

Light Reading/Deep Reading of the Bible

1 Corinthians chapter 11

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What is the sacrament in 1 Corinthians 11? What is the meaning of the angels' sake?

In 1 Corinthians 11, the Lord's Supper, or the Lord's Supper; It is an important ritual in Christian worship to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this passage, Paul elaborates on the meaning and purpose of the sacrament, and the correct way to partake it, and proposes corrections for the wrong practices of the Corinthian church. The Lord's Supper was instituted by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper before the Passion and is recorded in the four Gospels: In 1 Corinthians 11:23-25, Paul reiterates Jesus' teaching: The bread: a symbol of the body of Jesus, broken for the sins of believers. "This is my body, which is given for you, and you should do this in remembrance of me." Cup: Symbolizes the blood of Jesus and represents the establishment of the New Covenant. "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, and every time you drink it, do it in remembrance of me." The purpose of the sacrament is to remember Jesus' sacrifice and to pronounce His death until His return (11:26).

The Lord's Supper is a believer's public remembrance of Jesus' death and redemptive work, as well as a proclamation of His future return. Holy Communion is a communal ritual of the Church community, symbolizing the unity of believers with Christ and with each other. Paul emphasized that one should "examine oneself" before partaking of the sacrament to ensure that one participates with reverence and sincerity, and that one does not neglect or disrespect. Paul criticized the Corinthian church in 11:17-22 for its division and selfishness in the Eucharist: there was a class divide in the church, where the rich ate and drank first, and the poor believers were neglected and even starved, which undermined the spirit of unity of the Lord's Supper. Some treat the sacrament as an ordinary feast, gluttonous and drunk, and lose the spiritual meaning of

worship. Disrespectful attitude: Paul warns that partaking of the sacrament in an inappropriate way is tantamount to "discerning the body of the Lord" (11:29) and may lead to God's judgment and even "weakness, sickness, and even sleep." Paul asks believers to show love and solidarity in the sacrament, to wait for one another, and to avoid class divisions (11:33). Sanctification: The sacrament is an act of spiritual worship that should be distinguished from worldly pleasures. If anyone is only hungry, he should be fed at home (11:34). In the modern church, communion is usually administered in bread (unleavened bread or bread) and cups (grape juice).

Meaning of "For the Angel's Sake" Depending on the context, "for the angel's sake" may have the following meanings:

Maintaining cosmic order: Paul may have thought that church worship reflected God's design for the universe (including angelic and human order). The veiling of a woman's head is a public acknowledgment of this order, which is important to the angels because they are part of God's order. Avoiding Confusion: In the chaotic worship environment of the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 14), Paul emphasized that the veiling was to ensure the normativity of worship, which may have something to do with angels as guardians of the divine order. In the Greco-Roman and Jewish cultures of the time, head-covering was often the custom of married women and symbolized humility and respect. Paul may have borrowed this cultural symbol to ensure that church worship did not cause misunderstanding among angels or men. Some churches believe that women should cover their heads in worship in order to obey Paul's teachings. Application of Principles: Most modern scholars believe that Paul's focus was not on the veiling itself, but on order in worship and respect for God's authority structure. Therefore, modern believers should look for appropriate ways to express their obedience to God and the norms of worship according to contemporary culture. Modern believers should apply this passage by focusing on the theological principles behind it, rather than sticking to the form of a head-covering.

First Corinthians 11 deals primarily with the issue of order and worship in the church, and Paul mentions the dress code for worship, especially with regard to the veiling of men and women. He emphasized that in the church, men should not cover their heads because he is the image and glory of God; And the woman should cover her head to show her obedience under authority. This reflects the gender roles and church order in the culture of the time. Paul mentions that this was done to respect God's order of authority (God → Christ → men → women) and points out that this practice was generally applicable in the church at that time. Paul criticized the confusion and division of the Corinthian church in the administration of the Eucharist. Some selfishly eat and drink first and neglect poor brothers and sisters, causing the sacrament to lose its spiritual significance. Paul reminds believers that the sacrament is a remembrance of the death of the Lord Jesus and should be attended with reverence and unity. He instructed believers to examine themselves so as not to be judged by partaking of the sacrament with an ungodly attitude. Finally, he suggested that churches should wait for each other and maintain order and love when they meet.

We pray

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for establishing the sacrament so that as we partake of the bread and cup, we can remember again the salvation that the Lord Jesus has accomplished for us. Lord, Thy body is given up for us, and thy blood is shed for us, that our sins may be forgiven and that we may have a restored relationship with thee. We praise You for your infinite love and grace.

