



Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

## Parables Bookshelf - Series 1.10.3

This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF contains chapters 6-7 of the book *Sarah's Children*.

Many people like to give some outward testimony of the fact that they are a Christian. Many people choose to wear jewelry, such as a necklace with a cross on it, to testify of their belief in Christ. Others may wear t-shirts with a Scripture verse on it, or put a bumper sticker on their car.

Such messages are interpreted by others in a wide variety of ways. Being a Christian doesn't mean much more to some people than that they live in a nation that is traditionally Christian in belief. To others it is similar to joining a club, or aligning themselves with their favorite sports team.

When a woman considers wearing a Christian headcovering, as the apostles of Christ instructed godly women to do, she is making a much greater declaration than wearing a piece of jewelry.

Headcovering is recognized universally as a symbol of obedience and submission. Such a concept is offensive to many women. It goes against the grain of modern society. In an age when women's rights are being championed, and equality with men is being sought after on every level, the woman who embraces the humility of Christ will stand out as very peculiar. She will even be viewed with contempt by many in the world.

Headcovering is a subject that people feel strongly about. There are few who

would ever comment on a Christian woman wearing a cross necklace, but let her embrace the cross, and testify to this by wearing a headcovering, and people will have strong opinions about it.

When we choose God's way over the ways of the world, conflict results.

II Timothy 3:12

And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

The chief reason there is so little persecution of Christians in Western society is that Christians have conformed to the world.

Let a man or woman conform to God's kingdom and it will be apparent that they are aliens and strangers in this world.

## Food for Thought

*"The Christian faith is meant to be lived moment by moment. It isn't some broad, general outline--it's a long walk with a real Person. Details count: passing thoughts, small sacrifices, a few encouraging words, little acts of kindness, brief victories over nagging sins."*

Joni Eareckson Tada

## Scripture Memory

Colossians 3:23-24

And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

### Parables Newsletter

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# Sarah's Children

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The wise woman builds her house,  
But the foolish tears it down with her own hands.

Proverbs 14:1

## Homemakers

**S**hortly after our daughter was born my wife Tony quit her job at a local lumber company where she oversaw the distribution of the payroll. Ever since that time Tony has not worked outside of the home, but she has definitely worked. Each year when I fill out our tax forms and it asks for the occupation of my spouse I put "Homemaker." Besides this being a general title given to women that do not work outside the home, it is also a scripturally correct identification.

The scripture above states, "The wise woman builds her house." Certainly this scripture is not speaking about a woman physically constructing the building in which she and her family dwell. A woman does not have to be a building contractor to be wise. Building one's house goes far beyond anything that can be accomplished with a hammer and nails and saw.

We have already seen that the scriptures declare that a woman was created for man, and that she is intended to be man's helper. This is a critical matter to keep in mind as a woman seeks to build her house. A woman will find her greatest fulfillment in accomplishing that purpose for which God created her. This does not mean that all women must get married, but whether they are married or unmarried they will benefit greatly by understanding the purpose of woman's creation and the order of authority and government established by God.

In the last chapter we saw that women can produce

life and godliness in the lives of their men as they surrender their tongues to be used of God. A woman can elicit from her husband, or other male figure, a desire to rise up to higher realms, to pursue godliness, to avoid evil, to put away anger, to be conformed to the image of Christ whose image he was originally created to bear. She does this as she affirms man and speaks godly words of encouragement, faith and hope to him.

One of the woman's chief tools in building her house is her tongue and it should be governed by love. The foundation of any home must be love, for love must be the motivator of every action. If our words and deeds are not arising out of love, then they must be finding their source in some other, inferior motive such as selfishness, bitterness, anger, envy, malice, etc.. The very height of love is laying down one's life for the good of another. Yahshua stated, "Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

In the previous chapters we spoke much of taking up the cross, of losing one's life. At its very essence, such an action is a demonstration of love. To deny yourself in order to obey Christ is an act of love. Yahshua said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" (John 14:15).

What we have spoken of thus far is very difficult, yet we will be led to perform extreme and sacrificial actions that love may not be denied. If a woman has not embraced the cross and a death to self as has been described, it could be asked of her whether she has truly ever loved. There are many who confess their love and devotion, but when a choice arises that requires dying to their soul life, many choose to keep their life rather than lose it. This is not love, it is self-interest and self-protection.

It is common to think of love as some sort of infatuation with another being, and there is some truth to this. There is a romantic love of the sort that we see described in the Song of Songs. Yet this

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romantic love would be hollow and false if it was not wedded to the love we have described that will lay down its own life for a friend. Even Yahshua's love would have been lacking if He told His disciples that He loved them, but then He had refused to go the way of the cross.

A home must be built upon this type of unselfish love. Each member must seek the welfare of the others above their own welfare. A wife must lay down her own desires, agenda, and goals, to seek to help her husband fulfill the call upon his life. Some have depicted a woman who loves in this way as simply being a doormat for her husband's feet, but this is simply pride speaking, and true love is absent in those who hold to this view. Pride does not want to subject itself to the will of another. Pride wants to seek its own personal fulfillment.

In the last chapter we saw how Abigail turned the heart of David with her wisdom and humility. If we had read a little further we would have seen that she also chose to lay down her life and live her life for another.

### I Samuel 25:40-42

When the servants of David came to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her, saying, "David has sent us to you to take you as his wife." She arose and bowed with her face to the ground and said, "Behold, your maidservant is a maid to wash the feet of my lord's servants." Then Abigail quickly arose, and rode on a donkey, with her five maidens who attended her; and she followed the messengers of David and became his wife.

There are many women today who would describe Abigail's attitude in a very unflattering way, yet she was demonstrating great godliness. In her comment, "Behold, your maidservant is a maid to wash the feet of my lord's servants" she was expressing the height of love. She was proclaiming that she

would lay down her own soul life with its ambitions and desires that she might seek the welfare and benefit of others. It is questionable whether she spent much time actually washing people's feet, for she had five maidens of her own to attend to her, and later she lived as the wife of the king in the king's palace. She was expressing her heart attitude, however. She was not entering into a marriage relationship with David to get out of it what she could. Instead she was seeking to give of herself.

Yahshua demonstrated that this should be our attitude when He washed His disciples' feet. He also demonstrated it when He went to the cross, laying down His life for others. All that we have looked at in this matter of taking up the cross is a demonstration of love. This must be the foundation upon which a home is built. The woman should demonstrate this love if she wants her house to rest on a sure foundation. The scriptures speak of love as being a foundational matter. In Ephesians 3:17, Paul prays that the saints might be "rooted and grounded in love." To be rooted and grounded are both foundational matters.

Walking in such love should be the first priority of a wise woman who seeks to build her house. Secondly, a wise woman will seek to restore the proper governmental order in her home. If love is the foundation of a home, then government is the framework on which the building rises. It is what supplies order and structure, and it provides safety and security to those who allow their lives to be governed by it.

Speaking negatively, we are told that a foolish woman will tear down her home with her own hands. She does this first by not taking up the cross and denying self. She does it by insisting on her own way and demanding that she be able to live her own life. Secondly, a foolish woman tears down her house by seeking to overturn the governmental order of Yahweh. This will destroy a home as surely as if she went out and began removing the supporting beams that hold up the framework of her house.

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However, this book is written for the godly woman who seeks to be a homemaker, not a home destroyer. A godly woman will seek to affirm her husband's or father's role and calling in order that her entire household might be afforded protection, comfort, and peace. She seeks to instill in her children an appropriate reverence and respect for the delegated authorities of Yahweh. She seeks to bring honor into her home.

