

# *Divine Rules of Gender*

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*When two spouses exchange roles in the home, each tries to fulfill a role he or she was not created for. But in God's divine order, the strength of a man and woman lies in the particular attributes He gave each gender. These attributes make a man and woman what they are and equip them for what they are called to do.*

Sometimes God will say things in His Word that are so contrary to our natural way of thinking, so cross-grained to traditional views, that entire chapters in the Word of God will elude us. We don't have the slightest idea what He is talking about, in those chapters, much less how to walk in the truths contained in them. As a result, we just leave those truths out of our way of thinking.

One such chapter is First Corinthians 11. In verse 4, Paul says that a man prophesying or praying with his head covered dishonors his head. But in the next verse, he states that just the opposite pertains to a woman: But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head... (v. 5).

For years, certain churches translated these verses to mean that a woman who participated in a church worship service had to have some kind of hat or bonnet on her head as a covering. Then along came Kathryn Kuhlman. Ministering powerfully in the Holy Spirit, Kathryn had no hat for a covering, nor did she have unusually long hair. Yet she prophesied and prayed with her head uncovered, contrary to what the Scriptures appeared to say.

This made many of us stop and take a second look at First Corinthians 11. Here we have a revelation that the Apostle Paul deemed important enough to occupy the first part of an entire chapter - yet we seemingly have no idea what he was talking about!

Most Christians dismiss this passage as a simple discussion of the customs of Paul's day. But let's read these verses very closely and find out what they really mean.

*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God. Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered Doth*

*not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering. But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God. 1 Corinthians 11:1-16*

First of all, it is important to understand Paul was not a woman-hater. In fact, he did more through God's anointing to liberate women than any other man in history! Paul's teaching in this chapter is no exception. It does NOT put women into bondage; rather, it LIBERATES them to be all God has called them to be.

So what was Paul saying in this passage of Scripture? To every woman who loves ministry, Paul was giving divine order in two realms: 1) the natural order of the family, and 2) the divine order of callings within the family for the man and the woman.

Paul was making sure both the man and the woman fully understood authority. If either one creates a breach that breaks divine order, they weaken the family's resistance to the devil's attacks -- and it is Satan's priority to disband the family.

In verse 3, Paul wasn't discussing whether or not a man should wear a hat when he prophesies. He was talking about a man who has been both spiritually and domestically set into order by God to be the head of his home. But for any number of reasons, this man allows an overbearing wife to "cover his head" by coming between him and his position in Christ. As a result, the man "dishonors his head."

When a man surrenders his position as the head of both his home and ministry, he then dishonors his Head, Jesus Christ. In other words, the man is showing dishonor or disrespect to his Head by allowing a breach in divine order. He does this as he changes roles with his wife by letting her become the head of the home and a dictator over his ministry.

Let's look once more at what Paul said in verses 3 and 4: *But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.*

Paul says when a woman dishonors her husband by showing disrespect for both divine and family order, she is in effect praying and prophesying with her head uncovered. This both dishonors her husband, who is her covering, and Christ, who is his Head.

In these verses, Paul is trying to help us recognize when a wrong spirit is trying to gain entry into family order for the purpose of weakening it. By switching roles with each other, husband and wife are duped into trying to face Satan from an assumed position of authority outside of God's divine order.

When two spouses exchange roles in the home, each tries to fulfill a role he or she was not created for. But in God's divine order, the strength of a man and woman lies in the particular attributes He gave each gender. These attributes make a man and woman what they are and equip them for what they are called to do. The man has his role and attributes in the divine order of the family and home,

and the woman has hers.

It is evident from verses 14 and 15 that in the Corinthian church, it pleased God when a woman had long hair and a man kept his hair short. Why did it please God? Because just as a woman's long hair was her glory, the Bible also says it was given to her for a covering: *But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering* (v. 15). This covering was a symbolic, outward sign that the woman was in subjection to her husband and to Christ.

But for the man, it was just the opposite. It pleased God when a man had short hair because the short hair symbolized he had taken his rightful role as the head of his house and his ministry was not being covered or dictated by the woman. Paul thus implied long hair on a man indicated a wrong spirit at work in the Corinthian church. This is why he said in verse 14: *Does not even nature itself teach you that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?*

Paul's message in this verse was this: "Let's forget about customs and the cultural differences that exist from church to church so we can understand what God is trying to tell us here." For instance, there was the paganism of the Gentiles and the customs they tried to introduce into the church. There were also zealous Jewish believers who tried to bring Christians back under bondage to the law by observing Jewish traditions such as feast days and circumcision, claiming these things had a bearing on their salvation.

