

Honour Your Head (1 Cor 11:2-16)

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[0:00] So 1 Corinthians chapter 11, starting from verse 2. I praise you for remembering me in everything, and for holding to the traditions just as I pass them on to you.

But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. But every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head.

But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head. It is the same as having her head shaved. For if a woman does not cover her head, she might as well have her hair cut off.

But if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, then she should cover her head. A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God.

But woman is the glory of man. For man did not come from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

[1:09] It is for this reason that a woman ought to have authority over her own head because of the angels. Nevertheless, in the Lord, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman.

For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God. Judge for yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?

Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him? But that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given to her as a covering.

If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice, nor do the churches of God. And that is the word of God. I will invite Moksi to preach.

Okay, so we are talking about covering your head. Alright. I got the right head too, Moksi. This is particularly mine, okay?

[2:16] But I think, I got it wrong, it's supposed men are not supposed to cover their heads, right? So woman, Isaac, take that off. Sorry, you can put it wrong.

It's just that I don't have anything to cover my head with. Now I think, I think, this passage, when Pastor William said, look, Pastor Albert, do you want to do this?

Oh, yeah, but it's not an easy passage, you know? A lot of things we don't understand. I didn't understand. I mean, simply just take this, the passage we just read literally, it may not be beneficial. Right? For example, like, why did women not wanting to wear head coverings at the time? And why did some of the men wanted to wear something on their head?

I didn't know it. Paul didn't say it. Right? So the, it's not easy to just explain. And just, you know, not knowing the actual, what actually what happened, we just take it literally.

[3:33] It, we kind of don't know the meaning. It is quite foolish at times. For example, I'm not saying that it's total foolish, like foot washing. I know some, some church communities, they would use foot washing as kind of serving one another.

All right? But what does it mean? You know, I tried it, and, and, and, and, Simo actually washed my feet in one of the, the ceremony at summer camp in Hong Kong.

And I said, it's ticklish, don't you? I just feel, feel funny, you know? You know? what, what, what, what's actually behind foot washing?

Supposed to be, serving, with humility. Okay? So, say, if we found out the meaning, Mike, you may as well go to wash the toilets.

That, I think that's more applicable. You know, or washing dishes for your parents. Tell Carys about that. Yeah. You know? Uh, I think, we need to know what actual meaning behind, uh, a lot of the things that, you know, they knew, the Corinthians knew what happened.

[4 : 47] And they, they knew what Paul was talking about. And we kind of been so far away, and it's in a different culture, and, and written in different languages.

So, we need to find out. So, let's, let's, find out a little bit more, and see how we can apply, this passage, in our, daily lives today.

Okay? Women, it's not just talking about women, you know? It's talking about men. Men, do not cover your head, Paul said. And, women, cover your heads.

So, it's not just addressing ladies at the time. It was addressing the whole church. So, what did it mean for me today? At the time, Paul was, um, was telling the Corinthian male and female Christians, the appropriate behaviors, as they prayed, and taught.

Now, not everyone, not everyone, but the one who prayed, and taught. Okay? Not everyone. Interesting. You know, sometimes, we overgeneralize things.

[6 : 01] He was just saying that, when you teach, or when you pray, men, take your head coverings off. That means, others, could have, their coverings on.

And, ladies, please, put a cover on your head. It was particularly, to those, who, maybe, leading worship, and preaching, then.

But, still, we need to find out, what it means, for us, today. Does it mean, that I cannot wear anything, as I preach? It will be interesting, to find out.

I think, the general principle, the application for us, today, is that, we should be, in our hearts, fearing God, and honoring, one another, one another, or husband and wife.

Some said, it was, the male and female, was husband and wife. Or, on the general term, male and female, brothers and sisters, in the church.

[7 : 07] Do we honor, one another, as we gather, to worship? Okay. Now, a bit of context. And, Paul had these, now concerning, phrases.

Okay. Chapter 7, chapter 8, chapter 12, will be, I think, will be very interesting, as we talk, we're talking about, we're talking about, spiritual gifts, in chapter, starting chapter 12. But, these were the questions, that the Corinthians, asked, Paul.

And, Paul, was trying to answer, and, gave them, you know, what he thought. And, actually, for what, Paul was saying, it reflected, the arrogance, of the, Corinthians, some of the, Corinthians anyway.

How they, practiced, how they, behaved, how they, treated, one another. It was, fair bit of, arrogance, and selfish, attitudes, in them.

So, Paul was, always trying to, sharing his own example, and using Old Testament, and teaching them, how to, put down, your own rights.

