

A Woman's Role in the Body of Christ Part 2

Sam Soleyn
03/1995

Reconciliation and Freedom

...joy to be with you again. The reception from last evening has been wonderful and we want to continue this evening to try to open up some of the things from the word of God. Probably *the* message that has brought a sense of relief to the body of Christ, more than any other that I've preached, is the one on the role of women in the church. And historically, this subject has been perhaps the most difficult for us to grasp or to grapple with in the church because I think, perhaps, the enemy has done a greater work in dividing men and women from one another in the body of Christ than perhaps in any other area.

In the end of the age, you know, God is going to restore all the things that have been lost to us. We look forward to that because it is true that the glory of the latter house will be greater than the glory of the former house. (inserted - actual verse - "**The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,' says the LORD Almighty. And in this place I will grant peace,' declares the LORD Almighty." Hag. 2:9**) And I look forward to that - and I want you to know that I believe firmly that the women of the body of Christ are to play a pivotal role in the revelation of the true nature of the church. And when we have, when we oppress and exclude women from the body of Christ, we rob ourselves as men from a deeper understanding of the glory of the bride of Christ.

So I'm not pro-women and against men. In the kingdom of God you don't have to be that way. But I do believe in speaking the truth about the role of women in the church, not in any sense to cause an uprising of women against men, but to set in order, a heavenly order, within the body of Christ. And I think when we're all free in Christ, men and women, male and female, when we're all free, bond and free, slaves and masters, when we're all free, rich and poor, to be who we are in the Lord, then we all come to experience the maximum freedom that was meant for all of us. I am not free so long as any part of the body of Christ is in bondage. I am personally not free. Because - you know why? - I am

also of the body. And if the women are not free to be who they are in the Lord, I, as a man, am not free. To the extent that they are in bondage, to that same extent, I am also in bondage. And if we could only grasp that then perhaps our hearts will be open to receive the word of the Lord concerning the role of women in the church.

As we get further into this discussion, I want you to remember that. That is in my heart because, on both men and women, on *both* men and women, there are the restraints of God. But I'm satisfied that most of the restraints placed upon women are not the restraints of God. And I hope to speak to that tonight. And I want to go back to that Scripture that we talked about the last time I presented this message here. This is, in effect, finishing that message. So, if you've been listening to the tapes on these messages, get this one together with the previous one and look at them together. Because, you know, one of the unfortunate limitations of time is that you cannot fully develop many subjects that are, by their nature, so broad. You cannot develop and discuss them in their entirety in any one program. And so I labor with that problem. But tonight I hope to take another stab at it and perhaps we might see a little more of the revelation of God in this matter.

Christ and the Church Is the Profound Mystery

Let us look at the book of **Ephesians, chapter 5**, and I'd like to read from **verse 22 through 33**. I'd like to do this reading a little differently. I would like to begin at **verse 32**. Now, keep in mind we'll be reading from **22 through 33** but I'd like to begin the reading at **verse 32** because inasmuch as the verse begins with "**This...**", it implies that it refers to what has been going on before. Alright?

So he says, "**This is a profound mystery - but I am talking about Christ and the church.**" So everything that has gone on before is a profound mystery relating to Christ and the church. Now, he is revealing a mystery. He is revealing a mystery. If you're going to reveal something, and you use an analogy, the obvious presumption is the analogy that you are using is meant to be a vehicle for the revelation of the thing that is hidden. Right? The thing that is hidden is the mystery of Christ and the church. The analogy that is used to talk about Christ and the church is something we should commonly know about. And that analogy is the relationship between a husband and a wife.

Now, let's go back to **22** and come forward. Because I have covered much of this section before, I will not spend a great deal of time on what we have already talked about. I will go on from there, trusting that you will get the tape or that you will remember from our previous time together.

So he says, **"Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the church, His body, of which He is the Savior. Now"** he says, **"as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church - for we are members of His body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."** And then he says, **"This is a profound mystery - but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."** (inserted - Eph. 5:22-33)

Now, as I had mentioned earlier, and my previous emphasis was on this point. If this is a mystery about Christ and the church, in this reading, who is the wife and who is the husband? Now over and over again he says things like, **"Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church."** So in that analogy, he assumes that the husband knows how to love his wife and explains that as the husband loves his wife, this is the way Christ loves the church.

