

A photograph of a waterfall cascading over mossy rocks in a forest. The water is white and frothy, contrasting with the dark, moss-covered rocks. The background shows a dense forest of tall trees.

# UNDER HIS COVERING

I Corinthians 11 — Finding Value  
& Rest in God's Channel of Blessing

*Sabrina Reedy*

# Under His Covering

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*Colossians 1:26-27 "The mystery which has been hidden  
from ages and from generations, but now has been  
revealed ... which is Christ in you..."*

*the  
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of  
glory*

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# Introduction

## Wise in My Own Eyes

On a preparation day in early spring of 2023, our heavenly Father gave me some words that I needed to hear regarding my frequent wonderings about why my health still seemed to fluctuate often, and I was not experiencing the consistent strength and energy that I desired. He brought me to **Proverbs 3:7-8**. (I find it interesting that verses 5 and 6 are quoted quite often, but 7 and 8 are not as much...)

***“Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.”***

As I read this verse, that first statement felt like a direct arrow to my heart. I knew immediately that yes, it was true, I still *really* struggled with being wise in my own eyes. The life factors that have contributed to this are many, I am sure, but one that came to mind was that from a young age I noticed that I received praise when I excelled academically. School came quite easily to me, by God’s grace, and I quickly began to place my value in my ability to perform in that capacity. By age six I was reading chapter books and actually wrote my first “chapter book,” which my first-grade teacher kept on her classroom bookshelf and read to her students for many years to come. I remember how special this made me feel. It seemed like people were really proud of me when I did well in school, and, like any child, I wanted to make the adults in my life proud. I wanted to feel appreciated and valuable. I was not strong in athletics, or many physical pursuits, but intellectually I felt very capable. Thus I began to cling to this as a major part of my identity, and I strove constantly for perfection.

You can imagine how the report cards, grades, and academic awards received throughout my years in this educational system, and the reactions of those around me—which I interpreted as love—drove in the

pegs to secure this false identity in my psyche, and make it ever more unbearable to experience a “failure.” One of the few lies I recall telling in my youth, was at age sixteen when I failed my first practical driving test. I was mortified. *How could I fail a test?!* The reality was too horrible to accept, so I chose denial and swiftly texted my friends to tell them I had passed. The next week when my mom picked me up to go retake the test, I informed my friends and teachers that I had a dentist appointment. But this bump in the road only made me more determined to make sure something so humiliating would never happen again, and wait upon the next few “successes” to reassure and restabilize me.

Now, as an adult and a wife, it was not surprising that the enemy would tempt me on a regular basis to trust in my own supposed intelligence, and strongly resist ever admitting I was wrong. God only knows the true depth of this wrestle with being wise in my own eyes, but I know that He has never condemned me for this struggle. Yet He has desired to set me *free* from this, as it has seriously hindered my ability to freely and gratefully receive the blessings of advice, counsel, and when needed, correction, from many authority figures in my life, including my husband.

Often when these blessings of counsel and correction had been offered to me, I did not experience them as blessings. I would often feel deeply offended and disheartened, which I can recognize now as wounded pride. I have discovered that, throughout my life, the lies of the enemy had convinced me that I had received life and wisdom from God, and that I now had it inherently within myself. Therefore, I believed that I did not need to be constantly receiving life and wisdom through the channels of blessing which God had placed in my life. This, I am learning, is a deeply destructive deception.

**Proverbs 3:11-12** *“My son (or daughter), do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor detest His correction; for whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.”*

It is critical for us to understand the *ways* that God brings this correction. Because for most of us, we would much rather have God just tell us

directly, and *privately*. That way we can deceive ourselves into thinking that no one else has noticed our flaws—as if it’s just a secret between us and God. Our pride is somewhat protected in that. But, because God wants to heal us of that pride, He often uses other people in our lives to offer us correction, to give us the opportunity to learn humility.

