

Volume 1, Sermon 1 Paul teaching on the Lord's Supper

Taking verses out of context –

A good example of a verse being taken out of its context is 1Corinthians 11:10. Years ago I heard teaching on “women being disobedient” and the speaker used among other things this verse. And regarding this verse the teaching stated that angels can be tempted toward Christian women in the church; and therefore some rules of the church should be reconsidered.

Ah, but such a concept has nothing to do with the Apostle Paul’s teaching to the Corinthians. Discussed here, then, is what Paul actually taught and the teaching is extremely important, to which Christians today should be reminded. Please note that 1Corinthians 11, from beginning to end, is about the Lord’s Supper and the dangers for many Christians in partaking of it.

We will be using Strong’s Bible numbering system.

1Corinthians 11:10, the word ‘power’

First we need to discuss the part of the chapter that gives modern Christians difficulty. So let us dive right into the verses and some of the Greek words.

For the word ‘**power**’, Strong’s number is 1845. It means ‘*privilege*’, and when used regarding an object (i.e. in this passage something upon the head) the word implies ‘*a token of control upon*’ the person (i.e. she is *under the authority of another*). Also the meaning is ‘*positive*’, meaning that the one under such authority is ‘*privileged*’ to be included under that particular authority.

An ancient warrior proudly wore a helmet with the insignia of his king. A police officer wears a badge with the identification of the district in which he serves; and no person of authority can approach him with orders ... except through the authoritative line of command associated with the person in his district who ‘controls’ him.

Moreover, the badge implies ‘*freedom*’ for the officer to perform his duties without restrictions from outside the authority that is over him.

Also implied is that there is a ‘*force*’ (by means the authority) acting upon the officer such that he has ‘*freedom from other forces*’ (i.e. from other authorities).

Another example: The Spirit of the Father became placed upon His Son, Jesus Christ. Thus then, the Spirit was equivalent to a Heavenly Badge signifying to Israelites that their God, the God of Israel, had sent unto them their Messiah.

In comparison, the Spirit upon Jesus was much like the long lovely hair of a woman as she walked and worked properly within the authority upon her. The apostles also had such Spirit-Badges upon them, which caused spirit-walking Christians to recognize them as directly from Jesus himself.

Therefore, In regards to this verse, ‘**power on her head**’ signified that the woman was married and was walking ‘*freely*’ under her husband’s authority and force or power. Paul mentioned that the woman’s lovely long hair (which she proudly and beautifully maintained) was a ‘*token*’ or ‘*badge*’ of her ‘*privilege*’ under her husband’s care, and thus being ‘*free*’ from interference by other men.

1Corinthians 11:10, the word ‘on’

The word ‘**on**’ means ‘*superimposed upon*’ (i.e. by something higher) and it implies ‘*distribution*’. Therefore, at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit’s coming was ‘*superimposed upon*’ the gathered ones in Christ. This gives us a word-picture which implies ‘*distribution*’. In other words, the Holy Spirit that was ‘*superimposed*’ upon them

was also *'distributed'* in such a manner as to be **'on'** each person. This clearly means that each person present had been inclusively chosen by God to be at this meeting at this particular time to receive that which God would *'distribute unto each'* ... even as also He was *'superimposing the arrival of the Holy Spirit unto'* His entire Church.

The same was equally true of *'the token of privilege'* **'on'** the woman (i.e. tokenized by means of the lovely long hair) that indicated to everyone that she was *'chosen'* by her husband. Thus, by means of her hair she proudly wore a badge of *'being his choice'*.

In that early society and time, by using the example of a woman's hair, Paul taught about proper attitude within a structure of authority needed by Christians to function properly in their walk with the Lord; and this includes ... from the Father to the Son, and on down to God's chosen leaders, and on down to each Christian man, and to each Christian woman, and to each child. It is God's Structure of Authority in simple form. To discuss this Structure, then, Paul began at the low level where man and woman live in a family structure.

1 Corinthians 11:10, the words 'because of the angels'

The phrase **'because of the angels'** was a reference to "the Preacher" of the Book of Ecclesiastes. Through the later ages, Israelites considered the Book of Ecclesiastes to be *one great sermon* unto their society and especially unto individuals. They considered it "never outdated". In referring to it, Paul certainly considered the phrase pertinent to the early Church.

5:4 When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.

5:5 Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

5:6 Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; (therefore) neither say thou before the (arriving from heaven) angel, that it was an error (i.e. a mistake): wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and [further command the angel to] destroy the work of thine hands?

The important verse is 5:6 where God might very well command His sent angel to further **'destroy (even) the work of thine hands** (also)'. In this case the **'angel'** would be sent to a person to chastise him so that he might truly know and understand the Lord's position on a particular matter. However ... sinning with the mouth can be even more dangerous by saying to the angel, "You do not need to chastise me because it was only a mistake." At this point then (God overhearing what is going on) the angel may receive a new instruction to not only chastise you, but also now to destroy the work of your hands.

