not covered in the church when she is praying and prophesying, in other words, if she is not visibly acknowledging her husband's authority in whatever cultural way that pertains. If a woman is operating in the church in a way that belittles her husband or her husband is shaking his head and saying, Honey, I wish you wouldn't do that.

She's under this exhortation. And she ought to just shave off her head. Because, now think about this.

Culturally speaking, and He says, does not even nature itself teach you? Why do women wear long hair? Why have they historically worn hair ever since Eve? Lady Godiva? I mean, all down through history, women have worn long hair. And in virtually every culture, it's longer than men's hair. Not that men can't grow it long.

You certainly can. And we'll talk about what nature teaches in a moment. But, why do women grow their hair out? Why do they fuss with their hair? Why do they fix it? Why do they adorn it? Why? What is the generally prevalent reason? I want to look good in the eyes of men.

It is for my man. I don't want to shame my husband by looking like I just rolled out of bed and haven't run a comb through my hair in a week. I represent the household.

I represent my husband. I don't want to look like a floozy. I don't want to look like a loose woman.

In the same way that if somebody goes out that's married and is wearing very seductive looking clothing that shows too much and hides too little and is provocative, that's a reflection. That reflects badly on the husband. It's like, well, I'm not happy with him.

I'm trolling for attention from other men. I'm not happy with the attention and the provision of my husband. I want other men to take an interest in me.

Hair is a big part of that adornment. Paul says if you're not going to honor your authority that

has been assigned to you by God, the man, your father or your husband, then what should be done to you is what is done to women who go into prostitution, who throw away the whole authority structure and say, I'm going to use my body to make money and to get ahead socially or to do whatever. And women who had their head shaved, this was the penalty.

And why was it the penalty for prostitution? It was understood that you have parted from the cultural and societal expectation and norm. If you are chaste, then you are operating within that context of the father and the husband authority. If you say, no, not for me, well, your hair, which ought to be reflecting that, ought to just be cut off.

You have sort of a natural covering. And if you're not going to cover your head in the sense of, if you're not going to reflect respect and submission to your husband, then you ought to just shave off your hair because you're not respecting and submitting to anybody, including God who gave you your hair for a covering. Let her be shorn.

But if it is shameful, verse 6, for a woman to be shorn or shaved, see the picture here? It's shameful. Why is it shameful? And we're talking, again, in the context of the church. It's not, you know, you went through chemo and lost your hair, or you're shaving your hair in sympathy with somebody who did that.

There are exceptions to this. We're talking about normality here. We're talking about what is typical and what is the expectation in the church.

This is still in the church. The head of every man is Christ. And the head of Christ is God.

That's in the church. And we're talking about church function, church communication. You communicate non-verbally the way you dress and the way you fix yourself or don't fix yourself up.

If a woman is not covered, let her be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. If she's not going to shame, and it is shameful.

It doesn't say that she should be ashamed of herself. She's shaming the man. And by shaming the man, she's shaming Christ.

And by shaming Christ, you're shaming God. That's all connected. So verse 7 gives us the explication of all of this.

A man indeed ought not to cover the head, don't put a shawl over his head, since he is the image and glory of God. And by the way, this also means he ought not to cover his head with long hair. In this cultural context especially.

Ought not to cover his head since he is the image and glory of God. And Paul says, the long hair on the woman, if she's not going to use it to reflect glory and respect for authority, then it ought to be shaved off. Well, if the man is going to have long hair, he is equally shaming,

because short hair belongs to the man and long hair belongs to the woman for a reason.

Now what is that reason? Since he is the image and glory of God, the man is the image and glory of God. How so? Context, context, context. Is he just anywhere he goes and whatever he does, he's the image and glory of God? In praying and prophesying in the church, with an uncovered head, he is the image and he reflects the glory of God.

In this situation, the glory of God is at stake. Why? What is the body of Christ? Depends on the context, right? When Jesus is here in his first advent, he's born, manger, grows up, travels around. His body is crucified.

He bore our sins in his body on the tree. That's a body of Christ, in one set of circumstances and context. What's the body of Christ now? You're looking at it.

It's us. It is we. So, he, the man, in church, praying or prophesying with an uncovered head, with short hair and no shawl, is the image and glory of God.

But the woman in church, when praying and prophesying is going on, is the glory of the man. She's not the glory of the man at all times and in all circumstances. The idea is what is being communicated here in your gathering, in your fellowship, in your association with one another.

That's the context. It's not necessarily anywhere at any time. You could certainly apply beyond this, but his point is in your church services.

