

98-07-31a Colossians

Let's begin our study of the Word of God this evening with a word of prayer. Father, we thank you for the privilege of studying your Word together. We thank you for the encouragement that comes from fellowship with believers of like mind.

We thank you for the encouragement that dwells within us in the person of your Holy Spirit. We thank you for the sustaining grace that we enjoy because of knowledge of your Word and those things that the Holy Spirit uses to comfort us and to strengthen us as we face the challenges of life and as we enjoy the blessings of life. We pray, Father, tonight as we study the book of Colossians that God the Holy Spirit will give us insight and understanding.

We pray that our lives will be different as a result of coming to understand these things. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

We resume tonight in Colossians chapter 1 verse 15 where Paul begins talking specifically about the Lord Jesus Christ. Obviously, the Bible as a whole centers on Jesus Christ because He is the centerpiece of God's plan in human history. But it's great from time to time to find passages that speak about Him directly and personally.

The challenge for us is to find the application in those things. We can study Bible stories and see where a character, I say a character, actually a historical person, lived in certain circumstances and was sustained by God's grace or was disciplined by God's justice. But in the didactic passages, which is a fancy way of saying the teaching passages that directly address principles of the Word of God, we can sometimes listen and hear and appreciate what's being said, but it doesn't necessarily turn into something that is ammunition for application as we resume the mundane portion of our lives.

We talked last time about the transition and why Paul is bringing up the person of Jesus Christ at this point in the context of the book. We have spent quite a bit of time exploring the background and the reason why Paul wrote this letter. The visit of Epaphras, the situation of the congregation there in that region, the competing philosophies and ideas that are swirling around in that culture, the distractions, the desire to perhaps move away from Colossae and go to the big city where Roman culture is more and more pervasive and Greek art and literature that has survived down through is pulling and the influx of ideas, their stoicism and the early grains of Gnosticism and all these other isms that are competing for the attention and for the following of men stand in contrast and in some cases direct opposition to this relatively new teaching from Israel.

If you think about it in history, it would have been much more of a thing from Israel in those early days of the church. It was unheard of for the past several hundred years of Greek dominance and early Roman dominance that they find themselves in. There are many Ninoan and Cretan and other cultures that the Greeks and later the Romans had conquered and subsumed.

The Roman Empire obviously was a big melting pot for peoples and for ideas much as our country, the United States of America is today. We have also absorbed a lot of people with different ideas and philosophies of life. People often try to oversimplify that by saying it doesn't matter what the color of your skin is, we're all Americans.

But it goes beyond the color of skin. Certainly there is no room, especially in a believer's life, for prejudice or for unwarranted negative attitude toward people. But we have to at the same time be realistic and there are great differences in culture.

There are great differences in attitude toward family, in attitudes toward work, in the ethos of what people enjoy and how they talk when they get together, what sorts of foods they like, what sorts of activities they like. People bring their games, their recreation, the emphasis of conversation. How big are they on family history? How big are they on current family integrity? How much do they value marriage? How much do they value their ancestors or their parents? What is their attitude toward child training? What sense of responsibility do they have? And when you compare different cultures, whether they're from the Orient or from the Middle East or from Africa or from India or from the upper regions of Europe, wherever they may come from, and any others I've left out, the islands and Australia and so forth, all of these different cultures have built in ideals and ideologies and so forth that separate us and distinguish us as peoples on the planet.

This is something that God initiated. God divided man into peoples at the Tower of Babel. He said, I don't want you to be one culture, I don't want you to be one group in one place, all centered around this big tower doing astrological observations off the ziggurat and making up a one-world religion.

I want you to diversify. I want you to spread out and fill the earth and subdue it the way I commanded you to back even before the fall. And so God saw to it that that took place, and He divided man by language.

And I believe, at the same time, these additional differences, perhaps physiological differences, were put in place to encourage the human race to scatter. So it's not a bad thing to have these differences. Anyone from any culture can be a wonderful example of humanity if they're receiving the benefit of God's grace, and that's a decision that we all make.

You can make the best of and reflect the best of your culture and your history and your ethnicity and the people of your particular color, whatever they may be, if you have the grace of God at work. If not, it doesn't matter how altruistic or how admirable or how seemingly productive and wonderful you are. If you don't have a spiritual component from God's perspective in your life, who cares if your ancestors conquered nations or if your forebears have been great scientists and inventors or if they were all rowing dugout canoes with loincloths.

