

I. Introduction: Paul instructed the Corinthians about the proper relationships between men and women in the church, and the authority that God had given to men to lead His people.

- A. Paul taught that men are God's chosen leaders given to the church, not because they are inherently better, but because He has selected them to fulfill this role by His grace.

II. Authority In The Church (1 Cor 11:2-16).

A. The Chain of Command (vv. 2-3).

1. Paul told the Corinthians that everyone is to submit to someone: God is in authority over Jesus, Jesus is in authority over men, and men are in authority over women.

B. The Covering of Heads (vv. 4-6).

1. Paul explained to the church that head coverings indicated subjection to someone, thus for a man to pray in this way was wrong, but it was right for a woman.

C. The Creation of Humanity (vv. 7-10).

1. Paul exhorted the Corinthian men not to submit themselves to the cultural standards of their day, but for men to humbly lead their families and their churches.

D. The Clarification of Paul (vv. 11-16).

1. Paul stated that men and women must depend upon each other, rather than compete with each other. They are created equal by God but serve Him as He determines.

III. Conclusion: Paul explained to the Corinthians that the attitude of humility was the real issue that God cared about, and that head coverings were not required for women.

Questions About: Authority In The Church

1. Whom does God choose to lead His church? Why do human beings generally reject submission to authority? Who does God tell us to submit to in the church? (**Heb 13:17**)
2. What word is repeated the most in this passage? (**1 Cor 11:2-16**) What does this word mean? Who's the head over men? (**v. 2**) Who's the head over women? (**v. 2**) Who's head over Christ?
3. What is the chain of command in the church? (**1 Cor 11:2-3**) How did Jesus submit to God? (**John 4:34; 5:30**) Do you submit to God? Do you submit to authority? Government? Elders?
4. What did head coverings symbolize in eastern culture? (**1 Cor 11:4-6**) Why did Paul say a man should *not* wear a head covering? (**v. 4**) Why did he tell women to wear a head covering? (**v. 5**)
5. How did Paul argue that men have authority over women? (**1 Cor 11:7-10**) How are men the glory of God? (**v. 7**) How did God indicate that men were to rule over the church? (**vv. 8-9**)
6. How did Paul clarify men and women's interdependence? (**1 Cor 11:11-16**) What did Paul mean that long hair was a dishonor to men? (**v. 14**) How was it a glory to women? (**v. 15**)
7. How did head coverings indicate someone was contentious? (**v. 16**) What does your attire have to do with attitude? What does it communicate to others? Does it communicate humility?
8. Are you humble or proud? Do you trust God? What is God's role in your life? Are you trying to redefine His role for you? Are you trying to tell God what to do? Will you submit to Him?

Prayer

1. Ask God to help you understand His role for you in the family and in the church.
2. Ask God to give you the strength to follow His pattern for you whether you are male or female.