This is what should happen. The man ought not to cover his head, not with long hair and not with a shawl, since he is the image and glory of God. Now, in what sense is the image and glory of God? Well, this is the body of Christ.

And Christ has as his head God himself. The man is representing the image and glory of God. And God's head is covered for no one.

The Lord Jesus, in the realms of glory, is the head of all things to the church. Well, the physical representation of Christ on earth is the man. And Christ doesn't need to cover his head.

And by the way, Christ did not have long hair. Romans and Jews in 1st century AD didn't wear long hair. Man is not from woman, but woman from man.

In the same way that Christ is sent from God, and man comes from God. Man is not from woman. He doesn't say where man is from.

But you know this already in Genesis 1. Where is man from? God formed Adam out of the dust of the ground, right? He's from God. Man is not from woman. Woman is from man.

There is a divine order that is established. God could have created Eve out of the dust of the ground. He could have just scooped together some more dust and done it just like he did Adam.

Why didn't he? Ever really thought about that? Why did God put Adam to sleep and take something out of him to form the woman? Why didn't he make Eve first and take something out of her or have her just have a baby parthenogenetically? You know, a virgin birth for Adam. Couldn't he have made the woman and she could have been conceived by the Holy Spirit and produced the man? There's a reason why God does what he does. He made Adam first.

And he gave Adam dominance and sovereignty and authority over creation. Then he put him to sleep and he made a help meet for him. A help suitable for him.

A help. A compliment. A supplement.

God made her just like he made Adam. But he made her from a different source. And it is emblematic that her place is to be submissive.

And there's no way around it. That's why God did it the way he did it. And you can argue Paul's text and whether or not he had the right to say anything all you want.

Look at the creation story. Nobody argues that Genesis isn't accurate in the way God created people. So, man is not from woman.

Woman is from man. Nor was man created for the woman. The woman was created for the man.

God says, not good for the man to be alone. I will create a help for him. A help that is suitable for him.

He needs help. I'll help him. I'll make the woman.

For this reason, the woman ought to have authority on the head. On her physical head. She should have long hair.

Long is a relative term. Long relative to typical man's hair. Men's hair should typically be shorter than women's hair.

Women's hair should typically be longer. It doesn't have to be uncut. You don't have to be crystal gale and have it hanging down to your calves in the back.

But longer. Noticeably feminine hair. Long hair is feminine.

It just is. May not always be practical, but it's feminine. Ought to have authority on the head because of the angels.

Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman nor woman independent of man in the Lord. As woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman. All things are from God.

Judge among yourselves. I'll come back to some of this. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God

with her head uncovered? Judge among yourselves, is it proper? He's already said every woman who prays or prophesies with the head uncovered dishonors her man, her head.

He said it dishonors him. So he says, 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. Hair is given to her for a covering.

Hair is given to her is not actually in the better texts. Hair is given as a covering. What's Paul saying here? Nature teaches you not one thing.

We always quote it. Well, nature teaches that a man has long hair, it's a shame to him. Nature also teaches that a woman having long hair is a glory to her.

It's all taught by nature. Now what does he mean by nature? I don't look at baboons and chimpanzees. In what sense would nature teach me about hair length? I go to Absalom and he got his hair tangled in trees, so nature teaches me that that's a bad thing.

What does he mean by nature here? Think about the phrase, they talk about how behaviors arise in people as children and so on. They say, well, it's nature versus nurture. What is natural and what is imbued and imbibed due to training? What do you absorb from your parents and your upbringing and what do you bring naturally, what comes naturally to you? When Paul says does not nature itself teach you, this is normal human nature.

Men throughout the ages have understood not so much I need my hair to be short as I need to be masculine. Long hair is associated with femininity. It is the glory of the woman.

For a man to cultivate long hair that looks like woman's hair, sometimes you come up behind somebody and you get this gorgeous head of hair and they turn around and it's a man with a beard. You drive up to a stoplight and you look over in the car next to you and you think there's a girl sitting there and then they turn and it's this old creased-faced looking guy with this head of glorious woman hair. It looks like he's been to the salon.

Nature itself, your built-in God-given conscience and instinct tells you that it's not good for men to act like women. Effeminate women are a wonderful thing. Effeminate men are, to normal men, off-putting.

It is instinctively and naturally off-putting. This is why, and you'll forgive me, most men have what has come to be known as gaydar, which is radar for gay men. Sometimes it's just how they carry themselves.

It is how they speak. It is something intangible and you can't quite put your finger on it, but I can tell you I've seen actors on television or in a movie and I'll tell Patty, the guy's gay. He's in a manly part.

