

Small Group Guide: *Worship in a Worthy Way* - 1 Corinthians 11:1-34
***The Gospel Centered Life* - Part 9, 08/09/26**

Key Takeaways:

- God is a God of order and the way His people gather and worship should reflect that reality.
- Headship is about responsibility, not superiority—men and women are equal, yet God has given them different roles and responsibilities.
- Cultural context shapes the application, not the principle—Paul's instructions were culturally specific applications of the timeless principle: to not let your behavior dishonor God, confuse the gospel, or cause others to stumble.
- Communion is far more than a ritual—God takes it seriously, and so should we.
- A Gospel Centered life respects and reflects God's order

Icebreaker Question: Think about a time when you were part of a group or community that had a clear sense of order and shared expectations. What made that environment feel meaningful or safe? What happens when that order breaks down?

Discussion Questions:

1. Read 1 Corinthians 11:3, Genesis 1:26-28 and Ephesians 5:23. Paul uses the phrase 'the head of' to describe three relationships: God over Christ, Christ over man, and man over woman. What does it tell us that Paul includes Christ's relationship to the Father as one of his examples? How does that shape the way we understand headship between men and women?
2. Each culture interprets physical appearances to have certain meanings. In Corinth, a woman's uncovered head was intimate and even sexual, therefore inappropriate in a church gathering. How does this principle apply today? What are some modern equivalents where a Christian's appearance or behavior in a church gathering might send an unintended or unhelpful message?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 and Romans 15:1-3. Paul became 'all things to all people for the sake of the gospel', adapting to different cultures without compromising the gospel itself. Where do you personally find it hardest to distinguish between cultural preferences and non-negotiable principles? How do you decide which is which?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-22, Ephesians 4:1-6 and Galatians 3:28. Paul rebukes the Corinthians for letting their church gatherings become divisive, self-indulgent, and humiliating to the poor. What does that tell us about how seriously God views the way we treat one another when we gather as His people? Do you see any modern parallels to what was happening in Corinth?
5. Read Psalm 139:23-24 and 1 Corinthians 11:28. Examining ourselves before taking communion isn't about making sure we're perfect, but ensuring we understand what we're doing and have a right attitude toward it. What does genuine self-examination look like for you personally before taking communion? Is it something you currently practice? Why/why not?
6. Read Luke 22:14-20, 1 Corinthians 10:16-18 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. When we participate in communion we are actively, spiritually, associating with, and participating in who Jesus is, and what He stands for. How does knowing this change the way you think about communion compared to viewing it as simply a memorial?
7. Read 1 Corinthians 11:2. Paul commended the Corinthians for holding to the teachings he had passed on to them, before correcting them. Is there an area of your faith where you are faithfully holding to what you have been taught? Is there an area where, like the Corinthians, you have drifted into doing things your own way?
8. The overarching theme of this first letter from Paul to the Corinthians is that their problems were rooted in self-centeredness—they were continuing to live the self-centered way they did before they became a follower of Jesus. As you look at your own life, where does self-centeredness most often show up in the way you participate in church gatherings? How does it show up in the way you relate to other believers?

Prayer:

- If it's appropriate close your time together by taking communion as a group, praying together with the same spirit of self-examination and unity that Paul calls for in this passage.
- Thank God for the clarity of His order, the depth of His covenant, and the freedom that comes from trusting His design over our own instincts.