But Paul was saying, "Let's forget about these customs and take a lesson from nature itself. Doesn't nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a shame to him?"

We can learn a lesson from the entire animal kingdom on this point. Look at the respective roles that males and females play. They never try to change roles with each other and become feminine or masculine in each other's place.

Therefore, Paul was implying long hair on a man suggested a wrong spirit was at work, trying to get the man to break divine order by assuming the feminine role. Similarly, short hair on a woman suggested a spirit was at work, trying to get her to take the masculine role.

This issue of long or short hair being pleasing to God is no longer a consideration. Most of our modern-day teachers dismiss the whole issue because of what verse 16 says: *But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.* It is evident the real issue here was not long or short hair, but whether or not a wrong spirit was at work behind the scenes, trying to destroy the divine order of both the family and the ministry. This is also the issue that is pertinent for today.

Paul addressed the Corinthians this way because Corinth was a port town, steeped in idolatry and perversion. Prostitutes would shave their heads or braid their hair; some even performed perverted acts in connection with the temple worship of idols.

When men and women were born again in the Corinthian church, many of them would come in looking like temple prostitutes. Thus, the Apostle Paul instructed them in the truths of divine order,

saying in verse 5: *But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.*

Look at the last phrase in that verse: *...for that is even all one as if she were shaven.* This refers to the custom of temple prostitutes to chop off their hair or sometimes even shave their heads. Paul was saying, "Now that you're born again, why would you want to appear to all as if you were a temple prostitute instead of a godly woman under the subjection and covering of your own husband?"

Even today, when our customs in no way resemble the culture of Paul's day, there is a certain unspoken language that emanates from the clothes we wear and the manner in which we conduct ourselves. It is not too difficult to tell when we are in the presence of a female seductress or a male hunter. These persons are not only looking for sin - they are fully capable of it.

So we see the real issue in this passage was divine order. When is a wrong spirit at work behind the scenes, trying to destroy family order by getting the man and the woman to change roles with each other? Are the husband and wife trying to fulfill roles in their home that they were not created for?

This brings us to the understanding of verse 10: *For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.* This verse refers back to the first woman, Eve. Eve stepped out from underneath Adam's covering when she was deceived by Satan - the fallen angel who caused her to partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Notice that Satan didn't say anything to Adam; he went straight to Eve. Satan knew that HE couldn't convince Adam to eat the forbidden fruit; however, if the devil could deceive Eve, he knew that SHE could get Adam to eat the fruit.

This means that Eve wasn't responsible for the fall of mankind--Adam was. Eve was guilty of only one thing: breaking the divine order of the family by stepping out from underneath Adam's covering and leaving herself open to be deceived by a fallen angel. It was Adam who had the command to keep the garden; therefore, it was Adam who committed the treason.

Eve was deceived only after she stepped out from under Adam's covering. Therefore, Paul was saying in essence, *"For this cause, ought not a woman have a covering over her life because of the deceptive power of the enemy?"*

This will now help you understand what Paul is talking about in First Timothy 2:8-15: *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.*

Once again, Paul uses the first family as an example to help us understand this truth of divine order. In this passage of Scripture, he is speaking more on a domestic level than about gifts and callings, as he did in First Corinthians 11.

Everywhere the word "woman" appears in this passage, it is the same Greek word that means "wife." Paul is talking here about family order; so when he talks about a man who lifts up holy hands, he is referring to a husband whose hands have been on no other woman - a godly man worthy of being submitted to.

Understanding the context of this passage of Scripture helps us understand what Paul is talking about in verse 12 when he says a woman must learn in silence and not be allowed to teach or to usurp authority over a man. Paul couldn't be talking about whether or not a woman is called to teach or preach. Rather, he must be talking about the wife submitting herself domestically and spiritually to her husband, as in the Lord.

Think back to what Paul said in First Corinthians 11:5. *But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head....*

Prophecy is given for edification, exhortation, and comfort and therefore requires SPEAKING. Acts 21:9 tells us, And the same man Philip had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. It was God's will that Philip's four daughters prophesied.

So how can women exhort people through prophecy and still remain silent? How could Paul talk about women prophesying on one hand and forbid them to speak or teach on the other hand?

Any confusion is cleared up as soon as we realize what Paul was really talking about in First Timothy 2:12 when he said, *But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.* He was actually talking about the wrong spirit that is at work, trying to weaken the family unit by destroying divine order as the devil did with the first family.