[8 : 19] I think, the last couple of sermons, William, and other preachers, have been, Isaac's been talking about that. You know, just give up your rights, for the good of others. Alright.

So, here, Paul, was addressing, the situation there, as, as the worship setting. The, these, attitude, ran through, in, and, you know, in the family, and amongst the brothers, in the marketplace, and the worship setting, and particularly, today, we're talking about, head covering, and during the worship. And, next sermon, we're talking about, the Lord's Supper. And, chapter 12, the, the functioning of the spiritual gifts, they were all in this, worship setting. It was chaotic.

And, Paul was saying, when we come to worship, let's have a bill of order. Don't just do whatever you want. Because, we're coming to worship God. Now, I'm not saying that only, you only do that during worship, and you can, and you can be different, as you walk out of church.

No, this should be, a whole life should be worshiped. But, if, if, if, if we even, we come to worship with, with these kind of attitudes, I can't imagine how you would behave, elsewhere.

[9 : 36] Right? So, this is what, Paul was trying to put right, some of the, egoism, this kind of selfish attitude, that, Corinthians had.

And, for, Paul, firstly, he pointed out, um, very interesting, um, order. He, he was trying to say that, there, there's actually, a divine order.

Okay? In verse 3, he said, but I want you to realize that, the head of every man, is Christ. Alright? We have no problem about that. Okay?

But the next, and the third question, that statement, is a little bit of a controversy. The head of woman is man? Isn't the head of woman's Christ as well?

Alright? But it's even, hard to understand, the head of Christ is God. I'm, the guy just said before, quote, equal, quote, glory, you know, just one God, but three persons.

[10:41] But what does it mean, the head of Christ is God? Is Christ, uh, inferior? Of course not. Now, I think, in, in this, headship, okay, kephali, that's, that's the word for head, okay, it had, mainly two different meanings, in the Old, in the New Testament.

One, is authority. We all know, yeah, the headship. The headship has come with authority, and we are to follow. Another, another, uh, explanation would be, the source, or origin.

Alright? Both, kind of, uh, had this, uh, in the New Testament. women. So, how do we understand this? The head of every man, is Christ.

So, Christ is our authority. Yes, of course. Alright. But the head of woman, is man. So, man is woman's authority. So, woman, has, hundred percent, no question, submission.

Is it true? different? I'm, I'm, you know, I'm trying to, um, you know, some, some ladies will probably have a different, um, you know, pushing myself here.

[12:02] Alright? And, does that mean that God has the, superior, authority over Christ? What did it mean? Interesting, eh?

And so, I, you know, I, I had, I had spent a lot, a lot of time to, even I took, I tried to prepare the week before. And, yeah, I spent many time to think, to read, to understand.

And, there is no, I, I think this, Paul was, deliberately, um, there's a bit of both, in this, headship. Okay?

But, I think Paul was not, saying, uh, the hundred percent, authority. And I say, in a way, look, women, not superior, are not inferior to men.

That's, true. Okay? This is not what, Paul was saying. Women, it's kind of, lower grade. No, of course not. And, he was not even saying, that women, had to go, you know, can only achieve, or come to God, through men.

[13:12] No, he's not saying that. Okay? So, I think we, we, we need to, yeah, we need to take away, this kind of, uh, human understanding, about, you know, inferiority, superiority, and things like that.

No. Okay? But somehow, it's like, men and women, we're equal, but we're different. And there is a divine order of that.

And Paul was trying to say that, you know, God created man first, and then woman. Adam had the image of God. It didn't, he didn't say that woman did not have the image of God.

But it's somehow, woman was created, via, this rip of man. Right? So it's, he, in a way, different. Are we getting, are you following me?

Okay? For example, New Zealand police. Okay? Uh, my nephew, Simon, just, had to finish his first year, in, in, in police force.

[14:19] He had the, I mean, even if, I see him, one day, if I was, he was with his colleague, in his car, if I was over speeding, alright, which I usually do, yeah.

Yeah, God bless me. Yeah. I had to confess. I have to confess. E.T. preached that this morning, I was, you know, I was convicted too. Right? Um, if he, and his colleague, they didn't know it was me, right?

So he was speeding, he called me, alright, and, oh, Uncle Albert. And then, he had to write me a ticket, right? And I just cannot say, oh, Simon, you know, I'm greater than you, right?

And you, you just, you just take the ticket yourself. I can't say it, because he's, he, in his uniform, he is greater than me. It's that sort of order.

He may not be better than me, and his status, certainly, is my nephew. in that sense, he was kind of lower, but, in his uniform, in New Zealand, law and order, he is greater than me.