**Proverbs 11:14** *“Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.”*

## Wrestling With God

As Sabbath evening fell upon us, my husband and I continued reading a book which has profoundly blessed us in this area, which is called *Life Matters*. This particular sentiment almost brought me to tears of relief in better understanding my struggle:

*“The words of the serpent **broke Eve’s sense of dependence upon Adam**. By believing the lie, “you shall not surely die,” she no longer needed the channel of blessing that flowed through him. Eve’s sense of identity had shifted from a position of submission to Adam with relational equality, to a position exactly the same as Adam. **Instead of value flowing down the channel from God, the value came from within her**. Any advice coming from Adam could be seen as an attack on her personal sovereignty and a reminder that she needed help, rather than wise counsel offered for her benefit.” (Life Matters, p. 56)*

The light of this understanding reached to a deep corner of my heart, as I recognized the truth of it in my own experience, especially in how I was relating to my husband. But it comforted me to know that I was not the only one who has struggled with this, but that it was the very lie that had deceived Eve, and has been passed down to all humanity.

As I laid in bed that Sabbath night, I told Malcolm that I had our alarm set for 6:30 AM. “But,” this thought came to my mind, “Maybe God will

wake us up before then." As I said this, I felt a little nudge of assurance from God that He did intend to do this, which made me smile. I fell asleep looking forward to the blessings of the morning.

When I woke up, alert as ever, I thought it surely must be almost sunrise—there was so much light coming in the windows. I began to be excited at the thought of spending time with God, and seeing what He would continue to show me. As I sat up in bed, I received a *strong* impression **not** to check the time, but to go put my contact lenses in and head to the living room. I could almost hear God's soft voice pleading, "*Trust Me.*" But my curiosity started growing, and within seconds I was clicking the button on my alarm clock to see what time it was.

*1:30am?! Surely this must be a mistake...* Peering out the window I realized the excess light was coming from a bright, full moon. Confused, and feeling the temptation of wanting more sleep starting to creep in, I prayed for God to clearly tell me what to do. As the temptation increased, a Bible verse came to my mind which God had blessed me with in the past,

**Psalm 127:2** *"It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so He giveth His beloved sleep."*

*Right*, I assured myself. *God wants me to get enough sleep! 4 hours is not enough sleep.* Ironically, my friend Charienna had just told me how she had only gotten 4 hours of sleep the night that she was desiring to complete a certain special assignment for God. This flashed through my mind, but I wafted the thought away. *This is different*, I thought. *It's the Sabbath. I have a full day of fellowship ahead of me. I don't want to be exhausted. That wouldn't be responsible.* As I laid down and tucked myself back under the warm, cozy covers, another verse came to mind that God had shown me recently in regard to desiring renewed health and strength:

**Psalm 110:3** *"Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth."*

When I had read this verse I'd been impressed that by being willing to take hold of God's power to rise early and spend time beholding the beauty of His holiness in the "womb of the morning"—which I supposed meant, while it was still dark—we would be blessed with the dew, or health, of our youth.

So now I was conflicted again. I prayed, *Father, please just speak to me clearly. I don't want to miss out on a blessing from you.* Now, had God already spoken to me clearly? Yes, He had. But here I was wrestling with my own wisdom again. One of my favourite poems then came to my mind, which begins like this,

*"Be all at rest, my soul, oh blessed secret,  
Of the true life that glorifies thy Lord:  
Not only doth the busiest soul best serve Him,  
But he who resteth on His faithful Word..."*

(Freda Hanbury Allen, *Be All At Rest, My Soul*)

I breathed a sigh of relief and began to sink into my pillow. *He wants me to rest.* I thought. But then His voice came through clear as day, "*What is true rest? Remember—Be not wise in your own eyes. What is true wisdom?*" I then thought, *Jesus. Jesus is the wisdom of God.* So my mind went to the life of His Son. The world says that rest equals sleep, and don't get me wrong, we certainly do need adequate sleep, but Jesus experienced a level of rest that this world knows not of. He often stayed up entire nights **in communion with His Father** in order to receive the strength He needed to impart to those He would meet throughout His day. God heavily impressed **Psalm 110:3** upon my mind again, and I felt that He had a precious gift He wanted to give me. *2:00 AM though?* I thought, *Really?* He then brought a story to my mind from a dear sister who'd had a beautiful experience of sensing the Lord's close presence while studying the Scriptures and writing out her thoughts at 2:00 AM.

