

Captive's Corner



"Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"

2 Corinthians 10:5

Emmaus Correspondence School St. Louis P.O. Box 11051 Ferguson, Missouri 63135 www.emmauscorrespondenceschool.org

To God Be the Glory

In Genesis 2 and 3 we see that man was first in creation yet woman was first in the fall. This is very significant because once the mystery of the church, unknown even to the angels, was unveiled at the historical account of Pentecost in Acts 2 and in the teaching and instruction for the church in the epistles, it is the historical account of Genesis which God uses to teach us His order in His church. We see in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16; 14:34-35; and 1 Timothy 2:8-15 how the historical account of creation relates to the role of men and women in the church in speaking and leading as well as how it relates to the subject of head coverings.

In 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 God's Spirit gives instructions to the church that women are to wear a head covering when praying or prophesying. Several reasons are given why, and the first is that Christ is the head of man and man is the head of woman and God is the head of Christ. The word "head" is used to designate leadership or authority but not inequality. We can see this illustrated in Jesus Christ - God the Son. In His relationship with His Father He was equal, yet He humbled Himself as a servant to do all

We see in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16; 14:34-35; and 1 Timothy 2:8-15 how the historical account of creation relates to head coverings as well as the role of men and women in the church in speaking and leading.

the will of His Father. He did so even to the point of veiling His visible glory and taking on human flesh to die for sinful man (us) - Philippians 2:5-8; John 1:1-3; Luke 22:42; John 17. As the Son is equal to the Father in the Godhead yet is glad to be under His authority, so too it is to be with man and woman - Genesis 3:16. The head covering is a symbol or sign of God's appointed order, not a sign of inequality. By wearing it the woman shows submission to her head, God's appointed order, and even communicates the historical truths of Genesis to those present.

A second reason for the head covering in 1 Corinthians 11:7-9 also relates directly to the Genesis account of creation. The Holy Spirit says through the Apostle Paul that since man was created first and woman was created as a helper for man that she is the glory of man and man is the glory of God. So what significance does this have for the head covering? Well, the one who prays when a body of believers is assembled is representing that assembly in speaking to God. Also, when one prophesies, he or she is speaking forth God's Word to those assembled. So they are leading in speaking to the assembly. The significance then is that since woman is the glory of man, man's glory is publicly displayed when a woman prays or prophesies, taking the lead in speaking to the assembly or to God in the assembly. Therefore, man's glory (the woman) should be covered so that it is not man's glory that is shown forth in and from the body of Christ on earth. This is also one of the reasons why God tells us that women are to keep silent when the assembly gathered includes men. Since man is the glory of God, God's glory is shown as men take the lead in speaking in the assembly - 1 Corinthians 14:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:8-15 (These two passages are covered in more detail later in this paper).

Now, in verse ten of 1 Corinthians 11 the word "therefore" and the word "because" are telling us that the first two reasons given for the head covering result in a third reason. That reason is the angels. The question is obvious, "What do the angels have to do with head coverings?" Well, several very interesting points could be discussed regarding this question, but I am impressed to let it be settled with just one - God's glory! Look at the angels' own words in Isaiah 6:3, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory." Also, look at the revelation of Jesus

Christ communicated by His angel to the Apostle John, "To Him (God the Father) be the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen" - Revelation 1:1, 6b. In Revelation 5:11-12 millions if not billions (literally the word 'myriad' means an uncountable number by human means) of angels sing to Jesus, "Worthy is the Lamb ... to receive glory." Can you imagine it!? Clearly, the glory of God is preeminent in importance to the angels and should be to the church as well because we are the body of Christ on earth. 1 Peter 1:10-12 and Ephesians 3:10 tell us that the angels are very interested in the church, and God's wisdom is revealed to them as they view the church. Therefore, as the church obeys 1 Corinthians 11:3-9, the angels see that it is God's glory and not man's that fills the church and is expressed on the earth through the church. In this world system the glory of man is preeminent, which is why Jesus, Who is to receive all the glory, was murdered when He came into this world. Now, through Christ, the believer has been crucified to the world and the world to the believer (our deliverance from worldly influences) - Galatians 6:14; James 4:4. This only serves to intensely deepen the angels' interest because the One they have worshiped since they were created by Him has willingly veiled His glory and took on a form (flesh) lower than them in order to die to redeem His physical creation (especially man who was not only created lower than the angels but has had his fist in God's face ever since the garden of Eden) - John 1:1, 14; Hebrews 2 esp. verse 16; Psalm 85. Man, being sinful, has fallen short of God's glory. Yet, because of Jesus' sacrifice, everyone who believes on Him is put in union with Him. Therefore, in Christ we are exalted to a place in glory, in heaven, higher than the angels (Christ is seated at the right hand of God the Father in heaven) - Ephesians 1:20 with 2:4-7 and Hebrews 9:23. Christ in us is now our hope of glory - Colossians 1:27. We are even given the responsibility of judging the angels - 1 Corinthians 6:3. This is the height of amazing to us, so imagine for a moment how incredibly captured the angels are by God's affairs with man in His Church (the body of Christ). The fact that the angel Lucifer sinned and fell with a third of the angels because he attempted to receive for himself glory which was meant for God prior to man's creation only serves to increase the angels' fascination in observing whether or not God's glory is now being revealed in the very creatures He has died for and exalted above them in Christ to the very place Lucifer coveted. Jesus, still in flesh as a man, is now receiving the glory - Isaiah 14:12-17; Hebrews 2:7; Revelations 5:11-14. The term "in Christ" is common in the New Testament, especially in Ephesians. It captures the fact that we are utterly dependent on Christ for every spiritual blessing. Even the act of us being put in union with Him is of God's doing, not our own - 1 Corinthians 1:30; John 1:12-13; Ephesians 1:3. We forever remain dependent as

