

Devotion: When you Gather...part 1

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[0 : 00] All right, a couple of things to begin with today. I had initially thought that we would jump into chapter 11.

It's got two parts, and we would do all of it at once. We're not going to do that. So your notes have got part 1 and part 2. Just ignore part 2. We'll come back to it.

If we go back and we think about the book of 1 Corinthians, we know that this is a church that's shifting off the gospel. They're ignoring and walking away from the gospel that Paul has preached. They think that that was a fine start, a good foundation, but now they've understood more truth, new truth, through this use of rhetoric. And they are adopting different things, and it has caused division. That's chapters 1 through 4. It's caused some depravity, chapters 5 through 10. And it has caused problems in their devotion. That is, their corporate gatherings, right?

[1 : 08] Their corporate gatherings for worship. And the three problems that arise up in that devotion is men and women in worship, the Lord's Supper in disunity, and a bunch of tongue speakers.

Okay? Chapter 11 deals with the first two of those things, men and women in worship and the Lord's Supper. Chapter 12, 13, 14 deals with the tongue speakers and the problem that arises because of them.

And so we're going to just deal with that first problem, men and women in worship, and it's the first 11 verses. And really, chapter 11, verse 1 really probably goes with chapter 10.

Most translations now sort of put it together. And it's really verses 2 through 16. But I'm going to go ahead and start with verse 1, and we'll read all 16 verses, and then we'll dive into this.

Beginning in verse 1, it says, Be imitators of me as I am of Christ. Now, I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions, even as I've delivered them to you.

[2 : 18] But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head.

But every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, since it is the same as if her head were shaven. For if a wife will not cover her head, then she should cut her hair short.

But since it is disgraceful for a wife to cut off her hair or shave her head, let her cover her head. For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God.

But woman is the image and glory of man. For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head because of the angels.

Nevertheless, in the Lord, woman is not independent of man, nor man of woman.

[3 : 29] For as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman, and all things are from God. Judge for yourselves. Is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered?

Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair, it is a disgrace for him? But if a woman has long hair, it is her glory.

For her hair is given to her for a covering. If anyone is inclined to be contentious, we have no such practice, nor do the churches of God.

All right. Let's talk first off about how this passage gets abused.

Okay? This passage gets abused in two ways. The first way has to do with people who are enemies of the cross of Christ. Right? Enemies of the cross of Christ, because they will use this passage as a means of accusing Christians of backward, archaic, misogynistic thinking.

[4 : 36] Right? They say you hate women. You hate equality. You hate all of these things because of all of that. I mean, look, you're trying to force people to wear some sort of clothing that they don't want to wear.

And, of course, my immediately thought is masks. But okay. The other way that it's abused is that there are people who will read this, and it is obvious to me that the context of this passage has to do with the worship gathering.

You have praying and prophesying. You have a practice in the church. No such practice. Do the other churches. This is something that is about being in the church.

But you've got people who will read this, and I've got a friend of mine whose wife wears a covering all the time, except when she goes to sleep.

And I guess maybe when she bathes. And it is such a thing that if you don't do this, then you are looked down upon for not doing this.

[5 : 48] When our kids were young, we were in this period where we had to move around because, you know, we were in a place. And then the hurricane came, and you have to move and all this stuff. We were looking for a church to go to.

We showed up to this church on a Sunday morning. We walked in. My wife, four daughters, and a son. We sat down in the pews, and I started looking around and seeing all these white doilies. All of the place.

And all of the women and girls in that building had their heads covered with these doilies. And we were just like going, oh, well, what is it? Like, I had read this, but I had read it.

You know what I'm saying? You read it, but you don't read it. You read it, but you just don't remember it. And so I'm going like, what in the world is going on? So, you know, you can see that this thing can be so abused in so many ways, and it is quite special.

Okay? And so that's what I want to get to next is that this is a difficult passage. This is a difficult passage. And I want to show you a couple reasons why I think this is a difficult passage.

[6 : 54] First, our translations. Our translations are actually interpretations. Our translations are actually interpretations.

And what I mean by that is this. When you take something that's written in the Greek, like this was, and you bring it over into English, there are times that you have to make decisions about how to translate a word.

