

"male and female He created them." (Gen. 1:27)

## God's Grand Design

The Beauty of Biblical Complementarity (pt. 11)



A veiled Iranian woman walks along a square with her relative in northern Tehran on March 17, 2023. (CNN)

Headship, Head Coverings, and Dishonor

## 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

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<sup>2</sup> Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you. <sup>3</sup> But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ. <sup>4</sup> Every man who has *something* on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head. <sup>5</sup> But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for she is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved. <sup>6</sup> For if a woman does not cover her head, let her also have her hair cut off; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her cover her head.

## 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

<sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; <sup>9</sup> for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. <sup>10</sup> Therefore the woman ought to have *a symbol of authority* on her head, because of the angels. <sup>11</sup> However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. <sup>12</sup> For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man *has his birth* through the woman; and all things originate from God.

## 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

<sup>13</sup> Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God *with her head* uncovered? <sup>14</sup> Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him, <sup>15</sup> but if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? For her hair is given to her for a covering. <sup>16</sup> But if one is inclined to be contentious, we have no other practice, nor have the churches of God.

## 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

- Context: Paul deals with three specific issues in the public meeting of the Corinthian Christians (1 Cor. 11-14)
- Paul's ultimate concern: the manifestation of glory or shame in worship by maintaining or neglecting proper gender distinctions

## 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

Q: What is the covering and its meaning?

- not merely a woman's hair, but likely some type of shawl used to cover the hair
- it symbolized a right relation to "authority" and implied a submissive and modest posture

## Glory and Shame in Worship

### 1. The Basis of this Practice

- the hierarchy of relationships that exercise proper authority ("head"), including man and woman
- the headship of the man/husband is based on the creation order and design of man and woman

## Glory and Shame in Worship

### 2. The Description of Shameful Behavior

- the improper use of a head covering while praying or prophesying brings shame on one's "head"
- the lack of head covering for a woman would give the shameful impression that she is appearing like a man and vice versa

## Glory and Shame in Worship

### 3. The Qualification to Avoid Misunderstanding

- there is a profound sense of interdependence and mutuality between men and women – men are not superior in value!

## Glory and Shame in Worship

### ➤ Application:

- not women wearing head coverings today
- glad submission to and support of proper male leadership in the church and the family
- maintaining clear expressions of God-given gender distinctions in all of life