

PREFACE

Let's begin this session at the beginning: the Creation epic in Genesis. Turn, please, to Genesis 1.

Man (as in "mankind") is different; human beings are set apart from the rest of Creation, because, for one reason, they were created in a manner different from everything else. When we look at the Creation account in Genesis 1, the emphasis is on God (plural) *speaking into existence* all the component parts of the universe and this earth. We see that at the beginning of each day:

Day One: "Then God said, 'Let there be light...'"

Day Two: "Then God said, 'Let there be an expanse...'"

Day Three: "Then God said, 'Let the waters...'"

Day Four: "Then God said, 'Let there be lights...'"

Day Five: "Then God said, 'Let the waters teem with...'"

Day Six: "Then God said, 'Let the earth bring forth...'"

But when later on that sixth day God made man, it is stated slightly, almost imperceptibly different. Instead of "Then God said, 'Let there *be man...*'", it is "Then God said, 'Let Us *make man in Our image...*'" (emphasis added). Two things: Nothing else in all creation was made in the image of God, and, as this verse suggests but Chapter Two confirms, man was not spoken into existence, but was *made* by God—and intimately so.

Genesis 1 looks at the Creation narrative as a forest of trees; most of Genesis Two (from v4) backs up and examines in greater detail one of those trees: the creation of the man and the woman.

Although it is impossible to say with authority from this great distance, I believe the creations of first man, then woman were *remarkably* different from the creation of everything else. I believe the text describes a profoundly intimate manner of creation when it came to human beings. Note that from v4 on even the reference to the Creator has changed: So far it has been "God" in the plural (*elohim*), suggesting the participation of the trinity of God. But now, beginning in v4, it adds "the LORD God," adding the personal name of God: Yahweh, or Jehovah. And just look at how Yahweh created man.

Read Genesis 2:7.

That word translated “formed” in all our translations is

yasar (yaw-tsar') = probably identical with <H3334> (yatsar) (**through the squeezing into shape**); ([compare <H3331> (yatsa`)]; **to mould into a form; especially as a potter**; figurative to determine (i.e. form a resolution) :- × earthen, **fashion**, form, frame, make (-r), potter, purpose.

The Lord God did not *speak* man into existence; He reached down into the dust of Eden and personally fashioned him, as a potter would fashion a clay vessel. Then He breathed life into him with His own breath. Here we have the account of God creating not man as in mankind, but the first male of the species: so named Adam (v20) as the man is in the process of naming the beasts of the field.

Thus far, however, the Lord God could not declare the man “good,” as He had the rest of His creation. Instead of immediately declaring Adam “good,” He said, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him” (v18). The man was not yet complete. Listen to how Gordon Fee eloquently describes this.

Fee: Adam by himself was not complete; he was *alone*, without a companion or helper suitable to him. The animals will not do; he needs one who is bone of his bone, one who is like him but different from him, one who is uniquely his own “glory.” In fact, when the man in the OT narrative sees the woman he “glories” in her by bursting into song (2:23). She is thus man’s glory because she “came from man” and was created “for him.” She is not thereby subordinate to him, but *necessary* for him. She exists to his honor as the one who having come from the man is the one companion suitable to him, so that he might be complete and that together they might form humanity.

The Creation narrative makes clear that out of everything already created there could be found no suitable—that is, no *corresponding*—helper for the man. Why? Because in all of creation only the man had been made in the image of God; he would need a mate of the same kind. In the first account, in Genesis 1, it is stated that both male and female were made in the likeness of God; note the plural references.

Read Genesis 1:26-27.

Yet the woman was made in a different way; she was made from “out of” man: hence, wo-man.

Read Genesis 2:21-23.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:7-12.

Chapter Eleven is organized into two parts, both dealing with orderly worship. The first part (vv2-16) addresses how the worshiper presents him- or herself—that is, dress. The second part addresses how the worshiper behaves around the table of Communion—the Lord’s Supper.

