

Marriage

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[0:00] Looking to relevance into our life as it is now, looking at doctrines from Genesis. It's so important, it shows us the foundation, it shows us how God made the world to be.

And that hasn't become obsolete, that is guidance for us now. We think of him as the creator and the importance of his greatness, our security in him, his provision for us and the loyal response of thankfulness and reverence and honour and glory to him. That's fundamental to our place in this world that we should be thankful, trusting, grateful to our creator. And the psalm says, my help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. What a wonderful comfort that is to us. We thought about God and time and the richness and meaning of time and work and rest. We thought last Sunday about sexuality and I tried to paint a beautiful picture of the way God means it to be.

It isn't like that these days, but the picture of what it ought to be is a beautiful one. And then this morning we're going to look at a little bit more detail about how male and female relationships work in, what have I put, church, family and so on. So that's what we're going to look at today. There was that book that I got the stuff from last week. I'll just remind you of that book if you're interested in it. So I'm very conscious that if I was preaching this to the older generation in Sri Lanka, there would be no problem in this. Preaching it to the younger generation in Sri Lanka, there'd be all sorts of questions. And probably as we look at this material this morning, all sorts of questions will pop up in our minds about this material. Because in the world that we live in, in our Western culture, there are beliefs and thought patterns and patterns of living on sexuality, which are strongly held and assumed to be obvious.

And even assumed to be ethically superior, that this is the way any civilized society ought to live, it is thought. But the question needs to be asked, are these thoughts and patterns in order, in line with the order of the creator? Because that's what it ought to be.

[2:51] And as Christian people, we ought to be asking that question. So we're going to look about a little bit more about the relationship and differentiation between male and female. And touching on how this works out at home, and only touching very briefly on how this works out at work, but focusing more on how it works out in the life of the church. So mostly the third one. That's what we're going to be looking at. And already I can hear, I can't really, I'm just imagining that somebody's objecting and saying, I come to church to enjoy praising God and worshipping and meeting with God's people, but please don't preach to me how I ought to, that's wrong, how I ought to believe, how I, what things I ought to, what views I ought to hold in regard to sex and gender issues. So the word preach there becomes loaded, doesn't it? Don't preach to me, don't tell me how I ought to live.

Well actually that's my job. The person who stands up at the front and tells you what it is in the Bible is meant to preach, and is meant to say, and that can be confrontational. It can be saying, you thought this, but the Bible says that. Get into line with the Bible. And you might be thinking, well I don't want that. I just, I like the singing, but I don't want to be told how to live.

And my answer would be that all we do together in this meeting, in this community, church, Christianity is about Jesus Christ. That's, it's about him. It's not about stuff. It's about him.

And even the songs are about him. And the thing that is said about Jesus is Jesus is Lord. That's absolutely fundamental. That is the sort of keystone of what it is to be a Christian.

Jesus is Lord. It's a very controversial thing to say. It's a very challenging thing to say, but that's what has to be said. Jesus is Lord. And that includes his right to demand of us how we live, what values we have, and how to think. That's Jesus. You have an argument with Jesus if you say, I don't want the preacher to tell me what Jesus says. And that does include our sexual lives.

[5:14] It does include gender issues. And it's not just what happens in church. Jesus is Lord over every part of our lives. And he claims the right to say, and this is how you run your home. And this is how you behave at work. And most certainly, this is how it ought to be in the church. So I'm answering that objection. Here's a second objection. I don't, you might be thinking, well, I don't actually like Christian teaching on sex and gender. I find it objectionable, unacceptable. And it doesn't come from Jesus. It comes from the apostle Paul. He was a misogynist and a homophobe, you might say.

Okay. Well, do I have an answer to this? Well, I've tried an answer. A first answer in terms of beauty and peace. Rightly understood, the Christian way, the way of God is the way we were made. It is superior in its beauty. And it's superior in its well-being. So I put the word shalom, which is the Jewish word, which means peace. Peace meaning how things ought to run, how things run smoothly.

You know, with a car, shalom is putting petrol in the petrol tank and water in the radiator, and then it runs smoothly. Putting petrol in the radiator and water in the petrol tank is not shalom because the car won't work properly. God's way is the way of beauty and peace. It is the best way.