His still, small voice spoke to my heart again, saying, "*The poem says that true rest is found by 'He who resteth on His faithful Word.' That is wisdom. My Son rests upon My Word. I gave you My Word when I instructed you*



*not to check the clock. You can rest in that.*" Then I was strongly convicted. My own wisdom said it was too early, but God was the one who had woken me up! I certainly did not want to deny what He'd just taught me the previous evening, choose my own wisdom, and reject His blessing. So I asked Him to help me get out of bed, and I praise Him that He did, because He certainly had a blessing waiting for me.

# 1. From the Womb of the Morning

As I got comfortable and opened my Bible, I saw my two bookmarks—one in Proverbs and one in I Corinthians. Though I had recently been in the habit of reading an Old Testament chapter first, and then a New Testament chapter, I felt very strongly that I was supposed to go straight to I Corinthians. I opened to chapter 11, which was just where I happened to be in my devotional readings. It was a chapter that I thought I knew fairly well, but there was that pride and self-sufficiency again. I read from verse 1-16, the passage regarding the divine pattern between God and Christ, man and woman, and the subject of head covering. Then as I considered starting into the next section about the Lord's supper, I felt God drawing my attention back to verse 11. There was something there that related to what we had just read in *Life Matters*...

*"Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord."*

This verse stood out to me because our recent reading in *Life Matters* was emphasizing that God's kingdom is **relational**, and that *we need each other!* At that moment it struck me that although I had studied this Bible chapter in the past trying to understand what it says about *physical* head covering, I had never studied it specifically to understand the *spiritual* and *relational* significance of the divine pattern principles laid out there.

God strongly impressed me that I had read too quickly—that I needed to go back and read slowly, verse by verse, and that He had much more to show me. He specifically urged me to begin taking notes at verse 7. Thus, I will now share the thoughts that I believe God gave me as I studied this chapter, as they reinforced and magnified what we have been learning in *Life Matters*. I pray that the precious blessing I received can be imparted to you as well.

I have included verses 1-6 as they contain important context for the thoughts that followed,

**I Corinthians 11:1-6** <sup>1</sup> *"Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ. <sup>2</sup> Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you. <sup>3</sup> But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. <sup>4</sup> Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. <sup>5</sup> But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. <sup>6</sup> For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered."*

It is important to acknowledge here that Paul begins this segment by exhorting us to imitate, or follow him—but imitate him **how**? *"Just as I also imitate Christ."* Therefore, the discourse he is entering into is all about following the example of Christ. He then describes the channel of blessing within the divine pattern, with God being the head of Christ, Christ being the head of man, and man being the head of woman.

In verses 4-6, Paul begins to describe the physical custom of head-covering and its implications for both men and women, which I had previously studied quite thoroughly with a desire to know God's will for my own conduct in this area. However, in this moment, God encouraged me to step back from the physical and seek to understand the **spiritual implications** of this discourse first and foremost. As we will discuss later on, even the beauty of taking part in the Lord's Supper has no true benefit to the believer if its spiritual meaning is not realized in their day-to-day experience. We have thus seen throughout all ages of human history that many swiftly embrace physical forms with a desire to please the Lord, while avoiding the deep heart cleansing necessary to bring about true spiritual transformation. Therefore, I sensed that my present convictions on the physical aspect must be set aside and ultimately subjected to whatever blessings of spiritual understanding God had in store for me.

Thus, starting in verse 7, I was impressed to focus on one verse at a time.