Now, he also said, **"Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord."** Now, it was presumed that any man would know how a wife ought to submit to her husband. But it is not to be presumed that every man knows how to submit to a husband as a wife. Right? But yet, a man is part of the bride of Christ - and so in that sense, he is part of that which has to submit to Christ. But he does not ordinarily know how to submit to anybody as a bride. You see? So God has given him a bride so that when he sees how she submits to him, he gets an understanding of what is expected of him as the bride. That's the mystery revealed.

It's About Trust

Now the other side of this coin is equally important. And in speaking about the role of women in the church, I want tonight to especially talk about the role of Christ. Because the freedom and liberty that women have to operate within the body of Christ is because of who Christ is - not because of the rules and regulations governing conduct, but because of who the Son of God is. And I want to set that piece up by saying to you: the reason that there is so much animosity between men and women in the church today is simply this: historically, men have given women *many reasons* not to trust men. No, if you think about it, historically - in the history of the human race, the woman has constantly been the

subject of the aggression of men, whether it's as recent as the war in Bosnia, where rape was considered a normal act of war, to the incredible economic suppression of women historically and even in this country.

I was reading the other day, actually it's been about a year or two ago, I got ahold of an old law book and I was reading some statutes from New York in the 1900s. And in the state of New York in the 1900s, a woman could not hold or own property. She had to hold it in conjunction with her husband. And we've all heard the horror stories of how men would place women in sanitariums, which is a fancy way of saying in hospitals for mental charges, because they brought charges against them that they were mental cases, so that they could, by the use of law, keep the property of the women for themselves. And that's been just part of our economic history in this country as well.

Some example of this in the Scripture is the story, for example, of the woman who had ten coins and she lost one of them. She swept the house and when she found the coin she took it to her friends and she rejoiced. (inserted - see **Lk. 15:8-9**) And you say, "Well, I don't understand that." Well, in those days, a woman was given a bride-price or a dowry, which was really her inheritance from her father. She was not ordinarily entitled to an inheritance from him. And so, when she was given this bride-price, it was usually given in coinage, gold or silver. That was considered her money. So what she would do is she would drill holes in these coins and string them on her clothing because her husband could at any time give her a writing of divorce for any reason - mostly the hardness of heart but for any reason. And when he did, the only recourse that she had against him was to take her clothes and leave. Now, being not stupid, she figured out that if her assets were liquid and portable, you see [chuckle], they're on her clothing, then she could take them when she was taken out or when she was kicked out. So when she lost, when her net worth was ten coins and she lost one of them, she experienced a net depreciation of 10% of her total asset. [chuckle] And when she found it, she made 10%. Okay?

But I mean even in the Bible there are examples, if we understand what's going on behind the scenes, there are examples of how men have mistreated women historically. I think there is coming a time - now I understand that not all men have mistreated all women. And I understand that some women have mistreated some men. I understand that. But I'm saying as a general rule, historically, men have abused women in a whole variety of cases. And it is the norm! And in fact today, even in our country, it's a common norm.

One of the great reconciliations that I'm looking forward to in these last days is the reconciliation between men and women in the church. As excited as I am about the reconciliation that's going on between the races and between cultures, I am also hoping that there will be a total reconciliation in the body of Christ and it needs to include men and women.

Now, what we need to see is a foundation for this reconciliation. And we need, by doing so, we need to understand what the fundamental problem is. The fundamental problem is that women do not trust men. Now, if women do not trust men but women become saved, and they are told that there is this one Jesus who really does love them, whom they, this Person whom they really can trust, what is the problem? The problem is: they will fear God, they will obey Jesus, but the hardest thing that I have found in ministry to convey to women is that they need, they can really trust Jesus. They love Jesus but trusting Him is a real problem because many women, even though - and the evidence of this is many women, even though they love Jesus and they know He will never leave or forsake them, they still have serious problems with their image. They still have serious problems with who they are. Why? Because even though Jesus *says* these things in His word, they still need to see a model that brings that thing from the word into them. That model is the husband. The Christian husband. Because you stand, Christian husband, in the place of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Anointed Headship

My wife loves her mother but there are some things about her mother that she really doesn't like. As far as I know, her mother is not a Christian. In fact, I'm certain that she's not a Christian. And that's not some bias on my part. After 19 years, I still need to see something - there's no confession of Jesus as Lord. As far as she's concerned, Jesus is one of the great teachers. So, objectively, she is not a Christian.