And then I give an answer in terms of authority and reverence. He is our creator. And the fundamental issue that God has with us as a race is this. He is the creator, and yet we fail to worship him as the creator. We fail to honor him as the creator. We fail to thank him as the creator, and we fail to get our lives into the order that the creator has made. And that's a matter of reverence, really.

Respect for God. Jesus himself said, why do you call me Lord, Lord, and not do the things that I say?

[7:39] We're just down to very basic things here. Somebody might be objecting, and that's really an objection to Jesus being Lord. Now let me put in a little extra bit.

Sometimes people's lives get in a very big pickle, including in sexual matters.

People might make mistakes in the past or thought something in the past which they now think differently. And it's not always easy to unravel that or to put it back into order. It's not always easy, and I'm not trying to pretend that it is. Jesus understands that. And Jesus will make a way for us if we sincerely want to obey him. The question is the principle of the matter. Do you want to obey him?

Whatever that might take. If he says he is Lord, you prepare to put that into practice in your life. It might involve patience. It might involve courage. It might involve sacrifice.

It almost certainly will be a challenge. It will involve grace. And it will certainly involve wisdom.

Jesus understands that. I'm sure you understand that. But the heart of the matter is, will Jesus be Lord or not? Anyway, those are my introductory thoughts.

[9:24] So last time we listened to the Genesis story, and we asked questions like, is male and female equal in value? And the answer is yes. Is male and female interchangeable? And the answer is no.

And we asked, why male and female? We had a look at that. And then the whole question, why sex? Why human? And there are a number of questions that we didn't ask. And I put them in small because I'm not going to answer them again today.

So this is my plan. We will revisit Genesis and look at male and female. We will go to the early church in Corinth via Paul's letter, his first letter to the Corinthians.

My plan was to look at the later church in Ephesus, which is what Chris read. I fear that I may not manage to do that. And I'm going to draw some conclusions.

We're going to have to work hard this morning, which means concentrate. Think hard. Okay, so you're up for doing that? Okay, two or three people. Oh, that's really good.

[10:32] More than usual. So let's go and look at Genesis. Now, you can flip back to Genesis, because I'm going to make some references to it.

But I don't want to do the whole thing all over again.

Genesis, as you know, is the first book in the Bible. And it begins, this is my little sort of summary of it. To begin with, the world is formless and empty.

And then there are six days. One, two, three, four, five, six, and then the seventh day. And on the first three days, basically there's a separation of light and dark.

There's a separation of waters above and waters underneath. There's a separation of land from sea and a filling of the land with vegetation. Then that is matched by the one, two, three, fourth day, in which there is a filling of these spaces.

So there is the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night. And then on the one, two, three, four, fifth day, these two spaces are filled with fish and birds.

[11:48] And then on the sixth day, this space is filled with land animals and human beings. So on that last day, we get God making male and female in his image.

And they rule, and they're to rule and fill the earth. And that was the very quick, what happens in that.

And we notice that God works, I think we could say in two different ways. He does a, first three days, he does a sort of separating work, which is perhaps a ruling, a producing order.

And on the second three days, he fills and populates and produces an abundance in those spaces. There's a filling and producing fullness.

He also does some naming, but that's incomplete. But notice those two slightly different modes of working, separating and filling. It's not all the same sort of work.

[12:47] And we looked at the making of man and woman. So the woman doesn't get called Eve until chapter three.

So up until then, I guess she is called Isha, because Ish is man and Isha is taken out of man. So I'll call her Isha, because she doesn't get to be called Eve until later.

And in the story, you will recall, and I'm just summarizing it again. The man and the woman, Adam and Isha, are of equal precious value.

They are of equal precious value. They are both together tasked in chapter one with ruling and filling. And it's rather tempting to think that the man has a strength in the ruling part and the woman has a strength in the filling part.

But that's certainly not emphasized, but it's suggested. Man and woman are both equally and together the image of God.

[13:58] That's in chapter one, verse 27. God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him, male and female.

He created them. So they're both equally and together the image of God. And as we go on into chapter two, you remember that God said in verse 18, It is not good for the man to be alone.

I will make a helper suitable for him. And the woman, he goes to all the animals and doesn't find a helper suitable.

Flagging up for us that woman is not an animal. She's certainly not a robot. She is a person like Adam.

And when she is formed, she is formed of exactly and identically what Adam is formed of. Because he says, bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh is taken out of man.