In 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 God's Spirit gives instructions to the church that women are to wear a head covering when praying or prophesying. Several reasons are given why and the first is that Christ is the head of man and man is the head of woman and God is the head of Christ.

creatures on Him/in Him - our Creator and Redeemer. To God be the glory. Let Him who boasts, boast in the Lord - Jeremiah 9:24. Of course, the head expresses itself through the body. The "head" (Christ) needs the "body" (the church) to fulfill His purpose of properly expressing Himself to the visible world. God's desire and purpose is to have many sons in glory! - Hebrews 2:10. Also, Christ needs the church in order to properly express Himself to the invisible world in order to resolve the great angelic conflict which is not visible to us and which I have spoken about above. So we see that the glory of God is of preeminent importance in both the invisible and visible creation. All is according to His purpose. He remains perfect and complete without His creation. He

also completes His people and not vice-versa. Yet, He has chosen to live through the flesh of man in order to accomplish His purpose. Jesus now lives in and through His people on the earth by His Spirit. Thus, through man, God's glory is to be revealed. In this sense, we are essential to His plan and responsible. This is a great mystery, to think that God has chosen to be dependent on His creatures (man) in order to make His thoughts and ways known to them and to the angels, as well as to conclude His plan for the ages. In the following verses you can further look into the angels' interest in the church: Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:11-28; Luke 2:9-15; Matthew 4:11; Luke 22:43; Luke 24:1-8; Mark 16:27; Matthew 28:1-8; 1 Timothy 3:16; Galatians 3:19; Acts 7:53; Luke 12:8-9; Revelation 3:5; 1 Corinthians 4:9; Revelation 14:10.

Now to 1 Corinthians 14 which says that when "the whole church assembles" (v.23) "let the women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves just as the law says for it is improper for a woman to speak in the churches (v 34, 35)." In the law (the Old Testament Scriptures) we see that after man was created first and woman was first in the fall God declared that woman was to have a submissive role in relationship to man - Genesis 3:16. See also Ephesians 5:22-23. So then, when in light of 1 Corinthians 11 do women pray and prophecy if 1 Corinthians 14 instructs women to keep silent when the whole church assembles? Also, why are women not to pray or prophecy when the whole church assembles? These questions are adequately answered as we look at 1 Corinthians 11:3-16; 1 Corinthians 14; 1 Timothy 2:8-15; Titus 2:3-4; 2 Timothy 1:5 and 3:15 with Genesis 2 and 3 letting Scripture shed light on Scripture so that we can clearly see it's intended instruction to us. Titus 2:3 states that the older women should "teach the younger women what is good, to be subject to their husbands, that the Word of God may not be dishonored." In 2 Timothy 1:5 and 3:15 we see that Timothy as a child was taught by his mother and grandmother. So we see that women are able to take the lead in speaking when those assembled are women or children. When they do, they should wear a head covering so that man's glory (the woman) is covered as she publicly takes the lead. The covering also shows the women and children gathered that she is submissive to the authority God has placed over her, and she is simply taking the lead in speaking because he is not present. She is not attempting to usurp his authority as Eve did in the garden.

As the Son is equal to the Father in the Godhead yet is glad to be under His authority, so too it is to be with man and woman - Genesis 3:16. The head covering is a symbol or sign of God's appointed order not a sign of inequality.