So, for instance, in English, we have the word love. But depending upon the context depends on what that means. Because if I'm talking about I love my wife or I love chocolate, then that love is kind of different.

Right? So, when they're reading this, these Greek words have various meanings, and they have to pick which one they're going to use. But sometimes, just the word alone for them just doesn't seem to make sense.

So, they will add words into the translation. Look at verse 10. How many of you have the word symbol or sign in the text?

[8 : 03] You got the word sign? Okay? Symbol. Does anybody not have anything? It just says the word authority. Okay.

Is that the NIV? That's the NIV. Okay. Now, I wasn't sure if there was a modern translation that that is actually correct.

The word symbol and sign, is it italicized in the text? Okay. Some translations, my ESV doesn't do this, but some translations will italicize it.

If you see an italicized word, it means that the translators put that in there themselves. There's no Greek word behind it, but they're trying to make sense of the passage.

And they feel like this is a good word to put to try to make sense of the passage. And that is a decision that the translators have to make. Okay?

[9 : 05] It's not wrong for them to do that. Every translation does it. It doesn't make our translations untrustworthy. You just need to know that they do that. Now, here is the way that this is actually translated, if you want to think of it this way, that a wife ought to have, she ought to have authority on her, over her head.

Over her head. So, the possible meaning of that is that for her to have authority over her own head, not have an external authority on her head.

This is the only place in the whole passage that the word authority is mentioned. Because back up in here where it talks about being the head, the word head in this passage is meaning not authority, but source of life.

You notice how it talks about woman is from man, right? And man is not from woman. It says that kind of a thing. Okay. Well, so right there you have, okay, should symbol be there or should it not? You have a... Her? Yes. And the reason her is italicized is because there's an article that's there. Right?

[10:24] So, it could be she's... A wife should have authority over the head. Her own is not there, even.

It's just the head. And so, here's what I'm saying. You've got these possible translations. And so, it's difficult. It's difficult to say, well, what are we doing with this?

Let me give you another example. Go to verse 13 and 14. In verse 13 and 14, you've got two questions. Okay? Now, before we read it, I just want you to understand that in the Greek manuscripts, you have no periods, no commas, no quotation marks, no question marks, because that's just not the way they wrote.

Instead, when they were going to have like a quote from somebody, they would always say something. This is why when you read your New Testament, like in the Gospels, Jesus spoke saying.

That's their quotation system. Again, then the next thing that's written is what Jesus says, right? So, there's no quotation marks. There's words that tell you what's about to come. Same thing for questions.

[11:33] There are words that identify and say there's a question. Now, there are a few places where it seems like maybe there's a question, maybe there's not, and those question words are not there. So, translators have to make a choice.

This is one of those places. Listen to verse 13 as the question. Judge for yourselves. Is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered?

That's a question. But there are no question words here. So, without turning it into a question, but making it a statement, it says this. It is proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered. It says complete opposite. And that's a choice the translators made because there are no key words that say this is a question.

Okay? The next verse. Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair, it's a disgrace for him? Now, let's just pause in the middle of that question. And let me just ask you.

[12:39] Let's just assume that they're right that this is a question. What does it mean by nature? Is that I can think of two things. I can think instinctual. Okay?

Instinctual. I can also think the moral law of God written on the heart. That's a natural law. So, in other words, a natural law, I know that it's wrong if I were to kill someone.

Right? Like, if I've never heard the gospel, I live out in some bush, and I take somebody's life, I know it's wrong. I begin to hide the body and run. Right? Because I know the guilt of that.

Or flip it around. If I'm somewhere and I've never heard about God, I've never seen anything about Jesus, and somebody does something to me that I don't like, I will get angry. Right? That's human nature.

That's because the law of God is written on our heart. It's the natural law. Okay? Instinct is different from that. Instinct is my stomach is rumbling, and so I'm looking for something to eat.

[13:36] So, what does it mean here by nature? Does it? I don't think it can mean instinct because it says that it's a disgrace. So, a disgrace is going to mean that it's some sort of natural law.

Where in the world does natural law tell us that it's a disgrace for men to wear long hair, particularly since the body is actually fairly fit to be able to grow long hair?

