

1 Corinthians 11:2–16: Heads, Hair, & Head Coverings in Corinthian Worship

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INTRODUCTION

The quest to make sense of 1 Corinthians 11:2–16 has confused and divided Christians for centuries. Paul’s instructions in the passage reflect challenging theological presuppositions, obscure cultural practices, and crucial words with ambiguous meaning. In addition to the exegetical difficulties, the subject matter is personally sensitive and controversial, especially given the history and prevalence of sexism in society and in the church. Adding to these challenges, Paul’s instructions to the church also include an assertion about the nature of the relationship between the first and second person of the Godhead—the Father and the Son—that has been hotly debated by Christian scholars and ecumenical councils from as early as the second century up to the present day.

Needless to say, any interpretation of a passage that has been consistently debated by so many faithful Christians for so long requires careful attention, humility, and charity. In the end, any attempt to understand this section of God’s Word should cultivate a deeper love for Jesus and a stronger commitment to reflect the glory of His love to one another.

This passage contains at least three notoriously difficult elements:

1. The meaning and significance of Paul’s use of “head” (*kephalē*)
2. The cultural significance of hair length and head coverings and the difficulty tracing the logic of Paul’s argument on the basis of “nature”.
3. The significance of the enigmatic phrase in verse 15, “because of the angels.”

This paper is not presuming to finally resolve any of these challenges. Rather, it is an attempt to provide an introduction to some of the key issues and to offer some exegetical insights. The goal is to shed light on an interpretation of Paul’s intended meaning to the Corinthian Church and its significance for modern Christians.

THE MEANING OF “HEAD” (κεφαλή, *kephalē*)

But I want you to understand that the **head** of every **man** is Christ, the **head** of a **wife** is her **husband**, and the **head** of Christ is God.
(1 Corinthians 11:3)

Discussions around the meaning of (κεφαλή, *kephalē*) in 1 Corinthians 11 need to give attention to at least these four issues:

1. What sense of *kephalē* is Paul using in this context?
2. What are the implications of Paul's use of *kephalē* for trinitarian theology?
3. What sense of ἀνὴρ (*anēr*) (“man” or “husband”) and γυναῖκί (*gunē*) (“woman” or “wife”) is Paul using here?
4. What are the implications of this use of *kephalē* in Paul's description of the nature of the relationship between a man/husband and a woman/wife?

1. WHAT SENSE OF κεφαλή (*kephalē*) IS PAUL USING IN THIS CONTEXT?

In its literal sense, *kephalē* means “head”. However, there is broad consensus among Greek scholars that when *kephalē* is used as a metaphor or simile, it has three potential senses: 1) “leader/authority”, 2) “source”, or 3) “prominence”.

In order to understand Paul's intended sense in 1 Corinthians 11, we need to consider the immediate context and the word's use throughout the rest of this letter, other Pauline letters, the New Testament, the Septuagint, and other contemporaneous extra-Biblical Greek literature.

Survey of the metaphorical uses of *kephalē*

Preston Sprinkle (Ph.D. in New Testament from Aberdeen University), recently surveyed the metaphorical uses of *kephalē* in the contexts mentioned above and summarized his findings as follows:

- In at least a couple dozen cases in extra-biblical Greek, *kephalē* conveys some sense of authority or rule, especially when used in relationship between a person and other people. Most significantly, we see several instances in the LXX (around 13, in my estimate) where *kephalē* conveys some sense of authority or refers to someone in an authoritative position.
- *Kephalē* very rarely conveys some sense of “source” in extra-biblical Greek (and never in the LXX). We do find a few cases in extra-biblical Greek and in the church fathers where it might be used to convey this idea, especially in early interpretations of 1 Corinthians 11:3. These latter texts are written well after Paul, so are of limited value in determining what Paul might have meant.
- There is extensive evidence from medical writers and some ancient philosophers that the literal head was believed to be the control center of, and thus exercising some kind of rulership over, the body. We also have some evidence that the head was believed to be the body's life source, and this idea was often correlated with the head's rulership over the body.
- In Ephesians, *kephalē* does seem to convey some sense of “authority” in 1:22 and “life source” in 4:15.