And there are things about her mother that really defeat Lucy when she sees in herself the indications of these things. One day she was carrying on about it, and I looked her in the eye and I said, "Lucy, I want to tell you something. You're nothing like your mother." I said, "You are born of God. You're redeemed by the blood and you're nothing like your mother."

Now I just said that to her just because the Lord told me to. Well, one day, I heard her talking to another woman. And she said, "I used to have a problem with my self-image in this area. And my husband told me, You're nothing like your mother." And she said, "It cleared the air for me." Now, I had no idea! Believe me, I had no idea that that little statement on my part vitally changed how she felt about herself in this area. I mean it was, you know, I don't believe in magic but it was like instantaneous. It transformed something in her. Why? Because, you see, I was God's appointed covering to her. It didn't oppress, my covering for her was not meant to oppress her but to liberate her in the truth. "And My sheep, My sheep hear My voice!" (inserted - actual verse - "**My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me.**" Jn. 10:27)

It's the same with the Lord. When we hear the Lord, we hear in the inner man. My sheep, this woman that God gave me, to watch over her and to care for her, when I spoke the truth to her, it went straight into her. Now, one of her girlfriends could have told her the same thing. But it would not have meant the same thing because, you see - now, here it comes - because there is an anointing on me in headship to convey that. It wasn't my words. It wasn't any phrasing of it. It was because I was anointed to *break the yoke*. Can you hear me, brethren? Can you hear me? I was anointed to break the yoke - it's the *anointing* that breaks the yoke. It's not a matter of who you are or what you say, it's not how you doctrinalize it. The kingdom of God is not given to institutions; the kingdom of God is given to *men! To men!*

He gave gifts to *men* (inserted - actual verse - "**But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: When He ascended on high, He led captives in His train and gave gifts to men.**" Eph. 4:7-8) - to human instrumentalities. And when I spoke the truth to my wife, it broke the yoke because, you see, it was Christ speaking through this house. This is one of many examples of how, by just speaking what is true, when we are in our places, the kingdom comes.

Now, I'll challenge you with the truth. Isn't it true, men, that you know exactly what to say to hurt your wives? Isn't it true? Nobody could hurt your wife like you. Nobody. Because, to you, she's one flesh. To you, she is vulnerable. Her emotions are open to you. Women don't commit adultery because of sexual excitement. That's not the main reason. They commit adultery because they need for a man to tell them something about their worth and value. That's the real reason. They don't leave you because somebody's better looking or, or any of that stuff that men think about. See, men think about performance - women think about love and affection.

I used to be, I had a legal-aid program for a number of years, and I talked to a number of couples in conflict, in the throes of divorce. And without fail, when they would come in, if adultery had taken place on the part of the man - if the man, excuse me, if the woman had committed adultery, the man would ask the question, "Was his rival better than him sexually." But you know what the woman would ask if it was the man who committed adultery? She would ask, "Did you *love* her?" Totally different questions.

Every man out there knows what I'm - every woman. The women in the audience are saying, "Yeah! Yeah!" Because they're two different frames of reference, you see. For the woman, the issue is love. I am satisfied that I have not met a godly woman who desires to be a rebel. But the truth is, the ones who, in a sense push aside their husbands, have men who have no freedom in the Lord themselves so they can't free them to be who they are while covering them in the process.

Government Is the Woman's Safeguard, Not Bondage

See, there are two aspects to this, to the kingdom of God in regards to women doing their work. One is the doing of the work, if you like, the helps. The other is the governments - that which watches over us so the work can be done. Governments is not to prevent the wife from doing her work or the women from doing their work. Government is to make sure - please hear me on this - I'll come to the Scriptures in a moment. But governments are to make sure that they don't go back under the curse of Eve because there are angels watching them and some of these angels know that they once prevailed against an uncovered woman. They know that they were able to beguile Eve and they're looking for a chance to beguile any woman in the body of Christ.