You know, if a man could not grow long hair, I could kind of see maybe where this would fit in, but he can. Well, some of us can. Some of us can.

Now, here's my point. My point is not to tell you that it's one or the other. My point is to show you that this is a difficult passage to interpret.

Because just going back to the Greek, we've got questions that seem equally possible because of the various things involved in this.

[14:35] Let's hit another thing. Let's talk about chiasmic structure. So, I gave you a handout. Last time I tried to do this, I put it on the screen, and that was terrible. So, I'm giving you a handout. This

shows you this chiastic structure.

Okay? Now, let's talk about that for just a second. A chiastic structure is just a literary device that the Hebrews used as they wrote and thought about almost everything that they did.

And it was this book-ended idea that narrows down to a middle point. The middle point is always either the big point or the point of change.

And their goal is to either confirm or contradict. And in this case, one of the things that seems to be interesting, and we'll get into this a little bit more in a second, is that it seems as though verse 10, being the center of this chiastic structure, is a shift from one opinion to another opinion.

As though verses 4 through 9 are saying one thing, and verses 11 through 15 are saying the opposite. So, now, let's think about something.

[15:51] Think about all the chapters we've been through so far in the Corinthian letter. How many times have we seen Paul making reference to or quoting something that the Corinthians were saying, thinking, or believing that was wrong?

It's possible, possible that verse 4 through 9 is actually something the Corinthians were teaching. And that Paul was correcting them, beginning in verse 10.

Now, why would Paul be correcting them? Let me give you a little bit of some history. You probably have heard, you know up there where it talks about, if she doesn't cover her head, then it's like her head is shaven.

She should be one who cuts her hair short. So, part of that, the history behind that, is that many of the temples would have prostitutes. And in many of these temples, the prostitutes had their heads shaved.

Okay? They just had short hair. Now, I know why that is, I don't know. But the other thing is, is that that history is also kind of tenuous. There are people who challenge whether or not that's really true. But what you get, as you keep reading the history of Corinth, is you get a multiplicity of people.

[17:11] You get all kinds of views. So, for instance, Jews lived in Corinth. If you go to the Old Testament and you look for the men in the Old Testament, the men covered their head to pray.

The Jewish men and women covered their head to pray in the Old Testament. So, why would Paul say something opposite of the Old Testament? Is it because it's law?

I mean, we've already seen that Paul is not just adamantly opposed to everything there. He's just opposed to it as being something that you use to try to get your salvation with, right? The other thing is that women who were more wealthy tended to not wear head coverings in Corinth, whereas women who were more poor tended to do so.

And it has something to do with your hair and being able to keep it and working and all these kinds of things. And some people say, I don't know if this is true, that verses 4 through 9 was the attempt of the leadership of the church to just equalize everybody.

Because they were all coming with different views about what to do. And so, they're just like, okay, all the women just wear head coverings. Well, is that true?

[18:27] Well, honestly, I don't know. But there does seem to be some contradiction. Let's take a look at a couple of things. And I say, seem to be contradiction? It might not be. It could be, it might not be.

This is why this is difficult. Look at chapter 11, verse 5. And it says, but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head covered dishonors her head. So, this woman is to be praying and prophesying.

Now, what is prophecy? Spiritual gift. Spiritual gifts are to be used for the common good. You don't just use prophecy for your own sake.

You use prophecy for the common good. We'll get into that when we get into chapter 12. Where is prophecy to be used? It's to be used in the church for the common good. But, 1 Corinthians 14 says this.

The women should keep silent in the churches. For they're not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the law also says. If there's anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home.

[19:30] For it's shameful for a woman to speak in church. I don't know. We're going to have to deal with that. I understand that. But you see the difference. You've got one saying, oh, she's going to speak in church and prophesy?

Just cover your head. And you've got one over here going like, don't be speaking in church. What gives? This is a difficult passage. That's my point.

It's a difficult passage, right? I know, right? Look at verse 7 and 8. Verse 7 and 8 say, For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. And now here you go. For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Is that true? Is that true? In only one case.

Adam and Eve. But he's not talking about, it's not like they're putting forth Adam and Eve here. And maybe they are, but the point is that they're not even saying that. But look at verse 11 and 12.

