











- 1  **“Truth to Transform a Worldly Church”**
Studies in I Corinthians
...”Gender Matters”
I Corinthians 11:1-16
- 2  **The Real Significance Of This Passage**
 - Paul’s argument in this context makes it clear that he is actually addressing, - from a theological point of view, - some deep and profound **gender issues** concerning the fundamental distinction between male and female.
- 3  **It is obvious that Paul is addressing a theological question here because his argument makes reference to:**
 - **The Trinity (v. 3)**
 - **The order of creation (v. 8)**
 - **The divine intent in the creation of male and female (v. 7)**
 - **The divinely appointed role of the woman (v. 9)**
 - **The doctrine of angels (v. 10)**
 - **A God-given sense of distinction verses 13-15**
- 4  **Outline**
 - **A Summary Of The Main Teaching Of This Passage**
 - **Basic Aspects Of The Text We Need To Consider**
 - **The Theological Arguments Paul Uses In The Text**
 - **Some Guidelines In Applying The Teaching Of This Text**
- 5  **The Controversy Continues**
 - **“Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism”** [the Christianity Today ‘Book of the Year’ in 1993, edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem]
 - In 1987, Grudem and Piper were among the cofounders of an organization called: **“The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood” (CBMW)** - www.cbmw.org
 - **“Evangelical Feminists.”** - Essentially, this movement holds the position that women should be allowed to hold the governing and teaching positions of elders and pastors in the church.
- 6  **A Summary Of The Main Teaching Of This Passage**
 - Even though Christianity had exalted women and restored the dignity which rightfully belongs to them; and even though there is a fundamental equality in the standing of men and women before God; still, **“Gender Matters”!**
 - i.e., God made a basic distinction between men and women in the order of creation and it is His will that this fundamental order be preserved! i.e. God ordained that in the creation of the human race, there should be **“maleness” and “femaleness;” “masculinity” and femininity!**
- 7  **A Summary Of The Main Teaching Of This Passage**
 - **The apostle Paul is teaching in this passage that it is wrong to do away with this fundamental distinction; ... to ignore the obvious difference between male and female and act in a manner which blurs the distinction between the two.**
- 8  **A Summary Of The Main Teaching Of This Passage**
 - **The most likely reason for this seems to be that God created both man and woman “in His image” [Gen. 1:27]; and yet each separate, distinct, and different from each other! - It would therefore seem that it takes both male and female to adequately reflect the true image of God. - Therefore, to destroy the distinctions between the two interferes with the full and complete image of God which He intended to manifest through the male and female genders.**
- 9  **A Summary Of The Main Teaching Of This Passage**
 - **Thus, our modern society, with its tendency toward androgyny and unisex institutions is yet another violation of the sovereign will of the Creator; it is a blow to the foundation of human society and a threat to moral sanity.**
- 10  **Basic Aspects Of The Text We Need To Consider**

- We need to distinguish between the importance of the underlying principle Paul is concerned with in this passage and the particular cultural expression [or manifestation] of this principle, which may vary among different cultures.
- We must pay attention to the concept of 'headship' which the apostle Paul refers to in this text.

11 The “Kephale” Controversy

- **Traditionalists** argue that it means “**person in authority.**”
- **Evangelical feminists** argue that it does not mean “person in authority,” but rather “**source,**” as in “source of a river.”

12 The controversial verse is I Cor. 11:3, which says:

- “*But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God*” ...,
- **Evangelical feminists** take this to mean: “the husband is the source of the wife” (an allusion to the creation of Eve from Adam’s side in Genesis 2), “as Christ is the source of the church.”

13 Wayne Grudem’s Arguments

- “**A word’s meaning is found by examining its use in various contexts. Kephale is found in over fifty contexts where it refers to people who have authority over others of whom they are the ‘head.’ But it never once takes a meaning ‘source without authority,’ ...**”
- “In 1985, I looked up 2,336 examples of kephale in ancient Greek literature, using texts from Homer in the eighth century BC up to some church fathers in the fourth century AD. I found that in those texts, kephale was applied to many people in authority ... but it was never applied to a person without governing authority (when it was used in a metaphorical sense to say that person A was the ‘head’ of person or persons B).”

14 Wayne Grudem’s Arguments

“Verses that refer to Christ as ‘head’ cannot rightly be used to deny the idea of authority.”

15 Wayne Grudem’s Arguments

- “A listing of several ancient texts where one person is the ‘head’ of another makes clear the meaning ‘person in authority over another.’”
- “The meaning ‘source’ makes no sense in key passages like Ephesians 5:23: ‘The husband is the head of the wife.’”
- “All the recognized lexicons (dictionaries) for ancient Greek, or their editors, now give kephale the meaning “person in authority over” or something similar, but none give the meaning ‘source.’”

16 In our text [I Cor. 11:3] Paul introduces the basic premise that everyone has a “head:”

- “*Now 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.*”

17 Paul is playing on the anatomical and metaphorical meaning of “head”

- In the culture of Paul’s day, MEN who participated in public worship with their physical head COVERED - brought shame upon their metaphorical head (Christ)!
- **HOW?** By perverting the image of their maleness and appearing in public in a ‘female-like’ [feminine] way!
- Likewise, WOMEN who participated in public worship with their physical head UNCOVERED brought shame upon their metaphorical head [their husband]!
- **HOW?** by denying their femininity and appearing with a Masculine image!

18 The Theological Arguments Paul Uses In The Text

- There is a reference and a comparison to the Godhead in verse 3b:
- “... *the head of Christ is God.*”
- There is a reference to the order of creation in verse 8:
- “... *For man did not come from woman, but woman from man ...*”
- There is a reference to the divine intent and design of male and female in verse 7:

- *“... A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man.”*

19  **The Theological Arguments Paul Uses In The Text**

- There is a reference to the divinely appointed role of the woman in verse 9:

- *“... neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.”*

- There is a reference to the doctrine of angels in verse 10:

- *“... For this reason, and because of the angels, the woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head.”*

- There is a reference to a God-given sense of distinction in verses 13-15

20  **Some Guidelines In Applying The Teaching Of This Text**

- “In modern cultures where the wearing of a hat or veil does not symbolize subordination, that practice should not be required of Christians. But women’s hair and women’s dress is to be distinctively feminine and demonstrate her womanly loveliness and submissiveness. There should be no confusion about male and female identities, because God has made the sexes distinct - physiologically and in roles and relationships. He wants men to be masculine, to be responsibly and lovingly authoritative. He want women to be feminine, to be responsibly and lovingly submissive.”

John MacArthur

21  **Some Guidelines In Applying The Teaching Of This Text**

- “As in almost every age and every church, some of the believers in Corinth were not satisfied with God’s way and wanted to disregard it or modify it to suit themselves. Paul anticipated their objection to what he had just taught. He knew that some would be inclined to contentiousness, but he could say nothing additional to them that would be more convincing than what he had already said.”

John MacArthur

- *“If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God.”*

I Corinthians 11:16