- Paul's household code (5:22-6:9) appears to be subverting several social values assumed in other household codes. In particular, Paul challenged the notion that wives were inferior to their husbands, that husbands should rule over or subjugate their wives; rather, Paul's description of the husband's self-giving love for the wife is unparalleled in ancient literature and appears to be particularly highlighted in this passage.¹

The Context of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

Thoughtful arguments have been made for the use of authority, source, and prominence in 1 Corinthians 11, and both the ideas of authority and source are represented in the immediate context. If Paul intends the idea of source, he would be saying that Christ is the source of man in creation or in the new creation, man is the source of woman in the story of Adam and Eve, and God is the source the Christ—either referring to the “eternal begottenness” of the Son or His incarnation.² In the immediate context, Paul makes a point to say that women were made from man (alluding to Eve being made from the source of Adam's side), and that all men are born of women (that is women are the source of all men), and that both come from God as the ultimate source of life (1 Cor. 11:12). For Paul this seems to emphasize the mutuality and interdependence of men and women, a vital element in his argument that should not be minimized in the final interpretation.

However, Paul still maintains that man is the “head” of woman in a non-interchangeable sense (11:3). In this same context—and speaking specifically to the concept of headship—Paul speaks to the importance of women in gathered worship “having authority over her head” (ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς) (1 Cor 11:10). Ἐξουσίαν (exousían) is the primary Greek word used to communicate the idea of authority. There is debate about whether the idea of authority in (11:12) indicates a woman's intrinsic authority to cover her own head or some form of cultural expression that she is under the protective headship of her husband (something analogous to a wedding ring).

Both explanations are plausible. However, source seems to be applied reciprocally, whereas the idea of authority is directly connected to the mention of the woman's head. This seems to indicate that Paul's use of kephalē is connected to the idea of authority. If this is the case, it is vital to note that Paul seems to talk about authority in a subversive way through the lens of the self-giving love of Christ and in a way prioritizes equality, mutuality, and interdependence between men and women.

¹ Preston Sprinkle, "What Does 'Head' (κεφαλή) Mean in Paul's Letters? Part 8: Ephesians 5:23," *Theology in the Raw*, accessed September 12, 2024, <https://theologyintheraw.com/what-does-head-kephale-mean-in-pauls-letters-part-8-ephesians-523/>.

For more details on Sprinkle's research see:

"What Does 'Head' (κεφαλή) Mean in Paul's Letters? Part 1: Introduction," *Theology in the Raw*, accessed September 12, 2024, <https://theologyintheraw.com/what-does-head-kephale-mean-in-pauls-letters-part-1-introduction/>.

"What Does 'Head' (κεφαλή) Mean in Paul's Letters? Part 2: The Septuagint," *Theology in the Raw*, accessed September 12, 2024, <https://theologyintheraw.com/what-does-head-kephale-mean-in-pauls-letters-part-2-the-septuagint/>.

"What Does 'Head' (κεφαλή) Mean in Paul's Letters? Part 3: Ancient Greek Literature," *Theology in the Raw*, accessed September 12, 2024, <https://theologyintheraw.com/what-does-head-kephale-mean-in-pauls-letters-part-3-ancient-greek-literature/>.

"What Does 'Head' (κεφαλή) Mean in Paul's Letters? Part 4: Early Church Fathers," *Theology in the Raw*, accessed September 12, 2024, <https://theologyintheraw.com/what-does-head-kephale-mean-in-pauls-letters-part-4-early-church-fathers/>.

² The potential meanings of God as the source of Christ will be discussed below.

2. WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF PAUL'S USE OF *kephalē* FOR TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY?

the **head** of Christ is God.
(1 Corinthians 11:3)

Theologians have long debated how Paul's use of *kephalē* relates to the relationship between God the Father and God the Son. In what sense is God the head of Christ? Authority, source, or preeminence?

