



## **Neither Male nor Female**

Joseph Herrin (6-27-2000)

Much of this article was taken from a previous writing by this author entitled "Spiritualizing Gender." I felt that the matter needed to be given a different focus, for the previous writing was presented to correct a teaching that was growing in popularity that suggested that references to male and female in the New Testament should actually be interpreted as being references to spirit and soul. Those advocating this position were attempting to nullify the order of government that the Father had established which is found in the following verse.

I Corinthians 11:3

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.

(NAS)

More recently I have been led to answer some sincere objections of sisters in Christ who felt that head covering was not pertinent to believers today. My answer to these sisters has been published in an article. This writing should actually be read in accompaniment with this other article, for I have tried not to duplicate information between the writings. The other writing is entitled "Head Covering and Government". In reading that article I had a sister object to it based upon the scripture passage in Galatians that says that in Christ there is neither male nor female.

Indeed, when one takes this statement by itself, as it is often offered, it appears to give great trouble to the teachings of governmental order between man and woman found throughout scriptures. However, we should always examine the context of the scripture quotations we use to know whether we are properly interpreting the meaning of the writer. Paul admonished Timothy to "study to show [himself] approved, rightly dividing the word of God", clearly addressing the problem of many who do not rightly divide the word.

Many grievous errors have occurred as saints have taken scriptures out of context and used them in an improper manner. This brings up a point that I would like to address before I venture further on this topic. There is a danger of examining the

scriptures to find something that we desire. In other words, we may have a certain prejudice on a topic and we seek to find scriptures that will support our prejudice.

In the book of Proverbs we are told that every man is justified in his own eyes (Proverbs 21:2). It is quite possible to find a scripture passage, a verse, or a snippet of a verse that will support most anything we desire. I have even seen some use scriptures to support fornication, and even adultery. The student of scriptures should always have as his or her first goal to know the mind of Yahweh on a matter, and with no concern of personal consequence, to desire to conform oneself to that which the Spirit illumines to us.

Much of the church has no such integrity, however. We live in the perilous last days that Paul spoke of where men would not endure sound doctrine and where the masses of Christendom would heap to themselves teachers to tickle their ears and tell them what they want to hear. We live in the day in which he foretold to Timothy that men would turn aside to myths and fables, and Paul further declared to the Thessalonian believers that Yahshua would not return unless the apostasy occurred first, the apostasy being a divorcement from truth.

We find some sobering things in this passage. "Because they did not receive the love of the truth... for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false" (II Thessalonians 2:10-11). When people do not hold the truth as their first objective in studying the scriptures, when they approach the Word of God with the intent of supporting some position that appeals to them, then the Father has every right to send them deception. In fact, this scripture says that He will do just that.

If we approach the scriptures with anything less than a sincere desire to know truth, the Father will allow us to find exactly what we want. If we desire falsehood, He will send us delusion. Only those who desire truth, despite all personal cost to themselves, will find it. In the matter I will address here, many have received delusion because they really didn't want truth. They wanted something less than truth. They simply desired to find a doctrine that they felt would not lead them outside of the comfort zone of their experience. Even in the Old Testament we find that there were always many more false prophets than true. It is no different in Christendom today.

Satan's chief weapon is deception and deception always works best when it has an

element of appeal in it. This is how Satan deceived Eve in the garden. The fruit that Satan invited Eve to partake of was appealing and Satan's lies made it even more attractive.

Genesis 3:6

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate...

(NAS)

In the same way, there is much in the doctrine that says there is no governmental difference between men and women in the kingdom, that makes it attractive both to the woman and the man who would eat of this fruit.

The teaching that much of the church has adopted says that marriage should be a democracy, and the man and woman should be co-leaders together in all of life's decisions. This certainly is in keeping with the trend of Western society where patriarchal order is seen as archaic and backward, where men are condemned as chauvinists and oppressive and controlling figures if they insist on being the head of their home. The weight of societal opinion is against any who would say this is God's established governmental order.

There are tremendous obstacles to overcome should any man desire to walk in the order established by Yahweh. A man may have to deal with the unwillingness of his own wife to submit to his headship. This resistance can be quite extreme, even to the point where a woman would rather leave her husband and divide a family than to submit to her husband's headship. Then there is the opinion of society to overcome. The man may be painted as an overbearing brute who is insensitive to his wife's feelings. He may be labeled as a controller who desires to listen to no one's opinion but his own.