[20 : 37] Nevertheless in the Lord, woman is not independent of man, nor man of woman. For as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman, and all things are from God.

Now, is that a contradiction? Because it's not exactly the same thing. And all I'm trying to get at is just to let you know, this is a difficult passage.

It's difficult. So. Sure. Sure. Okay, we'll get to that in just a second.

All right. So. Let's. Can you think about the number of different individuals here in the United States?

You have a million. And they cover. Mm-hmm. And when a girl gets to be a certain age, she wears a big boy in the United States.

[21 : 44] Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. The youth still wears a down-tooth. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. That's right. That's right.

So. Let's talk about. How do we use this passage? What benefit can we get from reading this passage? And I have three things for you. Number one.

It helps us understand something about the clarity of God's word. It helps us to understand something about the clarity of God's word. There's a three-part definition that Baptists have historically gone with related to the clarity of God's word.

Statement number one. The word is clear in all of its parts. The word is clear in all of its parts.

Number two.

I'll say this again. Okay. The word is not equally clear to all people. The word is not equally clear to all people. Oh, I messed up on the first statement.

[22 : 54] It's the word of God is clear. That's all you're supposed to say. Because the third statement is the word of God is not equally clear in all of its parts. So I totally botched the first statement.

Let's start over. Ready? First statement. The word of God is clear. Just say that. I don't have this written down.

So I apologize. Second statement. The word of God is not equally clear to all people. And the third statement. The word of God is not equally clear in all of its parts.

So it's clear. But it's not equally clear to you as to me or me as to you. You understand some things better than I do.

I understand some things better than you do. It's a little bit more clear to me. It's a little bit more clear to you. It's also not clear in all of its parts. Some passages are more clear than other passages.

[23 : 52] Let me give you a verse to write down. Second Peter chapter 3, 14 through 16. Second Peter chapter 3, verse 14 through 16.

Beginning of verse 14 it says, Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found in him without spot or blemish and at peace. And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given to him, as he does in all of his letters when he speaks in them of these matters.

There are some things in them that are hard to understand. There are some things in them that are hard to understand and which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction as they do the rest of the scriptures.

Peter here in this verse, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, God gave Peter these words, and Peter tells us that Paul has written scripture, that Paul has written scripture that concerns salvation, and that some of the things that Paul writes are hard to understand.

The Holy Spirit has inspired us to know that some of the scriptures are hard to understand. And these things that are hard to understand are used by the ignorant to twist them.

[25 : 18] One of the things about chapter 11 to me is that it falls into this category. The last time I taught on this, I actually taught something completely different.

And since then I've been studying it, looking at it, trying to understand it. And when I began to see just right out of the Greek kind of this difference that you can go in a couple of directions and you're going to have to make a choice, and the choice is really hard because the history is spotty and everything else, I'm just looking at this saying, I don't think this is a clear passage.

And so this ought to teach us not only that God's word is clear, but there's some parts of God's word that's not clear, and we need to have humility as we come to God's word, as we come to study it, and actually focus on that which is clear.

You know, if you find yourself, just think of it this way, I'm going to use percentages. If you find that 90% of God's word is clear to you, then 90% of your study time should be on that 90% that's clear. And if there's 10% that's unclear, then spend 10% on that unclear. But what happens is that we get so intrigued with that which is weird, that which is difficult, that which is unclear, and we spend all of our 90% on 10%, and we major on minors in that regard.

[26 : 40] When we... Oh, and I was just going to say, because the big issues, the big issues are things like salvation, and justification, and the death of Christ, and the Trinity, and prayer, and how we get along with one another, and forgiveness, and encouragement.

Whether somebody wears a covering on their head or not, that becomes... Well, I mean, we want to do what God's word says, right?

But when it's so unclear, and we're going to get to this, we can't build a doctrine on it because we're not sure what it actually says. Jill, what were you going to say?

Well, I just think that doesn't really invite people to give them their own interpretation, and if that necessarily isn't, when you read this, it's very, in two ways.

Yeah. Well, yeah, but it's contradictory. Right. Yeah. Yeah. So, doesn't it, when it's not clear, like a lot of things, doesn't that invite people to their own interpretation?