In v3 the apostle stated his thesis that “Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.” Then he applies this to the setting of corporate worship, the gathering of a community of Christians met to worship and hear God’s word. In the ensuing verses Paul contrasts honor with dishonor, glory with shame in such a setting. He first points out that which brings shame and dishonor upon one’s spiritual head (vv4-6): when the man’s anatomical head is covered, or the woman’s anatomical head is uncovered. In vv7-10 he restates this assertion more positively, emphasizing that which brings honor and glory to one’s spiritual head in the assembly.

v7

For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man.

The word translated “ought” in all our translations—both here and in v10, regarding the woman—means to owe.

opheilo (of-ay'-lo) = or (in certain tenses) its prolonged form opheileo, of-i-leh'-o; probably from the base of <G3786> (ophelos) (through the idea of accruing); **to owe (pecuniarily); figurative to be under obligation** (ought, must, should); morally to fail in duty :- behave, **be bound**, (be) debt (-or), (be) due (-ty), be guilty (indebted), (must) need (-s), ought, owe, should. See also <G3785> (ophelon).

In other words the man has a moral obligation, a debt owed, *not* to cover his head in worship, and the woman has a moral obligation *to* cover her head in worship.

Why should the man not be covered? Because “he is the image and glory of God.” Does this mean that the woman is *not* the image of God, as Paul leaves this word (*doxa*) out when referring to the woman? No, we know from Genesis that both the woman and the man were created in the image of God. Positionally, in relation to God, she is no less the vessel of His image and glory. But here Paul is stressing the difference between the man and woman in earthly, corporate worship—their different roles. In God’s economy, the man reflects, represents the glory of God (and thus is obligated to remain uncovered), while the woman reflects, represents, completes the glory of man (and thus is obligated to be covered). This is a tricky concept to digest, which is why I have created and included a diagram that I pray will illustrate the various relationships and positions in worship. [\[see page 5\]](#)

As said before, reputable scholars and students of God’s word have voiced different positions on what Paul is saying here. Beyond that, some of the words and phrases in this passage can be interpreted and expanded in a number of ways, making it almost impossible to restrict them to just one. For example, take the phrase, “the woman is the glory of man.”

- Does this mean she is nothing in herself, and what glory she has comes from the man? Does it mean she has none of God’s glory in her?
- Or does this mean it is she who supplies the glory to the man?
- Does it mean she *reflects* the man’s glory back to him, or projects his glory out to others—or both?
- And just what does Paul mean by “glory”?

Some have interpreted this passage to mean that, “The man stands before God uncovered because of his spiritual subordination to Christ, so the woman should stand veiled because of her spiritual subordination to her husband” (as Orr and Walther). In the context of this chapter, which is clearly about proper attire and behavior in worship, that pulls us off-track a bit (and in my opinion doesn’t even make sense). Paul is not really addressing “subordination”—especially since he will, in a moment, balance out the two roles (vv11-12).

Paul says that the woman reflects (“is”) the glory of man, not of God. Because of the context of proper, God-honoring worship, here is what Paul is saying (as illustrated in the handout): “The man stands uncovered because he reflects the glory of God; the woman must be covered because she reflects the glory of man.”

Garland: In a worship setting, where persons are to give glory only to God, Paul reasons that a woman must cover her anatomical head, which reflects man’s glory, who is her metaphorical [or spiritual] head. If a woman were to appear in worship with her head uncovered, the splendor of her tresses (v15) would bring honor to her husband when all ought to be concerned with glorifying God alone. Such misplaced honor would redound only to her husband’s shame before God. [Paul’s] main point is that both man and woman are the glory of another. Man, whose head is Christ and who represents the glory of God, is to be uncovered in worship. Woman, whose head is man and who represents his glory, is to be covered in worship. To do otherwise brings shame to their respective heads.

Paul’s purpose, as always, is to exalt and glorify Christ Jesus and Father God. There is no more important situation in which to do this than corporate worship, which must be conducted in an orderly, God-honoring fashion. In such a setting only God and His Son are to receive glory and honor—and not anyone sitting in the pews.



Orderly Worship



Disorderly Worship



Uncovered



Covered



Covered



Uncovered

true worship connected to its source/object

"worship" disconnected from its true source/object

FIRST CORINTHIANS

Session 107