[15:02] Made of exactly the same stuff as him. Isha is taken out of man. And it says in chapter two, verse 24.

For this reason, A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and they will become one flesh.

The man and his wife were both naked and they felt no shame. So the woman was taken out of man. And ever since then, you will have noticed this, there is a constant logic to the idea of coming back together as one flesh.

And there is a constant delight in and attraction to coming together as one flesh. And coming together as one flesh isn't just biology.

It includes all sorts of working of men and women together in harmony and in union. So I'm just summarizing and saying there's an equality about Adam and Eve or Isha and Isha, man and woman.

[16:13] There's an equality. Equality of value. And the value of Isha is also flagged up by God saying it is not good for the man to be alone.

That's a very striking statement in Genesis because everything else God makes is good. And he says this is not good. It is not good until we have Isha, Eve.

It's not good until we've got her. But they are not interchangeable. They are of equal precious value. But you could not, without doing real violence to the story, just exchange woman and man. It just doesn't work like that.

They are not interchangeable. So in chapter 2 verse 8, it is Adam who's put into the garden.

Chapter 2 verse 8, he's the one put into the garden.

[17:20] He is the one tasked with looking after it. Chapter 2 verse 15, the Lord God took the man, took the Adam and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

He's given this job to work it. To serve it and to keep it.

He's tasked with that. And it is him who is given the instructions about the fruit. The Lord God commanded the Adam.

You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. So it's him who's tasked with that. And he is inadequate until he has a helper suitable for him.

So that is the, they're not interchangeable. The role that Adam has been given and in which he needs help is specific to him.

[18:23] And the woman's role is specific to her. So that is just a quick summary over the, the way that the, the, the narrative won't let us, it won't let us say that there is difference in value.

But it also won't let us say that they're exactly interchangeable. What was the song? Why can't a woman be more like a man? Where did that come from? Is that My Fair Lady or something like that?

Yes. Okay. Well, here's the answer. Because God made them different. And I've put at the bottom, it is a musical guide to male and female roles. And I like the idea of music.

Because music is something you can't, you don't really make rules for music. It's an inventive, dynamic, creative thing. But there are ways in which music operates.

If you've got two different instruments, they work. You don't treat them as if they're the same. You allow them to express their differences and work together.

[19:29] And it would be a bit foolish to try and boil that down into sort of ten rules. There's an artistry to it. And I'd like to say that the Bible gives us a sort of musical guide and says, these are the sort of musical parameters of how male and female work together.

work that out in life in a creative and colorful and beautiful way. And each couple is different and each community is different.

Each society is different. But the music of it is guided by the same underlying principles. Does that make sense? Yeah. Okay. Right.

So I've copied that from the previous screen. And I don't know where this quote comes from, but I think I rather like it. And they work in their differing labors and relations.

So Eve is going to do things in an Eve way and Adam is going to do things in an Adam way. And they're going to work together and rule the earth and fill it.

[20:38] That's a beautiful prospect. Now, there's a limit to how much information we can get from just looking at Adam and Eve, because there's only two of them.

And the first couple, they sort of represent business partners, because they've got the business before them of filling the whole world. That's going to take a lot of time and effort.

You know, they're going to have to have spreadsheets, and they're going to have inventories.

They're going to have transportation. They're going to have to have agriculture. They're going to have geography.

There's all sorts of things in which the man and woman are going to have to work together in business. There's a sort of first business partnership. They're also going to have children.

So they're the first romantic couple. And the idea of them reproducing is part of the beauty and the blessing of the Garden of Eden.

[21:37] And this is this, I think, really ridiculous idea that the first sin in the Bible is to do with sex, and it isn't. And God says that he wants them to be fruitful, to multiply.

And that's a blessed thing to have children. So in a way, they're representative of the first married couple. They're also spiritual partners before God, because they live in the presence of God. So if you like, they're the first church. That's a bit of an odd church, because there's only two of them. But we need to go on from Adam and Eve in at least these three different directions. And that's what we're going to try and do, although mostly the last one. So as we think about relationships today, men and women relate together in all sorts of different contexts. So Adam and Eve were one and two and three. They were business partners and reproductive partners and spiritual partners.

[22:48] And it's very unlikely that you're going to be all three of those, might be. But we're all in one of those categories somewhere.