He's got a woman and he's buckling and swashing and doing all these things and I tell you the guy's gay. You go look it up on Wikipedia or something, yeah, he's out, he's gay. There is an instinctive understanding that femininity in a man shouldn't happen.

Men should be men. Women should be women. Part of femininity is to adorn themselves with beautiful hair.

It doesn't have to necessarily be lengthy so much as feminine. It's feminine. I'm back to meat offered to idols.

We don't have idols today. It's the principle. The long and short hair, it has gone down all through history, but what's really in view is masculinity or femininity.

Nature itself teaches you that if a man acts feminine, it is a shame to him. When a woman acts feminine, it's glorious and the extension is when a woman acts masculine, that's also a shame to her and it's off-putting. In the lesbian and bisexual community, there are a lot of women who want to, they feel like they're a man trapped in a woman's body, so they cut their hair short and they wear dark jeans and big fat wristwatches with studs on them and they hack and spit and try to act like men.

It's a shame to them in the same way that for a man to act effeminate and effete and wimpy is a shame to him. It's not the divine order. If God assigned you to be a male in the species, be a man.

If he assigned you to be a woman, be a woman. Because in both cases you have the opportunity to reflect the glory of God, but in two different ways. We could have had one gender.

Think about it. God could have made the human race. The angels apparently are genderless.

We don't know, I don't know, but the Bible doesn't distinguish male and female angels. It kind of gives me the creeps when you see girly angels, because all the angels in the Bible have the masculine pronoun. Gabriel, Michael, the angel of the Lord came and he said and he did and he went and up in the smoke and all the rest of it, the angel of the Lord.

It's always masculine. Angels appear to all be one gender and it's masculine, if you could call it a gender. Gender is only in apposition to a different gender.

But the Lord could have made all of us like the angels and any two of us could get together and have a marriage and go on from there. You could be androgynous and anybody could have a baby and maybe you have the first baby and I have the second, like this. God could have made it that way, but God is making two different points in the human race.

Both of the points are equally important. They have equal value. They are equally treasured in the mind of the Lord.

They are teaching points. One of them is authority and the responsibility that goes with authority. That's one of the major things God wants to teach and he has constituted authority all over the place and said I want this to be clear.

Here's how authority works. This is what it means. He has another equally important, equally valued point that he is making and it is submission.

It is obedience. It is trust. It is acknowledgement of something greater than myself.

Men have been assigned the opportunity to be illustrations and examples of that first point. Women have been assigned and given the opportunity to make that equally great, equally important second point. It's a different point.

The Lord Jesus has done both. That's why he comes twice. The first time he comes he's in the subservient role.

He's the suffering servant. The second time he comes he's making God's other point which is the conquering king. He comes with authority and power and judgment.

He didn't do authority and power and judgment the first time. What did he do? Submission and obedience. He learned obedience by the things that he suffered and he teaches us obedience by the things that he suffered.

So to say, I don't want to make God's second point. I want to make God's first point. I don't want to make the subservient's obedience point.

I only want to make the authority and responsibility point. Well, shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why did you make me thus? Isn't it more important to fulfill God's perfect will? Do you think God had a reason for making some of us male and some of us female? And to exploit that. The cup is half full.

To the extent that I can be pure and noble and lovely and of good report, honest. Let me think on those things and the peace of God will come to my soul and I won't be constantly wanting to be something I wasn't designed to be and can't be. I won't be trying to get society to change to make me happy.

They are complementary points. They are two sides of God's coin. Men have been assigned one part.

Women have been assigned another. It's not lesser. It's complementary.

It's different. And both of them are necessary. The man cannot get along without help.

Jesus can't be the conquering king unless he is first the suffering servant. We can't be saved unless he is obedient even to the death of the cross. Which one do you think is greater? Jesus coming as the conquering king and expressing all of the omnipotence that belongs to his office

as the second person of the trinity? Or do you think it's more impressive that he emptied himself, took on the form of a servant and came in the likeness of men and accomplished our salvation? He didn't accomplish our salvation by slaying the armies of Satan.

He accomplished our salvation by being obedient and being self-sacrificial. So of the two comings, which one do you think... They are both superlatively great. But if you had to pick the second coming or the first coming, which one would you pick? Man, I'm picking the first coming every time.

That's my salvation. That's my Lord and Savior. We love because he first loved us and loved us that much.

We learned everything from his first coming. Second coming is icing on the cake. It's completion and fulfillment and restoration of all things.

But man, the first coming... Everything depends on the first coming. Well, ladies, guess what? When Paul talks about not dishonoring your head and being submissive and obedient, you are partaking of the greater of the two points. If you had to choose, your assignment and your opportunity as a woman is greater than the man.