[15:26] You understand what I'm saying? And, and even in the, in the, police force, there are, there are ranks, alright? He's a constable now, to start it off, you know, and he had the, he had the, um, privilege to meet, the commissioner, in Wellington, last year.

And he just cannot say, oh, look, you know, we're all police, let's, you know, let's go out to dinner tonight, but you pay. He can't say it, right?

Because there are, there's order, whether you like it or not. This is what God has installed, in our human, community, in our lives.

It, I mean, church, there are pastors, there are elders, they're not greater than us. They might not be better than us, but somehow God has put them there, with his purpose.

Same, parents. I think, I think our eastern culture, Chinese culture, is closer to the biblical culture. And I think in the western culture, it does not teach us anything about respect, right?

[16 : 36] To our elders. There are orders. that it's not just cultural thing, it's biblical thing. So, I think, husband and wife in this setting, yes, we're equal, but we're different.

because God has created us that way. All right? So, in this particular order, how do we, I mean, you have different opinions about him.

Hey, you might not like him, but he has the supreme authority, here in New Zealand. maybe until October. I don't know. Yeah. Yeah.

You understand what I'm saying? Yeah, there's authority. We need to somehow submit. Right? There are consequences that we don't.

But in the Christian setting, in the church setting, in the worship setting, what did it mean to this, to us, to respond to this divine order?

[17 : 44] Now, for the Corinthians, it demonstrated, in their, putting on, or not putting on, veils, or head coverings.

I believe, Paul was trying to say that, yes, there's an order, but you're not, oh, I do it because, you know, if I don't do it, I get punished.

I, you know, I have consequences, if I don't. I think Paul was not, it's not legalistic. You know, Christians, if we come, oh, because, if we don't, if we don't do this, oh, we bear certain consequences.

I think that, that religion, will really take us nowhere. Okay? So, when we come, when we worship God, it's more like, honoring God.

Okay? If we don't do this, we don't, we don't honor God, or we don't honor others. Okay? And second, um, principle that, Paul has given, was that, hey, listen, watch out, angels are watching.

[18 : 56] Angels are here, watching what you're doing. Of course, God's watching us, but also angels, were watching us. So, take authority, over your head.

This is what Paul said. And thirdly, appropriateness, and to natural law, teaches us that, in that particular setting, men, you don't need to cover your head, and, and, we have shorter hairs.

And women, if you don't cover your head, you know, even the nature, covers your head, with the long hairs. okay? So, we try to understand, what Paul was saying, and how, we can, behave, in our, present days.

How do we respond, to this, divine order, that God has given to us? Firstly, in verses 47, Paul was saying, that, every man, who prays, or prophesies, with his head covered, dishonors his head.

But, every woman, who prays, or prophesies, with her head uncovered, dishonors her head. It is the same, as having her head shaved. For, if a woman, does not cover her head, she might, as well, she might as well, have her hair cut off.

[20 : 13] But, if it is a disgrace, for a woman, to have her hair cut off, or her hair shaved, then, she should cover her head. A man, ought not to, cover his head, since he is the image, and glory of God, but woman, is the glory of man.

Now, look at it. Dishonors, glory. This is, it's kind of contrast. Okay. So, if a man, we don't want to dishonor God, and we don't want to dishonor, others.

in worship, when we pray, when we preach. But, on the opposite, when we, when a man, cover, when a man, have the, that does not have the head cover, he honors God.

All right. This is, Paul was trying to say, at that time. It's not, it's not about, yeah, legalism, that you, everyone, you're not, you're not, supposed to do this, do this, but, we do this, so that we honor God. We honor, one another. Now, this, um, cover, head, head, or not covering head, it's, it's not easy to understand, right?

[21 : 39] Um, especially when he says that, man, why, you know, I, I, I asked, quite a bit, you know, why would, not covering, your head, honors God.

And why would woman, cover, her head, will honor, the husband, and honor God. Okay. Maybe, it was, uh, some cultural thing, social things, at the time.

Now, it was, um, this, this particular, engraved, um, is something like, it was a, Roman Emperor, I believe it was Augustus, it was in a, pagan worship, he had his, head covered.

He was participating, or was leading, some sort of worship, um, pagan worship rites. So, maybe, some of the men, when they, cover their head, and Paul, was saying that, look, maybe this, the people, at the time, had their understanding, you know, when men, covering their head, had, it's kind of associated, with pagan worship.

So, if you want, if you do that, it cause others to stumble, and it doesn't honor God, you might as well, take your head off, or take your, head covering off. some, some commentators, um, believe that was so, and others, didn't know, yeah, because Paul, Paul really didn't say so.