All of Ecclesiastes chapter 5 has to do with the potential of folly within and among God's people ... which can lead either to destruction of a person or of a person's work. In our modern time, we have seen this occur in various ministries. God's destruction of a work (which He had been using) is a sad commentary regarding those who had created the work ... or regarding those who had taken over the work. The same has been true of churches which at one time had been a blessing to God's people in a community. The reader probably can think of other examples.

Therefore, consider the righteous priest Zechariah in Luke 1:5-25 and 1:57-80. The priest and his wife were chosen of God to function within the overall coming of the Lord Christ Jesus. When the priest challenged the angel, what happened? In God's heavenly ordained Plan God did not destroy the work of His own Hands. Neither did He destroy the work of the priest's hands. Nevertheless, we see what can happen when an angel of the Lord is challenged in any manner. What happened to righteous Zechariah was within the angel's authority to do. But what if God spoke to the angel about *'destruction'* regarding this priest? It was righteous Zechariah's mouth that got him into trouble. The priest should never have suffered his *'mouth to cause his flesh to sin'*.

Far too many Christians think their words (even when used loosely or errantly) are "not that big of a deal". "Quiet" is best. Especially in times of fear or perspiration ... "Quiet" is best.

The Ecclesiastes chapter begins with -

5:1 Keep thy foot (i.e. humbly step softly) when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools (i.e. a fool's sacrifice of lips giving praise without true repentance): for they (i.e. such fools) consider not that they do evil (i.e. in the house of God ... when they should be falling on their faces in repentance).

It used to be (and in the Law it always had been) that the house of God was primarily *the Place of Repentance*; for repentance was always considered the very first order of business in a person's prayer to God. In righteous Zechariah's case, God spoke to him through the angel (messenger). How often do we invite the Spirit to chastise us?

God's messenger spoke God's message during the temple's Time of Prayer of the people. The priest had entered behind the great curtain to perform the priestly duty of burning incense and it occurred at this special hour each day and it signified that the prayers of the people were also as '*incense unto the Lord*'.



Solomon's Dedication of the Temple: 2Chronicles 6:19-27 -

6:19 Have respect therefore to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee:

Note the word '*servant*' throughout King Solomon's dedication-prayer; and it incorporates any and every Israelite no matter where he or she happened to be in the world. This dedication-prayer implies "*in the temple, but also everywhere else*" in regards to an Israelite approaching God in prayer. Moreover, it applies throughout the ages of the Mosaic Law. And it applies in the Preacher's chapter of Ecclesiastes 5. And it had everything to do with Paul's teaching in our study passage.

6:20 That thine eyes may be open upon this house day and night, upon the place whereof thou hast said that thou wouldest put thy name there; to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth toward this place.

Here we see that the person is away from the temple and that he and/or she is honoring Solomon's dedication of the temple ... which God had *accepted* and made *permanent*.

6:21 Hearken therefore unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall make toward this place: hear thou from thy dwelling place, even from heaven; and when thou hearest, forgive.

Here we see the foremost emphasis on such a prayer is its humility toward God ... *in repentance and requesting forgiveness*. Whatever else the prayer would entail, it would be preceded by and in union with '*repentance*'.

6:22-23 If a man sin against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to make him swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house; Then hear thou from heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, by requiting the wicked, by recompensing his way upon his own head; and by justifying the righteous, by giving him according to his righteousness.

King Solomon understood that governmental justice was at best very poor. Therefore, the king asked that God Himself hear and *requite the wicked ones and justify the righteous ones* (to which of course God was already aware). This meant that God Himself would sit in judgment regarding any prayer ascending from any and all sinful Israelites. Therefore, this worked among the Israelites to always request ... within *repentance* ... regarding anything in prayer. Israelites were always free to approach their God upon His throne ... and here King Solomon was introducing into the equation *the sacredness of the temple* because God's chosen place for Himself was (is) in the heart (temple) of each Israelite.

Thus, (... **thy people Israel, which they shall make prayer toward this place: hear thou from thy dwelling place, even from heaven; and when thou hearest, forgive.**)

6:24-25 And if thy people Israel be put to the worse before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee; and shall return and confess thy name, and pray and make supplication before thee in this house; Then hear thou from the heavens, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest to them and to their fathers.

6:26-27 When the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them;

Then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, when thou hast taught them the good way, wherein they should walk; and send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance.

(Today note that Muslims continue praying toward their sacred place. No doubt some Jews still pray toward Jerusalem.)



Ecclesiastes 5:2 (Therefore) **Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.**

Here was one of the real and true dangers of each Israelite: That in their following the instructions of King Solomon in his dedication-prayer ... they could too quickly get into trouble with their lips in speaking to God.