Can you see how the head covering would be a silent object lesson to teach other women and children the historical account of Genesis 2 and 3 (especially God's order and purpose in creation and man's order in the fall). It would as well teach them God's appointed order in His

church. Now, to answer the second question, God's reasons for women remaining silent when the whole church (meaning men are present) assembles in 1 Corinthians 14 are related to the historical Genesis account. 1 Timothy 2:12-17 says, "I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet for it was Adam who was created first, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, But the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression." Now, also notice that 1 Corinthians 14:3 and 31 tell us that prophecy is "speaking to men for edification, exhortation, consolation, and learning." Further, notice that 1 Corinthians 14:27 and 31 say that when there is speaking in the church it is "each in turn" and "one at a time." This includes prayer (which we know is prayer out loud because verse 16 says "How can one... say amen") and prophesying but not corporate singing because it is not "one at a time." The church can sing altogether, but not pray out loud or prophecy altogether. This would obviously be disorderly - v. 40. (On a mission trip in Nicaragua I experienced an assembly where every member typically prayed their own individual prayer at the same time, out loud, when they assembled. It was very confusing to us. The American missionary who started that assembly (church) said he had tried several times using 1 Corinthians 14 to instruct them that orderliness and edification requires "one at a time" when speaking out loud in the assembly. Yet, they preferred everyone praying out loud all at the same time. ☺). Also, "let the women keep silent" refers to speaking, not their participation in corporate singing, as verse 35 makes clear. So, it is easy to see that, since only one person is to speak at a time, this person is clearly taking the lead in the assembly while they are speaking. As just stated in 1 Timothy 2, women are not permitted to be in authority over (lead) or teach men. Paul closes the Lord's

instructions on conduct when the whole church assembles with "let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner" as He has just described.

Some would say that the Lord's instruction to His church in 1 Corinthians 11 and 14 was only for the church at Corinth at that point in time because of the culture of that day in Corinth. This idea is easily refuted from Scripture several times over. First of all, 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says that "all scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." Notice, it does not say "all but 1 Corinthians 11 and 14." In addition, the instruction to the church in 1 Corinthians 11 rests on at least three pillars of truth which are unchangeable regardless of geographical location, time or culture. The Genesis account of creation is real history which occurred long before Corinth was a city and long before the church was formed. It does not change with time, locality or culture, neither does the principle of the angles or nature in 1 Corinthians 11. Therefore, the instruction to the church which rests on these truths does not change. Further, in verse 16 of 1 Corinthians 11 Paul says, "we have no other practice, nor have the churches of God." Of course, he is referring to his instruction in verses 3-16. As to 1 Corinthians 14, Paul refers to the law (the Old Testament Scriptures, e.g., Genesis 3:16) not the culture in giving the reason or basis for these instructions to the church. Further, in verses 37-38 he says, "The things I write to you are the Lord's commandments, and anyone who thinks he is spiritual must recognize them or he will not be recognized." In verse 36 by a rhetorical question Paul informs the readers then and today that these instructions did not originate with man but from God, nor are they for the church at Corinth only. In verse 33 he applies the instructions to all the churches of the saints. Lastly, I refer you to 1 Timothy 2:8-15. The significance here is that Paul's letter to Timothy was written about seven years later than his letter to the church at Corinth, and you can see that the Lord's instruction to the churches did not change with time. These verses are further significant in that 1 Timothy is a letter which was not written to a church in a particular city but to a person who was to continue building on the ministry of Paul after Paul went to be with the Lord. As Timothy traveled from one city to another he was to remind the churches of the sound doctrine he had received from Paul, passing on what he had learned and applied to his life to good and faithful men who were to in turn obey it and pass it on - 2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Corinthians 4:17; Colossians 4:7; 2 Timothy 1:13. The church's fulfillment of its purpose has always run parallel to this God-given God-commanded process - Matthew 28:18-20. Are we applying and passing on the Lord's instructions in our assemblies (churches) today?

By wearing it the woman shows submission to her head, God's appointed order, and even communicates the historical truths of Genesis to those present.

In closing, verse 20 of 1 Corinthians 14 says, "Do not be children in your thinking but be mature." We fulfill this exhortation as we understand what the will of the Lord is and humbly submit to it - Ephesians 5:17; 2 Corinthians 10:5. As we do, God is glorified. Today, we have this choice. We can walk with tradition which, in the church has conformed largely to the culture of the world, or we can live/walk in the light of the Lord's instruction to us and His work on the cross through which the world has been crucified to us and us to the world. The choice is literally to walk with God or with the world. The Lord desires fellowship (to walk together in happy agreement ☺) with His church. Yet, how can He fellowship with us if our ways are not His ways, if He is walking one way and we are walking another way ☹? - Revelations 3:20; Amos 3:3; Galatians 6:14; 1 John 1:5-7. "He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches!" To God be the glory forever and ever - Romans 11:36; Revelations 3:22!

Take the Emmaus Road to Bible knowledge
Are you presently taking our Bible courses?
If not, write us today for a free course!