[27 : 58] Well, sure it does, and I think that's what, I think that's what Peter's after, I think that's what Peter's after, because here's the thing. You and I can sit here, and we can look at chapter 11, and we have a heart of submission to the Lord that says, Lord, this is your word, and I don't understand it, but listen, I'm submissive of this word, and maybe one day, we'll have clarity about what this means, and we can kind of line out better how we should live and act according to this passage, but that's because we have a heart of submission.

The mocker and the scoffer who come to this passage, who throw in whatever meaning they want to, they're not throwing that in there because they want to understand it. They want to use it as a bludgeon to try to beat Christians up with.

There are some people then, like my friend, who I think abuses this text, who hasn't looked at some of the rest of these things, and he still has a heart of submission to the Lord, and yet he thinks, we ought to cover your head, and so in that regard, I'm not going to stand here and say, you're wrong, you stopped doing that.

I'm just going to be like, honestly, I just don't know. I just don't know. I think that's kind of what you're saying. I mean, I first wanted to get to the court, and I did what you all say, I don't know if you all am in court.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I think that was a cat husband, who was so caught up with something like that.

[29 : 30] Great. Perfect. Well, that's going to be the second use of this, is trying to, how do we build doctrine?

Right? How do we come up with a doctrine? And here's the thing, you don't come up with a doctrine by taking one single verse and pulling it out of the middle of everything and divorcing it from the context or divorcing it from everything else.

Right? When you look at this and you think to yourself, I mean, just go back to verse five, every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered. You know, Baptists have been historically people who've said that men are the one who take up the office of pastor and it should be men who lead the worship.

And there's other passages that are super crystal clear about that. But when you bring this passage in, you might be tempted to just lift this one up and say, listen, women can prophesy in the church too.

Women can preach too. It's okay if women preach in the church. Well, what you've done is you've divorced it from chapter 14. You've divorced it from 1 Timothy. You've divorced it from other things. You can't just grab this one, pull it up and say, well, see, all of these other clear passages are wrong because I like this one because that's what people do is they come to something that they, listen, if it were crystal clear about head coverings, I'd have told you.

[30 : 52] And if it had been crystal clear that a woman ought to wear a head covering, I would, without flinching, would have told you that you ought to be wearing a head covering. You go like, well, what difference does it make?

And I kind of go like, it's in God's word and it's crystal clear. You know what I'm saying? Because what we don't do is we don't look at God's word and say, well, I don't like that or that sounds bad or that sounds weird.

We don't do that first. We make sure we understand it first. But when we come across a passage that's unclear, then we have to use the more clear passages to help us understand it.

That's one of the first rules of building doctrine is number one, don't have a passage by itself. And number two, use clear passages to help you understand unclear passages.

Let's go back to chapter 11, verse 10. Right? This wife is to have authority over her head.

[31 : 55] Okay? I'm just going to say it's her head and it's her own authority. But I want to get to the last phrase, because of the angels. Now, if you just stop right there and you don't look at anything else, there's no way you're going to be able to tell me what it means because of the angels.

So, we kind of say to ourselves, well, how do we, how do we understand that so we can build a doctrine? What you do is you see that Paul has written this letter and you say, is there anywhere else in this book, 1 Corinthians, only 1 Corinthians, where Paul has said anything about angels? Yes. Chapter 6, where he talks about suing one another, taking one another to court.

And in verse 3, he says this, do you not know that we are to judge angels how much more than matters pertaining to this life?

why should a woman have authority over her own head? Because she's a co-heir with all of the men and she will judge angels and if she can judge angels, then surely she has the ability to judge on matters pertaining to this life.

[33 : 27] Surely, a woman is capable of deciding whether or not she wants to wear a covering or not. And I think that's Paul's point here. And the woman has the freedom to do it.

If she wants to wear a covering, God bless her. Let her do it. And if she doesn't, God bless her. Let her not do it. Because why? Because she is to judge angels.

Now, is that correct? I don't know, but that's the way I would start with trying to understand what does it mean because of the angels? Because you look at what Paul's been talking about in terms of the angels.