The man will probably have to contend with the objections of others in the church whose households are ordered democratically, where the husband does nothing unless the wife agrees. Undoubtedly there will be those who would see a man walking in proper governmental order as being a threat to their own arrangement in their household. The man may also have to deal with church leadership that has not dared to proclaim man as the head of woman for fear of the firestorm that would result. The pastor or elder may be fearful of the conflict that may result if the issue

is brought up, so he may try to dissuade any man from taking a stand on the matter.

These are not hypothetical situations, I have personally viewed them all first hand. Yet I have considered that it is impossible for a man to have Christ as his head, and have his wife as an equal partner at the same time. What happens when the man knows that Christ is asking him to do a particular thing, yet his wife is in adamant disagreement? The man is then torn. Should he agree with Christ, or should he agree with his wife? In such a situation a man actually has two heads. Christ is one head and his wife is the other, and he can only act if the two are in agreement.

If agreement never comes then the man must choose between which head he will follow. If he chooses to appease his wife and to thereby preserve marital peace, he will have to disobey Christ. If he chooses to honor Christ as his head, then he will have to disregard the demands of his wife. A man who places himself in such a precarious position of trying never to choose a course unless his wife is in full agreement will be brought to a choice sooner or later of deciding whom he will obey.

There are many pastors and teachers of the word today who insist it is God's way for all decisions in marriage to be made by both husband and wife. I have even had some to tell me that God would never ask a man to do something without bringing his wife into agreement first. This would certainly be nice, but it has neither been my experience, nor is this revealed to be the testimony of the scriptures.

If David had consulted with his wife Michael first, he would have never danced before the Lord as he did when the Ark was brought into Jerusalem. When Abraham listened to the voice of Sarah above the witness of God to him, he ended up having Ishmael as a son. When Samson finally told his wife Delilah what she badgered him to know, it ended up costing him his sight, his strength, and eventually his life.

Whether our spouses are godly or ungodly, there will eventually come a time when they have not heard the same thing Yahweh has revealed to us. He seems intent on causing this to happen to test our obedience to His headship. When a man seeks to never offend his wife nor God, he will eventually be led to confusion. No man can have two heads and remain without conflict. The traditions of the church today have brought many homes to this state of confusion.

Jesus condemned the Pharisees for making the commands of God of no effect through their traditions. Their traditions were interpretations of scripture that were of

man, not of God. In the same way, those who are teaching this doctrine of democratic relationships between man and woman are nullifying the commands of God and bringing confusion into the body of Christ.

Interestingly enough, the scripture that states “for God is not the author of confusion” is found in the very passage that most pointedly looks at the issue of male/female relationships.

I Corinthians 14:33-34

33 for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

34 Let the women keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says.

(NAS)

Oh what a difficult scripture this is for those who do not discern the government of God. Again, I am not writing at length on government here, it is explained very thoroughly in the writing “Head Covering and Government”. It is easy to understand why many who do not discern government have decried Paul as a chauvinist and one who was bigoted against women. Many write his teachings off as simply an artifact of the patriarchal society he found himself in.

I previously stated that when Satan brings deception he attempts to make it appear attractive. What is the attraction in the negating of God’s order that Christ is the head of man, and man is the head of woman? For one, it frees the natural woman from her place of submission to man. This is an awesome attraction. It is evident in our western culture that the natural order of men and women as established by God is viewed with contempt. For generations now women have been fighting to attain an equal footing with men, choosing not to remain in submission to them. The concept of a wife honoring and submitting to her husband is viewed as archaic and unsophisticated. The woman who chooses to conform to God’s divinely established order is considered to be a doormat under the feet of her husband.

There is tremendous fear that must be overcome for a woman to subject herself to her husband, father, or other male authority figure in her life. This is why Peter said,

I Peter 3:6

Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.  
(NAS)

A woman fears that her husband may not consider her needs. She fears that her husband might make a foolish mistake that will have negative repercussions in her life. She fears that her husband might choose to walk down a path that will bring hardship to herself or her children. She fears that her husband might through disobedience bring judgment and calamity upon herself and the rest of his household.