Have you noticed how absent honor is from homes today? It seems that honor is viewed as being archaic and as outdated as the concept of a wife calling her husband 'lord.' I see great dishonor in families today. Even in Christian homes I have observed children cursing their parents, yelling at them, pushing them, and treating them with great contempt. I have seen sons and daughters willfully disobeying their mother and father, often with the parents trying to placate the anger of their children by giving in to the child's tantrum. I have seen wives publicly correcting their husbands and reprimanding them without any shame. I have heard adult saints boasting about harshly reprimanding their elderly parents for some decision or action.

In all of this the honor that is due those who are to be honored is missing. Paul instructed the church in this way.

Romans 13:1-2, 7

Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves... Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

The civil governments of this world would fall into anarchy if there were no honor given to the authority they wield. Similarly, in the home chaos ensues when honor is lacking. A wise woman builds her home by instilling within it a sense of honor.

It is all too common today for a woman to speak criticisms of her husband publicly. It is also very common to hear a wife making her husband the butt of a joke, or of some jest. I have sat in a home church group and listened as the wife of a pastor mimicked how her husband would whine and cajole and urge her to obey him in some manner. This woman thought it was some type of sport to poke fun at her husband and to embarrass him publicly. It was no coincidence that I observed this same woman speaking harshly, and in a condemning manner, to her mother in the presence of others.

There is an appalling lack of honor among the saints today, on the job, in their homes, in relation to the civil governments, in the churches, and in every realm of authority which Yahweh has established. But perhaps nowhere is the damage seen as clearly as in the home. A wise woman will build her home by doing everything she can to ensure that honor is present.

Restoring honor, first and foremost, must begin with the woman's own relationship to her husband or father. The following scriptures depict what the manner of the godly woman should be.

I Peter 3:1-6

In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands... Your adornment must not be merely external... but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; just as Sarah obeyed

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Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

Titus 2:3-5

Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior... so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.

Ephesians 5:22

Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

In the society we live in such instructions seem preposterous. In a society that lampoons its presidents and government officials, in a society that places buffoonish caricatures of government leaders on the editorial pages of its newspapers, in a society where the patriarchal family is viewed as antiquated and backward, these instructions to the women of the Christian church are largely viewed with scorn and rejection. Yet there are godly women who desire to be all that the Creator made them to be. They desire to find in their own being a conformity to the revealed word of God.

How very much is revealed in this one command, "Wives, be subject to your own husbands as to the Lord." How are the saints to be subject to the Lord? They are to obey without complaining. They are to show reverence and godly fear. They are to lay down their own lives that they might fulfill the desire of the Lord. They are to always honor Him with the words of their mouth.

We have looked at one circumstance in which wives are not to obey, and that is when they are

commanded to sin. In every other instance they are to follow the principle of, "Wives, be subject to your own husbands as to the Lord." This is the revealed will of Yahweh, for man is the head of woman even as Christ is the head of man.

Can you imagine how households would be transformed as women began to practice these things? Quite often children are encouraged to rebel simply because they see a rebellious attitude in their mother as she relates to her husband or other men. How awesome and transforming it would be for the children to see their mother remain chaste and respectful even when her husband is disobedient to the word of God. The children would see demonstrated before them the principle that rebellion is never justified, and honor is always required.

Often children are loud, self-willed and rebellious because they have observed their mother or father also being self-willed. They have observed that their mother has her own life and is very assertive in her independence. They have not seen in her a gentle, quiet and submissive spirit. Therefore the children also lack these same things.

We often see in movies or on television the stereotype of a meek man who is wed to a strong and assertive woman. She may be disappointed that her husband does not take a firm stand in some matter. She may consider him to be too lenient with a repairman or salesperson. She may nag her husband to be more forceful and assertive, or she may simply take things into her own hands and assert herself with strong words and forceful actions as she deals with the repairman, the salesperson, the neighbor, the friend, the mother-in-law, etc.. Yet every time a woman resorts to this type of behavior she dishonors her husband and she promotes a spirit of dishonor in her family.

If you are dealing with rebellion among your children, ask yourself if you have been perfect in submitting to your husband as to the Lord. Have you revered him by being content with his judgment

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or actions in some matter, or have you usurped his authority by taking things into your own hands to make sure things are done to your satisfaction? Our actions and attitudes bear fruit in the lives of others. My own bride was led to begin practicing headcovering when the Spirit spoke to her through the rebellion and disobedience of our son.

I have taught and written about the matter of headcovering, and from the beginning of our marriage relationship I told my wife that headcovering was something I desired for her to practice. I did not hound my wife about the issue, but she understood my desire in the matter. One day as Tony was dealing with our son and he was not obeying in a prompt manner, she became angered by his recalcitrant attitude.

As she was considering what her next response should be to our son, the Spirit spoke to Tony and reminded her of her own hesitation to obey in the matter of headcovering. The Spirit so convicted Tony about her own reluctance to obey, and He revealed to her how this behavior was mirrored in our son, that she began covering from that time forward. The awesome thing is that even as our disobedience bears results in the lives of others, so too does our obedience. The godly example of one person has often persuaded many others to a walk of godliness.

As a woman demonstrates honor toward her husband or father, others will take note. A climate is set that encourages a response of honor from others. This is just a beginning, however. There is much that has been lost that must be restored in this day and hour. Never has the honor in the home been at a lower ebb. The tide has gone far out and it must return.

A woman can instill a sense of honor in her home through her speech. We are told that Sarah called Abraham 'lord.' In this way she honored her husband. It is a telling example of how far we have fallen that this sounds absurd to most women today. How does it make you feel? Would you feel

silly or ashamed calling your husband 'lord'? Why does it sound so abnormal?

We cannot say that using the title 'lord' is what sounds strange, for the church predominantly uses this title when speaking of both Yahweh and Yahshua. What strikes us as awkward and inappropriate is addressing man by this title.

Satan has done such a complete work of replacing honor with disrespect, and submission with independence that the word 'lord' when applied to man sounds wrong to our ears. But if the whole world is saying one thing and Yahweh says something else, we must agree with Yahweh. Sarah called Abraham lord and she is lifted up as an example of a godly woman for other godly women to emulate.

By your own speech, do you create an atmosphere of honor toward your husband or father that is noticeable to others? In the introduction to this book we spoke of how godly women are appearing as beacons of light in a darkened world. We spoke of how a woman dressing modestly and practicing headcovering attracts the attention of others. In the same way, the very speech of a godly woman should stand out in a darkened society. It should be so noticeable as to turn heads.

In this day of rebellion and dishonor, the wife or daughter that demonstrates submission and reverence in their speech will stand out as a bright, flashing, neon sign. Is your speech attracting such attention? Do those who observe your conversation note that you are not speaking in the same manner as the ungodly society that you live in? They should. It should be visible to all. It should be especially visible in your own home, and if you have children it should be very visible to them.

A wise woman will build her house, but a foolish woman will tear it down by exhibiting dishonor in her attitudes and speech. The tongue has such power in it. There is a tendency to not be careful about our words. If we are engaged in conversation a lot there is great room for error. Have you ever

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visited a home where the wife dominated the conversation? There is a tremendous danger in being too talkative. I have never seen a person yet who was known for their talkative nature who did not frequently say things that were better left unsaid.

Proverbs 10:19

When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable,

But he who restrains his lips is wise.

Ecclesiastes 5:2

Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few.