Maybe you work in a school and you have men and women that you relate to in school. And you relate and work together.

You might have, quite likely, a female head teacher. So you're relating together in a business context. You may or may not be buried. The New Testament gives a tweak to this and says, actually, in the kingdom of God, there's a blessing to being single.

And we're all here as a church. You may or may not be a regular church person. But we have men and women relating to one another in the church. So that's what we're going to be.

That's where it goes on. I think I thought of some examples. So Priscilla and Aquila were husband and wife. And they worked spiritually together.

[23:51] The Proverbs 31, you may be familiar with this wife of noble character, who's very much a businesswoman. And she buys things and sells things, probably has a shop on eBay.

Phoebe and Paul. Paul says of Phoebe, she's been a great help to many. They weren't married. It wasn't a romantic relationship. They probably weren't in the same church together.

But they did the Christian work together. So this is an example of varying dynamics of male and female relationship in the Bible. Okay.

I wanted to also touch on chapter 3 of Genesis and the fall.

In English theology, it's called the fall. In French-speaking theology, it's called la rupture, which means the break, doesn't it? The tear, something like that.

[24:53] The serpent's method was to attack through the isha, through the woman. And the serpent was crafty and shrewd.

And the woman, isha, was not overpowered by force. She was not commanded by authority, but she was beguiled by deceit, appealing to her sensitivities and desires.

That was the way Satan worked. That was what happened regarding her. Regarding Adam, he failed to guard the garden. He failed to take responsibility.

His wife gave him the fruit and he ate it. He didn't say, wait a minute, we're under orders on this. And he blatantly disobeyed God. So each member of that partnership sinned in slightly different ways.

And it's Adam whose sin carries us and carries over to us. It's not equally shared between Adam and Eve. In the New Testament, it says, many died by the trespass of the one man.

[26:07] It was Adam who was the head. And Adam who had the responsibility. And Adam, Adam's failure, that spills out to the rest of the human race.

Westminster Catechism, I think, says, the sin of our first parents, plural. Which is incorrect. It is actually Adam's sin. Just the one man. Adam's sin was the tipping point.

For sure, Eve's deception helped him tip. So the music of the rolls went askew. Do you know this word, askew? I even wondered if I'd spelt that right.

Goes all wonky. Goes all over the place. The music of the rolls goes askew. Right early on, Adam fails to guard. Eve fails to help.

She fails to help him. That was her job, to help him. And she doesn't help him. She should have been thinking about him. Othercentredly.

[27:07] But she fails in that. And in the New Testament, that's taken as a warning of some of the things to guard against now.

And the 1 Timothy 2 that Chris read, which is going to get very slender treatment this morning, I'm afraid. The Apostle Paul sees the same thing happening in the church at Ephesus.

And he sees that Satan gets in through the women who are getting beguiled. The men are failing too. But he sees the same sort of thing happening in the church at Ephesus.

And he says that they're to stop that. So the things to guard against, even now, male passiveness, failing to act so as to put God first.

And the female being deceived, not sufficiently detached to perceive the deception that's going on. Okay.

[28:11] That was looking at Genesis chapter 3. And now we'll plunge into 1 Corinthians 11. Because of the two difficult passages on this in the New Testament, I opted to look at 1 Corinthians 11.

And that's what we shall do. So this is focusing on male-female relations in the church. So please don't take this into school with you and say, the Bible says da-da-da-da.

Or don't take it into your office and say, the Bible says da-da-da-da. This is in the church. The dynamics work out differently in different contexts.

But this is what happens in the church. So we're not in the garden, we're not in a marriage, we're not in a business, but in the church. And let me read 1 Corinthians 11.

So do we have the place? I think we do. So he's talking about the church in Corinth. And he says, I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the teachings just as I pass them on to you.

[29:22] I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ. And the head of the woman is man. And the head of Christ is God.

Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head.

Sorry, I should read that again. Every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head. It's just as though her head was shaved. If a woman does not cover her head, she shall have her hair cut off.

It is a disgrace for a woman to leave to have her hair cut or shaved off. She should cover her head. A man ought not to cover his head since he is the image and glory of God.

But the woman is the glory of man. For man did not come from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

[30:27] This is the reason. And because, for this reason, and because of the angels, the woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head. In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman.