I have this question in me: Where was Adam when Eve was being beguiled? The Bible said, "She gave to her husband *with* her!" (inserted - actual verse - **"When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it."** Gen. 3:6) So he must have been *with* her. But he wasn't covering her. Why did Adam not say, "Get behind me, Eve, you stand there and I'll deal with you, Satan." Why did he not do that?

It would seem to me that Adam would have understood. This is, you know, she's of my flesh. Stand behind me so I can protect you from this deception. Weak men in the church is the real cause of women in rebellion. *Weak men*. And by "weak men," I do not mean just men who are namby-pamby. I mean men who abandon their headship role either because they're tyrants or because they're wimps. There's nothing Christlike about a tyrant. You know why? The Scriptures say that Christ washes her with the word. (inserted - actual verse - **"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word"** Eph. 5:25)

This doesn't mean just "He reads the Bible to her." I'll tell you what it means. It means, "He hears God for her." When God is speaking a word, if the men will hear the word of God for his wife and bring it forth and minister that word to her, it'll wash her and set her in order. I can't begin to tell you how many times Lucy will come to me and she will say, "Sam, I have this problem" or "What do you think the Lord would say about this or that?" Or, "I want to make this decision, what do you think?" And I've learned not to say to her, "Anything you want." When she asks me "What do I think?" I *owe it to her* to wash her with the word. I owe it to her to intercede on her behalf and ask God, "What would He have me say to the woman that He gave me?" And it has never failed, whenever I have broken open the word of God to her - brethren, I wish somehow I could convey this beyond words because the truth of it is so evident.

Whenever I have taken the time to ask God, "What would He want me to say to my wife?" - you know what? - He

never fails to give me a word because He knows He holds me accountable. And if I am asking on behalf of what He has given me, He will always equip me for what I - for every good work. This is no longer even a matter of faith. And when He tells me what I need to say to her, and I speak it to her, even if it's hard for her to receive, she will wrestle with it until she comes to peace with it. Most of the time, whenever God gives me something for her, it is perfectly what she's been looking for. And I cannot begin to tell you the numbers of times when just a word spoken to her ministered peace to her.

This is the intention of Christ - that we wash our wives with the word because, you see, it is not about a man ruling over a woman. Just as the woman is given to the man to represent how he ought to be in relationship to the Lord as a bride, in the same way, the husband is given to the wife to teach the wife that she can trust the Lord. Teach the wife that she can trust the Lord. Do you know where women will change in their security in their inward being? They will change when their husbands starts presenting Christ to them day by day.

Instead, the attitude of men has consistently been - even in the church - the attitude of men instinctively is: How can I keep her from doing thus and so? Rather than seeing that what she needs is to be watched over so the enemy does not interfere with her work. That she's watched over and preserved. Let me give you an example of this concept from the Scriptures.

A False Dichotomy

Look with me to the book of **1 Corinthians** the **14th chapter**. This is one Scripture that has been often used as a means of restricting the role of women. I'll read it to you. It's **1 Corinthians 14**, verse **33** and, **33 through 35**. Now, he says, **"As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church."** (inserted - **1 Cor. 14:33-35**)

Now...

...circles, is to separate between the worship service and the rest of the meeting. Let me ask you this: What is the church? Is it the worship service and is it the Bible class, or is the church the people gathered together? So if you're going to allow her to ask question in a Bible class, or even teach a Bible class on Sunday morning, but you won't let her do anything in the worship, you're contradicting yourself because you've artificially said, "This part is worship but

studying the Bible is not."