During the Passover season one year I was looking at a cross that was lying on the floor of a church in front of the pulpit when the Spirit began speaking to me. He began revealing to me what it meant to be crucified with Christ and conformed to His image. I was reminded of Yahshua's words:

John 14:10

“The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.”

In several places in the Gospel of John Yahshua is recorded as saying that He did not speak a word of His own initiative, but He only spoke the words the Father gave Him to speak. The Spirit began ministering to me that this was the calling for each one of the elect and chosen of God.

As I looked at the cross I was somewhat incredulous that such a high calling could actually be attained. Could I actually come to the place where all of my words were Yahweh's words, where I did not

speak a word of my own initiative? The Spirit confirmed to me that this was my calling. He reminded me that the expressed desire of the Father is to conform His children to the image of Christ. Christ never spoke a word of His own initiative, and this is the Christ to whose image we are all being conformed.

For this reason we should let our words be few. As I looked at the cross I prayed that the Father would teach me to set a guard over my mouth. I also considered how much more powerful my speech would be in its effect if it was not a mixture of Spirit and flesh, but if it was Spirit only. How profound would be the effect upon others.

Often our witness and testimony is greatly diminished because we exhibit such a corrupt mixture in our speech. I sat and listened to a couple speak of the necessity of holiness in the lives of the saints one day. They shared scriptures that the Spirit was bringing to them and what they shared was quite profound, yet less than a half hour later the conversation had degenerated into coarse jesting, sexual innuendo, and foolish speech. James asks the questions:

James 3:10-12

From the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.

Even as the Spirit challenged me to elevate my goals and to desire to become perfect in speech, the same challenge awaits every woman who aspires to godliness. What does godliness imply? It implies being like God, and we have Yahshua's own confession that He never spoke a word of His own initiative, but He spoke just the words the Father com-

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manded Him to speak. How much less speech there would be in the world if we all practiced this same obedience?

My wife read a book where the woman author spoke of her efforts to be more godly in her speech. She began trying to avoid unnecessary and frivolous conversation. She would get up in the morning and enter into communion with God before she spoke to anyone else. She would also set her answering machine on her phone to answer all calls, and she chose to return calls at certain times of day when she knew people would be less likely to want to ramble in conversation. She would call people back when they were preparing dinner, for example, for she knew that there would be less of a tendency for the person to try to engage her in a lengthy conversation. She knew the truth of the scripture that states "When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise."

When you bring this area of your life into conformity to the will of God you will see that people begin to perceive you differently. People will place a higher value upon your counsel and your words. People will sense a greater conviction when they hear the truth spoken from your lips. You will stand out from the crowd of careless talkers. In Proverbs we are told that "even a fool appears wise when he does not open his mouth."

Are you known to others as a person who is talkative? Do you find yourself speaking all day long, jumping from one issue and topic to another? Often I have found that the most talkative people are oblivious to how others perceive them. It is those who restrain their speech that are accounted as wise. The foolish person will let everything inside come forth as a gusher of words. There is no guard over their lips.

For a woman to build her house she must be wise in her choice of words. One careless remark can undo months, or even years, of prudent speech. It does not take much leaven to thoroughly leaven a lump of dough. It does not take but a little saltwa-

ter to spoil a fresh water source.

When one sets out to instill honor in their home they must be consistent in their speech. They should not demonstrate a submissive and humble spirit one day, and rebellion and pride the next. You do not want your house built with some good lumber and some rotten.

The tongue is the chief tool of a wise woman who will build her house. Like a hammer, it is skillfully used when it is applied to what needs nailing, and it is likewise skillfully used when you don't use it to strike that which should not be struck. Many are the women who are going around knocking holes in the walls of their home. They have not yet learned the power of restraining their speech.

In order to build honor into your home you must choose carefully your words. You must begin the practice of setting a guard over your lips. If you are in the habit of letting everything inside come out freely, then when you are in a moment of anger or fear you will find it difficult to hold back words that you will later regret. However, if you have already learned the discipline of the tongue then such moments will not catch you unprepared.

If this is an area that you experience difficulty in, then ask Yahweh to teach you obedience in it. Ask Him to instruct you in how to set a guard over your lips. Ask Him to make your lips a fountain of love and honor. Then you will truly find that you are a homemaker, building something that will withstand all the assaults of life.



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...

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.

For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man;

for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake.

Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.

I Corinthians 11:3, 7-10

### Headcovering and Government

**I**t is a wonderful thing to see so many women coming into an understanding of headcovering. It may yet be a trickle in comparison to the number of those who do not cover, but this little flock of obedient women are getting noticed. Headcovering is an issue that is central to the life of the godly woman for it stands as a visible witness to the profound changes that are taking place in her life.

There is much misunderstanding about headcovering. Of those who do not practice it, many have written it off as a practice that was simply a part of the time and place in which the Corinthian church found themselves. It is often treated as a historical relic with no relevance to our day. As we will see, this is not true at all. Others have tried to interpret this passage of scripture as meaning that a woman's hair is the covering spoken of, and that her hair is all she needs to cover herself with. In the

next chapter we will look at this misconception.

Among those who do cover, there is yet some misunderstanding for some do not realize fully what the headcovering testifies. Some have supposed that it is simply worn for the purpose of modesty. They recognize that a woman's hair is her glory and they believe it should only be let down and unveiled in the presence of her husband. Viewing the practice of headcovering as simply relating to modesty is a misconception, for the apostle Paul's instructions regarding headcovering reveal plainly that it is given as a witness of the governmental order of Yahweh and it is a statement of the woman's acceptance of this order.

It is not just the woman who must have her head covered, so too must the man, and so too must Christ. Yet it is given only to the woman to wear a symbol of this authority upon her head. The woman alone is given the privilege of standing as a visible testimony to the government of God. In practice woman is to have no head of her own before man, man is to have no head of his own before Christ, and Christ is to have no head of His own before the Father.

I think I can best bring insight to this matter as I relate my own experience of coming to understand the government of Yahweh. Let me begin by sharing how the Father led me to a life changing understanding in 1993. From that date forward the course of my life has been altered as the revelations I have gained have brought me both a tremendous peace born of understanding what Father requires of me, as well as bringing me into tremendous conflict with those who have not discerned these same things. Ultimately I was ousted from my place of ministry in the mainstream church because Father would not allow me to compromise the truths He had revealed to me, but this separation was also of the Father and He continues to use it in various and magnificent ways.

I came to salvation in Yahshua when I was a child,

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being baptized at the age of ten. My upbringing was largely in Baptist churches, first in Oregon, and later in Georgia. I experienced a tremendous awakening to the things of God when I was in my mid to late teens, and I was very zealous for truth. I sought diligently to know the will of the Father and to walk in it. Often my zeal was not according to knowledge, and I knew much personal failure and frustration as I sought to walk in a manner pleasing to God.

From my teen years I was very active in the activities of the Christian church. I was in attendance every time the door was opened, and from my late teens I was involved in teaching Sunday School, participating in prayer meetings, and doing door-to-door visitation. This was an incredible thing, since I had grown up with a tremendous sense of inadequacy and low esteem. As a youth I would rarely look people in the eyes when I spoke to them due to my feelings of unworthiness and timidity. It was just an overwhelming desire to please the Father that led me to participate in things of which I was mortally terrified, such as door-to-door evangelism.

I was involved in churches that often asked me to perform some service, and I was eager to comply. I was constantly searching the scriptures to see if I could discern the will of the Father for myself and for the churches of which I was a part. I would frequently see things that would cause me to question why the church was doing certain things. As the churches I attended had an open door policy when the elders were meeting, I would often show up to ask them why we were doing some particular thing. I must have been a source of irritation to many men who were set on doing things because it was a tradition handed down by men.