Right? The other thing is that we're not supposed to build doctrine on narrative passages, passages that just tell a story, but we're to use teaching passages to help us understand the narrative passages.

Let me give you a couple of examples. So, let's think about Jesus. He heals the blind man, right? And the story goes is that he scoops up a little bit of dirt spits in it, makes a little bit of mud, smears it on the guy's eyes, and he has him go wash.

[34 : 37] And then the guy says, I see people walking around like trees, and then he washes it again. I think that's the way the story goes, and now it's crystal clear. What kind of doctrine would you build off of that narrative?

Yeah, you can't build a doctrine off that. But if you were to see what Jesus teaches in the narratives, you can build doctrine off of that. The book of Acts, right? And the book of Acts.

You got all kinds of things that are narrative in the book of Acts. You got some teachings, but you got some narrative, and one of the big narratives in the book of Acts is this falling down of the Holy Spirit upon his people with tongues of fire, and they begin to speak in other languages.

This is a story, right? And I don't mean a story as in false, but I mean this is just a recounting of the history, and there's no doctrine that's given to you in that, yet people will develop a doctrine, and they will believe that they need to have that same experience that they had.

Or think about Moses, right? The first time that he meets the Lord. Exodus chapter 3. How does God speak to him? Through a burning bush.

[35 : 54] So you, oh, I have a new doctrine. God speaks through burning bushes. So I'm going to go set the woods on fire, you know? Like I'm saying, like that's the way people do.

Now I know that I'm making a caricature of it, but listen, we don't use the story there of Moses in chapter 3 of Exodus to build a doctrine that says God speaks through burning bushes.

What's the doctrine that we could possibly come up with? Well, we go to look at other places throughout the Bible, we see that God is a God who speaks. And so it's not about how he speaks, but it's that he speaks.

And that he speaks specifically here to Moses. I mean, you could take this story with Moses in all kinds of places, right? I mean, he takes his shoes off because he's on holy ground.

Well, why don't you take your shoes off when you come to church? Is God not here? Is that a proper use of that? Or with Jesus, he washed the feet of his disciples, right?

[36 : 59] And when washing the feet of his disciples, he gave them an example, an illustration. But a lot of people, there's a whole denomination, the Church of God. It's a Church of God in Christ, I think it's called, or maybe Church of God.

They have three ordinances, and one of those ordinances is foot washing. And they expect you, when it's time, just like the Lord's Supper, for you to wash somebody's feet.

But Jesus didn't give that to give us another ordinance. My point is, my point is there's a proper way to build doctrine. We've got to understand the passage the way the original audience was meant to understand it.

And then we can't pull a verse out of the context, and we can't pull a verse out of the context of the whole Bible. We've got to let everything speak to that to help shape and harmonize and give shape to what that doctrine should be.

And so, this is, to me, when I read this chapter, it reminds me of the duty we have to make sure we're being careful with that, right?

[38 : 03] And the last thing I would say is that this was related to the worship of the Church, and so it ought to give us pause to say we need to be diligent about planning our worship services, right?

Because here they are doing something in worship. If the idea that he's quoting verse 4 through 9 from the Corinthians, they were trying to make something happen in worship that God had never commanded anywhere in Scripture.

Women have to wear doilies, right? I've got to cover their head. If that's the case, and even if it's not, when we come together for worship, we just need to be careful with all the things that we have a tendency to bring in by tradition.

You know? Think about this. The Lord's Supper, we're commanded to take the Lord's Supper together, and the way that we do it is by tradition, right? You ever thought to yourself, it's like, why do we have that little plate and those trays sitting on that table up there?

Is that where they have to sit? No? Do we have to have a few people that walk around and serve everybody? Or could everybody get up and come forward and get their own?

[39 : 23] Well, they could. It doesn't matter, right? Because what he's commanded is he's commanded us to take the Lord's Supper, but he's not given us all these things. But what happens is we take all these circumstances and the ways that we do things, and we begin to make those the issue.

In his word, he's commanded us in worship to read the word, to pray, to sing, to preach, and to observe the ordinances, Lord's Supper and baptism.

And so, there's a lot of things that people do in worship that were never commanded. We're never commanded. But, like, it's not that they're bad, but we're just not commanded to do them.