But that's not what it means. All you have to do to see what he's talking about is go back a few verses and he tells us what he's talking about. **Verse 26** says, "**What then shall we say, brothers? When...**" (King James puts it this way:) "**When the whole church has come together in one place...**" Do you know what the whole church in Corinth in one place was like? 40,000 plus people. You see, we have this idea in our heads that the whole church is just our group. Paul wrote this letter, **1 Corinthians**, to the church in Corinth. And of this church at this time there were probably close to 40,000 people. So he not only gives orders concerning the role of women in *that* type of an assembly, he gives orders concerning a whole bunch of other people. He said, for example, "Only two or three prophets should speak." What if fifteen of them wanted to speak? That's not your meeting. And he said, when they did that, they should speak in turn. It's in the same passage here. I just haven't read it to you. Read it for yourselves. He says, "**Each one should speak in turn, no more than two or three, and**" if there were no interpreter, they should speak at all. And he even restricts, to some degree speaking in tongues in that particular type of assembly. And he gives this tagline, he said, "**Let everything be done decently and in order.**" (inserted - **1 Cor. 14:40**)

Why does he not permit a woman to speak in that particular setting? You know why? It would be impossible, when all those groups came together as was true in **1 Corinthians**, they didn't all know each other. It would have been impossible to have provided a woman with covering under those circumstances. So he restricts that, he restricts the prophets, he restricts how many people can speak, and how and what order they would. He's giving a whole series of orders concerning the whole church together in one place. So what we do is we first decide what the whole church is - namely our hundred and fifty, three hundred, two thousand - and then we superimpose this Scripture on it and we say, "When we come together like this, we'll divide it between the worship service and we'll divide it between the Bible class. They can speak and ask questions in the Bible class, but they can't speak and ask questions in the worship service. I challenge you to show me one indication that this is a Sunday morning worship service.

It isn't there. And you can't imagine it there cause it just isn't. The difficulty would be: How do you cover a woman in that circumstance? Covering is not meant to inhibit the woman from doing her work; it is meant to protect her from attacks by the enemy. That's the point.

Authority - Not "Sunday Morning Worship"

Look again at another Scripture: This is the one from **1 Timothy, chapter 2**, beginning at **verse 11**. There he says, "**A**

woman should learn in quietness and full submission." (verse 12) "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner." And then he goes on to say that a woman **"will be saved through childbearing - if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety."** (inserted - **1 Tim. 2:11-15**) Emphasis on "propriety."

Now what does he mean here when he says, **"A woman should learn in submission, in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent."** Now, I want - we'll be looking at another Scripture in just a moment, but I want to say this. All of our interpretation of Scripture today seems to be within the context of things that we have made up as how the church ought to be. So, we have made up this idea that to serve God you come together in Sunday morning worship. Right? There really is no Biblical example of the church coming together for quote "Sunday morning worship." There isn't. It just isn't there. You say, "Well, what about **1 Corinthians 16:1?**"

It says now, **"Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made."** (inserted - **1 Cor. 16:1-2**)

What is he talking about? He's talking about the need to provide financial alleviation for the problems up in Jerusalem. And he gives orders to all the churches that he has an apostolic relationship to. And he says to them, "Lay by you..." If I say to you, "Lay by you in store..." - do I mean take it down to quote "the storehouse"? No, I mean "Stick it in your pocket. Put it in your bank account. Lay it by you. You keep it so that when I come you don't give me your spare change."

This is not about giving a collection quote unquote "at the church." This is talking about providing alms for the church in Jerusalem. He's saying, "Tuck it back and do it on the first day of the week." How could we possibly infer from that that he's talking about Sunday morning worship? Because he said "On the first day of the week..."? That was normally the day when people kept their accounts, those who had enough money to send anywhere. So he was saying, "*Regularly* tuck it back." And he's certainly not talking about giving it quote unquote "down at the church." That's an invention in our minds. He's saying, "Tuck it back by yourself. You keep it till when I come and then there won't be any -" How could you possibly get out of that Sunday morning worship?

I'm not saying you shouldn't meet. But we have created a holy day and we have created a high place to do it in. And we call that the church. The problem with the church today - one of the key problems - is that we have created some

ceremonies and some processes and we're substituting the life of God, the life of the body, for those ceremonies. These are the traditions of men and they're making void the law of God.