Sometimes my questioning would lead to difficulties, particularly if I was convinced that the practice of the church was in opposition to the teaching of scriptures and if I discerned that our traditions were having a negative impact in the lives of people. I never could understand the mindset of people who did things because it was the way Baptists, or

some other group, did it. My sole authority was the word of God and the revelation of the Spirit.

To give you one example, in my early twenties I was given the position of Sunday School Superintendent at a Baptist church. This was quite a responsible position for one my age, but due to my zeal I was as Paul, "advancing beyond many of my contemporaries." At the time the Sunday School program had no oversight and was a real mish-mash of uncoordinated activities of differing individuals. I began to diligently look into this issue to know how to improve it.

I looked at the overall objective of Sunday School, which I discerned was to make disciples of Christ, and I looked into how we could better accomplish this goal. I read books on the principles of teaching. I addressed issues of a lack of coordination between classes. I wanted to design a progressive Sunday School where consistent and systematic growth in the teachings of Christ would be attained. After spending considerable time looking into these things I wrote a paper to share with the church elders, listing my recommendations. Right as I was about to seek an opportunity to share these things with the elders, Father spoke to me.

Father asked me again what the goal of Sunday School was, and I answered that it was to take children and to make disciples of Christ out of them. He then asked me to whom He gave that responsibility in scriptures. As I contemplated this I had to answer that it was to the parents that He gave this charge. He showed me multiple scriptures where He gave the charge to parents to train up their children and to teach them the ways of Yahweh.

Father had me take another look at Sunday School and I found that it started out as an outreach to street children and orphans, and later it began to include children whose parents were in the church. I was reminded by the Spirit of something Bill Gothard had shared during a Basic Youth Conflicts' seminar. He said, "Once men begin to share a God given responsibility, it is not long before they aban-

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don that responsibility altogether.” I saw how this had happened in the church in relation to the training of children.

It used to be common practice for families to sit down together and for the parents to teach the scriptures to their children. When the church began to share this responsibility, it wasn't long before parents began to rely solely upon the church's instruction of their children, and the mothers and fathers ceased to instruct them.

Father then revealed to me some other tragic results. He told me that when He gives someone a responsibility, He also gives them the authority to carry it out. Because the church was not given the responsibility to train up children, they lacked the authority to achieve lasting results. They were endeavoring to do something without the authority to carry it out.

He also showed me that with responsibility goes honor. When parents train their children they receive the honor that goes with their position of instruction. When they give away the responsibility they also give away the honor that attends it. The children instead give the honor to their teachers, and in times of conflict between a parent's advice and a teacher's, the child will often side with the teacher for they honor them more in the realm of instruction and insight than they do their own parents.

As Father began to show me all of these things I was appalled. I saw how the church had developed a tradition that began with good intent, and how it had developed into something that had far reaching negative repercussions in the body of Christ. Many of the parents in the church I was in spent no time at all instructing their children. The results were very evident.

As the Father finished speaking to me of these things I had to tear up the paper I had formerly prepared and write a new paper. Whereas I was

confident the church leadership would have received the first paper well, I was very guarded in my optimism of how they would receive the revelations Father had given me. I knew that, although the elders of this church said they wanted to be a New Testament body of believers, they actually only wanted to do so in so far as they did not have to give up any traditions that they found to be to their liking.

I shared my findings with the church leadership, and it was totally rejected. I shared with the elders that according to scripture, the chief focus of the church in making disciples of its children should be in encouraging, equipping, and releasing parents to fulfill their divinely given responsibilities. I shared with them that this is where the efforts of leadership should be focused, and that the Sunday School should be phased out, as it existed in its current forms.

Everything I shared was resolutely rejected. Some of the elders refused to even consider that such a sacred cow as Sunday School should actually be done away with, or that it could be having a detrimental impact upon families. My tenure as Sunday School Superintendent was very short lived, and the bad fruit of our traditions was seen in the breakdowns in the families of the church.

This is but one example of a conflict I found myself in due to my zeal to walk in the revealed truths of God. There were many others and I would have earned frequent flyer miles for attending elders' meetings, if there were such a thing. In none of my efforts, however, did I ever see the leadership of the church change in even the least way. I became a pariah to different congregations and I found myself leaving more than one body frustrated and disillusioned.

When I experienced these separations I was very torn. I had a zeal to walk in truth and it grieved me when churches chose tradition, human reasoning, or their own ways, over the ways of Yahweh. Yet

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something was nagging at the back of my mind telling me that these separations could be handled differently, but I had no clue as to what I should do differently. I was often reflecting on Yahshua's high priestly prayer recorded in John 17 where He prayed that we would be one, even as He and the Father were one. Yet I could not reconcile my zeal for truth and this oneness.

I continued in this state for about a whole decade, and my frustration grew. When I was in my early thirties, and married for some time, I once more found myself in a situation where I was very active in a body, and I was discerning some grave errors that the church leaders were making. My wife became caught up in it this time, for a couple she was very close to were being badly treated by the pastor of this church. They were the music ministers of this body and they lived in a house the church owned. The pastor had aspirations to start a counseling ministry and he considered that their home would be the ideal location, precipitating this couple being run off so their house would be vacated. (Of course, it wasn't as simple as this, and there were faults on many sides.)

My wife became so distraught that she no longer wanted to attend this church. My own words to the elders and pastor were rejected and I too was not entirely desirous to stay. I asked permission of the elders to leave, in order that my wife and I could get some emotional distance and better hear from the Father. We were given permission, yet in my heart I neither had peace about staying or leaving. My wife and I ended up leaving for a period of six months, and during that time in 1993 the Father revealed some profound things to me that have changed the course of my life.

During this time of separation from the body a brother gave me a copy of Watchman Nee's book "Spiritual Authority." Little did this brother realize how profound an impact that book would have on my life. As I read the book the Spirit quickened passage after passage and I began to see scriptures fall into place like dominoes falling in a long chain. I knew that something critical that I had been

missing was being revealed to me, and that the Father had waited until I was so conflicted and hungry for understanding that I would receive what He wanted to show me. Happily I received His instruction and correction.

Watchman Nee states, "Authority is a tremendous thing in the universe - nothing overshadows it. It is therefore imperative for us who desire to serve God to know the authority of God." He further states, "To offend God's authority is a rebellion far more serious than that of offending God's holiness. Since it is a matter of conduct, sinning is more easily forgiven than rebellion, the latter being a matter of principle. Satan's intent of setting his throne above the throne of God was the thing that violated God's authority; it was the principle of self-exaltation... In serving God we must not violate authorities, because to do so is a principle of Satan. How can we preach Christ according to Satan's principle? *Yet it is possible in our work to stand with Christ in doctrine, while at the same time stand with Satan in principle.*"

This is exactly what the Father showed me that I had been doing. In my zeal for the truth I had been standing with Christ in doctrine. I loved the truths the Father was revealing to me. I desired to see them walked in. I desired to see error eschewed. I longed for the benefits of seeing the children of God walking in the truth. Yet Father showed me that my approach of contending with the church authorities over these issues of doctrine was in actuality practicing the principle of Satan, which is rebellion.

How my eyes were opened when I saw this. I understood that as it says in Romans 13, "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resists the power, withstands the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive judgment to themselves.... Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake."

