

SPIRITUAL ROLE OF WOMEN IN CHURCH
CHURCH ORDER – PART I
1 CORINTHIANS 11:1-15

THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

1. The Christian faith brought **freedom** and hope to women, children, and slaves because everyone is **equal** before God and in faith as believers in Jesus (Gal. 3:28).
2. Unfortunately, there are always those women who flaunt their newfound “freedom” in public meetings and **refused** to observe important **social** customs like covering their heads in public meetings.
3. While the New Testament does not permit women **elders** (1 Tim. 3:2), the women with a gift of **prophecy** were allowed to exercise it.
4. The order God established did not permit women to usurp the authority of **men** (1 Tim. 2:11-15).

KEY THOUGHT: Paul’s address on this topic was to **restore** order and to remind the Corinthians that God created men and women **differently**; however, that difference did not mean inequality or inferiority (1 Cor. 11:3).

GOD’S ORDER IN THE CHURCH IS BASED ON THREE THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS THAT ARE SELF-EVIDENT.

I. THE REDEMPTION OF SINNERS (1 COR. 11:3-7)

- A. There is a definite order of “**headship**” in the church (1 Cor. 11:3).
 1. The **Father** is head over **Christ**.
 2. **Christ** is head over **man**.
 3. The **man** is head of the **woman**.
 4. The woman is subject to man even though she is **equal** to man in Christ (1 Cor. 3:21-23; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 5:21-33).

B. There are clear **symbols** of this headship that must be respected to **honor** God (1 Cor. 11:4-7).

1. The woman is to have **long** hair and cover her head to show respect for her “covering” in **man** (1 Cor. 11:5-6).
2. The man is to have **shorter** hair and not wear any covering as he honors his **head**, Christ (1 Cor. 11:4, 7).

KEY THOUGHT: A godly Christian woman glorifies God and brings glory to man by submitting to **God’s order** and keeping her head covered in public worship (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:21-25).

II. **GOD’S CREATION ORDER (1 CORINTHIANS 11:8-12)**

A. God’s order of headship is created in part by the fact that man was created **first** (1 Tim. 2:13), and that woman was created **for man** (1 Cor. 11:8-9; Gen. 2:20-23).

B. There is no inferiority implied because Paul presented the **partnership**, as well as the headship, found in creation (1 Cor. 11:11-12; Gen. 2:24).

KEY THOUGHT: Man and woman are made spiritually **one** in the **Lord** and as such cannot do without one another (Gal. 3:28).

III. **GOD’S ORDER IN NATURE (1 CORINTHIANS 11:13-15)**

A. Nowhere in the Bible does it tell us **how long** our **hair** should be.

B. It simply outlines that there ought to be a **noticeable** difference between the length of men’s hair and the woman’s hair.

C. The woman’s long hair is her **glory**, and is given to her as a **covering** (1 Cor. 11:15).

D. Paul probably was not advocating that all women in every culture were to wear a **shawl** for a head covering, but he did expect them to use long hair as a covering and as a symbol of **submission** to God.

KEY THOUGHT: The important thing is the submission of the **heart** to the Lord and a public display of **obedience** to God’s order (Deut. 6:5; 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 6:1-4).

FOR FURTHER STUDY AND PERSONAL GROWTH

July 18, 2010

SUNDAY: ***The difference between men and women does not mean inequality or inferiority (1 Cor. 11:3)!*** The contribution by women to the kingdom of God is massive and truly only measurable by God Himself. The contribution of women within the local church is equally as daunting to calculate. However, in the wisdom of an infinite, sovereign God, He established certain order within the family and the church for His glory and our protection. The Christian faith brought freedom and hope to women, children, and slaves because everyone is equal before God and in faith as believers in Jesus (Gal. 3:28). Unfortunately, there are always those women who flaunt their newfound “freedom” in public meetings and refuse to observe important social customs like covering their heads in public meetings. The order God established did not permit women to usurp the authority of men (1 Tim. 2:11-15). Paul’s address of this topic was to restore order and to remind the Corinthians that God created men and women differently; however, that difference did not mean inequality or inferiority (1 Cor. 11:3). Ask the Lord how you can bring greater clarity into your life by applying the principles in 1 Cor. 11:3. **May the Lord bless your application of truth in your life!**

