

**WORSHIP SHOULD BE  
MARKED BY UNITY,  
FREEDOM AND ORDER**

**1 CORINTHIANS 11**

# ANCIENT CORINTH



# ANCIENT CORINTH



# INTRODUCTION

# INTRODUCTION

- Paul addresses disunity among the Corinthian believers, from contention arising over head coverings to the celebration of the Lord's Supper.
- In the previous chapter, Paul instructed Christians to avoid pagan worship banquets.
- Now, he shows the Corinthian believers what a Christian worship service should look like in contrast to these pagan worship practices.

**GLORIFY GOD PROPERLY  
IN WORSHIP IN HOW  
YOU DRESS**

**1 CORINTHIANS 11:2-16**

# WORSHIP - DRESS

- There is lots of confusion about this passage.
- First, we need to remember that this passage wasn't meant to be a proof text about women, but about Christian versus pagan worship.
- Paul's primary concern is that these couples are praying and prophesying in a way that does not seek the good of the assembly or the glory of God.
- It is focused on attracting attention to themselves.

# WORSHIP - DRESS



- Augustus the emperor built statues of himself throughout the Roman Empire.
- They depicted him with a toga pulled over his head.
- Having a toga pulled over your head was the mark of a leading role in pagan worship rituals.

# WORSHIP - DRESS

- The strategy of Augustus was to communicate to his empire through these statues that he was now the imperial head and controller of all Roman activities.
- And that even included religious affairs.
- The statues were his way of saying, “Consider me not just the head of the political empire. I am also the head of your religion too.”

# WORSHIP - DRESS

- The cultural trend developed from his example.
- Eventually the social elite followed his example and began wearing togas pulled over their heads (“head coverings”) to communicate power and status within their culture, especially at worship services.
- Because of this cultural norm, Christian gatherings ended up looking like pagan worship events.

# WORSHIP - DRESS

- Once we understand this cultural context, Paul's instructions against male head coverings in verses 4 and 7 make sense.
- He is essentially calling out the men on their motive in worship services.
- By coming into church meetings with head coverings, they are obviously focused on their own reputation instead of building up the church.

# WORSHIP - DRESS

- By dressing like leaders in the pagan community during Christian worship, these men were clearly revealing their motive in coming to the assembly.
- By avoiding head coverings, these men could rightly and visually associate with the true God instead of the Roman gods.
- Freedom of attire is permitted in Christian worship, Paul says, but not at the expense of dishonoring God.

# WORSHIP - DRESS



- Women marked their availability by means of a symbol. Married women wore veils or head coverings, and unmarried women wore their hair down with no head covering.
- For a married woman not to wear a head covering wrongly communicated, “I’m available.”

# WORSHIP - DRESS

- In their excitement, these wives were engaging in worship with hair that communicated non-association, even infidelity to their spouse.
- This behavior was a distraction to the assembly and drew attention to the women instead of God.
- It would be much like all the wives in a modern worship service throwing off their wedding rings during the heightened enthusiasm of worship.

# WORSHIP - DRESS

- By wearing the appropriate cultural symbol for marriage, these women could rightly and visually associate with their husbands.
- Freedom and excitement in Christian worship is available, Paul says, but not at the expense of dishonoring your spouse.

# WORSHIP - DRESS

- Paul is essentially saying you shouldn't conduct yourself in a way that would dishonor the one to whom you are submitting.
- Men: don't dishonor God by wearing pagan attire that would call your allegiance to Christ into question.
- Women: don't dishonor God and your husband by wearing cultural attire that calls your marital status into question.

# WORSHIP - DRESS

- Notice verse 5 that assumes that wives pray and prophesy in Christian worship services.
- In the Jewish synagogue women were not considered full members and were required to sit separately behind a curtain.
- Paul is saying something scandalous about women.
- They are full, complete and equal participants in worship.

# WORSHIP - DRESS

- Notice verses 11–12 where he reminds them of their Genesis-identity (namely, that woman came from the rib of man, but man also comes from the birth of woman).
- Paul is saying that Christianity recognizes the full equality and interdependence of the sexes.
- This idea of gender equality and interdependence would have been outrageous, even in a progressive culture like Corinth.

**GLORIFY GOD IN  
THE LORD'S SUPPER**

**1 CORINTHIANS 11:17-34**

# LORD'S SUPPER

- In Corinthian culture, dinner parties were a way to gain social status and prestige.
- It was a place where you could clearly observe the social stratification between the rich and the poor.
- The Lord's Supper, according to Paul, was supposed to display something diametrically opposed to the culture's way of doing supper.

# LORD'S SUPPER

- The Lord's Supper joins believers from all the social levels that the culture works so hard to divide.
- The point of the Lord's Supper was to be a visual representation of the fact that the common divisions and disunities of our world are overcome in Christ.
- One should be able to walk into the Lord's Supper to see how God views both the rich and the poor and everyone else: as equals at the foot of the Cross.

# LORD'S SUPPER

- Rich believers in Corinth had the affordability to host these suppers in their homes and had the leisure time to prepare a lavish meal.
- Their version of the Lord's Supper was much more extravagant than what others could provide.
- The rich would arrive for the meal early and fill the primary dining area, eating the finest of the foods and indulgently drinking the majority of the wine.