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As I read through this book, and as I studied the scriptures, I came to comprehend the principles of God's authority and our right response to all authorities, including those in the church. God never honors rebellion in any form. Rebellion is the principle of Satan. Submission is the perfect principle of Christ. Even when people are under ungodly authorities, the Father never honors those who lift their hands, or wag their tongues against those authorities. David is a case in point.

David was subject to the ungodly authority of King Saul. David was completely faithful in the discharge of his duties, and he never failed in loyalty to Saul. Even when Saul sought repeatedly to kill David, and even when Saul killed the priests of God, David refused to lift a finger against him. David was presented opportunities to strike Saul, even when Saul was in the process of seeking to take David's life. Yet David said, "Who can lift his hand against God's anointed and remain guiltless?"

When David had opportunity to slay Saul in the cave, he instead merely cut off the corner of Saul's garment. Yet even for this small act we are told that "David's heart smote him" and he repented of it. Watchman Nee states that cutting off the corner of the garment may not be as serious as murdering someone, but in the church it can be equated to murmuring against an authority, or speaking against them to others. Our hearts should convict us in these matters.

David always sought to cover the transgressions of Saul. He even wept for him, and sang a song eulogizing him when he heard he had been slain. When others thought they would win David's favor by stating that they had been instrumental in Saul's death, David had them put to death, being condemned by their own words.

Another example of covering the sins of one in authority is when Noah became drunk and fell asleep while naked in his tent. His son Ham failed to see the dignity of the authority of his father and he went out and reported his father's ugliness to his

brothers. "When Ham saw his father's improper conduct he did not have the slightest sense of shame or sorrow, nor did he try to cover his father's fault. This reveals that he had a rebellious spirit." Shem and Japheth, however, managed the situation quite differently. They entered the tent backwards - thus avoiding seeing their father's nakedness - and they covered their father with a garment they had laid on their shoulders.

We are told by Paul that "love covers a multitude of sins." Yet how common it is to revile those in positions of authority when we see them in error. We should be grieved for them, and we should seek to cover their transgressions and to ask the Father to restore them to righteousness.

My own error was not so much being a spreader of slander or gossip, nor being a malcontent seeking to expose the sins of another. My failure was in not seeing how the Father would have me to address the situation of seeing a leader in sin. My response had been to consistently go to them and to tell them of their error. The Father spoke strongly to me and showed me that my proper response was found in trusting Him to deal with a wrong authority. The testimony of all of scripture is that Yahweh will vindicate Himself. He both establishes authorities, and He disciplines and even removes authorities that sin against Him. He does not ask for those under authority to correct those over them, for this leads to rebellion.

Father particularly gave me the following passage as my pattern.

I Peter 2:18-3:2

Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a man bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. For what credit is there if,

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when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.

Father told me that, as I had no place of authority yet in the church, I was to be as the wife of which Peter spoke. I was to be submissive to those over me in authority, and when the occasion came that I found them to be in sin, I was to let them be won without a word, with my behavior remaining respectful and chaste.

The principle is this: if a woman has a husband who is disobedient to the word of God then she has two options. She can correct him herself, telling him of his transgression, and possibly persisting in speaking of it to him until she sees a change. If she chooses this course then Father will remove His hand from the husband and He will delay in correcting him for there is rebellion in the house. However, if the woman understands that Yahweh will correct those whom He places in positions of authority, and if she will refrain from speaking to the husband and correcting him, if she will instead trust that God will correct him, then Yahweh will act decidedly to bring correction to the husband. This latter course is the only way to maintain peace in the household when the husband is in sin and the wife discerns it. For her to put out her hand to bring correction will loose striving and conflict in the household.

Father showed me that this same principle is at work in the body of Christ. When I would discern that there was error in leadership, it had been my habit to tell them of their error. I would stretch out my hand to offer correction. I was not malicious in this, but the principle I was following was wrong.

Authority must always be corrected from above, not from those beneath. Father showed me clearly the course set before me. He told me to go back to the church I had left and to apologize to those in leadership for my actions, even though the pastor was still in sin. He told me to offer no correction to the leaders, nor to even open my mouth regarding anything they were doing. I was to say nothing good or bad. I was to trust Father to deal with the wrong authority.

Yahweh assured me that if He found one saint so submitted in this way that He would assuredly deal with the wrong authority. He revealed to me that the reason there was so much wrong and sinful authority in the body was that He could find no one under these authorities who was truly submitted. Because there was rebellion in the house He delayed to correct the wrong authorities.

Churches are full of rebellion. The members of the body are constantly going around and speaking words against leadership. Some are actively rebelling and calling for removal of a pastor they do not like. Others seek to split congregations, being factious and submissive to no one. It is the rarest of saints that looks to God to correct a wrong authority. Like Ham, the churches broadcast the nakedness and shame of those in authority over them.

Father spoke to me and said that if He could find a person in submission, and bearing up courageously under a wrong authority, that He would move heaven and earth on their behalf. He would correct the wrong authority and restore godly leadership.

In my own situation, I went back with my wife and met with the pastor. I shared with him what the Father had revealed to me, and how I had been thinking I was advocating the doctrines of Christ, yet I had been practicing the principle of Satan which is rebellion. This pastor graciously forgave me and then told me that if I wanted to share anything with the body on Sunday regarding this, that I could.

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Sunday came and I was given the opportunity to address the whole body. I shared the same with them, confessing that I had been practicing the principle of rebellion when I thought myself in agreement with the purposes of Christ. I was given great grace to share, feeling no embarrassment, being greatly aided by the Spirit, and the people were visibly moved.

Father honored my attitude of submission, and this pastor who was in sin and who had been at this church for 14 years, suddenly resigned. Thus Father removed the wrong authority because He had found one who would look to Him to correct the leader who was disobedient.

For another three years Father told me to walk in the place of the submissive wife and to not open my mouth saying anything good or bad to the church elders. He told me I was to pray for them. For three years I did not attend a single elders' meeting. I prayed for these men and for the body.

At first I was still focused on the sins of those in leadership, and they were not walking by faith, nor by the leading of the Spirit. I prayed that God would fix them or remove them that the body would not be hindered. Father stopped me abruptly, however. He said, "If you are going to pray for these men as I asked you to, then you must pray according to My will and desire for them." He then asked me, "Do you know how long I have longed to correct some things in your life? By the judgment that you judge others, you shall be judged."

Needless to say, my prayers changed immediately. I began to pray, "Father, have mercy on these men. Father, be patient with these men. Father be gentle in your correction of them. Take all the time You need to bring them to obedience and righteousness."

My own calling to intercessory prayer took off at this point and what had once been a labor became

a passion. I began to pray that Father would give me His heart to pray for others. I asked that I would know His heart and feel His emotion for those I prayed for. I longed for these times of prayer before the Father. I relished these times. They were the highlights of my life.

Immediately after Father gave me this understanding of authority, the gift of writing that had lain dormant came alive within me. For years I knew I had a calling to write, yet I was able to bring nothing forth. I attempted to walk in this ministry many times, and I would write pages and pages. At the end, however, I would read what I had written and I sensed no anointing upon the words. I sensed no approval from the Spirit, even when I knew what I had written was correct. Over and over, I would end up trashing what I had labored on.

Immediately after I came rightly under authority, Father opened up this area of my life. I sat down to write a piece of correspondence to a minister of another church who had counseled me during my time of separation and, as I wrote, out flowed an article that I had not even intended to write. This article is the very earliest writing upon which I recognized the seal and approval of the Spirit. The writing had an anointing on it, and it was distributed among many churches at the time.