Here, too, is one of the real and true dangers for Christians in our churches: In our usual lack of humility, we think too highly (spiritually) of ourselves. Too often, we think we can substitute spiritual words for spiritual humility.



Back to 1Corinthians 11

In Ecclesiastes 5:1 '**Keep thy foot** (i.e. humbly step softly) **when thou goest to the house of God**' is the word '**keep**'. According to Strong, the Greek means '*keep safe or keep from harm, as regarding something treasured*'. Therefore, in verse 2 of 1Corinthians 11, Paul has '**keep the ordinances**' which refers to the Lord's Supper, which Paul reiterates for his readers in verses 23–32.

Note again that this entire Chapter 11 has to do with *the Lord's Supper and Its sacredness*. Moreover, it has to do with the potential dangers *as Christians partake too lightly of it before the Lord*. This is why ... in discussing the example of women being within the structure of authority ... that Paul deferred to the Ancient Preacher of Ecclesiastes (5:6).

Furthermore, we must note here that all of the New Testament writers constantly either referred to or directly quoted from a great many passages of the Old Testament which was their own and only Bible. It was true of Jesus in the Gospels and all the way through Revelation where Jesus himself gave revelations to the Apostle John.

11:1 Be ye followers (i.e. '*imitators*') **of me, even as I also am of Christ.**

Paul begins Chapter 11 with the Line of Authority he is in ... that is under (and thus he himself 'follows' by 'imitating') Christ. Within this Line is his position of both apostle and teacher; and Jesus had personally instructed Paul to go unto the churches. Here, then, Paul was teaching to church members, warning them.

11:2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and (also) **keep the ordinances** (of the Lord's Supper), **as I** (earlier had) **delivered them to you.**

Here we see that the Christians of Corinth were keeping the Lord's Supper as it should be kept "in letter".

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.

Nonetheless, those Christians were not keeping it entirely "in spirit". In Hebrews 11:6 we see that *a proper thing must be done in faith* because only then *can any proper thing please God*.

Otherwise, especially for the Lord's Supper, Paul teaches that God was displeased with these Christians.

Dear reader, for something to be done in faith it must also be done according to God's ordained structure of authority. Thus, Paul (before getting to the subject of the Lord's Supper) in verses 3-15 dealt with the subject of authority; and he began with man-and-woman in general, and with husband-and-wife in specific. Paul emphasized that if a man and/or a woman be not in a properly structured relationship before God then he and/or she would be in danger of God's displeasure when entering into the Lord's Supper.

In one's walk with God, all should be right between him and/or her and the Lord before joining into such

a sacred ceremony. Like the Israelite of the Mosaic Law ... wherever he and/or she happened to be located ... *true humble repentance* was expected first when addressing God. Therefore, how much more so before entering into the Lord's Supper?

11:16 But if any man seem to be contentious (i.e. there were some in Corinth who thought differently from Paul on this subject), **we** (i.e. the apostles) **have no such** (different) **custom, neither the** (other many) **churches of God.**

11:17 and following –

Here Paul moves on to another part of his overall subject: the proper (i.e. worthy) taking of the Lord's Supper

Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies (i.e. those that choose divergent concepts) **among you, (so) that they which are approved** (i.e. approved by God and His Spirit) **may be made manifest among you** (i.e. become apparent to all as men and women of God and not just being of church members).

This means that those whom we think are godly in their teachings may not be so. When God so chooses, He may do something out of the ordinary to manifest others as special unto Him, and that all should give them deference.

When ye come together (i.e. gather) therefore into one place, this (i.e. your gathering) is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating (i.e. in your gathering) every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

In other words, those who bring their favorite food and drink in abundance to this Lord's supper also go first in line so as to abundantly partake of their favorite foods and drink; and they sit with their cliques of friends such that those who have brought little or nothing are left with little or nothing to eat or drink (except the ceremony itself of the Lord's supper in bread and wine ... which in Corinth was accomplished according to Paul's early instruction).

What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For (Paul continues) **as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.**

But (therefore) **let a man examine himself, and so let him** (in spirit) **eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself,** (because he is) **not discerning the Lord's body.**

The Greek meaning of 'shew' is '*broadcast, declare, make public*' as truth ... Or as a '*substantial proclamation*' (i.e. like the initial governmental proclamation that World War Two was over... a glorious moment in American history).

Wherefore (Paul continues) whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

The Greek word '**discerning**' means '*separate thoroughly*'. Therefore, during this sacred occasion, the Christian should discern (i.e. '*separate thoroughly*') '**the Lord's body**', which means *unite into the purpose of Jesus' death* and therefore *into his final commandment: 'to love (agape) one another'*.

Therefore, in Corinth the more well-to-do folks in the congregation were *failing* God's condition *to partake*. And as such, each '**eateth and drinketh damnation to himself**'.