I mean, it doesn't really matter. The thing that counts is where do you stand before God? Where

do you stand in spiritual things? Well, this was the same sort of hodgepodge and milieu or melee or whatever you want to say, mixed smorgasbord of ideas that we have in this country today. It was very similar back in the early days of the Roman Empire.

People had to choose because now you've got options. You're not stuck off in one place with nobody but other people like yourself. It's just your family.

You're out on the steppes someplace or you're off in the rice paddies someplace or in the Middle East you're out living the Bedouin life or you're in some town where your dad and your grandfather and your great granddad going all the way back six or seven generations all did the same thing. They were all carpenters. They were all herders or whatever.

You just grow up doing the family thing. This world of ideas had opened up and it created confusion. People questioned the values that they had received.

All of the same things that happen today. We've reviewed that because it tells us how important it is to understand the truth in Colossians because it's not just a little quick theological treatise and it's not just a book that was written to people 2,000 years ago. The things that Paul is saying apply very much to us today.

It applies as we think about training our children and having answers for our children and young people who we have contact with. Sometimes it's not your children. Sometimes nephews and nieces and more distant children feel more comfortable talking to someone other than their parents about, well, why do you believe these things? What convinced you that biblical Christianity was really the truth? Because when they come up in junior high and high school they get hit with all of these ideas.

It's in their textbooks. It's in the history. It's in their classmates.

You look in any school in our area here and see people from all over the world still wearing their all-over-the-world clothes and coming from their all-over-the-world homes. So Paul is sort of shining a beacon, a searchlight through this fog of ideas to remind people of the faith that they heard of at first because these are believers. They're people who have been taught the Word of God.

But questions have started to kind of curl up the edges of their faith a little bit and started to kind of pry loose the joints and raise doubts and concerns and uncertainties, insecurity about whether faith in Christ is really everything, all sufficient to live the meaningful life, the pleasing life before God. And Paul is going to address and already has addressed some of the specific counter-propositions that are floating around in the atmosphere. So we have seen him greet these saints and tell them how thankful he is for them because they have grown in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Their faith, their hope and their love are evident. And for this reason he continues to pray for them and to ask that they be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. We saw those two different kinds of wisdom that Paul prays for.

And he goes on to say that they should be thankful to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints and the light. We have studied at some length what that inheritance consists of in other studies and we'll return to it when we get to the second chapter of Colossians. He talks about deliverance from the power of darkness and conveyance into the kingdom of the Son of His love.

And it's a reminder to us that one of the big differences that we find in Christianity, one of its great truths, we don't just... People, when they're talking about ethnicity and culture and so forth, they say, well, let's celebrate our differences. Sometimes in Christianity, when we're comparing Christianity to other religions, we say, well, you know, this is how it's different. And it isn't just being different, it's being true.

It's being right. And one of the things that people have missed in other religions and other understandings of Christianity is the personhood of God. At philosophy, most philosophies don't really have relationship with God behind them.

Christianity is fundamentally, and it's an old saw, but it's true, it is a relationship with a person, with the divine person of the universe. And therefore, it is completely different because our basis for thinking and living is different. We're enjoying a relationship with God Almighty.

We're not sticking to a code. Sometimes our Christianity turns into that, and it's such a shame. This is why Paul says that the kingdom belongs to the son of his love.

Jesus Christ is the expression of God's love. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. This is another distinctive that addresses a real problem that we have, and the only solution.

Many philosophies in most religions don't directly address human sinfulness. They may give a code of behavior and evaluate different behaviors as being good or bad or better. But the problem of human sin and of our helplessness to correct that problem is only truly outlined and truly addressed in biblical truth.

So Paul rehearses all of that, and then in verse 15, he begins talking directly about the son of his love in whom we have redemption and forgiveness. Who is it that brought us these wonderful gifts? He is the image of the invisible God. We saw last week this is the Greek word icon, E-I-K-O-N, from which we get I-C-O-N in English.

He is the image, the icon of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. We could do six weeks on this one verse, but we're going to try to cover it in one evening. But we need to spend

some time on this because it's easy to just blow on by.

He's the image of the invisible God. Okay, well let's just roll right along. What does it mean to be the image of the invisible God? Because we have seen this phrase before, haven't we? What is the other book that we're currently studying? It's Genesis.