The theological and historical backdrop:

The nature of the relationship between God the Father and God the Son was central in the fourth century debate between Arius and Athanasius which precipitated the Council of Nicea (325 A.D.) where the church rejected Arianism as a heretical position on the nature of the Trinity. Proponents of Arianism held that the Son of God was not eternal, but that He was made by God before time, is of a different substance from the Father, and is eternally subordinate to Him. The ecumenical council rejected this idea, and clarified the Church's position that the Son of God is eternally begotten of the Father, not made by the Father, and is of one substance with Him.³ This relationship was further clarified at the Second Council of Constantinople (533 A.D.), where the church rejected the notion that the Son of God was eternally subordinate to the Father (Subordinationism). Orthodox trinitarian theology holds that the Father and the Son are of one substance, distinct in personhood, and equally divine.

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father; God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God; begotten not made, one in being with the Father.
(From the Nicene Creed, A.D. 325)

This historical and theological backdrop is important to keep in mind when considering Paul's use of *kephalē* in 1 Corinthians 11:3. Is Paul using the sense of authority or source? And how does that relate to an orthodox position on the nature of the Trinity?

***Kephalē* as Source in the Trinity?**

The idea that Paul is using *kephalē* to speak to God being the **source** of the Christ is consistent with an orthodox position on the Trinity so long as it means either that the Son was "eternally begotten of the Father" and "not made" by the Father or that God is the **source/sender** of the incarnate Son.

³ The term used to refer to the equality of substance between the Father and the Son is *homoousios* which is traditionally translated in the Catholic version of the Nicene Creed as *consubstantial*.

***Kephalē* as Authority in the Trinity?**

The idea that Paul is using *kephalē* to indicate that God holds some kind of **authority** with respect to the Christ requires more nuance about the nature and timing of the authority. Is it referring to an ontological subordination of being or a functional submission of the Son to the Father? And is this dynamic true of the Father and the Son for eternity past, or something that became true when the Son took on human flesh and nature in His incarnation?

A position on God's relationship to the Christ that claims that the Son of God is *ontologically subordinate* to authority of God the Father would be a type of *subordinationism*, claiming that the Son of God is of a different and subordinate substance from the Father. This would be a departure from orthodox trinitarian theology which holds that the Father and the Son are of one substance.

However, others who believe that *kephalē* has the sense of *authority* maintain that the Christ is *functionally* submitted to the authority of God the Father. In this view, the Christ has a submitted role to the Father, but is equal in His substance and divinity. The question is whether or not this is an "Eternal Functional Submission"⁴ or something that the Son took on in His incarnation.

This question relates to the concepts of Divine Simplicity and the Hypostatic Union of the Incarnate Son. The principle of Divine Simplicity states that God does not exist in parts, but exists as a one unified whole. Most theologians agree that before the incarnation, the Godhead had one unified divine will, making the idea of "eternal functional submission" untenable if not heterodoxical.

However, when the eternally begotten Son of God became a man in the Incarnation, He carried within His person two distinct natures—human and divine—existing in one substance (the Hypostatic Union). Within an orthodox understanding of the hypostatic union, it is maintained that the incarnate Son of God has two distinct wills—a divine nature with a divine will and a human nature with a human will (Dyothelitism). In this way, the Incarnate Son of God—in His role and function as "the Christ"—submitted His human will to the authority of the divine will of the Father. This submitted posture is most clearly seen in Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done" (Luke 22:42).

⁴ This question has reemerged in recent years among evangelical scholars. For an overview of the elements of the debate see Andrew Wilson, "Submission in the Trinity: A Quick Guide to the Debate," Think Theology, accessed September 12, 2024, https://thinktheology.co.uk/blog/article/submission_in_the_trinity_a_quick_guide_to_the_debate.

In view of this, it's possible to hold that headship does connote the sense of authority, but it is important to maintain that this would refer to the functional submission of the Christ in His incarnation and not an eternal functional submission.⁵

In the end, neither the sense of *kephalē* as source or as *authority* inherently contradicts an orthodox understanding of the nature of the relationship between the Father and the Son, and these important trinitarian considerations need not determine or restrict Paul's use of *kephalē* in this passage. However, the analogy of the Father and the son does protect us against any understanding of *kephalē* that would communicate an idea of subordination or hierarchy of value. The Father and the Son are one in essence, equally divine, distinct in personhood and function, and united in a glorious interdependent community.