For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

For if we would judge ourselves (according to scripture and Jesus' words), **we should not be judged** (by God). **But when we** (in fact really) **are judged, we are** (i.e. become) **chastened of the Lord, that we** (should learn and) **should** (accept His chastisement that we) **not be condemned** (along) **with the world.**

Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

The Greek for '**tarry**' means '*accept from*' (i.e. '*accept from a giving*' Source, like God). Thus, each

Christian was supposed to ‘**await one for another**’ so as to ‘**accept from**’ the Lord his Coming and his Fulfilled Promises. Indeed, those who had the necessary means to help ‘**others**’ were to provide ... in the spirit of God’s family ... ‘**one for another**’ ... Thereby, awaiting their Lord.

And (i.e. moreover,) **if any man hunger** (like those hungrily eating and drinking), **let him eat at home; that ye come not together** (i.e. gather in church) **unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.**

It was like this: The well-to-doers would bring a feast-of-foods (which they thought befitting such a special occasion). Therefore, during the day they would wait at home not eating (saving their eating for the dinner) in anticipation of banqueting upon what they and the other well-to-doers would bring.

Such occasions typically produced cliques. By definition, cliques leave out others ... and these others then understand they should attempt to gather in their own clique or find one that will accept them if .

For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.



Barbara and I have firsthand knowledge of God’s miraculous healing when He brought our baby son out of certain death. (You can read the account in my book *God’s Hook*, a book about faith and is free for download.) God healed baby Ben not once but two separate times in less than ten days, and He did it in a manner such that everyone involved (us, friends, family, doctors, nurses, etc.) knew that each healing was nothing but a miracle.

Yet, we have not since observed another *sure, proven, witnessed-by-experts* miracle. Even so, we have observed and been part of praying to God for Him to do such healings.

The Lord has so often answered our prayers ... yet, in ways such that we *could not prove that it was God* like we could have proved when Ben was born. And so, whenever we *cannot prove that something is accomplished by God Himself* then we do not claim that “God did this or that”.

Barbara and I are entirely convinced that God can “prove” Himself when and as He desires to do so ... and He does not need us in doing it. Yet, with baby Ben we were surely glad and amazed to witness it along with the many others.

Christians, individually, and in groups, and in whole churches (sometimes across the land, as in praying for America) sincerely ask God to heal. And so yes, there is much teaching of others that our God is a healing God.

We, too, have brothers and sisters in the Lord that believe and teach varied concepts of “healing” ... yet, seldom do any “move” God to heal in a manner such that “the healing” *can be acknowledged by all* (Christians and non-Christians alike) *as having been accomplished by God Himself*.

We know that our God is *Mighty to save*, *Mighty in compassion*, and can *Mightily heal*. Even so, ‘**For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.**’



Dear reader, we must not miss the emphasis that Paul placed on *the Structure of Authority*. After he introduced the subject matter of Chapter 11 (verses 1, 2) he immediately entered into *the Structure of Authority*. He entered *the Structure* on the low level were we are (verses 4 through 16). Paul inferred that Christians who *fail to live correctly at our low level and fail to honor the Structure of Authority given by God* are in danger before Him ... especially as they enter *sacred ordinances like the Lord’s Supper*.

In our modern age we must not think that God has changed (i.e. modernized) *the Structure of Authority* ... which *Structure* includes proper instruction and raising of children. Therefore, he who lacks *the Structure of Authority* within his family ... he cannot *legally under God* fill a position of spiritual leadership within the Family of God.



We have read of Paul, and of the Preacher of Ecclesiastes, and of King Solomon’s dedication-prayer of the temple. Paul refers to the Preacher, and the Preacher refers to King Solomon.

God’s entire Word is One. Jesus and his chosen apostles, shortly before the Crucifixion, lived the Lord’s Supper before us in Scripture. For us, then, God has seen fit that we have the opportunity to –

‘...**let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup... discerning the**

Lord's body.'

'...discerning the Lord's body' is not celebrating; it is both examining and discerning."

Amen.

PS. I had begun this sermon with this paragraph -

A good example of a verse being taken out of its context is 1Corinthians 11:10. Years ago I heard teaching on "women being disobedient" and the speaker used among other things this verse. And regarding this verse the teaching stated that angels can be tempted toward Christian women in the church; and therefore some rules of the church should be reconsidered.

Ah, but that concept has nothing to do with the Apostle Paul's teaching to the Corinthians.

Interesting is it not how misappropriating a verse can lead a person into concepts very different from the actual concept intended, which usually can be very meaningful, like Paul commenting on *authority* regarding *the sacredness of the Lord's Supper*.

PPS. I seldom want to stray out of a Bible text once I have begun in it, but because I had to move around in the Word to present this sermon I had to create a section in the website for sermons. I will see if the Lord might want me to do more sermons.