[23 : 21] Okay. And for women, it's always been, a custom, a culture, to have their heads, covered, at the time. Only those prostitutes, the temple prostitutes, prostitutes, when they came from those, um, you know, the, the, heathen temples, they come to the market, they had their head, uncovered.

So, when, ladies, and during the worship services, if they, tie the head coverings off, it, you know, it would cause, others, discomfort.

Do we want, others, feel, because of us, being stumbled, and cannot, worship God, you know, with a natural, you know, heart?

So, I think Paul was trying to say that. Let us, let us, because of this divine order, let us submit to God, let us honor God, and let us honor, one another.

Appropriate things to do. Now, that may be one first thing, we can consider. This, um, one of the, uh, commentators is, trying to explain to us, a man, not to cover his head, will bring honor to God, glory, because, uh, he's the, image and glory of God, and woman is the glory of man.

[24 : 50] What's, what's trying to say, I, I, I tried hard to understand, but, you see, if you could, you'd be brighter than me. Okay, you understand? Okay, because, God is, man is created, by God, first, so he has the direct, kind of, uh, relationship, um, to God.

So, you don't need to cover your head, you can, just come to God, straight away. But because woman, was created, after, and he is, the man is the, his honor, so, with the head covering, he submits to him, so that, and that's appropriate way, to come to God.

On the opposite, if, the man, he, already had a direct access, he does not need to cover his head. But if the woman, did not have the direct access, he, and, he uncovers his head, he actually, was put, was, yeah, it's inappropriate, and he's, honoring, the man, instead of honoring God.

I think, this, honest, honor, or, dishonor, is one thing, we need to, understand. When we come to, worship, I'm not talking about, head covering now, today, but, what are some of the things, we can, honor God, and what are some of the things, we do not, honor God, during our worship services.

I think, in our groups, we can talk about it. And second, Paul was saying, angels are watching. It is for this reason, that a woman, ought to have authority, over her head.

[26 : 41] That means, the woman can control, you know, you can, exercise this authority, tell your head, what to do. Right? Because of the angels.

Angels are watching. I don't know, if they were, Paul was saying, it was, the celestial beings, the angels, you know, they're watching, good angels, bad angels, I'm sure, bad angels are watching as well.

Are you worshiping God? They could, they could, come before God, and they can, accuse us. But the, good angels, they're watching, you know, I'm sure, the angels, Gabriel, Michael, they will worship God, a lot better than us.

And, whether men, or women, we should come, not just because, the angels are watching, but the fact, they are watching. You know, so, let us, worship God, with appropriate, behaviors.

behaviors. And, thirdly, the, the, natural law, would, yeah, just, we, teachers, us, that we are to, act appropriately.

[27 : 58] Paul says, judge for yourselves. Now, you think about it yourself. You ponder, you know, is it proper, for a man to pray, for a woman to pray to God, with her head uncovered?

Does not the very nature, of things, teach you that, if a man, has long hair, it is a disgrace to him?

But, that if a woman, has long hair, it is her glory, for long hair, is given to her, as a covering.

Now, you might think, now, now, one thing, Paul was not saying that, man having long hair, is a sin. No, he was not saying that. But, it was a, natural, law, it was appropriateness, and it was a cultural thing.

Alright? Today, I don't know, many, guys, we still have, well, in human history, most men, do have shorter hair, than women.

Is it true? Generally speaking, apart from Manchu dynasty, you remember, all these guys, had long, long plaids, you know, it was, it was, if you did not have that, you know, you're unlawful citizens, in Chinese history, during that hundred and something years.

[29 : 20] Alright? But, there's just a few, incidents, in the human history. But, that's kind of a, yeah, it's kind of an accepted norm, in the human nature, and, obviously, this is not, strict, you know, it's

not, that's why Paul was saying, it's not a, you know, it's not a sin, if a man, if men have long hairs, and, and ladies have short hairs, but he was saying, that it's appropriateness, it used as an illustration, as a natural law.

Okay? So, sum up, what Paul was saying, well, apart from that, I always, I was reading some materials, it was there, that, very interesting, all Christian women, covered, the head, all the time, until the, Protestant, Reformation, that's 16th century, that is, the first, 16th centuries, of the, Christian church, all women, covered their head, coming to worship, it's only the last, five, six hundred years, that, the Protestants, us, Christians, kind of behave, it's, differently, even some, Protestant churches, women, ladies, cover their head, when they come to worship, okay, but now, today, we do not have them anymore, okay, so, what does, this, apply, for us?