By negating God's order and changing the obvious and natural interpretations of scriptures, a woman is offered a way out; she is given an alternate path that she can walk that gives her much more control over her destiny. She no longer has to walk in submission to man, exercising faith, trusting God to protect her from the failures of her husband who has feet of clay. As Satan offered the fruit to Eve and it had a pleasing appearance to her, so does this forbidden fruit have allure to women in the Church.

This doctrine of democratic relations between man and woman is but the latest temptation that Satan has set before men and women to cause them to abdicate the roles God has assigned to them. This was Satan's original sin. He was created with a glorious position before God, yet he was not content with it. He wanted to rise above his calling.

Isaiah 14:12-15

12 "How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations!

13 "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north.

14 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

15 "Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit.

(NAS)

Satan was not content with his position, even though it was a glorious position, one that brought him into the very presence of God. He viewed his role as demeaning. He began to consider that he should rise higher and that he should be worshiped. It says that he said in his heart "I will make myself like the Most High."

It was this very same temptation that Satan brought to Eve. He told her "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God..." (Genesis 3:5).

Satan convinced Eve that her role was demeaning. She could be something greater. Rather than being what she was created to be, she could become as God. In reality, Satan was offering her the opportunity to be god of her own life. She could discern for herself good and evil, right and wrong. Rather than relying upon God as her source of righteousness, she could establish her own.

It is in addressing the error of Satan, the error that Eve also embraced, that Paul tells the Church, "Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels" ( I Corinthians 11:10). By having her head covered the woman is making a bold declaration to the angels, both those who abandoned their first estate in the rebellion of Satan, and the holy angels who kept their first estate.

The woman by covering her head is saying, "I have decided to remain in the calling God appointed to me. I seek to neither rise above it, nor to fall below it. I reject the error of Satan when he sinned by trying to attain to a position other than that which God had apportioned to him." This is a both a strong rebuke to the fallen angels and an affirmation to the holy angels.

The holy woman is overcoming the fears in her life and entrusting herself to God. God is pleased to respond by strongly supporting such a woman.

II Chronicles 16:9

"For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His."

(NAS)

One can see what the attraction is to the woman to embrace the error that is being espoused today, but what is the attraction for the male? One of the chief motivations is a desire to appease his wife and other women in the body of Christ. I can attest

that any man that desires to walk in the calling in his life as the head of his wife will encounter the most extreme opposition. To touch this issue is to touch the very heart of Satan. One of the greatest strongholds of Satan in families and in the Church is centered around the issue of maintaining God's government.

Satan has from the beginning tried to alter God's established authority; first by trying to become like God himself, then by tempting man to do the same. What is offered to each person who embraces his error is the opportunity to be one's own god. It no longer becomes necessary to submit to God's direct or delegated authority. One can determine for themselves what is appropriate behavior and what is not. A child is tempted to cast off the authority of parents. A wife is tempted to cast off the authority of her husband. They think, "I am able to make my own decisions. I need no help to determine what is good and evil in my life."

Yes, this issue of male and female, of headship and submission, touches on Satan's great sin, and upon that which he tempted Adam and Eve with in the Garden of Eden. Even as he uncovered his head before God, he still incites people everywhere to rise up above the position the Father has assigned to them. It is just as grievous to rebel against God's delegated authority as it is His direct authority. The woman who believes she can usurp the male authority over her and then submit to God's direct authority is greatly deceived. To violate one is to violate both.

Women have a tremendous position of influence in a man's life. They can either affect a man for great good as Timothy's mother and grandmother did to him, or they can affect a man for great evil as Jezebel did to her husband Ahab. A man greatly feels the influence of the women in his life, particularly that of his wife. The two are one flesh. This is why Yahweh forbid the Israelites to marry foreign wives. He knew the influence of a wife, and he foresaw that the Israelite men would be influenced to follow after foreign gods.

Solomon was a man who loved God. In fact, he is the only person in scripture of whom it is clearly stated that he loved God (I Kings 3:3). Unfortunately, we have the parallel statement that Solomon loved many foreign women (I Kings 11:1). In the end, his wives led him into idolatry and he built shrines and temples to their gods. Solomon spoke much about the effect that a nagging or contentious wife can have on her husband. She can make his life a misery.