## 2. The Glory of Man

**I Corinthians 11:7** *“For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is **the glory of man.**”*

How is the woman *“the glory of the man”*? This was the big question that came to my mind.

Well, according to what we had just learned from *Life Matters*, glory is related to character, yes, but it is also related to *how we find value*—or what it is that we choose to “glory” in.

**Jeremiah 9:23-24** *“Thus says the LORD: ‘Let not the wise man **glory in his wisdom**, let not the mighty man **glory in his might**, nor let the rich man **glory in his riches**; But let him who glories **glory in this**, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,’ saith the LORD.”*

As these points connected in my mind, what I saw here is that the woman’s special purpose in God’s design—or how she is *the glory of man*—is that her life is meant to provide a special revelation to the universe of **how mankind finds true value**. This might seem confusing for a moment, but stick with me as we unpack it together.

According to **Jeremiah 9:23-24**, man is to find his value not in riches, nor might, nor wisdom, but in understanding and knowing God. What does it mean to *know* God? To know His character!—His goodness and His love.

This experience of knowing the fullness of God’s love will result in the man loving God in return, and trusting and submitting His life to God’s leadership. However, this experience in the man’s heart is largely *invisible*, especially to unbelievers who may not recognize the fruits of a submitted life. Thus, the woman is meant to be **the visible manifestation** to the entire universe of “man’s glory,” or how mankind is to find his value. Through her trusting, willing submission to *her* head, being her husband (or father if single, or other authority figures in her life), **she exhibits the blessing of resting in submission to a life source, and finding her**

**true value there**, instead of in her own works and achievements. Her submission and rest in her relationship with her husband is both a visible representation of how man ought to rest and find his value in Christ, *and* how Christ rests and finds His value in His Father!

When these thoughts came in succession, it was like a bright lightbulb turned on, revealing to my mind that this is the *true* fulfillment of “*Christ in you, the hope of glory!*” (**Col. 1:27**) Learning to rest in God’s channel of blessing is our *only hope* of finding our true value (glory)! And that relationship—that blessed fellowship between the Father and Son, into which we have all been invited—is described as **a great mystery**. (**Mark 4:11, Rom. 16:25, I Cor. 2:7, Eph. 1:9, 3:3-4, 9, 5:32, 6:19, Col. 1:26-27, 2:2, 4:3, I Tim. 3:9, 16, Rev. 10:7**)

It is not hard to see that the ability of a woman to completely, joyfully submit to the leadership of a man has become a great mystery to the human race. But, by God’s grace, as **Colossians 1:26** says, though this mystery has been hidden from ages and from generations, it has now been revealed to His saints through the life of Christ, and in **Rev. 10:7** we have the promise that it will one day be fulfilled among His people.

This deeper understanding of “*the hope of glory,*” the hope of finding true value in God’s relational kingdom, actually made me quite emotional. Several years ago, while I was still single, I began my personal online ministry, and God very directly gave me the name *The Hope of Glory*. I thought I knew why at the time, as I had been rejoicing in my newfound understanding that Jesus is *truly* the begotten Son of His Father from eternity, and that it is the Spirit of the begotten Son which is sent into our hearts, crying, “Abba, Father!” (**Gal. 4:6**). This was as deep as my understanding of “*Christ in you—the hope of glory,*” had reached at the time, but now this profound layer had been added in regards to His trust, His submission, and His rest in His infinite value as God’s Son, without having to prove anything to anyone. In this revelation I received a much deeper sense of the ministry God has called me to (now with my husband’s leadership!), in helping others learn how to enter into this channel of blessing, and find the true rest that God wants for His children.

### 3. The Woman Of, and For, the Man

**I Corinthians 11:8** *“For the man is not of the woman, but **the woman of the man.**”*

The woman is meant to receive all that she has, all that gives her her sense of value, from God, through the man. This is to protect her from seeking to find her value in her appearance, her skills, or her personal achievements, which would ultimately cause her to be bound in Satan’s performance kingdom.