Father gave me understanding of why I was now released to write. He told me that He could not advance anyone in the kingdom who did not know and practice His principles of government and submission to authority. Once I learned these things and began to walk in them He was able to bring me into my calling.

I cannot stress how vital this topic is. Let me share a few more words from Watchman Nee's book.

Please take note that Satan is not afraid of our preaching the word of Christ, yet how very much in fear he

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is of our being subject to the authority of Christ. Never should we who serve God serve according to the principle of Satan.

We preach the gospel in order to bring men into God's authority, but how can we establish God's authority on earth if we have not met [understood] authority?

The controversy of the universe is centered on who shall have the authority, and our conflict with Satan is the direct result of our attributing authority to God.

[When we look at men] let us not see the man, but only the authority vested in him. We do not obey man, but God's authority in man... We are on the wrong road if we meet man first before we obey authority. The opposite is the right way. Then we will not mind who the man is.

The greatest of God's demands on man is not for him to bear the cross, to serve, to make offerings, or deny himself. The greatest demand is for him to obey... Why did Samuel say, "obedience is better than sacrifice"? Because even in sacrifice there can be the element of self-will. Obedience alone is absolutely honoring to God, for it alone takes God's will as its center.

For authority to be expressed there must be subjection. If there is to be subjection, self needs to be excluded; but according to one's self-life, subjection is impossible. This is only possible when one lives in the Spirit. It is the highest expression of

God's will.

To serve God we are not called to choose self-denial or sacrifice, rather are we called to fulfill God's purpose. The basic principle is not to choose the cross, but to obey God's will. Should the principle on which we work and serve include rebellion, then Satan will obtain and enjoy glory even through our sacrifices.

As God's servants, the first thing we should meet is authority. To touch authority is as practical as touching salvation, but it is a deeper lesson. Before we can work for God we must be overturned by His authority. Our entire relationship with God is regulated by whether or not we have met authority. If we have then we shall encounter authority everywhere.

In Matthew 7:21-23 we find our Lord reprimanding those who prophesy and cast out demons and do many mighty things in His name. Why are they disapproved? Because they make self their starting point; they themselves do things in the name of the Lord. This is the activity of the flesh. Wherefore our Lord pronounces them evildoers instead of His laborers. He emphasizes that only the person who does the will of His Father shall enter the kingdom of the heavens. This alone is work in obedience to God's will, that which originates in Him. We are not to find work to do, rather we are to be sent to work by God. Once having understood this we shall truly experience the reality of the authority of the kingdom of the heavens.



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This issue of authority and submission is such a vital element and the church has largely neglected it. Did you note Watchman Nee's words earlier? He said that it is possible to offer sacrifices to God, it is possible to preach the gospel, it is possible to perform miracles, and in doing all of these things to bring glory to Satan. The only requirement is that we have not submitted to the will of the Father in these things. Satan does not fear the active saint who is doing great exploits in the name of Yahshua. He fears the one who is submitted to the authority of Yahshua.

This is indeed the greatest and deepest principle in the kingdom of God. Deeper even than salvation. Truly, a person can be saved and still fail to walk under the authority of God, failing to recognize authority in the places Father has delegated it to man. The issue of covering is central to this issue.

I think at times that Western men and women are at a disadvantage when it comes to understanding issues of government, authority and submission. We have been altogether steeped in democracy which turns the whole pattern of divine government on its head. In the kingdom of God all authority flows from Yahweh down to those whom He entrusts it to. In democracy, authority is determined by the people as they choose through election who the authorities will be over them. In the kingdom of God, all authority is established by God. In democracy it is "of the people, by the people, for the people."

We know little of submission in our Western society. In our government we can impeach, or recall a leader whom we do not like. In most of our churches we can do the same thing. In marriages it has become all too common to divorce a spouse that is viewed as unreasonable or hard to live with. On our jobs we have many different paths to go over a boss' head if we don't like the things they are doing. In the church, if people don't like a particular minister they are free to go church hopping, looking for the one that is appealing to them. There is very little submission practiced in any realm of Western society.

Israel is considered an Oriental culture, and Watchman Nee also being from the Orient has an advantage in discerning Paul's instructions. However, it is not to his culture that he always relates back, but to the testimony of the scriptures themselves, and the witness of the Spirit of God. I have gained much from the teaching of this man whom the Father continues to use years after his death as a martyr in a Chinese prison. The following excerpts are from the chapter entitled "Head Covering" which is found in Watchman Nee's book "Love One Another."

### God's Two Universal Systems

I would like to view this matter of head covering from far off; otherwise, it will not be easy to understand I Corinthians 11. To comprehend this chapter requires that we know God and His Word. First of all we need to know that God has set up two systems in the universe: the system of grace and the system of government.

### The System of Grace

All that concerns the church, salvation, brothers and sisters, and God's children is included in God's systems of grace. Everything which pertains to the Holy Spirit and to redemption belongs to the system of grace. Within the proceedings of grace, the relationship of man and woman is such that the Syro-Phoenician woman received grace from God as much as the centurion. So did Mary as much as Peter. So, too, might Martha and Mary have been raised from the dead as well as Lazarus.

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## The System of Government

But there is another system in the Bible which we will call the government of God. This system is entirely different from that of grace. God's government is an independent system under which God does whatever pleases Him.

When God created man, He created male and female. This belongs to God's government. He created male first and female next - also a matter of His government. He does what pleases Him. He has a sovereign and independent will. When He decided that the Lord Jesus should be the seed of the woman, this too was God's government. He does not take man into His counsel...

## Grace and Government Joined and Completed

These two systems of grace and government continued side by side until the coming of the Lord Jesus. Quite evidently there are two sides to God's work: the system of God's grace and the system of God's providence proceed together in the world. The priests and the prophets stand on the side of grace, maintaining the system of grace; the kings and the leaders of Israel stand on the side of God's government, maintaining the system of His government.

When the Lord Jesus was on earth, on the one hand He came to be the savior of the world, to deliver men from sin. This is according to the system of grace. On the other hand, God sent Him to the world that

through the work of the cross He might establish His own authority and set up His kingdom so that the heavens might rule on the earth. This is the system of government. Its work will continue until the power of the devil is destroyed and the kingdom and the new heaven and the new earth are brought in. On that day, the two systems of grace and government will be joined into one. That is to say, that during the time of the new heavens and the new earth, these two systems will become one in the Lord Jesus. He does both sides of God's work. He works under the system of government as well as the system of grace.

The government of God does not commence with the creation of man, but, rather, at the creation of the angels. This is quite clear in the Bible. When Satan was yet a morning star, while he was still ruling, God's governmental system had already begun. Following the creation of man, basic institutions such as marriage, husband and wife, family, and the relationship between parents and children all came within the realm of God's government.

The basic lesson that all brothers and sisters need to learn is that we should never allow grace to interfere with God's government. I say most emphatically that never in our lives should we permit grace to intervene in what God has decided in government. God wants men to respect His government not to overthrow it. If we are ignorant of God's government, we are lawless people in the sight of God. Since we have never seen the kingdom except as it is seen in the church, it is imperative for us to see the system of government. As

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a matter of fact, the system of grace is for the sake of completing the system of government. The system of government is not for the system of grace, but grace is for the completion of government.

Many hold to a fundamental error: they foolishly maintain that grace can set aside government. The truth is that what God does in grace never alters God's government. The forgiveness of grace that we receive from God does not change His governmental forgiveness. No matter how much we receive forgiveness in grace, still it does not affect governmental forgiveness.