So, my goal is, let's just be simple with what we do in worship, and let's be wise with what we do in worship. What do I mean by these things?

Well, first of all, think about this. A choir is not something that God ever commanded for the church to have. How do you like them apples?

[40 : 33] It's never commanded in Scripture. Right? That's right. Certain instrumentation. We're not commanded to make sure we have certain instrumentation.

As a matter of fact, if you know the church of Christ, typically, they don't have any instrumentation. Do you know why? Because there are no instruments listed in the New Testament to go along with the singing.

In Ephesians, it says, singing, making melody with your heart to the Lord. Even though the Old Testament has instrumentation listed, and that's where I go, and I'm going like, yeah, no, we're going to have some instruments.

I just, you know. But, that's right. God never commands us to sing hymns out of the Baptist hymn book only. Yet, man, there'd be some people that if you sing something not in that Baptist hymn book, they'd be upset.

You know, there's just all kinds of things we could go to, but here's the other thing. Okay, fine, we're only going to do the things that God tells us to do. Yeah, but even in that, we still have to be wise. Right? For example, reading Scripture in public in the service of the church.

[41 : 47] Well, how much Scripture should we read? What if this Sunday I decided that we were going to read all of Job? Pack your lunch.

You know, right? Or what if I said, for the next few weeks, we're going to read one chapter a week from Song of Solomon? Not just pack a lunch, but like we need to have a PG-13 rating on our service.

Right? So, planning worship and making sure that worship is honoring to the Lord and good for His people, it takes a little bit of effort and time.

We have to have some thought in it. We can't just willy-nilly throw things together, do things that we just come up with off the top of our head, but we've got to go with what is He commanded and how can we be wise about this?

The average person can't sit and listen to a whole chapter being read. Why is that? Well, one, our attention spans are not like our ancestors. And so, you've got to be wise with that.

[42 : 55] You know, we read three or four verses at the beginning of the service, we read a little bit in the middle, and then I read the passage that we're going to deal with with a few extras. That's actually more than a lot of churches. And that's sad.

You know? Because we really should have more of God's Word constantly, but we have to go and understand the weakness of our flesh means we need to stretch that just a little bit and work with us and recognize that we have that difficulty.

So, bottom line is, when I read something like this chapter 11, I'm immediately thinking, okay, we don't really know exactly what's going on here, but that gives us a chance to talk about the fact that we need to be humble as we approach God's Word.

It is clear, even if it's not clear in every part, we need to make sure that we are building our doctrine properly and not just on random isolated verses, and we need to be diligent in the way we come to worship and the way we plan worship.

And so, I hope that that is good for your soul and that you would take advantage and say, what's my part? What do I need to do when it comes to these things? And it's like, well, stay reading the scriptures, but also pray for the leadership of the church, that they know how to, you know, orchestrate and organize the services in such a way that we can make sure that we're doing things both the way God's commanded and with wisdom.

[44 : 25] And by all means, if somebody happens to show up to the church who's never been in church, and it's a guy wearing a hat, don't ask him to take it off.

If they come in and sit in your pew, just go ahead and sit in another pew. Don't ask him to move. Welcome, but not. So. My chair.

Well, any questions or comments? Yeah. Yeah.

You were going to wear a head covering? Yeah.

I'm glad because that is one of the things I was thinking about last night. I want you to feel the freedom to say, I don't understand this. And that's okay. It's okay.

[45 : 59] No. Yeah. You know, what's interesting is I went back to look at my notes to try to understand why I made the decisions about what I said about it.

And I always keep my notes where I translate the passage and such. And I didn't translate this passage last time. And so I didn't get into all the nitty gritty of those kinds of things.

I just sort of, I leaned upon my commentaries. And it's one of those things that pastors are always told, don't lean on your commentaries. But like when you have so much going on in a given week and you've got so many people you've got to go see, sometimes you lean on your commentaries because you don't have as much time to put in that.

And so I look at that and I kind of go like, what was I doing? And so, so I went back and I looked at all the really important passages in here that are the kind of the key ones and went back and retranslated in order to try to get a handle on, you know, what's going on here. And so, yeah. Okay. Any other comments, questions?