Man represents her life source—her connection to God and to life itself. Everything that Eve was she had received from Adam. She was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. (**Gen. 2:23**) This is why the woman is to submit to the man *“as unto the Lord.”* (**Eph. 5:22**) The way that she is able to rest in her husband’s love and blessing teaches her how to rest in the love and blessing of God.

In God’s ideal design, she should learn this first through her relationship with her father, receiving a deep understanding of her value from him. Then, when she is married, this position of blessing and “life source” is meant to be transferred to her husband. This is what is represented by the father giving his daughter to the husband on their wedding day. It is not about transferring ownership, it is about transferring the responsibility to bless, protect, and cherish. God wants His daughters to have rest and security in their value in Him through the blessing of these appointed spiritual heads; not having to strive to prove their value to themselves, God, or others through their own works.

**I Corinthians 11:9** *“Nor was man created for the woman, but **woman for the man.**”*

The woman was made **for the man**. How is the woman important to the man? The man *needs the woman* in order to have **any authority or ability to bless**, because by her choices to trust and submit to him, she determines how much authority he has.

(A single man in a position of blessing needs those in the “channel” position, beneath his care/mentorship, to do the same for him.)

The wife’s example of trusting submission to her husband teaches others (children, friends, church members, etc.) how to also receive from her husband’s channel of blessing. Her testimony of him is the most powerful force to strengthen his sphere of influence, and enable him to fulfill *his* role as **the glory of God (I Cor. 1:7)**—being a source of light, love, wisdom, and protection to all those under his care, and revealing the true character of our Father in heaven.

## 4. A Testimony to the Universe

**I Corinthians 11:10** *“For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, **because of the angels.**”*

The submission of woman to man confirms the holy angels (and rebukes the unholy angels) in the truth of the Son’s submissive relationship to His Father, and the joy He has in resting in that channel of blessing. As the angels observe the harmony that exists in the homes where this divine pattern is embraced by both spouses, contrasted to the chaos and pain in the homes where it is rejected, Satan is further exposed as a liar and murderer in contrast to the perfect wisdom and love of God’s design. In this way, both husbands and wives have a tremendous responsibility in this great controversy between Christ and Satan. The most important work in building God’s kingdom begins in the home.

**I Corinthians 11:11** *“Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord.”*

Here again is the first point that really caught my eye. God’s kingdom is a *relational* kingdom—We *need* each other! Man could not propagate humanity without the woman to be his channel, and the woman could never have existed without the man as her source. This is why God created both “male and female” to reveal His image. (**Gen. 1:26-27**) Our heavenly Father, in His infinite wisdom, would not create the universe without first begetting His Son to be the channel of such creation, because **it would be by looking to the Son that all created beings would learn how to relate to the Father.** God needed One who would know and trust Him intimately in order to fulfill this purpose.

Likewise, Adam needed “one comparable to him,” who could understand and relate to him, and be an example of trusting submission to all children who would be begotten through her. Thus, Adam’s love could be expressed and magnified in begetting sons and daughters, to share God’s love with and grow God’s family on earth.



**I Corinthians 11:12** *"For as the woman is **of the man**, even so is the man also **by the woman**; but all things of God."*

What other verse does this remind you of?

**I Corinthians 8:6** *"But to us there is but one God, the Father, **of whom are all things**, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, **by whom are all things**, and we by him."*

The man is the "of whom" (the source) and the woman is the "by whom" (the channel) just like God and His Son. Mankind has the amazing privilege of being an example of this divine pattern, for the purpose of preaching the gospel to all created beings.

## 5. A Protective Covering

**I Corinthians 11:13** *“Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?”*

Now, the thoughts that God shared with me on this particular verse may be difficult to receive. I want to express to any readers that I was extremely convicted when these thoughts came to me, and of all sinners I am chief. I therefore pray that no one will sense any judgment or condemnation as I share these convictions. I simply believe that these are solemn and important principles that God wants us to consider for our own well-being, for the sake of our families, and the gospel.

