

August 3, 2025

God's Good News Story: The Church Alive & Growing
The Book of 1 Corinthians – Part 10 Chapter 11
Proper Protocol for Worship

Today we continue on our multi-year journey through the New Testament where we are seeking to understand the historical, chronological and missiological of the 1st Century Church so that we in the 21st Century Church can keep the 'CHURCH LIVE & GROWING'. As we have made our way through the Book of Acts we have stopped at various points to delve into other books of the New Testament that seem to have been written at that specific point in time. We just completed study of Acts 19 and it seems that at this point in the 30 plus year time span that the book of Acts covers, that Paul took the time to write to the Church in Corinth.

Paul **REMINDS** them of their **HIGH CALLING TO...**

1. Be Holy
2. Develop a Fellowship of Harmony & Love
3. Glorify God.
4. Have the Mind of Christ.
5. Be God's Sanctuary & Temple
6. Honor & Respect Faithful Spiritual Leaders
7. Live as Obedient 'Beloved Children' of our Heavenly Father.
8. Live Your Life With Integrity & Godliness.
9. Honor God in Our Relationships & Service
10. To Use Your Liberty In Christ in Loving Wisdom
11. To Make The Message of the Gospel a Priority Over Our Freedom and Rights.
12. To Follow the Example of Christ in How We Treat Others. **today in Chapter 11 we discover**
13. **To Honor Christ in the way we worship.**

Today's passage is a rather challenging one to fully understand as to how it applies and relates to modern culture and worship. But the key point can be summarized this way. We should seek to honor Christ in our worship and show respect for our fellow worshippers.

Proper Protocol Principles:

1. Christ is the Focus of our Worship

1 Corinthians 11:1... Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

1. Jesus **forgave** others. Our Savior taught us through His words and actions that we are to forgive others,
2. Jesus promoted **peace** and is referred to as the "Prince of Peace." - **Isaiah 9:6**,
3. Jesus made a priority to **teach people** the proper things to believe & the proper way to apply those beliefs.
4. Jesus was selfless. He came to earth, not to be served, but to **serve others**. Jesus said, "*Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*" - **Mathew 20:26-28**,
5. Jesus **obeyed His Father**. As His crucifixion approached, Jesus prayed to His Father, "*My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.*" If we want to imitate Jesus, we need to remain obedient during the difficult times in our lives, and not only during times of prosperity and calmness". Adapted from <https://virtualbiblestudy.com/lessons/1-corinthians/11/>

Proper Protocol Principles:

2. Follow Biblical Patterns in Worship

² I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the traditions just as I passed them on to you.

Paul has a pattern that he often uses to teach and challenge others. Before he goes into their problems and errors, he looks for something good to say about them or a reminder of their calling in Christ. He strives to show them what they can be and should be, then he dives into the problem that needs to be addressed so they can live up to their calling in Christ. Paul praises them for remembering and holding on to the ‘traditions’ or teachings that he had previously taught them. We can conclude from his following remarks that they must not have followed them completely, but they were trying. I think a key lesson to take away from this is that our worship should honor Jesus and be in line with Biblical patterns of worship and doctrine.

3. Worship Should Be Respectful and Show Respect for God and His Authority

³ 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. ⁴ Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. ⁵ But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as having her head shaved. ⁶ 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.

⁷ A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. ⁸ For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; ⁹ neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. ¹⁰ It is for this reason that a woman ought to have authority over her own head, because of the angels. ¹¹ Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. ¹² For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God. ¹³ Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? ¹⁴ Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him, ¹⁵ but that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given to her as a covering. ¹⁶ If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God.

This section of scripture has been ignored, maligned and misapplied for centuries. It is a very challenging and seemingly strange section. We should however keep in mind that problem in Corinth seemed to be disrespect and dishonor of God and of other believers. If you remember our discussion on ‘liberty’ and ‘freedoms in Christ’; it appears that the Church in Corinth was a self-focused group rather than a “Christ-focused” one. They placed their personal desires and opinions over the guidelines in the Bible and the teachings that Paul had given them.

It is a problem of respect and authority....they had none! From the very beginning of the Bible, we see that God establishes a proper order and a respect for His will and plans. We are not to 'do our own thing'. We may have 'Liberty' in Christ, but that 'Liberty' is ours to choose to follow God and honor Christ, not to exercise our own personal freedoms.

Remember ...It is About God, Not us!

