

Summit Woods Baptist Church  
First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class

1 Corinthians 11:2-10

For the remainder of this semester, we will be in sections of 1 Corinthians that have caused many disagreements throughout the history of the church. As we approach these discussions together, it will be helpful for us all to keep a few things in mind. Remember that the content of this class does not stand alone. Rather, it works in conjunction with Pastor Bret's sermons and our Growth Groups. The intent is not for us to resolve every potential issue in class, or to try to anticipate the points of Pastor Bret's sermons, but to be better prepared to listen to Pastor Bret's sermons since we have already spent time reflecting on the passages during the week. As has been the pattern, we will consider what the Bible text says, but the larger conclusions will be left for Pastor Bret to preach in his sermons.

These chapters in 1 Corinthians address some topics on which faithful, God-loving, and Bible-honoring people differ in their understandings. Therefore, it is possible that some of us may lean toward a different understanding of a particular verse than the other members of our class or than Pastor Bret presents in his sermons. When this occurs, it is essential that we all remember that while we must be unified on the core content of the gospel and our church's statement of faith, there is room for differences among us on secondary issues about which the Scriptures are less clear. Where our understandings differ, we must remember not to be divisive and to intentionally extend grace to each other with brotherly love. Thoughtfully consider the questions "From where in the text do I get my understanding?" and "From where in the text might someone get a different understanding?" Our goal is to be learning and growing together as we all seek to faithfully follow our Lord Jesus.

Remember to begin your study early in the week so that you have time to really think (and keep thinking) about the passage without being rushed.

❖ Day 1

Read 1 Corinthians 11:2-16.

NOTE: The sermon on February 4<sup>th</sup> will cover verses 2-10, and the sermon on February 11<sup>th</sup> will cover verses 11-16. Both texts are included here (and will also be on next week's lesson) since they are so closely related. This week's questions will focus on verses 2-10, and next week's will focus on verses 11-16, but it will be helpful to have the larger passage in mind for both.

For these lessons, the sermon text is provided in a format that visually helps display the structure of the paragraph or section of text. The main verbs are underlined. Generally, the main indicative clauses remain to the left, and the supporting clauses are either directly underneath when they have equal priority to what comes before, or are tabbed to the right when the clause supports, develops, or draws a conclusion from a neighboring clause.

<sup>2</sup>Now I commend you  
because you remember me in everything  
and maintain the traditions  
even as I delivered them to you.

<sup>3</sup>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.

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<sup>4</sup>Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head,  
<sup>5</sup>but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head,  
since it is the same as if her head were shaven.

<sup>6</sup>For if a wife will not cover her head,  
then she should cut her hair short.

But since it is disgraceful for a wife to cut off her hair or shave her head,  
let her cover her head.

<sup>7</sup>For a man ought not to cover his head,  
since he is the image and glory of God,  
but woman is the glory of man.

<sup>8</sup>For man was not made from woman,  
but woman from man.

<sup>9</sup>Neither was man created for woman,  
but woman for man.

<sup>10</sup>That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head,  
because of the angels.

<sup>11</sup>Nevertheless,  
in the Lord woman is not independent of man  
nor man of woman;

<sup>12</sup>for as woman was made from man,  
so man is now born of woman.  
And all things are from God.

<sup>13</sup>Judge for yourselves:

is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered?

<sup>14</sup>Does not nature itself teach you  
that if a man wears long hair  
it is a disgrace for him,

<sup>15</sup>but if a woman has long hair,  
it is her glory?

For her hair is given to her for a covering.

<sup>16</sup>If anyone is inclined to be contentious,  
we have no such practice,  
nor do the churches of God.

1. According to this week's passage, is Paul pleased with the Corinthians' actions regarding the topic in this paragraph? From where in the text do you get your answer?
2. What is the difference between the 'traditions' that are to be kept, mentioned here and in 2 Thessalonians 2:15 & 3:6, versus the 'traditions' that are to be rejected, as in Matthew 15:1-3, Galatians 1:14, and Colossians 2:8?

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3. How does Paul's commendation here compare with the beginning of the next paragraph in verse 17?
4. If they are doing well, why does Paul address the topic of head covering?
5. Is the use of 'head' in verse 3 physical or figurative?
6. Which uses of the term 'head' in verses 4 and 5 are physical and which are figurative?
7. Are the rest of the uses of 'head' in verses 6-10 physical or figurative?

❖ Day 2

Read 1 Corinthians 11:2-10 again.

8. Is this passage speaking to men or to women or to both?
9. Who is dishonored if a man prays with his head covered?
10. Who is dishonored if a woman prays with her head uncovered?

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11. If covering the head is a sign of the woman submitting to man, then a man covering his head would be a sign of him submitting to \_\_\_\_\_ and not to Christ.
12. According to verses 14-15, what is the covering that a woman should have/use that a man should not?
13. In verses 6-7, Paul says for the woman to “cover her head” and that the “man ought not to cover his head” when praying and prophesying. What basis does he use in verses 8-9 to justify these instructions?
14. How are these instructions not contradictory to the equal standing between men and women described in Galatians 3:26-29? How does the relationship between Christ and God in verse 3 inform your answer?

❖ Day 3

Read 1 Corinthians 11:2-10 again.

15. Though following Paul’s instructions is certainly of benefit to everyone, for whose sake does Paul specifically mention in this week’s passage?
16. The word translated ‘angels’ is used in the New Testament to refer to both supernatural messengers and human messengers. Do you think the angels in verse 10b are supernatural or human, and what in the text might point you one way or the other?
17. Does the nature of the messengers change the point that the Corinthians should maintain clear gender distinctions (specifically with their hair) to honor the God-given differences between them and to avoid offending others?

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18. Is Paul's primary concern about the physical display itself, or about the heart attitudes that the physical display represents, and how does verse 10a inform your answer?

19. What is the heart issue that the hairstyles/head coverings represent in this passage?

20. What aspects of your understanding of this passage have changed after studying it more carefully this week?

21. What questions do you still have that you hope Pastor Bret covers in his sermon?

In preparation for Sunday, pray that we rightly and happily submit to God's authorities and that we honor Him well.