3. WHAT IS PAUL'S INTENDED MEANING IN HIS USE OF ἄνθρωπος (MAN/HUSBAND) AND γυναίκα (WOMAN/WIFE)?

ἄνθρωπος (*anēr*) can mean either man or husband depending on the context, and γυναίκα (*gunē*) can mean either woman or wife depending on the context. With respect to the idea of headship, it seems likely that Paul is speaking primarily about the nature of the covenantal relationship between a husband and a wife. However, the significance of hair length and head coverings was understood as being relevant and applicable to post-pubescent men and women.

4. PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUSBANDS AND WIVES:

Although none of the three potential metaphorical uses of *kephalē* can be ruled out, a survey of the metaphorical uses—especially when describing the nature of the relationship between people—along with the direct mention of *authority* in connection to the head of the woman suggests that the idea of leadership or authority is most probable. At the same time, it is vital to note that in the context of husbands and wives, Paul always draws attention to a subversive understanding of the nature of true authority or leadership through the lens of the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus and the trinitarian design of equal value, distinctive function, and interdependent community.

⁵ The fourth century church father, John Chrysostom, was aware of both the multivalency of *kephalē* and its relationship to trinitarian theology. Referring to Chrysostom's approach to this passage, Anthony Thistleton writes, "Chrysostom is aware that a parallel between men/women and God/Christ should not give "the heretics" grounds for a subordinationist Christology. In certain respects head denotes a kind of primacy, but both God and Christ on one side and men and women on the other are of the same mode of being. 'For had Paul meant to speak of rule and subjection ... he would not have brought forward the instance of a woman (or wife), but rather of a slave and a master.... It is a wife (or woman) as free, as equal in honour; and the Son also, though He did become obedient to the Father, it was as the Son of God; it was as God.' While we must avoid reading back patristic doctrines of the Trinity into Pauline texts, Chrysostom (a) reflects Paul's notion that in the context of love between God and Christ, or between man and woman, obedience or response is chosen, not imposed; and (b) reflects the endeavor to do justice to the duality or wholeness of difference and "order" on one side and reciprocity and mutual dignity and respect on the other." (Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 818–19.)

HAIR LENGTH, HEAD COVERINGS, & GRECO-ROMAN PHYSIOLOGY

Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For **her hair is given to her for a covering**.
(1 Corinthians 11:14-15)

Paul's argument here has bewildered readers for centuries for at least a few reasons. First, his rhetorical question about the disgrace of long hair on a man is made on the basis of "nature". In what way does nature teach us that long hair on a man is a disgrace? Second, up to this point, Paul seems to have been expressing the importance of women covering their hair with some sort of garment when prophesying or praying in corporate worship, but here he seems to be saying that her hair "is her glory" and was given to her "instead of a covering" (ἀντὶ περιβόλαιου, *anti peribolaion*).⁶ How can we make sense of this?

In a 2004 article entitled, "Paul's Argument from Nature for the Veil in 1 Cor. 11:13-15: A Testicle instead of a Head Covering"⁷, Troy Martin Argues that Paul's instructions about head coverings in 1 Corinthians 11 should be read in the context of the prevailing beliefs in ancient Greek and Roman physiology. Looking at the ancient Greco-Roman medical texts, he demonstrates that the Greek word that is most often translated "covering" (περιβόλαιον, *peribolaion*) is used in Greek medical texts as a reference to testicles. Martin then demonstrates that the predominant medical writers in the Greek world understood hair growth and hair length to be physiologically connected to fertility and reproduction. In the medical texts from Hypocrites, Aristotle, Aristophanes, and others he discerns the following beliefs to be widely held by the most prolific thinkers and writers in Greek physiology:

1. Semen is formed and stored in the brain, and hair grows only on the head of prepubescent humans because the channels of the body are not yet large enough to allow reproductive fluids to travel through the body.
2. At puberty, hair growth in the pubic areas of the body marks the movement and presence of sexual fluids.
3. Hair was understood to be a hollow fiber which creates a vacuum that draws in semen toward the regions of the body with the most hair.
4. In sexual intercourse, long hair on the head of women aids in drawing semen upwards into the womb.
5. Long hair on men causes the male body to retain semen in the head rather than to eject it.
6. Male testicles aid in drawing semen down from the brain.