God's government is an independent principle. From beginning to end, God brings in His governmental system. Grace only complements government. The system of grace was added because of man's insubordination and rebellion under the system of government. Grace is for the purpose of redeeming and restoring those who are insubordinate and rebellious, so that they may be subject to God's governmental system. Hence, grace actually gives an assist to God's system of government...

## Submission to God's Government

So the system of grace and the system of government are two separate matters. The humbler a person is, the more he progresses in the governmental system. Never think that because you have entered into the system of God's grace you can therefore escape the system of God's government.

Grace can never nullify government; rather, grace enables people to obey government. May I say with all seriousness that grace gives us the strength to be subject to government. It does not make us rebellious or desirous of overthrowing government. These systems complement each other. Grace never abolishes government. Only a fool would say that since he received grace, he can afford to be loose and careless. What a foolish thing that would be.

The clearer a person understands grace, the better he will be as a servant or a master. The more a person knows grace, the better he is as a husband, a parent, a child, or a citizen, for he is more capable of submitting to authority. He who receives more of the grace of God knows more of how to maintain the government of God. I have yet to see one who truly knows God's grace destroy God's government.

## Head Covering and Government

The matter of head covering belongs to God's government. For those who do not know God's government, it is impossible to exhort them to have their heads covered. They will not be able to understand how much is involved in this matter. But those who have seen God's government in God's revealed Word are able to appreciate the tremendous connection between head covering and God's government. "Now I praise you in all things that you remember me in all things, and hold fast the traditions, even as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (I Corin-

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thians 11:2-3).

The relationship here described is not that of the Father and the Son, but that of God and Christ. To use a modern expression, Christ is God's representative. The relationship between the Father and Son pertains to the Godhead, but Christ sent of God touches upon God's arrangement, God's government. "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John 17:3). God is God, and Christ is one sent by God. This is their relationship in God's government. The Son, originally equal with God, was willing to be sent by God as the Christ. God remained on high as God, but Christ was sent down to do His work. This is the first order of events in the government of God.

In God's purpose, Christ is set up to be the head of every man; therefore, all people must obey Him. He is the firstborn of all creation and its firstfruit. He is the head of every man; every man should be in subjection to Him. This is a basic principle under God's government. Christ being the head of every man is related, not to the system of grace, but to the system of God's government. Likewise man being the head of woman also belongs to God's governmental system. God in His government establishes man as head just as He sets up Christ as head and also Himself as head. Thus the system is completed.

God is Himself the head; He sets up Christ as head; and he further establishes man to be head. These are the three great principles in God's gov-

ernment.

For God to be Christ's head does not touch upon the matter of who is greater; rather it is simply an arrangement in the government of God. Likewise, under God's government Christ is the head of every man and man is the head of woman. Such are God's arrangements; such are His appointments.

Philippians 2 is clear enough: the Lord Jesus in His eternal essence is equal with God; but in God's government He becomes Christ, and as Christ, God became His head. Christ Himself acknowledges in the Gospel of John that: "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father doing: for what things soever he does, these the Son does also in like manner" (John 6:38)... Today Christ takes His place in the government of God. According to God's counsel, He is Christ and as Christ He needs to listen to God the Father, for God the Father and God the Son are equal in glory and honor in the Godhead, but in God's government Christ does not stand in the place of God the Son; rather, He stands in the position of Christ, the One sent of God.

Some day the whole world will know that Christ is the head of all men, for this is God's governmental decision. Today this is known only in the church; the world has no knowledge of it. But the day will come when all the people of the world will recognize that Christ is the head. He will have the preeminence in all the creation. He is the firstborn of all creation and the firstfruit. Everyone must be in subjection to the author-

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ity of Christ. Likewise, God's appointment of man as head of woman is also known only in the church today. Do you get the point? Today the church alone knows that Christ is the head of man and that man is the head of woman.

We have already seen how grace can never overthrow God's government. I trust our lesson will become clearer as we learn that grace is to support God's government, not to destroy it. How can anyone be so foolish as to use grace to interfere with God's government? The government of God is inviolable; His hand always sustains it. No one, just because he has believed in the Lord, can overthrow the Father's authority, or even undermine the authority of any government. We must not say that because we are Christians we do not need to pay taxes. No, nothing of the sort! The better Christian you are, the more you maintain the government of God.

We are here today to maintain God's testimony in the world. God has shown us that there are three different heads: God is head, Christ is head, and man is head. This is not a matter of being brothers and sisters; it is basically a governmental arrangement. Grace is concerned with brothers and sisters, but government is different. God has sovereignly willed that the head of Christ is God Himself, so Christ must obey; the head of man is Christ, so man must obey; and the head of woman is man, and so woman should have the sign of obedience on her head.

## The Meaning of Head Covering

"Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonors her head; for it is one and the same things as if she were shaven" (I Corinthians 11:4-5).

The meaning of head covering is: I submit myself to God's government; I accept God's appointed position; I dare not nullify His government by the grace I have received; I do not even dare think about it; on the contrary, I accept God's government. As Christ accepts God as His head, so should every man accept Christ as his head. Likewise, woman should representatively accept man as her head. In covering the head, the woman signifies that she is not head, that she is as if she has no head - for it is covered.

Let us remember that although in practice it is only the woman who has her head covered, yet, in reality, Christ has His head covered before God and every man has his head covered before Christ. Why, then, is it that God only requires woman to have the practice of having her head covered? This indeed is marvelous, for it involves a very deep principle.

I often feel that it is impossible to talk with some brothers and sisters about head covering because they have no knowledge of God's government. Before anyone can understand head covering, he or she must first know God's government. The whole question is settled once one sees that Christ has His head covered before God. How much more ought I to have my head covered be-

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fore Him! I must cover it so that it is no longer seen or exposed, for Christ is my head. As a matter of fact, everyone's head must be covered before God. Since Christ is my head, I cannot have my own head seen or exposed.

Here I would like to tell Christian women that God has appointed man to be woman's head. In these days when God's authority is unknown in the world, the Lord demands this order only in the church. It therefore affects the very fact of our being Christians. God requires us in the church to accept what He has appointed governmentally.

### The Sister's Responsibility

When a sister covers her head, she is standing before God on the basis of Christ's position before God and man's position before Christ. God wants the woman to cover her head in order to manifest His government on earth. This privilege falls only to woman. She does not cover her head merely for her own self; she does it representatively. For her own self, she does it because she is a woman; representatively, it is because she represents man before Christ and Christ before God. So when woman covers her head before God, it is just the same as if Christ covered His head before God. Likewise, when woman covers her head before man, it is just the same as if man covered his head before Christ. Man or woman should have no head because Christ is head. If one's head is not covered, there will be two heads. Between God and Christ one head must be covered; so too must it be between man and woman, and so

between Christ and every man. If one head is not covered, the result will be that there are two heads. If God is head, then Christ is not; if Christ is head, then man is not; and if man is head, then woman is not.

God calls upon the sisters to show this arrangement. It is through the sisters that God's governmental system is to be displayed. It is the sisters who are responsible to have the sign of obedience on their heads. God specifically requires women to have their head covered when praying or prophesying. Why? Because they ought to know God's government when they come before Him. In going before God to pray for people, or in going before people to prophesy for God, whether in praying or prophesying, whether in that which goes to God or in that which comes from God, in whatever is related to God, head covering is demanded. The purpose is to manifest the government of God.

Man ought not to cover his head. It is a shame to his head if a man covers his head before woman, for the man represents Christ...

"For this cause ought a woman to have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels" (v. 10). The Bible does not specify what is to be used for the covering; it only states that the head, where the hair grows, should be covered. Why should the head be covered? Because of the angels.