And what did we see back in Genesis chapter 1, verses 26 and 27? You might turn back there because we're now up to chapter 9. Maybe we've gotten a little rusty on chapter 1. God says in Genesis chapter 1, verse 26, Let us make man in our image according to our likeness. Then in verse 27, So God created man in his own image. In the image of God he created him.

Male and female he created them. So Genesis 1 is at some pains to point out to us that there is an image of God. God created an image of himself.

Who is it? It's man. Man is created in the image of God. At least he was during creation week.

Day 6 of creation week. However, we know the tragic story of what happened in the garden, and we know that although man as a race, as a group, if you will, was created in the image of God, mankind has fallen. And we have marred that.

We don't, as individuals, certainly reflect the fullness of deity in bodily form. But Adam did. And Eve did.

And as a couple, they did. They were created in the image of God. And we still retain the vestiges of that.

We know from 1 Corinthians 11 and verse 7, for example, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11, 7, talking about the praying with head uncovered and so forth for a woman, he says in verse 7, A man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God. It doesn't say he was the image and glory of God. It says he is the image and glory of God.

Therefore, he ought not to cover his head. Now, what on earth does covering your head have to do with being the image of God? Because it goes on to say, Man is not from the woman. Woman is from man.

Nor was man created for the woman, but the woman for the man. For this reason, women ought to pray with their heads covered. Well, if you're a lady, when's the last time you got a scarf or a shawl or something and put it over your head before you prayed? Why do we not still do this? The Bible says a woman praying with her head uncovered dishonors her head.

Well, this is a fruitful passage to study. We can only outline the truth that is here. Therefore, he begins this by giving the answer in verse 3 of chapter 11.

I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ. The head of woman is man. The head of

Christ is God.

Now, if you've ever had Trinitarianism, the doctrine of God, you know that Christ, the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God, is co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. So in what sense is God the head of Christ? It sounds like there is subordination there, and there is. It is not a matter of value.

It is not a matter of intrinsic worth. It is a matter of function. Functionally, with respect to the human race, Jesus Christ is subordinate to God the Father.

He is just as equal. He is just as eternal. Every one of his divine attributes is undiminished, but he is submissive to the will of the Father.

This is a truth that unfortunately in feminist thinking, going all the way back a hundred years and more, that somehow a subordinate function implies lesser value or inequality in terms of intrinsic worth. And it's just not so. Look at the Lord Jesus Christ.

He performs a subordinate role. Look at God the Holy Spirit who performs a subordinate role. Being a subordinate is not a disgrace.

It is not a shame. In many cases, subordinates outshine their ordinates, their overseers, their authorities. There are ladies who are submissive to their husbands and their character and their faith and their adornment of integrity and character far outweighs and outshines their husband, but yet they are subordinate.

There are enlisted men. There are NCOs and staff NCOs that are better men, better marines or soldiers or sailors, better in every respect than officers with gold on their shoulders and on their covers. It isn't a matter of subordination making one inferior.

Subordination should not connote inferiority, but people have made that false equation and then used that to try to be insubordinate, which is a violation of the divine design. Jesus Christ is the ultimate example of subordination without inferiority. The head of Christ is God.

Verse 4, every man praying or prophesying having his head covered dishonors his head. If he prays with his head covered, he dishonors his head. Well, who is the head of every man? It's Christ.

So who is it that gets dishonored when a man prays with his head covered? Christ. What does it mean for a man to pray with his head covered? If I have a hat on when I pray, does that dishonor the Lord Jesus Christ? We have to understand what head covering signifies. And people are always saying, well, you've got to have the cultural truth.

It was a cultural thing. We're not in that culture, so we can pretty much overlook this passage. Not so.

The expression of these truths is different in terms of culture, but the truths are still there, and it's very important for us to understand what they say. Covering the head is a sign of submission. It is a recognition of authority.

It is the same as a salute. Initiating a salute is a recognition of authority in the military. Kneeling in Anglo and Saxon cultures of the past, bending the knee or kneeling for many generations in other cultures has been a sign of submission.

I just saw a fragment of a news report or something last night where there was a woman that had a pet pig, and the neighbors were all up in arms over this pig because this pig was disobedient and unruly and would go and tear through fences and root up gardens and do all manner of unhappy things. And the lady, I have no idea how this happened, I just saw maybe 30 seconds of it, but somehow the lady wound up with an animal psychologist or an animal expert of some sort. And this animal lady was explaining to the lady that owned the pig how to get over this problem and make the pig more obedient.