I believe that we can understand this verse in this way— *“Does it make sense for a woman to pray to God while stepping out from under the authorities He has placed in her life to bless her?”*

And if it doesn't make sense, or if it's not “proper,” then why not?

What I was personally convicted of by this text, is that by stepping out from under these authorities, a woman is rejecting her covering of protection (whether that be her husband, father, pastor, etc.), and thus is rejecting the example of Christ's submission to His Father. And though unintentionally, she is partaking in the rebellion of Satan, in wanting to be one with God without submitting to Christ. Persisting in this rebellion will cause her great difficulty because she is operating outside of the very channel through which God desires to bless her, and in which is the only place she can find her true value. This will inevitably cause her to battle through life trying to find value in her own works. Again, please understand, this has been *my struggle*.

God is not arbitrarily saying that it is improper for His daughters to pray to Him if their heart is not submitted to spiritual covering, but that it is “uncomely” or “unproper” because He will not be able to **fully bless them** and answer their prayers if they are not willing to receive those blessings through the channels He has appointed.

**I Corinthians 11:14-15** *"Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is **a glory to her**; for her hair is given to her for a covering."*

Nature itself testifies that a covering of long hair is a blessing or *glory* to a woman, as it is naturally appealing to see a woman with long, healthy hair. Remember that our "glory" relates to where we find our value. God gave woman the physical covering of hair to be a *glory to her* to symbolize that **the spiritual covering of headship is given to protect and secure her in her value.**

This relates back to verse 6, where the point is made that if a woman chooses to reject her spiritual covering, she might as well cut off her physical hair. By rejecting the blessing of spiritual covering, she is rejecting her hope of finding and resting in her true value, or *glory*.

**I Corinthians 11:16** *"But if anyone seems to be **contentious**, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God."*

Though I did not receive a clear understanding of this verse, God gave our pastor Ben insight to bless us as we studied these things together. We thus understand that Paul was not here denying the custom of physical head covering, or spiritual head covering, as this would make very little sense after all the time he just spent unpacking these things for the new believers. But he is speaking against *contentiousness*, saying that there is no place for arguments and disputes on such matters within the body of Christ.

## 6. Divisions Among You

I almost stopped taking notes as this “subject” seemed to come to a close, but God reminded me that, though my Bible headings may make it seem like there is a break in the letter, Paul was continuing the same line of thought. Beginning with the principles of headship between husband and wife, he set a foundation for understanding the critical importance of the divine pattern within the whole body of Christ.

With this in mind, let’s continue in verse 17,

**I Corinthians 11:17-18** *“Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are **divisions among you**, and in part I believe it.”*

Again, this is not a new discourse. The divisions within the body of Christ are intimately connected with a rejection of the divine pattern in the hearts of the individual members. Division is caused by the same spirit of independence which awakened rebellion in the heart of Lucifer, and led him to refuse to follow Christ’s example of submission.

**I Corinthians 11:19** *“For there must also be factions [divisions] among you, that **those who are approved** may be recognized among you.”*

*“Those who are approved”* will be recognized by their willingness to submit to one another in the proper channels, as the Lord has instructed. This is evidence of the Spirit of Christ in them. In **Ephesians 5:19-21**, we see a beautiful description of how God’s “approved” children will act:

*“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; **submitting yourselves one to another** in the fear of God.”*

But unfortunately, the Corinthian church was not doing this, which is why Paul was addressing this issue.

**I Corinthians 11:20-21** *"Therefore when you come together in one place, it is **not to eat the Lord's Supper**. For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk."*

The Lord's supper is meant to symbolize His followers receiving His own life. A refusal to submit to husbands, fathers, parents, elders, pastors, etc. makes this experience null and void. It is a rejection of the life of Christ.