All the talk about women and their hair coverings and men with their hair lengths are not really the key issue. They were just a symptom of the real problem – they did not want to submit to the authority of God and follow His commands. We can spend a lot of time on hair and dress, but the heart of the matter is that we are to approach God in Worship with a humble, self-less, respectful and obedient heart. The issues of the hair and clothing were mostly time specific issues of Corinth and their false-gods worship. One of those religions that focused on Dionysius. This Greek myth was one of gender confusion and sexual overtones. The male followers often dressed up and acted like women, and the women dressed and acted like men. (Sadly, we see this gender confusion and transgender issue occurring today). The point was that they were rejecting God's ordained roles and family authority patterns (traditions) that He had given in the Old Testament. The issue here was one of rebellion versus submission. The problem makers were rejecting the right of God in their lives and choosing to make their decisions based on their own selfish desires. The bottom line in **Genesis 1: 26,27...** ²⁶ *Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in*

the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

²⁷ *So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*

In summary, God designed us, made us and gave us rules to follow, we must follow them. A man is a man and a woman is a woman, don't go against God and choose your own path. You dishonor God and you disrupt the model plan of the Family. In God's plan He sets what we call as the Nuclear Family as the cornerstone of His plan. A Godly Husband/Father, who takes his authority and headship of the family seriously and lovingly. He works together with a Godly Wife/Mother who follows the lead of her husband to raise, teach and guide the children to be respectful, obedient and submissive followers of God that will one day rise up and keep God's Family Plan going through all time. Note: we may not 'like' this plan, but it is God's plan, when YOU create a universe out of nothing and hold it in place and create a human race in YOUR image, then maybe YOU can make YOUR own rules. But, until then, **FOLLOW GOD'S PLAN**. It is the best. Don't be hard-headed, selfish and disobedient!

4. Worship Should Be Offered With Personal Purity and Shared With Others in Harmony

¹⁷ In the following directives I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good. ¹⁸ In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. ¹⁹ No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval. ²⁰ So then, when you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, ²¹ for when you are eating, some of you go ahead with your own private suppers. As a result, one person remains hungry and another gets drunk. ²² Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God by humiliating those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? Certainly not in this matter!

Paul then addresses what happens when you don't follow God's rules and choose your own worship patterns. He zeroes in on one key problem...Disorder, Disrespect and Disobedience in the incorporation of the Lord's Supper/Communion in their worship times.

The Corinth Church was not showing proper respect and authority to God in their worship. In the early days Lord's Supper/Communion/Breaking of Bread was often held in homes. Without proper guidance and oversight you can see how quickly things could go wrong. Communion was designed to bring honor to Christ's sacrifice and to help bring a 'common-union', a fellowship among the believers. However, their self-centered attitudes instead brought about division and disrespect.

We can summarize Paul's teachings using this 4-point theme:
(adapted from Warren Wiersbe Commentary. pp. 605-606)

First, We Should Look Back (23-25)
Second, We Should Look Up (26)
Third, We Should Look Within (27-32)
Fourth, We Should Look Around (33,34)

First, We Should Look Back (23-25)

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Communion is a time to remind us of the great sacrifice that Jesus gave for us so that we could have forgiveness and salvation. We must remember His death, why He died, and how He died. As we remember, let's also personally identify and showing our acceptance of His redeeming work.

Second, We Should Look Up (26)

²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

Communion reminds of Christ's past work, but also of the 'Blessed Hope of His Return'. It is to be a vital part of the Believers worship until Jesus comes again for us.

Third, We Should Look Within (27-32)

²⁷ So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. ²⁹ For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. ³⁰ That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. ³¹ But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. ³² Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world.

Communion is also a time to reflect upon our spiritual purity. We are to partake in a ‘*worthy manner*’. We are to examine our hearts, identify and judge our sins, and confess them to the Lord. It doesn’t mean that we have to perfect in every way, but that we are intentional about recognizing our sins and failures and confessing them and living in a worthy, God-honoring manner. It also means that we are to be in right relationship with our fellow Church members. We can’t be ‘Right with God’ if we are not “Right With One Another”.

Fourth, We Should Look Around (33,34)

³³ So then, my brothers and sisters, when you gather to eat, you should all eat together. ³⁴ Anyone who is hungry should eat something at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment. And when I come, I will give further directions.

We are to be in Right Relationship with our fellow Church members as well. Remember, we can’t be ‘Right with God’ if we are not “Right With One Another”. We need to worship God corporately and contentedly, not in a vacuum, we should join with others.

Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 5:23,24... ²³ *“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.*

Communion is a time of Worship, Remembrance, Celebration and Fellowship., It should be participated in out of Respect, Honor and Love...for God and for One Another.

Take-Away:

Let’s follow the example of Paul and “*Follow the Example of Jesus*”. Let’s Love God with respect and in faithful obedience and Love One Another with mutual compassion and care.

**Follow Jesus...
Intentionally, Deliberately and Consistently.
Then we will Glorify God and
Encourage One Another.**