And the interesting thing, what I'm really working at to get to here, is that this pig would come up and make its little pig face at her and she would reach down and pet it. And the pig would lay down on its side and she would rub his tummy. Well, unbeknownst to 99.9% of the human race, pigs have their own little culture and body language.

And the authority pig, the master pig, is recognized by the other pigs. They will come up and rub his belly with their snout. So to rub the pig's belly is to indicate your submission to him.

So this lady, every day when she petted the pig and patted him on the belly, was indicating her submission. The pig said, I'm the top dog, I decide what happens around here because she's rubbing my belly. And in pig language, he figured he had the run of the place and he made the rules, and that's why she couldn't get him to obey.

And so the lady said, you've got to stop rubbing his little tummy. And I didn't watch it long enough to see if now he's going to come up and try to rub her tummy or anything like that. The point is that in pig language, rubbing the tummy is a sign of submission.

In the Greek culture, covering the head was a sign of submission, especially for ladies. And so Paul is using this and he says, do not let your authority man in your household, which is where your authority is, be undermined when you go before God to pray. If you have been dragged to church, if you have been dragged into spiritual function by your wife, if your wife has prodded you as the man to say the prayer for Thanksgiving dinner or to lead the family in devotions, you really didn't want to, but you were prodded into it, and someone else initiated that, and you go ahead and do it as the man, you're dishonoring Christ, because you are failing to function in your own authority.

Your only authority is Christ. The head of the man is Christ. And you report to Christ.

You don't report to your wife. You don't report to some guy that's discipling you. You don't report to some group.

You don't report to anybody other than Christ. The chain of command has been outlined here. God, Christ, man, woman, and by extension, children.

You get that when you go over to your passages in Ephesians and Colossians about children being obedient to parents. But that's the chain of command. If nobody else is in there, it goes from God to Christ to the husband to the wife to the children.

You will notice that there's no pastor in there. It doesn't say God, Christ, pastor, husband, wife, children, or God, Christ, pastor, wife, children, and just kind of edging out the husband because he's disinterested. This is the chain of command.

And Paul says, Every man praying or prophesying having his head covered, having his authority covered. He's not functioning in his own initiative, in his own authority. Somebody has badgered, cajoled, coerced, manipulated, in some manner motivated him to do this other than his recognition of his responsibility to Jesus Christ and through Jesus Christ to God the Father.

He's out of line and he's dishonoring Jesus Christ because he considers the motivation that somebody else gave him more motivating than Jesus Christ himself. If you don't value the Word of Jesus Christ and if you're not obedient to the Word of Christ, go back and read John chapter 17. If any man has my words and keeps them, he it is that loves me.

I will come to him. I and my Father will make our home with him. If somebody else can have a bigger effect on you than the direct commands of Jesus Christ, you're dishonoring Christ.

You won't do it because of what Christ said, but you'll do it because of the guys down at the church or the guys in your study group or your mentor in this mentor-disciple mode that's real popular now. That dishonors Jesus Christ. The husband is to be the spiritual head of the house.

Of course, this is not an ideal. We know that there are many situations where you don't have a model family with husband and wife and two point something kids, but this is the ideal. Every man praying or prophesying.

What is prophesying? It's teaching. It's communication of the Word of God. If you're teaching and you're not doing it because you're responding to the authority of Christ, you're out of line.

You're dishonoring Jesus Christ in so doing. Look at verse 5. Every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head. Who is the head of the woman? The man.

We're not talking about la cabeza here. We're talking about head in the sense of authority. If a woman prays or prophesies with her head uncovered, this is in disregard of her husband's

authority.

This is without her husband's oversight, approval, responsibility. She's taking the lead. She's wearing the spiritual pants, so to speak, and has usurped this function.

And Paul is not saying that there aren't cases where you have an unequally yoked situation where you're the wife and you're interested and the husband just is not. He may or may not be a believer, but he's not picking up that responsibility. This doesn't mean that you can't teach your children or that you can't pray.

This is the ideal because there were brassy women who were usurping authority from perfectly responsible godly husbands standing up in church thinking that they were speaking in tongues, thinking that they were prophesying, and you see this today. I was talking to a lady yesterday who grew up a nice Baptist. You know, we're right here in the middle of Baptist land in Texas.