For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God. Judge yourselves. It says, I thought I'd choose a nice easy passage.

So, this is why I stayed up so late and didn't make the prayer meeting this morning. Well, every culture has its way of gendering.

I think that's a word. In other words, it's a way of expressing what maleness is, what maleness is, what maleness is. Culturally developed and accepted ways of expressing the relationships of respect or commitment of maleness and femaleness.

Now, if I just look around, so, trousers used to be a culturally accepted distinguishing mark between men and women.

[32:10] But not so today. So, just wearing trousers. But I think women wear different sort of trousers to men, don't they? They're not exactly, it's a lot more subtle, but there is still a difference.

And then if I look, let's see, shirts. So, a few men are wearing shirts and t-shirts. So, that seems to be a fairly male. Oh, of course, there are exceptions.

But I think that you could pretty well, if you took a picture of somebody and sort of flattened the contours, took away the facial features, you could probably tell from clothing, maleness and

femaleness.

I think you could. If you think of head covering, that's probably, I don't know, there's no, ah, there's some ladies wearing hats.

Jolly good. But, and there's a gentleman wearing a hat too. So, that illustration goes wrong. The hats are different. If you think of Islam, hair covering, you'd be in a completely different ball game, wouldn't you?

[33:21] Because it's a very important, very crucial. Different cultures do it in a different way. All cultures do it, but different cultures do it in a different way. If we were expressing marriedness and unmarriedness, in Sri Lankan culture, you have a different coloured dot on the front of your head if you're a woman, to express whether you are married, unmarried, or a widow.

Christians wonder about whether they should do that. But anyway, that's the culturally accepted, we don't do that, do we? But we do do wedding rings. So, if you are married, you almost certainly are wearing a wedding ring, men and women.

Different cultures do it different ways. We don't do big hairdos and things. I'm just going to look around and see if I'm going to embarrass myself on this.

When I went to the Sri Lankan wedding, I've shown some of the pictures and make sure everybody gets to see this, the bride just looked fantastic with gold in her hair and their hair all over.

It just looked like a goddess. I can categorically say there's nobody here who has done themselves up like that this morning. But the potential is there.

[34:41] You know, you could have come in this morning with a gold sari and makeup sort of several feet deep, eyeliner and everything, mascara, gold in your hair and you could have come in looking like a goddess and as you walk through that door, everybody, I think particularly the men, everybody would have gone, wow.

But we don't tend to do it quite like that. Paul is making a point that of all the places where maleness and femaleness should be rightly expressed, you know, the epitome, the high point of expressing this, this should be in the church.

church. That's where God's order for men and women ought to be seen and put into operation. Not so much in the school, in the home, yes, but particularly in the church because it's God's family.

That's the place where God is remaking everything and this is the place where this should be seen in its clearest form. So let's go through that passage and we'll see if we can see how this fits together.

So he starts off, he's doing this because he doesn't think they are doing it right. He thinks that they are failing to express maleness and femaleness according to God's created pattern.

[36:11] That's why he's doing this. So he sets up, first of all, three headship relationships. They are not exactly the same. They are just similar.

So he says, I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ. So there's a man, there's Christ who is the head of this man.

We sang this, you all sang it, I live in him my living head. So you all agree with that unless you didn't sing that verse. The head of every man is Christ, the head of the woman is man.

So here's something like that. So here's man and woman and there is a headship relationship there, that the head of the woman is man.

And she, he says that there's another headship relationship between Christ and God. God. And that's parallel two.

[37:16] So it's not worth thinking about those relationships. What do they imply? What don't they imply? The God and Christ, well we know quite a bit about that relationship.

We know that Jesus is God. We know that Jesus obeyed God. God. We know that the father told the son, he loved him and showed him everything he did and there was this really close and beautiful partnership between the father and the son.

But it was an ordered partnership. It wasn't the son showing the father everything he did and the father fitting in with that. It was the father showing the son everything he did and the son fitting in

with that.

And that Jesus' delight was to bring glory to his father, father. We're told he's the image of God and he brings glory to his father. So let's put Christ bringing glory to his father and let's tweak this by saying the relationship between God and Christ is one of co-equality.

There is no sense at all in which Christ is inferior in his value to God. But there is definitely an order there and it's a beautiful order.