Proverbs 21:9

It is better to live in a corner of a roof, than in a house shared with a contentious woman.

(NAS)

Proverbs 21:19

It is better to live in a desert land, than with a contentious and vexing woman.

(NAS)

Proverbs 27:15

A constant dripping on a day of steady rain and a contentious woman are alike...

(NAS)

When a woman continually urges a man to perform some deed that is contrary to the will of Yahweh, many men will capitulate. For some, they may quickly stray from obedience. For others, they may be worn down over time as was the case with Samson.

Judges 16:16

And it came about when she pressed him daily with her words and urged him, that his soul was annoyed to death.

(NAS)

Many men know that to stand on the truth of scriptures and have only Christ as his head would be the cause of tremendous strife in his marriage. Most women in western culture are so indoctrinated in the rebellion and independence of the nations they live in that they perceive God's design of headship to be ludicrous, unreasonable and simply intolerable. They would no more willingly submit to it than cut off their own head (which, by the way, is what they are being asked to do).

Many men, being more desirous to keep peace in the home, avoid the issue altogether. They go along with the ways of the world and establish a very modern, democratic home. It is very modern, but wholly unbiblical.

Some believers are simply ignorant of the truth, never having had it taught correctly to them. There are so many arguments that make it seem reasonable that we should no longer make a distinction between men and women in the Church. One of the

most common comes from another of Paul's writings which is often quoted by those who advocate equality and democracy between men and women, "In Christ there is neither male nor female" (Galatians 3:28). As much as preachers talk against the error of taking a scripture out of context, it is amazing how many do so with this verse.

To see the error, one must look at the whole context of the verse. As this is such an important issue, I will include the whole passage here and if the reader is serious about knowing the truth of the matter, he or she will read it.

Galatians 3:1-29

1 You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?

2 This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?

3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

4 Did you suffer so many things in vain-- if indeed it was in vain?

5 Does He then, who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?

6 Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.

7 Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.

8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying "All the nations shall be blessed in you."

9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.

10 For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them."

11 Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith."

12 However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, "He who practices them shall live by them."

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become

a curse for us-- for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"--

14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

15 Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations: even though it is only a man's covenant, yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it.

16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

17 What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.

18 For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.

19 Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made.

20 Now a mediator is not for one party only whereas God is only one.

21 Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.

22 But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed.

24 Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.

25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring,

heirs according to promise.  
(NAS)

This passage, indeed virtually the whole book of Galatians, is dealing with the issue of Judaizers coming into the body and teaching people that they must, in addition to having faith in Christ, keep the Law, as delivered by the Patriarchs and prophets. The book of Galatians shows very little concern for issues of church order or relating to one another in the body. Galatians is not a governmental book. To find these issues, a much better source is Paul's letters to the Corinthian believers, because this was one of his main subject matters with them. The Corinthian epistles would be a much better source to discern doctrine about male/female relations among the body than Galatians, because such relationships are not the focus of Galatians.

Looking at this passage from Galatians we see that Paul has decided to approach the Galatians' error by revealing what the source of the promise given to Abraham was. Was it through the Law, or through faith? This is important because the Judaizers were saying that in order to be true Jews, (sons of Abraham), one had to keep the Law. Paul shows that this is erroneous. The true children, seed, offspring of Abraham are those who walk in the faith of Abraham.

16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

18 For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.

Paul is establishing who the true seed is and who will inherit the promised inheritance that was given to Abraham and his seed. By identifying who are the true seed or offspring, Paul is able to show how foolish those are who assert that believers must adhere to the Law, because the offspring of Abraham were never determined by keeping the Law. Indeed, the law was given 430 years after Abraham.

This is essential to understanding this passage and interpreting the scripture that many are quoting. Who were the inheritors? Under normal Jewish law daughters did not inherit, only sons did, the exception being families that had no sons. Neither did slaves within the household inherit, nor foreigners. The inheritance was given to the male seed of the father.