And here is one of the ways we have allowed that to become a burden and millstone around the necks of women. We say, "You can't preach in the Sunday morning worship." Well, where is the Sunday morning worship preaching even mentioned in Scripture? He's talking about the usurpation of authority. That's what he's talking about. The improper, co-opting of lawful, Biblical authority. That's why Aquila and Priscilla worked together in instructing Apollos. (inserted - actual verse - "[Apollos] began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately." Acts 18:26)

And frankly, God does not want a woman teaching a man without her husband. Why not? Have you ever heard of adultery? What is the, what is the source of most of the sexual problems between members of the church today? It's men meeting with women who are not their wives. Are we blind? Or is Sunday morning worship the entire circumstance of our existence. He's saying, "I don't want the women uncovered *for their safety*. That's why I don't allow you to teach or usurp authority over the man." He's not saying, "You can't teach." He's saying, "I do not want you exposed to unlawful authority."

Why? Because if what I'm saying is true, if the woman has a husband who is neglecting to care for her, and the man is paying her attention and she feels that she has worth and value to him, what is the danger in that situation? Or am I just, do I just have a wild imagination? This is for the preservation of both the man and the woman. It's not about keeping her from doing her work. It's just saying, "Don't let her do it apart from covering."

Authority - Not Hair Length

Now, let me go to the passage on covering. This is **1 Corinthians**, the **11th chapter**. And in this sense, we, this one should be tucked in, tucked in, to the one we just read in **Ephesians, chapter 5**. He says, "**Now I want you to realize...**" (This is from **1 Corinthians 11, verse 3**.) "**I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ...**" Now, let me ask you this: What does it mean when it says, "**The head of every man is Christ.**" It means the authority over the man is Christ. Could we go for that? Sure. In fact, the Head of the whole church is Christ. That's what **Ephesians 5**

said: The wife should submit to her husband as unto the Lord because the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. (inserted - actual verse - "**For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the**

church, His body, of which He is the Savior." Eph. 5:23) So when it says, "**The head of every man is Christ,**" he is talking about authority.

"**...and the head of the woman is man...**" The covering of authority over the wife is the husband. The covering of authority over the single woman is her father. The covering of authority over the widow is her mature Christian son. Don't we remember these things? Or have we become so dulled by tradition that even the word of God is of non-effect.

You know what's amazing to me? And I appreciate this comment that you have made to me more than anything else. You say, "When you say it, it just feels so right in my spirit." Well, you know why? Because we're all Bible-study people. We're all, we're scholars of the Bible but we haven't heard an apostolic assembly of the pieces that we already know. Why? Because an apostle is responsible to lay a foundation, a foundation in the kingdom. (inserted - actual verse -

"By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds." 1 Cor. 3:10) My preaching is apostolic. I don't say that to promote myself but rather to say to the church, "There are five gifts to equip the saints. And if you don't receive all five, you will be deficient in some way." (inserted - see **Eph. 4:11-16)**

It's not about individuals or personalities. God's given me an understanding as He does apostles of how the kingdom fits together foundationally. My desire, as I began this program, I said to you, my desire is that you *all* do your work - men and women - *fully*. And until we're all free to serve the living God, none of us is fully free. And the women are included in that, men. I'm not advocating the cause of a woman against a man - I'm just speaking out *for the church, for the church!*

I speak for the church. My message is not about the Baptist church, Church of Christ, Catholic church and the like. My message is about the body of Christ. I appeal to you on behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ for the freedom of His church. That's my message.

So when it says, "**The head of every man is Christ and the head of every woman is a man,**" he's talking about authority. "**And the head of Christ is God.**" That shouldn't surprise us. He submitted to the Father - in everything! - declaring, "I only do what I see the Father doing." (inserted - see **Jn. 5:19)** When people have problems with submitting to lawful authority, they're really not true followers of Christ. Because He embraced the ultimate of humility. Do you understand what it must be like for a man as powerful and as knowledgeable as He was, to order, to let every step, each next step, be ordered by the commands of heaven? That's a type of humility we haven't grasped in the church.

He chose, deliberately, to limit Himself to whatever, *whatever*, the Father was doing at the time He was doing it.