[38:36] It's not a demeaning order. Where do we go from there? Now I should say what does headship mean? We all sang it so you obviously all know about it.

I think what headship means is a relation of order which includes authority because there's a mention of authority in verse 10.

The woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head, so that's certainly part of it. There is a relationship of responsibility that somebody takes responsibility for the other person and the head takes responsibility.

And we also said that Adam was the head of the human race and he passed on not a blessing but blame.

so I think there's a sense in which their head passes on blessing hopefully through the union with that which he is head of.

[39:39] So there's a number of relationships there but authority is definitely part of it and there's definitely an order there. What else can we say?

So I think we now have to bring in this business of head covering and I'm going to just jump in and say let's assume that their sign of womanly acknowledgement of male headship is whatever this head covering is or was.

Whether it's a head covering covers the head or it's a hairdo with gold woven into it or whatever it is whether it's the length of the hair or the way it's done up they showed that through whatever their head thing was and I'm going to say that's their culture we have to stick with the principles but the way we express it in our culture may or may not be the same.

And let me also say that it's on this reading it's extremely possible for a woman if you just took the head bit and covered your head say right I've done what the Bible says I covered my head without actually being the slightest bit respectful to her husband.

Do you see which is the important thing? It's the respectfulness that's the important thing and for them the head whatever you did with your hair was the sign of it but let's not mistake the two things we want to go for the fundamental issue here.

[41:12] Right where have we got to? So what clicks next? Yes. What he is objecting to is that this orderly role this beautiful orderly role has got reversed.

I thought I had a nice background on that but obviously I don't. So we have says Paul what you're doing is you're reversing these roles so that you are acting as if the woman is the head of the man. See I've done the diagram the other way around. You're acting as if the woman is the head of the man and they might say well how are we doing that? And he says well in your culture you know this don't you? Because if you take a man and that he does this with his hair that women usually do he's acting as if he's a woman.

This is what he says. Verse 4. For every man who prays or prophesied with his head covered you know with his head with this hairdo or this veil or whatever it is or whatever form of hat it was.

If a man does that woman's hairdo thing he dishonors his head. That needs thinking about which we'll do in just a second.

[42:32] And he says you could do it the other way around as well. And every woman who prays or prophesies so she's participating in church life with her head uncovered.

So she's not wearing what a woman ought to have on her head in that culture. Dishonours her head. And he emphasises this. He says talk about dishonour.

If she does that she might as well have her head shaved. And everybody knows it's a shameful thing in your culture. This is the culture that he's writing to.

To have your hair cut or shaved off. That is a shameful thing. So we end up with this role reversal thing of if the man wears the woman's head gear or the woman acts as if she's a man and doesn't wear her womanly head gear.

He says you're reversing the roles. You can't come into the place of God and just blatantly reverse the roles that God has put into creation. And he brings in the vocabulary of shame.

[43:43] Now interestingly there's quite a bit about glory and he says it is not glory. You're not bringing glory to Jesus. You're dishonouring Jesus. Please pick up the words for this which is in verse 4.

everyone who prays or prophesies with his head covered every man who prays or prophesies with his head with a woman's hairdo shames his head.

It says dishonour but shame will do for that. Actually shame is better. He shames his head. I don't think he's saying shames his cranium.

His head is Christ. You bring shame on your head if you man act in the church as if you're a woman. And likewise verse 5 every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered in other words as if she was a man shames her head.

And in verse 6 he says it is a shame a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut. He says there's a shame thing going on here when these roles get reversed.

[44:54] And in the church is the place where above all the roles that God has kindly given man and woman ought to be tenderly and respectfully and beautifully shown.

And you are bringing shame to the Lord in reversing your roles. And then he goes on to say he tweaks this a little bit.

He says in verse 8 a man ought not to cover his head since he is the image and glory of God. And I don't know if I've got a little thing for that. Nope.

Yes. He's the image and glory of God. So there's a glory thing going on here. But the woman is the glory of the man.

So that glory thing works for all three of those headship relationships. And then he says man did not come from woman but woman from man.

[45:52] So that's the priority of Adam's creation and woman being made from him. And he says for this reason and because of the angels the woman ought to have this whatever it is on her head.

Now what are the angels doing there? Don't really know. Maybe angels are watching. Maybe angels are particularly interested to see what happens in churches. Maybe the angels are saying one day God's going to renew everything.