Lord, may every time we partake of the sacrament, not just an outward ritual, but a true inner worship and thanksgiving. Through the sacrament, help us to examine our lives, repent of our sins, and be cleansed and renewed before You. Let the sacrament be a firm sign of our faith, regaining strength in our weakness and victory over the Lord in our temptations.

Lord, also ask You to unite the whole body of our church through the sacrament, so that we may be of one accord and love one another, as one body in Christ. May we always remember Your death until You return and meet that glorious day with hope.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we pray, amen.

1 Corinthians 11

Amplified Bible, Classic Edition

11 Pattern yourselves after me [follow my example], as I imitate *and* follow Christ (the Messiah).

² I appreciate *and* commend you because you always remember me in everything and keep firm possession of the traditions (the substance of my instructions), just as I have [verbally] passed them on to you.

³ But I want you to know *and* realize that Christ is the Head of every man, the head of a woman is her husband, and the Head of Christ is God.

⁴ Any man who prays or prophesies (teaches, refutes, reproves, admonishes, and comforts) with his head covered dishonors his Head (Christ).

⁵ And any woman who [publicly] prays or prophesies (teaches, refutes, reproves, admonishes, or comforts) when she is bareheaded dishonors her head (her husband); it is the same as [if her head were] shaved.

⁶ For if a woman will not wear [a head] covering, then she should cut off her hair too; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her head shorn or shaven, let her cover [her head].

⁷ For a man ought not to wear anything on his head [in church], for he is the image and [reflected] glory of God [^ahis function of government reflects the majesty of the divine Rule]; but woman is [the expression of] man's glory (majesty, preeminence).

⁸ For man was not [created] from woman, but woman from man;

⁹ Neither was man created on account of *or* for the benefit of woman, but woman on account of *and* for the benefit of man.

¹⁰ [b]Therefore she should [be subject to his authority and should] have a covering on her head [as a token, a symbol, of her submission to authority, [c]that she may show reverence as do] the angels [and not displease them].

¹¹ Nevertheless, in [the plan of] the Lord *and* from His point of view woman is not apart from *and* independent of man, nor is man aloof from *and* independent of woman;

¹² For as woman was made from man, even so man is also born of woman; and all [whether male or female go forth] from God [as their Author].

¹³ Consider for yourselves; is it proper *and* decent [according to your customs] for a woman to offer prayer to God [publicly] with her head uncovered?

¹⁴ Does not [d]the native sense of propriety (experience, common sense, reason) itself teach you that for a man to wear long hair is a dishonor [humiliating and degrading] to him,

¹⁵ But if a woman has long hair, it is her ornament *and* glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering.

¹⁶ Now if anyone is disposed to be argumentative *and* contentious about this, we hold to *and* recognize no other custom [in worship] than this, nor do the churches of God generally.

¹⁷ But in what I instruct [you] next I do not commend [you], because when you meet together, it is not for the better but for the worse.

¹⁸ For in the first place, when you assemble as a congregation, I hear that there are cliques (divisions and factions) among you; and I in part believe it,

¹⁹ For doubtless there have to be factions *or* parties among you in order that they who are genuine *and* of approved fitness may become evident *and* plainly recognized among you.

²⁰ So when you gather for your meetings, it is not the supper instituted by the Lord that you eat,

²¹ For in eating each one [hurries] to get his own supper first [not waiting for the poor], and one goes hungry while another gets drunk.

²² What! Do you have no houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God *and* mean to show contempt for it, while you humiliate those who are poor (have no homes and have brought no food)? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, [most certainly] I will not!

²³ For I received from the Lord Himself that which I passed on to you [it was given to me personally], that the Lord Jesus on the night when He was treacherously delivered up *and* while His betrayal was in progress took bread,

²⁴ And when He had given thanks, He broke [it] and said, *Take, eat*. This is My body, which is broken for you. Do this to call Me [affectionately] to remembrance.

²⁵ Similarly when supper was ended, He took the cup also, saying, This cup is the new covenant [ratified and established] in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink [it], to call Me [affectionately] to remembrance.

²⁶ For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are representing *and* signifying *and* proclaiming the fact of the Lord's death until He comes [again].

²⁷ So then whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in a way that is unworthy [of Him] will be guilty of [profaning and sinning against] the body and blood of the Lord.