I think, firstly, this passage, tells us that, we're different, men, and women, are different, and we have, our respective roles, and responsibilities, and even gifts, in, in our services to God, but the important thing is, do we honor God, and do we, honor, one another, when we, come to God, when we come to worship, I think, I think, in Corinthians, Paul is given, in the, in the settings, Paul is given, various, instructions, you know, he was quoting, for these, yeah, these, Christians, in Corinth, you know, they do whatever they wanted to, all things are lawful, they said, and Paul was saying to them, yes, all things are lawful, but not all things are beneficial, not all things build up, yes, I can do all things, but, let's, consider, before, we, you know, we just, so headlessly, doing things, in our arrogant way, let's, let's think about it, is the thing, I do, the thing, I say, beneficial to others, build others up, or do, the things we do, do I get, you know, enslaved, you know, I do this, I, I, I cannot, you know, I cannot help myself, not doing it, if, if that's the case, we're being enslaved, and then, in, in, chapter 10, last week, the sermon reminded us, do the things we do, honor God, so, head coverings, was the issues at the time, what, what are some of the issues, we can think of, I'm sure you can think of, something, let me know, if you have thought of something, but I, I share some examples, yeah, I think, especially this, in, we need to, now, I think, it's not just a cultural thing, it's not just a social thing, it's, it's a theological thing, this order, is given by God, it's created by God, and we're, even though we're equal, but we're different, okay, and we need to respect that, we need to follow God, you know, if they're parents, we need to honor them, please, we need to honor them, okay, if they're brothers and sisters, if they're leaders of a group, we need to honor them, they may not be better than us, all right, they may be in a spiritual, ups and downs at times, you know, but we need to honor them, okay, you need to honor Moksi, Moksi can be bad at times, but God has instilled Moksi in church, all right, I need to be accountable to him, all right, I don't use, force my order to the church, no, we need to serve, the greater the responsibility, the lower we need to serve as servants, right, but what are some of the things we can think about,

[34 : 21] I remember at times when we take people to overseas mission trips, I remember a few times we went to Thailand, or even I took Vincent and Eva to Indonesia, right, remember a long, long time ago, yeah, and you know, the local missionaries, you know, there was instructions, you know, boys, please, when they come to worship, have shirts, must have colors on, you know, polo, at least polo, no t-shirts, no shorts, no short shorts, all right, because respectable to God, to worship, and because if you do that, you cause others uneasiness when you come, when they come to worship, oh, look at these, look at these Westerners, oh, look how, how disrespectful they are, you know, look, we come, we come to worship with ties, and we don't need, we didn't need to wear ties or, or, or, or, or, or, or, or, or suits, right, but, but appropriateness, to build up others, to, to honor God, okay, and ladies, no, too thin, too little, too few clothes, please, you know, because they could identify you as some people immoral, especially in Thailand, or some, some places, in Southeast Asia, you know, this, this may be some of the things that, that we can think about, and today, for us,

PCBCs, I don't know, I don't know, think about it, what, maybe some of the things that we can honor God, or some of the things that we do not honor God, when we come to worship, personal opinion, personal opinion, I might not be right, maybe, we'd come, to worship, maybe just a little bit, too, too, too, casual, you know, if we honor God, I think we could be better with our time management, if we honor God, we should have proper attire, if we go to meet this, prime minister, I don't think you'll wear, shorts, t-shirts, but we come to the king of kings, do we honor him, do the things that I do, the things I say, the clothes I wear, do I honor him, do, maybe, do I, cause others to stumble, do I build up others, or do I let others down,

I think these may be some of the, um, contemporary, um, yeah, I think, we can think about, for the Corinthians, it was the covering of the heads, but what is for us today, in this 21st century, you know, when everybody talking about my rights, my rights, my rights, I think the sermon last week taught us, you can give up your rights, that is as Christian, for God, for others, that is the verse that we have just read, the verse of the month, you know, I can, I can do all things, but I can, I give up my rights, I can, so that others, more people come to know Christ, I serve, I will come, I will act as a servant, maybe, maybe, we ask God, to show us, how do we honor him, and that, when we come to see him, let's pray,

Father, just thank you for this, yeah, what, maybe I don't, understand still, totally, but, but Lord, your word, come with power, and that, what the Corinthians have, yeah, they done wrong, but Lord, help us not to do the same again, but help us to have wisdom, thank you for your Holy Spirit, in us, to guide us, into all truth, so show us, what are some of the things today, as we come to worship, how can we honor you, and what may be some of the things, that we do not honor you, and how do we build up one another, and help us Lord, not to cause others, to stumble, so pray that you be with us, and teach us Lord, thank you in Jesus name, amen, maybe two questions, you can talk about later,