Therefore, His presence is not welcomed there, and they are receiving no blessing by going through the motions. The spirit of "I must take care of myself" is the spirit of antichrist. Those that are hungry are not being filled with the true living bread from heaven, while others are drunken with the wine of false doctrine and the lies of the enemy.

**I Corinthians 11:22** *"What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you **despise the church of God** and **shame those who have nothing**? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you."*

To despise the church of God is to seek one's own profit—wanting to be first, highest, greatest, under no one else's authority. It is to despise the body of Christ, which was designed to operate with authority structures for our benefit and His glory.

**I Cor. 10:32-33** *"Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks **or to the church of God**, just as I also please all men in all things, **not seeking my own profit**, but the profit of many, that they may be saved."*

To "shame those who have nothing" (the poor; **James 2:6-9**) is connected to being a respecter of persons—choosing to serve or not to serve, to submit or not submit, based on your own judgment of whether someone deserves your service or submission. Feeling no need to care

for the poor is a symptom of stepping out from within the channel of blessing. When we understand that we have received *all* things from God through this channel, we will not see our life or possessions as our own, and allow God's love to flow freely through us to those in need of our care.

## 7. Discerning the Lord's Body

**I Corinthians 11:23-24** *"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'Take, eat; this is **My body which is broken for you**; do this in remembrance of Me.'"*

Why was Jesus betrayed? Why was His body broken for us?

**Phil. 2:6-8** *"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became **obedient unto death**, even the death of the cross."*

He was obedient (submissive) unto death. He would not do His own will, but only the will of His Father. His perfect submission to His Father and revelation of His selfless love was so contrary to the hearts of the religious men of the day that they rose up to murder Him, just as Satan had wanted to do from the beginning (**John 8:44**). Are we genuinely desiring to partake of *that* same life, as symbolized by the Lord's supper? The life that is despised and rejected of men? (**Isa. 53:3-5**) Are we willing to submit and serve and reveal the character of Christ even to those who mistreat us, *let alone* to our brothers and sisters in the body of Christ?

**I Corinthians 11:25** *"In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is **the new covenant in My blood**. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.'"*

What is the "new covenant" in His blood? It is the promise that God will work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure if we embrace Him as our life source. To refuse to submit to one another is to reject God as our source of life and believe that we can be saved by our own works, which is to remain in the Old Covenant.

**I Corinthians 11:26** *“For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you **proclaim the Lord’s death** till He comes.”*

We proclaim the Lord’s death by being willing to die to self in obedient submission, as He did, and embrace whatever sufferings may come, trusting in God to fulfill His promises.

**I Corinthians 11:27** *“Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be **guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.**”*

The spirit of not wanting to submit to one another—not wanting to rest in God’s channel of blessing—is the same spirit which murdered Christ. This is a very solemn thought, and one we need not take lightly.

**I Corinthians 11:28-29** *“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, **not discerning the Lord’s body.**”*

He who eats and drinks “in an unworthy manner” brings judgment upon himself. Why? Because he is not discerning, or considering, or having care for, the Lord’s body—the church. He is not recognizing that we all need each other, and that we need structure and submission in order to operate effectively as one body.

It is true that all body parts must submit to Christ as the Head, but the hand also submits to the wrist, and the arm. The toes submit to the foot, which submits to the ankle, which submits to the leg and the hip. If the head tells the waist to bend forward, every part of the upper torso submits to that decision. No part of the body is solely responsible to the Head. All effect one another, all submit to the proper channels, and all must cooperate in unison for healthy function.

Therefore, if a person has judged that they don’t want to be a member of the Lord’s body, they cut themselves off from the Head, and thus from



the source of life. Their only option then is to try to enter heaven by their own merits, and will be grievously disappointed when their works are shown to them in their true light—as nothing but filthy rags. This is how they are bringing condemnation upon themselves, by not believing in and receiving the submissive Spirit of Christ.