We're doing the authority and responsibility side and we're going to stand on the yellow footprints in front of God's desk and answer for all of our mistakes. Look, I gave you a helper and she was trying to give you some insight here and you just bull in a china shop and went your own way. Well, we've got no recourse.

Abigail can say, Oh, King, my husband's a fool. I'm doing the best I can here, but I've got limits. You know, the guy's an idiot, right? In eternity past, if you had a chance to wake up and pick a gender, I would go woman.

You've got more opportunity and more defense and provision and an excuse, if you will. But it's a wonderful assignment. Anytime you question, anytime the Christian feminist movement questions, what they ought to do is look at the Lord Jesus in His first advent.

Born of a woman, made in the likeness of men, servant, submissive, suffering, and yet through that, God accomplishes the key piece of the whole plan. It's nothing without that. And believe me, all men know that you're nothing without your woman.

It's a wonderful assignment. It's nothing to try to be confused by. Oh, it's the most difficult passage of the Bible because I don't want it to be true.

Well, just study a little more and you'll find out that you've got the better half. It's the bigger piece of the pie. It's the more fruitful and enjoyable and wonderful opportunity in my view and I think in Paul's view.

So anyway, that's where we are here in chapter 11. When it says, does not even nature teach

you, I don't care what anybody says, everybody knows that instinctively the order of things is for men to be manly and women to be feminine. That's what nature teaches.

And to pervert that and to reverse it is unnatural. It's nature in the sense of our human nature. Human nature generally understands.

This is why all down through the centuries, men have been men, they pick up the swords and go and fight and women typically provide the support and the help and tend the wounded and greet you when you come back and hold the fort and keep the country running while everybody's off getting massacred in an unworthy cause or whatever stupid idea some manly general had and the women keep the nation alive. So that's nature. It's not looking at the trees and the birds and saying, gee, I guess this bird has a long feather, we must both have long hair.

It's none of that. It's human nature, your human instinct, your conscience. And men having long hair, long hair is metaphorical for femininity, being effeminate, being effete, being wimpy.

A woman has long hair, it is glory to her. When a woman is feminine, when she makes the most of what God has given her, appearance-wise, and that is largely behavior, even more so than cosmetics, which is sort of a nice touch, but it's primarily behavior. When you have womanly behavior and feminine character, it is a glorious thing.

If anyone seems to be contentious, does anybody seem to be contentious in this day and age? Seen any contention? Go read the Christian Feminism. Oh, by the way, who's the guy? Johanan. He's a Crystal College graduate.

I cannot think of his name. Anyway, his last name is Johanan. There's a website you can look up.

It's called headcovering.com. There's a headcovering movement to return. This is like phylacteries and the tephelode on your door frame and all that. Let's get literal.

There's a headcovering.com. I can't think of Johanan's first name, but he's behind it, or at least he's quoted in it, and he's written some articles on the value of women physically covering their heads in this day. I agree to the extent that headcovering is emblematic of femininity and being godly and strong in your submission. The Lord Jesus was submissive, but He wasn't weak, right? Model your submission on the Lord Jesus.

Model your submission on the First Advent. You can go into the temple and swing a whip of cords when you need to, but it's not the pattern. What is the pattern? Know ye not that I must be about my Father's business? Know ye not that I must be about my husband's business? Know ye not that I am here to help my husband accomplish what God has put before him? Jesus said, I have not come to do my will, but the will of my Father.

Right? Women should model their submission in the same way that a man models his submission to Christ on Christ's submission to God. The man's got a head also. He's got to be just as submissive as the woman, but he is submissive to a different head.

Our responsibility as men is to be submissive to the Lord Jesus Christ in the way that he was submissive to God. A woman's responsibility is to be submissive to the man in the way, and it's a particular man, it's man singular, it's not all men, but father, husband, and in a larger sense, it's looking to and through him to Christ as Christ was submissive. The key is the submission of Jesus Christ.

He was submissive, but he was not weak. He was strong. Paul says, when I'm weak, that's when I'm strong, because God's strength is flowing through me.

And that's what we want to be, and that's what we want to do. Well, we're out of time for this morning, but we'll pick up here for the next section. We're getting into the happy part here, the Lord's Supper in verse 17, and we'll pick up there next time.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the wonderful insight and illumination and strength that it imparts to us as we see our roles that you have assigned us in this life from birth and in our circumstance. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will bring these things back to our minds and to our hearts as we see opportunities and face challenges to put them into practice.

We pray that in so doing, our lives will bring and reflect glory for the Lord Jesus and in your sight. We pray it in Jesus' name, amen.