But they'd gotten a lot of things that happened at their church and there had been a split, so they were looking for a new church. So her husband said, why don't you visit such and such a church? And she said, okay. He couldn't go.

He had work obligations. So she went. Well, the service started at 11 o'clock and they played some music and began to sing.

And they sang, and they sang, and they sang, and they sang. They had a little full orchestra going and for over an hour they sang. It was 10 after 12 and they were still singing.

In the midst of all of this singing, it was a charismatic service. People were running about. People were speaking in tongues.

At some point, one of the worship leaders stood up and said, greet the person next to you. And so the lady standing next to the lady I was talking to turned to her and started praying over her in tongues and just made her feel extremely awkward because she didn't know what the lady was saying or what it meant or anything else. It was a lady running all around the church, just doing laps, running up and down the aisles, waving her hands and unintelligible.

Well, see, these are ladies. Here are ladies going and praying in tongues. Here are ladies running up and down the aisles.

Here are ladies standing up and thinking that they're prophesying. This is what Paul is talking about. It dishonors their husband and by extension it dishonors Christ because there is a structure.

There is a function here. It's not a matter of worth. It's not a matter of inferiority.

It is a matter of function. Functionally, God has set up a system of authority. And women are not

to do that.

It dishonors their husband. Paul says women are to be quiet in church. They're not to make an issue of themselves.

They make an issue of themselves at home with their husband. And that makes it more fun for the husband because he's got to be ready for that. So every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head.

It doesn't mean she can't pray and it doesn't mean she can't prophesy. She just can't do it with her head uncovered. Her husband has to be exercising oversight.

That's what having the head covered means. You can't have responsibility for something without also having authority. This is one of the first things I learned in military life.

Authority and responsibility go hand in hand. Do not give me responsibility for something over which I don't have authority because that is anarchy. And if you have authority without responsibility then you have tyranny.

There is a balance there but they go together. Authority and responsibility. If I'm responsible for something then I need to have the exercise of authority to carry out that responsibility.

The husband is responsible for himself and for his wife. That's just the way it is. And for a woman to go outside her husband's authority in the spiritual realm to pray or to prophesy was happening in that church and it is happening today in the church at large.

It dishonors her head. It dishonors her husband. And her husband is going to be held accountable.

If these wives are running around loose it's the husband that will be standing on the little yellow footprints in front of God's great big desk up there in the sky on judgment day accounting for every careless word every careless action that both he and his wife have engaged in. The reason the husband has authority over the wife is the husband also has responsibility before God for the wife. And he will answer for what the wife does.

Who answered for what the wife did in the garden? Adam. He answered for both of them. So, he goes on to say she dishonors her head for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved.

In the Greek culture, what ladies got their heads shaved? Prostitutes. Unmarried women who gave physical favors to men for money had their heads shaved. Why did they have their heads shaved? They said, look, your head is not covered you're not married you're not allowed to be doing this physical stuff with your body.

All of this talk about well, the woman has authority over her body no, she doesn't. The husband,

or whoever should have been her husband or her prospective husband or her late husband has authority over her body. And when Paul says that if she prays and prophesies with her head uncovered she dishonors her head it is one and the same as if her head were shaved.

She's acting like a prostitute a woman who is not responsive to the authority that God placed over her. The woman is under the authority of the father until she's married then it is taken over by the husband. That's why you have the bride price and the transfer.

That's why the father gives away the bride in a wedding. And it's a terrible thing if any of you have done this, don't tell me it's a terrible thing in a wedding when the pastor stands up and says who giveth this woman to be this guy's bride and somebody pipes up and says her mother and I do. No, the father gives away the bride.

That's the structure. Biblically. It's no harm done.

It doesn't really matter what's said. Principle wise if you have anything to say about a wedding and you want it to reflect biblical values don't let anybody stand up and say her mother and I do. Who giveth it's the father's responsibility for the daughter and he passes that responsibility to a worthy young man who says I do.

I will. I will be there till death do us part. And that is the only condition under which the father relinquishes that responsibility for his daughters.

If a woman disregards her father and any husband that she could have had or does have it's like being a prostitute. They shave the heads of prostitutes. So that's the example that Paul is giving.