**John 3:18-19** *“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, **because he has not believed in the name [character] of the only begotten Son of God.** And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”*

Now, this next part I found super interesting, especially in connection with my original wonderings about my physical health:

**I Corinthians 11:30** *“For this reason **many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.**”*

This verse that once made zero sense to me was suddenly very clear. Connection to God through His body is life and health. Disconnection brings disease and death. Christ’s example of humble, peaceful, joyful submission **is** “The way, the truth, and the life.” (**John 14:6**) It is the *only* way to the Father, who is the *only* source of healing. Therefore, rejection of Christ’s example in the lives of Christians everywhere, and refusal to walk in His meekness and lowliness, is causing disease and early death.

This makes perfect sense when we recognize how damaging stress is to our bodies and minds. It is extremely stressful to live in constant power struggles with our parents, spouses, elders, etc., and face each day with the overwhelming burden of needing to prove our value through our performance. But as we truly embrace our infinite value as God’s children, and learn to “discern the Lords’ body” in all our relationships, joyfully receiving and giving in our ordained position in the channel of blessing, these causes of stress will lose their power, and dis-ease will subside.

**I Corinthians 11:31** *"For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged."*

Judgment is simply a revelation of the truth. If we are willing to examine ourselves in this matter and receive an understanding of our true state humbly, while we can yet repent and submit ourselves to be transformed into His image, we will not be judged in the end by the words of Christ—the Words that have testified to the character of His Father.

**John 12:48** *"He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day."*

**I Corinthians 11:32** *"But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world."*

When we allow God to reveal these truths to us, it is painful! It is not easy to see the true condition of our hearts, and the ways we have hurt God, others, and ourselves. As David wrote so beautifully of this refining process,

**Psalms 30:5** *"... Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning."*

The joy that comes as the Lord heals us through His gentle chastening is worth every bit of discomfort during the "open-heart surgery," as we experience true rest of soul and assurance of eternal life with Him, as well as the added bonus of greatly improved relationships here on earth. May we each see our deep need, and invite God's refinement as David did,

**Psalms 139:23-24** *"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."*

**I Corinthians 11:33** *“Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait one for another.”*

The simple starting point for believers is to learn to esteem others better than themselves. Hence Paul encourages us to practice patience and courtesy. However, we can observe the outward form of letting others get their food ahead of us, yet still be grumbling about them in our hearts. Only God can give us the heart transplant we need to be able to truly love, exalt, and submit to one another in the example of Christ. The inward transformation and outward practice should go hand in hand.

And our final verse...

**I Corinthians 11:34** *“But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.”*

If any of us hunger after righteousness, let us not rely upon church services to feed us, lest our lack of Christlike character be revealed in our dealings with one another, and we face sorrow, sickness, and pain as a result. But let us partake of the living bread daily, in our own homes, with our own families, that we may be transformed into His image from glory to glory. That the fruit of our daily walk with Him may be seen when we come together for fellowship—that our interactions may refine, edify, and uplift one another, that our own wisdom may be laid in the dust, and that the true Wisdom, the humble, submissive, restful life of Christ, who has complete security in His identity and value, may be witnessed in His people. Amen.

A surprisingly early-morning wake-up call from my heavenly Father came in direct answer to my prayers, though I didn't realize what I had been praying for. I'd thought I needed health advice, but the blessing I received was far different than what I was expecting...

In a performance-driven world, where individualism influences much of our upbringing, the majority of God's children have lost the sense of what it means to be part of a *body*. We have been taught to be "strong and independent," while our relationships crumble around us, and mental and physical illnesses weigh us down with sorrows. All of this is evidence that we have strayed from God's perfect design for our marriages, families, and church communities. But His Word is mighty to heal our thought patterns and show us the way of life, if we are willing to receive it.

I pray that the enclosed testimony will bless your heart and mind with a renewed understanding of the blessings God has provided within headship and submission, and the priceless calling we have as believers to preach the gospel through all our relationships.

*the  
hope  
of glory*