- 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.  
27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.  
28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.  
29 **And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.**

Paul is speaking of the rights of inheritance here. The very next verse after the one that says there is neither male nor female states “And of you belong to Christ, then you are... heirs according to promise.” This whole passage is establishing who will inherit the promises given to Abraham. This is no teaching on governmental order. Paul is not overthrowing the teaching that “Christ is the head of man, and man is the head of woman.”

Paul is joyfully asserting that all those who come to God on the basis of faith are the true children of Abraham. They are sons. They share in the inheritance. Observance of the Law does not determine who inherits the promises of God and who do not. Indeed, the law never determined who was a true son of Abraham.

Paul is saying that among the body of Christ, all share in the inheritance and all are considered sons in relationship to the promise given. Some are not Jews who inherit the promise, and some Greeks who are excluded from the promise. Some are not slaves who are excluded, while others are free and are included. Some are not male who receive the promise, while others are female and are excluded from the promise. All receive the promise. All are inheritors.

Paul is NOT teaching here on male/female relationships. He is teaching on inheritance. He is not talking of government, nor the exercise of gifts. He is in no way advocating the abolition of traditional gender roles as established by God. This is not the context of his teaching. Paul did teach on these subjects, but not in this passage of scripture.

Over and over in this day people are pointing to this scripture and saying, “see, it says right here that in Christ there is neither male nor female. We can cast off all this talk about man being the head of woman. Since there is neither male nor female we are all free to hear from God and have Him alone as our head.”

How very appealing this is to those who loathe submission. How very appealing it is to those who want to determine their own way. Yet they do violence to the scriptures by so taking these words out of context. They violate what is clearly stated in other passages that are clearly speaking about governmental order.

One of the scriptures that is overthrown by taking this scripture out of context is this one. "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" (I Corinthians 11:3). If we were to interpret the meaning of this snippet of a verse from Galatians as people insist, then we would have to rewrite I Corinthians. It might be better rendered in this manner, "But I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, and Christ is the head of every woman, and God is the head of Christ." But this is not what it says, is it?

Again, I must reiterate, if we come looking for something in scriptures to support a certain prejudice that we have, we will find it. However, if we look only for truth without regard to how it personally effects us, we will indeed find truth, and Yahweh will give us the grace to walk in it.

If we look simply for the truth of God's governmental order, we will find it everywhere. In I Corinthians we find the admonition to women to "let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says" (I Corinthians 14:34). Where do we find this command in the Law?

Genesis 3:16

To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, in pain you shall bring forth children; yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

(NAS)

Numbers 30:3-13

3 "Also if a woman makes a vow to the LORD, and binds herself by an obligation in her father's house in her youth,

4 and her father hears her vow and her obligation by which she has bound herself, and her father says nothing to her, then all her vows shall stand, and every obligation by which she has bound herself shall stand.

5 "But if her father should forbid her on the day he hears of it, none

of her vows or her obligations by which she has bound herself shall stand; and the LORD will forgive her because her father had forbidden her.

6 "However, if she should marry while under her vows or the rash statement of her lips by which she has bound herself,

7 and her husband hears of it and says nothing to her on the day he hears it, then her vows shall stand and her obligations by which she has bound herself shall stand.

8 "But if on the day her husband hears of it, he forbids her, then he shall annul her vow which she is under and the rash statement of her lips by which she has bound herself; and the LORD will forgive her.

9 "But the vow of a widow or of a divorced woman, everything by which she has bound herself, shall stand against her.

10 "However, if she vowed in her husband's house, or bound herself by an obligation with an oath,

11 and her husband heard it, but said nothing to her and did not forbid her, then all her vows shall stand, and every obligation by which she bound herself shall stand.

12 "But if her husband indeed annuls them on the day he hears them, then whatever proceeds out of her lips concerning her vows or concerning the obligation of herself, shall not stand; her husband has annulled them, and the LORD will forgive her.

13 "Every vow and every binding oath to humble herself, her husband may confirm it or her husband may annul it.

This latter passage is especially revealing. According to the Law which Paul referred to in I Corinthians, a woman could not even make a vow or oath to God without her father's or husband's permission. This is because under the government of God man is the head of woman. Woman was not created for God, she was created for man (I Corinthians 11:9). Whether these truths be popular, or not, is inconsequential. They are established by God and Paul declares that these truths as revealed in the Law are still valid in the church.