²⁸ Let a man [thoroughly] examine himself, and [only when he has done] so should he eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without discriminating *and* recognizing with due appreciation that [it is Christ's] body, eats and drinks a sentence (a verdict of judgment) upon himself.

³⁰ That [careless and unworthy participation] is the reason many of you are weak and sickly, and quite enough of you have fallen into the sleep of death.

³¹ For if we searchingly examined ourselves [detecting our shortcomings and recognizing our own condition], we should not be judged *and* penalty decreed [by the divine judgment].

³² But when we [fall short and] are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined *and* chastened, so that we may not [finally] be condemned [to eternal punishment along] with the world.

³³ So then, my brothers, when you gather together to eat [the Lord's Supper], wait for one another.

³⁴ If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together to bring judgment [on yourselves]. About the other matters, I will give you directions [personally] when I come.

1 Corinthians Chapter 11 – Detailed Explanation and Theological Influence

Overview of 1 Corinthians 11

This chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians deals with two major topics:

1. **Proper conduct in worship, especially concerning head coverings** (verses 1–16).
2. **The Lord's Supper and how it should be properly observed** (verses 17–34).

Paul is concerned with order, reverence, and respect in Christian gatherings. He addresses both **cultural practices** and **spiritual truths** about worship and the body of Christ.

Verses 1–16: Head Coverings in Worship

❖ Context and Meaning

Paul begins by commending the Corinthians for maintaining traditions but clarifies one specific practice — **head coverings during prayer or prophesying**.

- **Men should not cover their heads**, as it dishonors Christ.
- **Women should cover their heads**, as it honors their husbands and respects the order of creation.

Paul refers to the **creation order**: man was created first, then woman. He emphasizes **headship** — God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man, and man is the head of woman (v.3).

This passage balances:

- **Authority and submission** (not inferiority).
- The **interdependence** of man and woman in the Lord (v.11–12).

Paul also appeals to **nature** and **cultural norms**: long hair is a covering, and a sign of feminine modesty in their time.

❖ Theological Influence

- **Gender roles in worship**: The passage has sparked centuries of discussion on men and women's roles in church.
 - **Headship theology**: It influences complementarian views (distinct roles for men and women), although egalitarians challenge its cultural specificity.
 - **Worship practices**: It highlights the importance of **honor and propriety** in communal worship.
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Verses 17–34: The Lord's Supper

❖ Context and Meaning

Paul rebukes the Corinthians for how they observe the Lord's Supper:

- **Division and selfishness** mar their gatherings (v.18–22).
- Wealthy believers eat well, while the poor are left out — **violating unity and love**.

Paul then **recounts the institution of the Lord's Supper** (v.23–26), echoing Jesus' words:

“This is my body... This cup is the new covenant in my blood...”

The Eucharist is to be taken **in remembrance of Christ**, proclaiming His death until He comes.

Paul warns that:

- **Partaking in an unworthy manner** brings guilt (v.27–29).
- **Self-examination** is essential.
- Some are **ill or have died** because of irreverent participation (v.30).

❖ Theological Influence

- **Foundation of the Eucharist / Holy Communion**: One of the most formative New Testament passages on the sacrament.
- **Sacramental theology**: Supports belief in the **real presence** of Christ in Communion (in Catholic, Orthodox, and some Protestant traditions).
- **Church unity**: Stresses that the **Lord's Supper is communal**, not individualistic — reflecting the unity of the Body of Christ.
- **Discipline and reverence**: Encourages **heart preparation** and **spiritual discernment** before participating in holy acts.

✚ Key Theological Themes in 1 Corinthians 11

Theme	Explanation
Headship & Order	Spiritual structure in the Body of Christ; reflects divine relationships (God–Christ–Man–Woman).
Worship Reverence	Worship should honor God with humility, order, and cultural sensitivity.
Unity in the Body	The Lord’s Supper symbolizes and demands unity, love, and equality among believers.
Discipline in Sacraments	Believers must examine themselves; improper participation has spiritual consequences.
Christ’s Death Proclaimed	Every Communion is a public declaration of the gospel and Christ’s return.

Conclusion

1 Corinthians 11 is foundational in Christian worship theology. It addresses:

- The intersection of **cultural practice** and **divine principles**.
- The **holiness and communal nature** of the Lord’s Supper.
- The need for **unity, humility, and reverence** in the gathered church.

Paul reminds the Corinthians — and us — that **how we worship reveals what we believe** about God, one another, and the Church.