MONDAY: ***God has established a definite order to prevent chaos, not to pronounce superiority (1 Cor. 11:3)!*** God is a God of order. Just look at the intricate nature of His creation and the ecosystems He has created or the celestial dance of the stars and planets He so precisely maintains. The laws of physics and thermodynamics cannot be broken because He uses them to maintain His order in His universe. Therefore, it should be no surprise that He has established a definite order of headship in His church (1 Cor. 11:3). The Father is over Christ. Christ is head over man. The man is head over the woman with additional instructions and responsibility (Eph. 5:25, 28). In God’s order, the woman is subject to man even though she is equal to man in Christ (Gal. 3:28). Rejoice today that you belong to a God of precise order and sovereign power. ***May the time you reflect on the Majesty of God today bring you such peace, joy, and comfort that obedience to His plan is a source of great joy!***

TUESDAY: ***There are clear symbols of this order that show respect for God (1 Cor. 11:4-7)!*** The woman is to have long hair and cover her head to show respect for her “covering” in man (1 Cor. 11:5-6). Likewise, the man is to have shorter hair and not wear any covering as he honors his head, Christ (1 Cor. 11:4, 7). The issue is not the length of hair or to whom one answers, but a willingness to recognize God as sovereign ruler of His creation. Obedience to His wishes brings order and tranquility to His creation in the home and church. Why do you struggle personally with some of the commands from the Lord? Decide today that He is truly the One to cover you with His grace and mercy. Ask the Lord for forgiveness for your rebellious actions and joyously submit to His authority through your authority figures. ***May the Lord’s gentle hand reassure you of His tender care and provision in your life!***

WEDNESDAY: ***Honor is shown to God when His order and symbols are observed (Eph. 5:21-25)!*** A godly man shows respect and honors God by caring for His church and those within it by desiring to qualify as a deacon, even if never called to serve as one (1 Tim. 3:8-13). A godly husband loves his wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her (Eph. 5:25). A godly woman glorifies God by submitting to God's order and keeping the symbols of that order He prescribes (1 Cor. 11:4-7). Ask the Lord what adjustments you need to make in your life to bring Him honor and glory through your humble obedience to His established order. ***May the Lord be blessed by the humility of our hearts and the contrite nature of our spirits!***

THURSDAY: ***Man and woman are in a partnership with one another and with God (Gen. 2:24; 1 Cor. 11:11-12)!*** Man and woman are made spiritually one in the Lord and, as such, cannot do without one another (Gen. 2:24; Gal. 3:28). However, God's order of headship is created in part by the fact that man was created first (1 Tim. 2:13). Furthermore, woman was created to provide a helpmate for Adam (Gen. 2:20b-23). Paul was not pronouncing the status of woman as inferior when he presented the partnership, and its intended headship, that began at creation (Gen. 2:24; 1 Cor. 11:11-12). Man and woman are made spiritually one in the Lord and, as such, cannot do without one another. Stop and rejoice at the divine wisdom of God to create the complementary roles of man and woman. Praise Him for the blessings you may have received through your marriage now, or the one you seek in the future. ***May the wisdom and perfection of God become a source of praise and joy in your life!***

FRIDAY: ***Submission to God by men and women is important for harmony with the Lord (1 Cor. 11:13-15)!*** God has created a definite order in His creation. Paul here cites some of God's rules and directives for order within His church. Curiously, nowhere in the Bible does it tell us how long our hair should be. It simply outlines that there ought to be a noticeable difference between the length of men's hair and women's hair. The woman's hair is her glory, and is given to her as a covering (1 Cor. 11:15). Paul probably was not advocating that all women in every culture were to wear a shawl for a head covering, but he did expect them to use long hair as a covering and as a symbol of submission to God. When the holy, sovereign nature of God is contemplated, does it really matter what He asks us to do to please Him? We know He will not ask us to do something that is bad for us or for others. Pray for a spirit of contentment in the days ahead. Ask for His favor to fall over you as you become more obedient to Him in every area of your life. ***May obedience to the Lord become one of your greatest pleasures in life!***

SATURDAY: ***The critical issue is the submission of your heart before the Lord (Deut. 6:5)!*** First, we know that we are to love the Lord God with every aspect of our being (Deut. 6:5). Submitting our hearts to the Lord for worship places it in tune with the direction He has for our lives. We further submit to Him when we obey the structure He has given for our homes and His church (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:21-25). Even our relationships with the next generation are carefully outlined (Eph. 6:1-4). Do you find great pleasure in pleasing the Lord? Have you experienced the sweet fellowship of being in the center of His will? Where do you need to make adjustments in your personal relationships? Ask the Lord for the wisdom to know exactly where to start or who to ask for advice in this area. Seek first these important areas of order in His kingdom, and you will experience His peace and comfort. ***May the Holy Spirit be allowed to lead you into the sweet fellowship of obedience to a loving God!***