Most of the arguments against maintaining the gender roles established by God and spoken through the mouth of His prophets, are based upon fairness, or rather, the apparent lack of it. It seems unfair for a woman, who undeniably has the ability to hear the voice of God, to submit herself to man. Often these men are less sensitive spiritually than their wives or daughters. However, even in this case the scripture is

clear, as is revealed in the scripture from I Peter chapter 3 where if a wife has a husband who is disobedient to the word, she is to let him be won without a word from her, as he sees her chaste and respectful behavior.

If a woman will be honest in examining this issue she will recognize that her reluctance to agree with the testimony of scripture has more to do with fear than any other reason. Fear causes women to reject the authority of their husbands. Fear also causes men to reject the authority of Christ. Questions such as “What if he doesn’t consider my interests in his actions and decisions?” “What if he makes a decision that is costly to myself and the rest of the family?” “What if his guidance leads to hardship and anguish and I have to suffer due to this?” “What if I am not given any forum to exercise the gifts and talents God has placed in my life?” “What if my happiness is threatened in submitting to his headship?” And even, “What will others think of me for choosing to submit to authority when it is so out of vogue and women who submit to their husbands are looked at as weak and spineless?”

These questions and others could be asked by women in their relationship to men as well as men in their relationship to God. Peter’s answer is “For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a man [or woman] bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly...” It is fear that leads us to make judgments and to declare that something is not fair.

The Father knows our frames, that we are but dust. He knows we have tremendous fears that come against us. He realizes the peril that many women feel in submitting themselves to their husbands. He is gracious to those who choose to do so despite the fears that arise within them. This truly finds great favor with Yahweh. Oh how He will minister grace and mercy to those who choose to entrust themselves to Him and to abide by His governmental order, overcoming every objection that arises within themselves.

I have great compassion for the fears of women. I know how difficult it is to submit to someone who very well may make decisions that will bring negative consequences. As I struggled with this issue at one time, I asked God what it would hurt for a man to just capitulate and to tell his wife that they would run their marriage like a democracy and all decisions would be made with equal voice of both partners. I was asking God, “If a man chooses to lay aside the authority delegated to him, and to out of compassion for his wife to never ask her to do anything that caused her distress or discomfort, what would be wrong with this?” God spoke back to me so

quickly that it surprised me. He said “Honor would be missing.”

A wife is told to honor her husband as man is to honor his head, Jesus Christ. God has created a divine mystery where the marriage relationship mirrors the relationship of Christ with His Bride. The King James Version of the Bible renders the word honor as ‘reverence’.

Ephesians 5:32-33

32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

(KJV)

The word reverence in this verse is a very intense word. Strongs’ Hebrew and Greek Dictionary renders it this way. 5399 phobeo (fob-eh'-o);

from 5401; to frighten, i.e. to be alarmed; by analogy, to be in awe of, i.e. revere:

You may recognize the similarity of the Greek word ‘phobeo’ to our English word phobia. Both come from the same root which means “to fear.” You may ask, “Why would a woman fear her husband?” The type of fear here is a reverential fear and it is similar to the admonition that saints are given to fear God. The husband actually stands in the place of God to his wife. Man is the head of woman as Christ is the head of man. Man has been delegated authority by God. He stands in God’s authority. This is why women were prohibited from making oaths or pledges to God without the permission of their husband or father.

God spoke to me and told me that the lack of submission in Christian marriages today is a mirror of the lack of submission found in the Church towards Christ. We will not resolve the issues discussed here through democracy. It will not satisfy God for men to say, I will always follow Christ when I agree with Him. If Christ will never ask me to do something I am unwilling to do, then we will have peace. Let Christ and man perform their relationship in a democratic way. Let Christ always consult with man before He makes a decision.

No, this would be unacceptable to the Father. Christ is our example. Even as we are told in the Gospel of John that Yahshua NEVER did anything of His own initiative,

but He always did the will of the Father, even so should man have his head covered before Christ and he should always strive to never do anything of his own initiative, but to always do the will of Christ. And so should woman do with man.

This requires humility and submission. It requires putting the flesh to death, and for the lack of these things we sadly find these things rarely practiced. May Yahweh grant us His grace to walk in His divine governmental order.