(inserted - see **Jn 5:30**) And I'll tell you this, my brethren, *God highly exalted Him*. There's a line of thinking throughout the Scripture - I wish I had time to develop this. I will the next time. The line of thinking throughout the Scripture about those who offer acceptable sacrifices and those who do not. There's a line of thinking that has to do with the priesthood of Melchizedek beginning with the high priest who enters the holy place and gives Himself, gives Himself, and all those who are of this order of Melchizedek are required to present their bodies as living sacrifices - if I read **Romans 12:1** correctly. (inserted - actual verse - **"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship." Rom. 12:1**)

So this is not about who is Tarzan and who is Jane. This is about who is like Christ. He was the ultimate in the humility of submission - and He said, it is said, **"The Head of Christ is God!"** because He submitted His head to the Father even unto death, death on the cross. (inserted - actual verse - **"And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross!" Php. 2:8**) This is the pathway to righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. (inserted - actual verse - **"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" Rom. 14:17**) Hallelujah.

So, with that in mind, can we look at this thing about head covering [laughter] - Glory to God! - you may, once you see it, you already know where we're going before you get there. I was amazed one time when I read the Scriptures that said that on the road to Emmaeus two men walked with the Lord after His resurrection and they said, after He had departed, they said, "And did not our hearts burn within us along the way as He opened the Scriptures to us." (inserted - actual verse - **"They asked each other, Were not our hearts burning within us while He talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" Lk. 24:32**)

I tell you, whenever God shows me these things, my heart burns with a passion for the perfection of beauty. Because those whom the Son sets free are free indeed. (inserted - actual verse - **"So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." Jn. 8:36**)

Look at this. Time is going. Let me look at this. It says, **"Every..."** Let's go now to, I'm in verse 3. It says, **"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. Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head."** Now he'll explain to us what that means. He talks about long hair in a moment. Now, I don't want you to get so hung up on this that you start going around with rulers measuring the lengths of men hair. But he's simply, he's going to introduce a concept of covering. And he's saying, "Don't wear long hair because hair is a sign of covering and what the covering is about is, if you're a man, wear your head uncovered when you pray or prophesy because you're in the presence of God - and you're acknowledging that you have a head that is covered by heaven." Okay? That's all it means. And then it goes on to say,

"And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head..." Now I want to notice very quickly, it says that she can pray and she can prophesy. [laughter] Glory to God, we forgot that, didn't we? It says she can pray and she can prophesy - but what does she need to do? Have her head covered.

But you say, "Well, does that mean she wears this doily on her head?" Well, let's look at it. It says, if she doesn't do it, **"it is just as though her head were shaved."** I don't know how you shave a doily off a woman's head [laughter], but I do know how you shave what? Hair. **"If a woman does not cover her head, she should have her hair cut off. If a woman does not cover her head, she should have her hair cut off; and if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, she should cover her head. A man ought not to cover his head.."** and so on. And it goes on to say, **"For long hair is given to her as a covering."** (inserted - 1 Cor. 11:6-7,15)

Now, if a woman is covered, don't bother her about the length of her hair. If she's under the authority of her husband, if they agree together, don't bother - this is not even about the length of hair, it's a question of covering. If she's in submission to her husband, proper authority, leave her - the husband, now, he needs to get in there and provide a covering for her so she can do her work.

Free in Christ

I want to close on this note. The reason that there's a difference between the domo gifts, which are gifts of government and they are limited to men, is because they are about the authority of Christ represented in the man. But they're not meant to keep the woman from doing her work. She is to do her work. The men have the ability to impart the gift; the women have the ability, like all of the rest of the church, to walk in it and to practice it. Let the women be free to serve the living God - and men, rise up and cover them so that they're free, *free in Christ*, to do all the works of God.

Now I want to close on this note. What, what can a woman do in the body of Christ? Under covering, she can do anything that the body of Christ can do because she is a type of the body. And if the body can't do it, then she can't do it. But if she can do it, or if the church can do it, she can do it. In the same way the church has to be covered by Christ, the woman needs to be covered by her husband or the proper Biblical authority. Is that clear? I hate to end a sermon like that, but is that clear? Now then, don't say that you don't know. I want to hold you accountable to free the women that they might serve the living God. God bless you! I'll see you next time.