I am often amazed at this marvelous teaching that sisters should have on their heads a sign of authority FOR

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THE SAKE OF THE ANGELS. We know the tragic history of how some of the angels sinned. Satan rebelled against God. Why? Because he desired to make himself equal with God. In other words, the angel Lucifer attempted to expose his own head before God and refused to submit to His authority. In Isaiah 14 Satan consistently reiterated “I will...” Right in this passage we see an archangel falling to become Satan. Revelation 12 further shows us that when Satan fell, one-third of the angelic host fell with him. Why did the angels fall? Because of their not being subject to the authority of God the head, but trying to expose their own heads.

Today woman has a sign of authority on her head because of the angels, that is, as a testimony to the angels. Only the sisters in the church can testify to this, for the women of the world know nothing of it. Today when the sisters have the sign of authority on their heads, they bear the testimony that, “I have covered my head so that I do not have my own head, for I do not seek to be head. My head is veiled and I have accepted man as head, and to accept man as head means that I have accepted Christ as head and God as head. But some of you angels have rebelled against God.” This is what is meant by “because of the angels.”

I have a sign of authority on my head. I am a woman with my head covered. This is a most excellent testimony to the angels, to the fallen and to the unfallen ones. No wonder Satan so persistently opposes the matter of head covering. It really puts him to shame. We are doing

what he has failed to do. What God did not receive from the angels, He now has from the church. Because some of the angels do not submit themselves to the authority of God and of His Christ, the world is subject to great confusion. The fall of Satan has caused more trouble than the fall of man. But, thank God, what He failed to get from the fallen angels, He has obtained from the church.

When many of the sisters in the church take the place given to woman and learn to cover their heads, they send out an unspoken word of testimony to the angels in the air, to the effect that God has obtained in the church what He desires. Because of this, woman must have on her head a sign of authority, a testimony to the angels.

I have written all this out for you because I truly desire that you would see the truth of the magnificent testimony of head covering. It is tragic that the church has been falsely taught that the grace of God nullifies the government of God. This is great error and it will keep many from progressing in the kingdom. Only the truly humble will be able to receive this message, for pride always desires to uncover its head and determine its own way.

Even as many women do not want to have any man directing their activities, so many men do not want Christ to dictate to them. Obedience only occurs when the will of Christ coincides with the will of man, or when the will of the wife or daughter coincides with the will of the husband or father. The world is full of two-headed monsters for many refuse to cover their head, desiring rather to expose it as Satan did.

Is it any wonder that this is such a difficult teach-

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ing, since it bears upon the original transgression of Satan. He has worked tirelessly to get all others to uncover their heads, even as he did. He would have the whole world uncovered before God. We see the tragic results of his efforts as children uncover their heads before their parents, wives before their husbands, men before Christ, servants before their masters, citizens before their governmental leaders. The world, and especially the church, has become the target of Satan's deceptions until it is full of rebellion.

The scriptures actually foretell that this would be the condition of Christianity before the return of Yahshua, for in Thessalonians we are told that He would in no wise return unless the apostasy occurred first, the great falling away from the truth. We are told that God would send the church strong delusion for they did not love the truth. Paul said that the last days would be difficult days for men would heap to themselves teachers to tickle their ears and they would not endure sound doctrine. Many proclaim that we live in the last days, but they are heedless that the scriptures declare that the state of Christianity before the return of Yahshua would be one of great apostasy, error and deception.

Should we not expect that the understanding of God's government would be hidden and greatly obscured in this day? Should we not expect that many would even tragically use the grace of God as an excuse to tear down and reject the government of God? What harm these ones do to themselves and all those around them. They will not make further progress in the kingdom.

Is it not telling that it takes humility to receive this teaching, yet that the casting off of this teaching is in harmony with the pride of man that seeks to yield to no other authority? All of these things should be witnesses to the truth and they should expose where the error lies.

Some, when they hear this teaching, think that it sounds strict and legalistic. They have confused

government with legalism. When Yahshua walked in perfect submission to the Father, having no will or initiative of His own, it was not legalism He was under, but He was perfectly submitted to the government of God. This led to a perfect peace between He and the Father. There was no striving. Likewise when women cover their heads, literally and practically, peace is the result in households everywhere. When they uncover their heads striving is the result. This is certainly the witness of I Peter 3.

In I Peter 3 we also are given Sarah as an example of a godly and submissive wife, and immediately afterward the great obstacle to following in her example is listed. The obstacle is fear. Many women fear that if they submit to their husbands, and they do not correct them when they are wrong, if they do not constantly make known their own desires and needs before their husbands, they will somehow be neglected, abused, or suffer in some way. It takes faith in God to overcome these fears and to place one's trust in Yahweh. It takes faith to remain silent and to trust that Yahweh will correct a husband who is disobedient to the word. Sadly, too many women exercise fear rather than faith, and the results are seen in the church and in our society.

The same is certainly true of men who are afraid to trust Christ and to follow Him wherever He leads. Many refuse to let go of the reins of their lives. They fear that Christ might lead them down paths that are terrifying to them. They are afraid that somehow their own needs and desires will be overlooked or neglected. They respond out of fear and uncover their heads.

We all need grace to walk in these things, tremendous grace. This life is fraught with perils, and we need the comfort and assurance of a Savior who loves us enough to lay down His life for us.

I told you that my life changed irrevocably when I learned these truths and began to walk in them. Peace was the very first fruit that attended this un-



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derstanding of government and submission. I had peace in my life that I lacked in prior days. I knew what was expected of me, and though I have been led through the valley of the shadow of death, I have clung to my Lord and Savior and followed Him where He led me. He has preserved me and brought me into much truth in the last nine years, truths that would have been withheld from me had I not accepted His government, rather than resisting it.

When we enter into the place of submission and humility, this finds great favor with God. He knows our frame and our weaknesses. It finds great favor with Him when He sees us following the path of submission despite all of the fears and objections that arise within us. The word He gave me concerning those who obeyed Him in following this course is: "The eyes of Yahweh roam to and fro throughout the earth, that He might strongly support those whose hearts are wholly His" (II Chronicles 16:9). When He finds such a one, He will move heaven and earth on their behalf. How beautiful is a submissive and trusting heart in His sight. His heart is captivated by the sight of such a one. With longing He desires to reach out and support those who have adorned themselves with a quiet and submissive spirit.

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### PARABLES PRECEPT— What's In A Word?



Righteousness is another key word in the Scripture. What does it mean to be righteous?

The word righteous means to be right in a moral or legal sense. To be righteous is to be held blameless in the eyes of God.

A righteous man is not one who has never done anything immoral or sinful. All men have fallen short of God's Holy (clean) character. We have all been polluted by sin. Yet God will put away our sin and declare us to be righteous.

In one sense this does not seem right. How can God declare someone who is sinful to be righteous before Him? God is not unjust, nor is He deceitful, or a liar. He always calls things as they are. He must therefore make us to be righteous, without sin or guilt before Him.

God accomplishes this by permitting another to pay the penalty of our sin. It is similar to a judge permitting a thief to have

the restitution for his theft paid by another person who acts as an intercessor for him.

Sin always results in a judgment of death. Only one who is not guilty of death can pay the penalty for those who deserve death. This One was God's own Son. Christ was without sin, and He was willing to accept the penalty of death that sin for others. Christ freely laid down His life for sinful man. The penalty for all sin has been paid in full, so God is able to declare justice to have been served.

I John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.