If a woman is not covered i.e. if she is not responsive and submissive to the authority, the God-given God-ordained authority that the husband has let her also be shorn. Just treat her like a prostitute. Shave her head.

But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved let her be covered. If you don't want to be viewed as a prostitute then pay attention to the divine design and don't be insubordinate. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head since he is the image and glory of God.

This is where we have our connection to Colossians chapter 1. Because Christ is the image of the invisible God. Man is the image of God. Yet we know there is a difference between your average man and Christ.

But what is the goal of our life as believers? To close that gap. To return to the unspoiled undiluted image of God that God designed man to reflect and which is found yet in the person of Jesus Christ. Why do we struggle with our sinfulness? Why do we grieve when we sin? Why do we acknowledge it before God and strive to do better in the area of sin? Because we have a responsibility as image bearers to have that image renewed and restored within us through the rehabilitating power of God's word and God's spirit.

To be Christ-like is to be the image of God. To be conformed to the image of His Son. Remember Romans 8.29? What a great passage.

Everybody remembers Romans 8.28. All things work together for good. That's the part we really hang on to. All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

And that's people who act like they're called. It's like we have the authority to be called the sons of God, but when are you a son of God indeed? When you act like one. We're all called as believers, but when do you really become the called? When you love God.

Then you are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, what did He do? He pre-designated them to be conformed to the icon of His Son. Very same word in Romans 8.29. He knew ahead of time that there would be those in this age who would come to faith in Christ.

He designated that group ahead of time. Pre-designated. All the stuff about pre-destination I think has gone in weird directions.

Pro-orizo in Greek means to designate ahead of time. You can say, everybody that comes to the store between 8 and 11 for our big sale is going to get a free set of sheets. You've pre-designated the group from 8 to 11 as those who will receive sheets.

God pre-designated church age believers, those who come to faith in Christ between Pentecost and the rapture to be conformed to the image of His Son. It doesn't say anything in the Bible about conforming Israel to the image of His Son. It doesn't say anything about conforming the patriarchs or any of the other generations, the millennial saints or the tribulational saints.

It is the church, the body and the bride that has been pre-designated. It's a category of believers in human history. It is one segment of the larger group of all believers that has been pre-designated to be conformed to the image of His Son.

We have the opportunity to pursue that image of God that Jesus Christ is, to be restored, to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, to put on the new man, as Paul says over in Corinthians, that is created in the likeness of its maker. All of that ties us to Jesus Christ because He is the image of the invisible God and to be conformed to the image of His Son is to be conformed to God, to be restored to the image of God in Genesis chapter 1. So, we don't want to go breezing through Colossians and miss when it says, Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God. Why is Christ the worthy goal to pursue in all of this world of competing religions and philosophies and ideas about what's right and what's good and what's fruitful and what's useful and what's productive and what's meaningful in life? Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God.

To be conformed to Him is to fulfill the purpose for which God created man in Genesis chapter 1. What other competing goal do you want to put next to being conformed to the image of Christ? He is the image of God. What higher thing can you think of than the image of God? What fuller, more complete thing can you think of than the image of God? If you are in the process of being transformed by the renewing of your mind to be the image of God and to reflect His glory, what else is there? What are you going to add to that? That's the complete thing. That's the ultimate, infinite goal.

So it's an important concept to remember that Christ is an image of God and that we are being conformed to His image and that image is a big deal. That's why we have 1 Corinthians 11 where a man ought to be aware that when he disregards the divine structure of authority he dishonors his head. A woman who disregards divine authority dishonors her head, which is her husband.

And that dishonor goes up the chain. You've seen these disasters in the military where something bad happens. You fly too low and cut a cable and people die on a cable car and heads roll all the way up the chain.

Who trained these pilots? Who's commanding this air wing? There is a sense in which that bad news rolls uphill just like bad stuff rolls downhill. And a lot of times the responsible parties are reprimanded or rebuked or have some other negative impact when a subordinate does something because that's the way it works. So we can't say, well, it doesn't really matter if I am making progress or if I conform.

Yes, it does. It makes a difference because all of us reflect on Jesus Christ. In our marriage and in the spiritual realm of our marriage especially it's important to observe the responsibility to children, for wives, for husbands in the eyes of God because it reflects on Christ.

We're going to pause here and take our break. When we come back we're going to see a little bit more about the image of God and also what it means to be the firstborn of all creation. Let's pause and take a break.