How does Satan carry out this strategy? First, he works on getting divine order labeled as a bondage. His aim is to cause women to not only usurp authority over their husbands, but to teach other women to do so as well. This is what Paul meant in verse 12 when he said that a woman shouldn't teach or usurp authority over the man but to be in silence.

The phrase "to be in silence" means a woman is not to be in opposition to her husband. In other, words, she is not to be outspoken against him or to usurp authority over him. It also means she is not to teach other women to usurp authority over THEIR husbands.

Paul went on to say in verse 14, *And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.* Since these verses are talking about divine order in the family, we can know that the transgression Eve committed was not the one that caused the fall of the human race. Paul was very clear on that point in Romans 5:12: *Wherefore, as by ONE MAN sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

Eve was guilty of becoming deceived because she stepped out from underneath Adam's covering and caused a breach in the divine order of the family as defined in First Corinthians 11:3: But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Once Satan had enticed Eve, he was able to use her to go after her husband.

Adam knew exactly what he was doing when Eve coerced him to go with her. He went in with his eyes wide open! We may wonder what happened that day between Adam and Eve that could have caused him to betray God, but the fact remains ADAM KNEW. Satan discerned he couldn't convince Adam to take the fruit, so the enemy had to go around Adam and deceive Eve so she would get Adam to eat the fruit. After all, they were one flesh, so for Adam, resisting Eve would be like resisting HIMSELF!

The spirit at work in Paul's day to violate divine order is the same one at work in OUR day. Satan is always downplaying God's highest calling for women, which is **HOMEMAKER, MOTHER, and GUARDIAN OF THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF OUR CHILDREN.**

As the head of the home, the husband is the one who must answer to God for the condition of the home. Whether he likes it or not, the husband will be held accountable to God. We see this in the fall of the first family. When God inspected the scene of treason, He didn't go to the woman first; He went directly to the man and held him accountable. It didn't matter if Eve asked Adam to take the fruit. God still held Adam absolutely accountable.

Here is another point I want you to understand along this line: Mankind was created both male and female, but doesn't mean one can have more of God than the other.

Let's look at what Peter says about the difference between man and woman: *Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto THE WEAKER VESSEL, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.* 1 Peter 3:7

The word "weaker" here means the wife is a more FRAGILE vessel than the man. If the two vessels were clay water pots, the comparison would refer to the thickness of the outer walls. Even though the "weaker" clay pot might have thinner outer walls, the inside of both pots would be the same size and would still hold the same amount of water. Well, in the case of the man and woman, both vessels - despite their differences - can hold the same amount of the glory of God!

The outside of the clay pot is different because God has created the woman to function one way and the man another way. The man, when his soul has been transformed by God, is supposed to be the first line of defense for his family as he protects them from the world. That's why the outside of his clay pot is supposed to be thicker. His mind, his will, and his emotions are designed to stand up in that kind of environment. He isn't necessarily smarter than the woman, just more rugged.

The woman was created to be the second line of defense in the home. The husband fulfills his rightful role as the head of the home by confronting the hostility of the outside environment. Meanwhile, the wife is supposed to remain under the shelter of his covering, guiding their children

through the formative years - the years when the foundation of what they will become forever is being cemented in them. First Timothy 5:14 talks about this God-appointed responsibility of the woman: *I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.*

So we see that in God, there is neither male or female, as proclaimed in Galatians 3:28: *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* But when God created man and woman, in His wisdom He made man first and placed him in authority. God made man accountable, yet it is impossible for Him to love or respect either man or woman more than the other.

Let me make one more point regarding this subject of God's divine order of authority: Jesus' HUMANITY, not HIS DEITY, is under the covering of God as His Head. First Corinthians 11:3 says: *But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and THE HEAD OF CHRIST IS GOD.* In Jesus' deity, He is coequal with God. But then Jesus took His place in humanity. *Humbling Himself, He was found in the fashion of a man, willingly letting go of His equality with God* (Philippians 2:6-8).

You see, it was only in the creation and redemption of man it became necessary for God to instigate this divine order of authority so He might put down man's rebellion. At the end of this age when time is no more and the judgment is finished, there will be no more rebellion. Instead, everyone will serve one another without feeling like a servant. There will be no big "I's or "little you's," no more feelings of inferiority or lack of self-worth. No one will ever feel at any time that God has ever showed favoritism or loved someone else more than he.

This is what you have to look forward to, brothers and sisters, but for now, you have a vital responsibility to fulfill as you take your place in the divine order of your home!