If indeed this was the prevailing view of the Greco-Roman medical world, Paul's logic from "nature"⁸ would have been readily understood by his readers: that long hair on a man is shameful (because it diminishes his fertility), but long hair on a woman is her glory (because it increases her fertility), because her hair was

⁶ The normal sense of the word ἀντὶ is "instead of", "in place of", or "as a replacement for" (BDAG).

⁷ Troy Martin, "Paul's Argument From Nature For The Veil In 1 Corinthians 11:13-15: A Testicle Instead Of A Head Covering", [JBL 123/1 (2004): 75-84]. For more debate on this view see also Mark Goodacre, "Does περιβόλαιον Mean 'Testicle' in 1 Corinthians 11:15?" Journal of Biblical Literature 130 (2011): 391-96, and Martin's response, "Περιβόλαιον as 'Testicle' in 1 Corinthians 11:15: A Response to Mark Goodacre," Journal of Biblical Literature 132 (2013): 453-65.

⁸ In this case, Paul's use of "nature" would read something like "our shared understanding of human biology".

given to her “instead of testicles.”⁹ So within this context, Paul’s argument on the basis of “nature” and his argument throughout this passage makes logical sense: given what hair signifies, it would be inappropriately provocative for a woman to have her long hair uncovered when worshiping, and it would be shameful for men to have long hair.

Even if we now understand the ancient Greek conceptions of human physiology to be inaccurate,¹⁰ the fact that this was a widely held assumption in Corinth reveals a concerning social dynamic behind the act of a woman praying or prophesying in the gathered assembly with uncovered or unbound hair. This would have been seen as an explicit gesture of sexual promiscuity that may have been celebrated in Corinth and in the temple of Aphrodite,¹¹ but would be inappropriate in the context of public Christian worship where men and women are to treat each other with dignity as brothers and sisters.¹²

“BECAUSE OF THE ANGELS”

What does Paul mean when he says that women/wives need to have authority on their heads “**because of the angels**”?

That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, **because of the angels**.
(1 Corinthians 11:10)

In view of the cultural understanding of long hair on women as a sexually promiscuous gesture, Paul’s statement that women/wives should have “authority on their heads **because of the angels**” takes on a new light. Considering this, Michael Heiser raised the idea of a potential connection to the enigmatic story from Genesis 6:1-8 when “the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose.”¹³ Heiser and many others read “the sons of God” as a reference to created spiritual beings who rebelled against God by entering into some sort of sexual relationship with human women. This immoral relationship between spiritual beings and human women perpetuated the evil in the world which precipitated the flood event as an act of divine judgment. So for Paul, if women in Corinth were revealing their long hair in worship, then it is likely that it was indicating some form of openness to

⁹ Leslie Dean-Jones, *Women's Bodies in Classical Greek Science* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 83–85.

¹⁰ For some, the idea that the Bible would report an underdeveloped understanding of certain features of science could seem like a violation of the doctrine of Biblical Inerrancy, but faithful adherents to the doctrine of Inerrancy have long understood the presence of this sort of phenomena in the Bible. The most widely held articulation of the doctrine of Biblical Inerrancy is expressed in the *Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy* (1978). Article XIII states: “We deny that it is proper to evaluate Scripture according to standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose. We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.”

¹¹ See Mary Beard and John Henderson, “With This Body I Thee Worship: Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity,” *Gender & History* 9, no. 3 (1997): 480–503, and Tony Perrottet, “Ancient Greek Temples of Sex,” *The Smart Set*, August 7, 2017.

¹² Even if one is not compelled by Martin’s interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:15, it is widely attested that, “A woman’s unbound hair, and the act of letting it down, often had sexual connotations and could serve as the mark of a ‘loose woman’” David Seal, “Hair,” ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016). Seal references Charles H. Cosgrove. “A Woman’s Unbound Hair in the Greco-Roman World with Special Reference to the Story of the ‘Sinful Woman’ in Luke 7:36–50.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 124 (2005): 675–692.

