

1 Corinthians

# Wisdom & Unity

Meeting the demands of  
Christian life and living



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Starting where  
you are:

Any questions?



# 1 Corinthians 11:2-34 – The Ways of Worship

In this chapter, Paul's concern is for how believers come together for worship and two matters are addressed. First is the appropriation of cultural practices within worship. Second is Paul's objections to their behavior when they come together. In both cases, it seems that the culture in Corinth has influenced how Christians in Corinth relate to one another. The underlying question, then, is how might believers in Corinth unite around these matters?

Paul's response: ***consider your approach and practices of worship.***

## **Outline: 1 Corinthians 11:2-34**

- 11:2-16 □ Head coverings in worship
- 11:17-34 □ Communion as worship

*The following outline adapted, in part, from The Bible Exposition Commentary.*

October 20, 2022



# Dress to be Inoffensive

A unified fellowship considers and  
corrects their approaches to  
worship.

# Head Coverings in Worship (11:2-16)

## 11:2. Praiseworthy commendation

1. They remember their example (see 11:1)
2. They remember “the traditions”

## 11:3-7. Redemption: Order/”Headship” in the church

God, the Father □ Christ, the Son □ Man □ Woman

3. Subject to, not originating from (neither in spirit nor in nature)
4. Promotes order, not inequality (1 Cor 3:21-23)
  - a. God : Jesus - John 10:30; 14:28.
  - b. Man : Woman - 1 Cor 7:3-4, 21-24; Gal 3:28; Eph 5:21-33)
5. A response to culture of shame created by adhering to cultural norms

October 20, 2022

# Head Coverings in Worship (11:2-16) cont'd.

## 11:8-12. Creation: Order/"Headship" in the church

1. Follows God's creative design (vs. 8)
2. Follows God's creative intent (vs. 9)
3. Frames Paul's argument (v. 10)
4. Furthers Paul's appeal for unity and equality (v. 11-12; Rom 11:36; Gal 3:28)

## 11:13-16. Nature: Order/"Headship" in the church

5. Appeal to reason (vs. 13)
6. Shame/Honor (vs. 14-15)
7. The means of demonstrating submission to God is open to cultural interpretation (vs. 16)

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# Communion as Worship (11:17-34)

## 11:17a. Paul's condemnation

Acts 2:42, 46 exemplify how the church should gather for table fellowship – in Corinth, *Love (agape) Feasts*. Compare and contrast that with the selfish individualism and spiritual abuse that follows here.

## 11:17b-22. Confront selfish individualism

*The Problem:* A distortion of unified community

- Rich members indulged on their abundance
- Poorer members suffered from their lack.

# Communion as Worship (11:17-34) cont'd.

## 11:23-34. Correct spiritual abuse

Paul counters the distorted image of a unified community with a corrective found in an earlier example of table fellowship: The Lord's Supper, or Communion.

- **Step #1 (23-25)** Look back: Remember Jesus' sacrifice.
  1. Remember *that* He died
  2. Remember *how* He died

*The Lord's Table is not a monument to be admired; it is to be experienced.*



# Communion as Worship (11:17-34) cont'd.

## 11:23-34. Correct spiritual abuse

- **Step #2 (26)** Look ahead: Anticipate and proclaim Jesus' return (see 1:7-8).
  1. Live as a proclamation of saving grace (see 1 Thess 1:8)
- **Step #3 (27-32)** Look within: Reflect on God's saving grace.
  1. Acknowledge and accept the purpose of the gathering.
  2. Acknowledge and accept the Person for whom you gather.
- **Step #4 (33-34)** Look around. Discern the Lord's body.
  1. Recall Jesus' physical death
  2. Appeal for a unified church (see 1 Cor 10:17)

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**'til we meet again:**

- Reflect on today's lesson**
- Pray about today's lesson**
- Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-31**
- Next Bible Study: Wednesday, October 26**



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