He started off in that little church down there and that little church in Corinth and that church in Ephesus and that church in Brighton and that other church in Brighton. And the angels maybe are looking and saying wow see what God's doing.

Those people singing. Amazing. Maybe that's what's happening. I don't know. I don't know enough to tell you dogmatically. But in verse 11 he says the relationship needs a little bit of tweaking.

In the Lord however woman is not independent of man nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man that's the bit he said before so man is born of woman but everything comes from God.

[47:00] So he sort of nuances that. He says it's not quite starkly that you know male headship. blah. Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah. He says there's a let's realize there's a sort of interdependence going on as well.

There isn't a man here who isn't grateful to his mum for bringing him into the world. Isn't that right? So there's a certain humility in this relationship.

So that humility in this relationship over here. Interdependence and he says in the Lord. In the Lord. Spiritually there's a humble dependence, an interdependence between male and female in the church. And then the next bit is the biology isn't it? Because man is born of woman.

So biologically and spiritually there's certain humility into that headship relationship. But he still says don't reverse the roles.

[48:11] There are roles and they're not to be reversed. And this is where he comes back to. Verse 12 for woman came from man so man is born of woman

but everything comes from God. Judge for yourselves.

Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head as if she was a man? Doesn't the very nature of things teach you that if a man has this whatever it is long hair, hairdo it is a shame.

It's not quite the same word there but disgrace to him that if a woman has whatever this hairdo thing is it is her glory. So when he says doesn't the nature of things I think he's saying don't you instinctively in your culture isn't it obvious to you?

I think that's what he's saying. I don't think he's saying that for all time in every culture men should not have long hair. I don't think he's saying that but I think he's saying for all time in all culture men shouldn't display the cultural signs of them being women particularly in the church.

So that is the this. That's the 1 Corinthians 11 and I'm going to just nod to 1 Corinthians 2 and say it's similar.

[49:30] Activity is appropriate and inappropriate to the church regarding male and female. It's half past 12. You don't want to go spend another half hour on 1 Timothy chapter 2 do you? At least not at the moment. There's a lot that should be said about 1 Timothy chapter 2 but I'm not going to say it today.

There's the screen we had before. It was about role reversal in a particular culture and let's try to move towards drawing some conclusions. In the church the roles of male and female are to be shown most beautifully and properly.

The principles are fundamental. Cultures will express it differently. Men are to bring honour to Christ by behaving as men in taking responsibility in the church.

Otherwise they bring shame to Christ. Women are to bring honour to Christ by letting men have their headship in the church. If they take the headship then they bring shame to Christ.

And it isn't just a matter of what you put on your head. It is really what you have in your heart and in your life. And particularly in husband and wife.

[50:45] Paul says this in another place. Women respect your husbands. I think what I'll say is if you're in terms of future relationships women don't marry a man you don't respect.

Respect is an important thing there. If you've lost respect in your partnership then it might need quite a lot of work but try and get that back. Conclusions.

The Lord Jesus claims lordship over every part of our lives. That includes our sexual lives, our gendered life, the way we work and relate as male and female and express ourselves.

There's a creation order of male and female. The male has a loving servant leadership. That's the idea of headship. the female has a nurturing relationship self-giving helping role.

This works out differently in marriage and family. It works out differently in business and culture. You don't relate to the men and women in your business as if you are married to them do you?

[51:51] That would be stupid. But you do necessarily relate as male and female and particularly in the church the family of God. In the church we seek to bring glory to Christ not shame.

So a question for men. Are you lovingly taking responsibility before Christ? In the 1 Timothy it says men pray.

That's a good question. Men are you praying? When we have the prayer time do you step forward and pray even though you think I won't do this very well not used to speaking out had a busy day at work whatever but somebody's got to take the responsibility.

Will you take the responsibility? Do you support your wife? Do you actively care for her and look after her? Do you look after your wife spiritually?

Do you pray together? Women are you growing in the self-giving support that's the woman's gift?

[52:59] Are you putting to death the desire to have your own way? Take the power and be the centre of attention. It's the wrong way forward. And for all of us we started off singing glory to Jesus.

We sang that we were alive in him our living head. Let us live in the Lord. Let us live for the Lord.

Let us live in every part of our lives for his honour and glory.

Let us sing together. Let us sing together.