# LORD'S SUPPER

- There was no legal day off in the Roman Empire, so the poor believers arrived late and very tired from work.
- They would find themselves in a room or courtyard adjacent to the primary dining room, cut off from the rich believers who had been dining for hours.
- At this point in the evening, there was no food or wine left for the poor believers, as the rich were already drunk and engorged.

# LORD'S SUPPER

- This helps us understand Paul's harsh words in verses 21–22 and 33.
- These rich believers are humiliating the poor during an ordinance that was supposed to unite the two.
- In verses 20–21, Paul warns these believers that they are clearly no longer celebrating the Lord's Supper.
- Their actions show that they have made it their own pagan meal.

# LORD'S SUPPER

- To bring them back to a proper understanding of the Lord's Supper, as is his pattern, Paul points these believers back to Christ Himself.
- Verse 24 is Paul's way of telling the Corinthians that they have taken the Lord's Supper (an observance designed by God to remind believers to glorify Jesus because of His self-sacrifice) and turned it into an event for glorifying themselves.

# LORD'S SUPPER

- What was designed to distinguish Jesus as the true God, the Corinthians transformed into something that made them feel distinguished.
- To repent of this, in verses 28–29, Paul urges these believers to “examine themselves” and find if they actually care about the unity of the church at all.
- Both the rich and the poor are to take the bread and the cup in a humble, unifying, equal way.

# LORD'S SUPPER

- The bread and the cup are not about satisfying one's desire, but visually proclaiming the unifying message of the Gospel of Christ.
- Indeed, verse 34 maintains that if a believer comes to the supper with any other goal than that in mind, it would be better for him to stay at home than drink judgment on himself.
- The Lord's Supper is not about satisfying one's desire, but exalting God and His Gospel.

# QUESTIONS



# EXECUTIVE ORDER



# BIBLE VERSES?

## Who Are the Real Bible-Quoting Hypocrites?



Michael Brown | Posted: Feb 01, 2017 9:20 AM

 Share (160)



# BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE



[JIM DENISON](#)

[ABOUT](#)

[SIGN UP](#)

[STORE](#)

[DONATE](#)



**Trump travel ban: 3 biblical priorities**

SHARE THIS  

# EXECUTIVE ORDER

- The primary focus was on seven countries: Iran, Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Yemen, and Somalia.



The screenshot displays the U.S. VISAS website interface. At the top, the U.S. Department of State logo and the text "U.S. VISAS" and "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE - BUREAU OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS" are visible. A search bar is located in the top right corner. Below the header, a navigation menu includes "Tourism & Visit", "Business", "Employment", "Study & Exchange", "Immigrate", "Other Travel", "Set Location", and "Set Nationality". The main content area shows the breadcrumb "travel.state.gov > Visas > Tourism & Visit > Visa Waiver Program" and options for "Print" and "Email". The title "Visa Waiver Program" is prominently displayed, followed by an "Expand All" button. A yellow "Important Notice" banner is present. The "Overview" section explains that the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) allows citizens of participating countries to travel to the United States for tourism or business for stays of 90 days or less without a visa, provided they have a valid Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) approval. Below this, the "Requirements for Using the Visa Waiver Program (VWP)" section states that all requirements must be met. On the right side, there is a "More Information" section with links to "A-Z Index", "Lost/Stolen Travel Documents", "Border Security/Safety - DHS", and "Customer Service Statement". Below that is a "FAQs: About Visas - the Basics" link with a question mark icon, and an "ESTA APPLICATION" link with the ESTA logo.

# 1. SCRIPTURE ENCOURAGES SECURITY

- The Bible consistently teaches the priority of self-defense (Luke 11:21; Exodus 22:2; Proverbs 25:26; Nehemiah 4:17–18; Psalm 82:4).
- We are told to respect landmarks (Proverbs 22:28; 23:10). Moses noted (Deuteronomy 32:8) that when God “divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the people.”
- The Promised Land’s borders are clearly delineated in Scripture (Ezekiel 47:13–23; Numbers 34:1–15).

## 2. GOVERNMENT AND OUR SAFETY

- Paul called the governing authority “the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God’s wrath on the wrongdoer” (Romans 13:4).
- The president is to “preserve, protect, and defend” the Constitution and those who live under it.
- We must recognize the post-9 / 11 reality that meeting the needs of foreign travelers can come at the expense of American citizens.

# 3. COMPASSION AND THE HEART OF GOD

- Scripture consistently calls us to care for immigrants and foreigners (Exodus 22:21; Leviticus 19:33–34; Deuteronomy 10:18–19; Ezekiel 47:21–23; Zechariah 7:10; Malachi 3:5; Hebrews 13:2).
- Jesus stands in solidarity with those who are persecuted (Acts 9:4–5) and considers our service to those in need as service to our Lord (Matthew 25:31–40).

# APPLICATION

- Balancing borders, safety, and compassion is, of course, the challenge of our day.
- The most practical way we can respond is to pray for our leaders and those affected by this controversy and to find ways to serve the millions of immigrants and others in need where we live.
- [www.denisonforum.org](http://www.denisonforum.org)
- [www.samaritanspurse.org](http://www.samaritanspurse.org)