¹³ Michael Heiser, “The Head Covering of 1 Corinthians 11:13-15” (The Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 86): <https://nakedbiblepodcast.com/podcast/naked-bible-86-the-head-covering-of-1-corinthians-1113-15/>

sexual immorality and idolatry. This would be particularly distressing in the context of corporate worship where the people were ostensibly gathering to worship Jesus as the crucified and risen Lord. Is it possible that Paul was concerned that this expression of sexual promiscuity in worship would expose the Corinthian church to some form of threat from other rebellious spiritual beings in Corinth?

This view seems possible, given what all we know of sacred prostitution in Corinth and its ongoing influence on the Christians in the city. Consider these factors:

1. The Corinthian Christians were already struggling with syncretistic practices and were at times engaging in the worship of other idols (1 Corinthians 10).
2. Paul had a worldview that saw demonic spiritual beings at play behind these idols. (1 Corinthians 10:20)
3. Corinth had a large number of people who worshiped the goddess Aphrodite, and some accounts claim that the temple to Aphrodite employed around one thousand temple prostitutes. In the Greco-Roman world, Corinth's temples were seen as the most socially accepting of sacred prostitution, and prostitution was part of the ritual, moral, and economic life of Corinth.¹⁴
4. The Corinthian Christians were at times permitting people within the church to engage with the temple prostitutes.
5. Paul saw a strong connection between sexual immorality and the worship of idols. (1 Corinthians 10:1-14).

It may be hard to imagine how the church could permit this kind of hyper sexualized behavior into the gathering of the church, but it is important to remember the cultural context that the Corinthian Christians had lived in their whole lives. They weren't raised in a society with Judeo-Christian moral sensibilities. Prostitution was not only permitted in Corinth, but it would have been esteemed as virtuous, contributing to the fertility and growth of the city, economic prosperity, and sacred worship.¹⁵ It's not a stretch to imagine that these cultural waters were continuing to influence a small community of first generation Christians without much theological guidance, oversight, or accessible examples of a Christ-centered sexual ethic.

WHAT'S PAUL'S POINT & WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR US?

As has been the case throughout the letter, the new Christian Community in Corinth has not yet fully embraced a Christ-Centered worldview. Their approach to corporate worship is getting undermined by their acceptance of their own cultural idols related to human sexuality and gender. In particular, their acceptance of sexually provocative behavior in corporate worship undermines their loyalty to Jesus and dishonors the dignity of both men and women. Paul wants to help them turn from these immoral and

¹⁴ "Greek geographer Strabo described Corinth's lust to the civilians. He said that the temple of Aphrodite once had acquired more than a thousand prostitutes, donated by both men and women to the service of the goddess. In this temple, 1,000 girls worked in this manner to gather funds for their deity. Cypriot women, called Propoetides, were forced to act as prostitutes for Aphrodite, and these women acted as surrogates to Aphrodite in that through these sexual activities they were generating fertility for Cyprus." From: "Sacred Prostitution in Ancient Greece," Wikipedia, July 22, 2024, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacred_prostitution_in_ancient_Greece.

¹⁵ For more detailed discussions on the dynamics of ancient temple prostitution see: Konstantinos Kapparis, "The Economics of Ancient Prostitution," in *Prostitution in the Ancient Greek World* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 265–314, and Sara Keating, "'Sacred Prostitution': An Ancient Tradition Based on Respect for the Woman," *The Irish Times*, December 14, 2021.

idolatrous practices so that they could be a community that worships Jesus and reflects the glory of His servant hearted love and humility toward one another.

A lot could be said about the significance of this passage for modern Christians, but three things stand out for our context:

1. We should engage in public worship in ways that help each other direct our attention to the glory of God alone, and we should root out self-oriented approaches to worship.
2. Men and women should engage in worship as interdependent brothers and sisters that honor each other's God-given dignity, and celebrate God's beautiful design for unity, distinctiveness, and interdependence.
3. Ultimately, this passage points us to Jesus who embodies both the glory of humble submission to the will of the Father and the glory of sacrificial love for His people.

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