

The **Glory**



ⁱⁿ *Headship*

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Introduction

In general, headship is something people run from; they want to be free from it, or to only accept it when absolutely necessary. If this is true for you, read on and discover why headship in the kingdom of God is a precious, hidden treasure to be sought for. Biblical headship is *not* a hierarchical, authoritarian structure that dictates and enforces the will of God; it is a divine relationship centered in the life of God designed to bring His purpose to pass in the lives of His children.

The place to begin is recognizing that God is, and always will be, on His throne.

*The Lord has established His throne in the heavens; and His sovereignty **rules over all.** (Psalm 103:19)*

The issue we face is not whether God is ruling, but whether or not we are receiving the many benefits of His headship which involves much more than government.

Sin had its beginning when Lucifer, whom the Lord had placed in authority over His creation, rebelled against the government of Almighty God. In essence, he violated divine authority in an ungodly attempt to promote himself, to raise his throne above the stars of God and make himself like the most High (Ezekiel 28:14; Isaiah 14:13-14)

After his fall, Satan then attacked the oversight given to Adam by God through which he was to rule the earth. Satan did so by tempting and deceiving Eve to disobey God. When she acted, the obedience to God in which Adam could function as lord over the earth was broken. Eve failed to see the oneness she had with Adam under his headship. The decision should have been his to make. Thus, the first sin, both in heaven and upon earth, involved rebellion against God's authority.

Because we are the descendants of Adam, in the depths of our fallen natures we are all rebels. God's love, mercy and forgiveness bring us back into a relationship of life with Him. However, once saved, we face the need to embrace His lordship in order to bring the redemptive benefits of His headship into our personal, family and church lives. This is important today because a spirit of rebellion from the world has invaded the church. There exists a spirit of idolatry similar to periods in Israel's history.

In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes. (Judges 17:6)

Children rebel against parents; the divorce rate is increasing, and numbers of church leaders, often without proper accountability, are being exposed for sins that defame God's name. And at times, leadership in homes and churches is marked by abusive domination over the lives of people they are responsible for. In many churches, hierarchical authority structures rigidly divide believers into clergy (performers) and laity (spectators) where the latter are ministerially suffocated. Thus, the church cannot function as a living expression of Christ's body. All such practices are contrary to biblical headship.

The solution does not lie in God baring His arm in power to bring spiritual order and obedience by force. It lies in His people embracing the

security, freedom and fulfillment that is theirs in three headships found in the kingdom of God where submission is an expression of glory.

1. God is the head of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3).
Jesus is the radiance of His glory (Hebrews 1:3).
2. Christ is the head of every man (1 Corinthians 11:3).
Man is the glory of God (1 Corinthians 11:7).
3. Man is the head of a woman (1 Corinthians 11:3).
Woman is the glory of man (1 Corinthians 11:7).

The church, with its families, is an ark of safety, and it is here that the glory and benefits of headship can be realized. As the church walks under the headship of Christ, she will one day share His glory (Ephesians 5:27; Revelation 21:10-11).

Let us examine four principles of relationship in these headships to discover why they are important. We will consider headship in the God-head, between Christ and the church and in Christian marriage.

Principles of Biblical Headship

THE PRINCIPLE OF LOVE

Most people would say that headship is primarily based on power. However, God's heart is not to impose His will on us by force but to capture our hearts and obedience with His love.

- **The Godhead**
The whole of salvation is the story of God's love for His creation. However, this would never have happened without the great love between Father and Son in the Godhead. Because of His great love, God initiated what only He could do. He freely offered forgiveness by grace, and expressed mercy to lost mankind (John 3:16). Nothing validates the headship of God so clearly to us as the undeserved love He expressed in sending His Son to redeem us back to Himself. And nothing teaches us how to respond to headship as well as the Son's obedience of His Father. Thus, God's love undergirds His headship.
- **Christ and the church**
The willing sacrifice of Jesus when He personally bore the shame,

reproach and suffering for our sins qualifies Him to be head over *all* things to the church. What can provide greater motivation to obey Him than the love He expressed for us on the cross? Just as the Father gave His Son for the church, the Son has also given the Holy Spirit to manifest His headship to each member of His body, who are to respond to Him as He responded to the Father. Included in the Holy Spirit's graces are five specific ministries given to the church through whom the Lord equips and shepherds her (Ephesians 4:11-13). Those who He selects from these ministries to be overseers in the church are not chosen primarily because of great ministry ability, but because they love the sheep and are willing to lay down their lives to serve them. They will not dominate the flock but be examples of the Christ whom they represent, always pointing the people to Him who is the *only* head of the church (1 Peter 5:2-3). Every great leader among God's people was also called as a servant. This is how love is expressed. God called Jesus His Servant (Matthew 12:18-21). Others called servants by God include Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David and Daniel. The Lord's words to the first apostles, and by implication to all subsequent church leaders, are as follows:

. . . you know that the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to become first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. (Matthew 20:25-28)

An excellent example of such servanthood is seen in the manner by which Paul expressed and established his apostolic authority and ministry to the church at Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 2:1-13). Leaders who truly love the sheep will hate sin and redemptively confront it, especially when it is hidden or not repented of. Paul's first epistle to Corinth concerning such sin was a rebuke of the church for not having dealt with the situation (1 Corinthians 5:1-13). The eldership apparently was either ineffective or nonexistent. Godly love in local church government should always be immune to compromise in matters of truth and righteousness, while being reasonable and willing to yield in other areas.

- Marriage

A Christian husband and wife are to reflect Christ and the church by their covenant relationship together.

For the husband is head of the wife as Christ also is head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. (Ephesians 5:23)

To express Christ, a husband's headship must flow out of sincere love, a love that is not superficial; one that cares for, teaches, nurtures, honors, provides for, and seeks to protect his wife from deception and evil influences. There must exist in his heart an openness to receive through her prayers and spiritual graces, the input and support that will help equip and complete him in the purpose and call of God. What wife wouldn't submit to her husband if her loved her as Christ loves the church?

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word . . . so husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself. (Ephesians 5:25, 26, 28)

The following are certain ungodly attitudes and practices that will cripple a husband's headship:

- Overbearing domination of his wife
- Failing to honor her as a fellow heir of the grace of life and a contributor to the ministry God has called them to in the church
- Physical and sexual abuse
- Failure to share with one another what God is saying to them
- Failure to recognize the voice of God when it comes to him through his wife
- Failure to assume (abdicate) his function as father to the children and head of his wife
- Failure to spiritually protect her from demonic attacks (i.e. spirits of deception, etc.). It was Eve, not Adam, who was deceived in the garden. This is an area where the husband must live with his wife in an understanding way recognizing that she is a weaker vessel and po-

tentially more open to deception (1 Peter 3:7; 1 Corinthians 11:10). The order of creation tells us that woman was made for man just as the church was made for Christ (1 Timothy 2:11-15).

Thus, like the church, women must not presume the role of headship.

THE PRINCIPLE OF UNITY AND ONENESS

A despotic, controlling exercise of authority inevitably will give rise to contention and division. This principle is very evident in the secular world. In contrast, godly headship will bring harmony and unity when it is embraced.

- The Godhead

Scripture is clear that there is only *one* God (Deuteronomy 6:4). The presence of headship in the Godhead does *not* imply plural Gods. The Father sent the Son; the Son sent the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit glorifies and reveals the Son; the Son does only the will of the Father, but there is *only one God*. They are one in character, will and purpose, being also one Spirit.

God is (a) Spirit. (John 4:24) — the Father

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:4) — the Holy Spirit

. . . the last Adam was made a life-giving Spirit. (1 Corinthians 15:45) — the Son

The sovereignty, character and oneness of God are woven together in His headship.

- Christ and the church

The church visibly becomes the *one body of Christ* only to the extent that each believer personally walks in obedience to the lordship of Christ. Scripture defines this as “walking worthy of our calling” (Ephesians 4:1-6). What we are in the potential of our call is one thing; what we become through how we walk can be something else. For example, should leaders position themselves as head over the church, whether they realize it or not, they are laying the foundation for dividing believers into clergy and laity classes. They are to oversee the assembly so that Christ is *always* the head. Leadership must

not submit the church to a sectarian denominational authority that is not under the lordship of Christ. To do so only strengthens division in the body of Christ. The Lord is raising up ministries today with hearts to see the unity of believers become a visible reality as the church is prepared for His return. This will not take place apart from restoration of His headship.

- Marriage

Husband and wife are two individual souls, both made in the image of God, who stand before Him in a covenant of *one flesh*. In the specific service they are *jointly* called to in the assembly, each one contributes out of the unique grace and gifting given to them. Since the wife has been called to be with her husband in the Lord's work, she will generally find her personal fulfillment in service in her husband's calling, for she will complete him in that call. Failure to appreciate the need for each other, as one flesh and one ministry, is frequently the basis of disunity in Christian marriages.

THE PRINCIPLE OF NAME

It is apparent that in scripture there is a significance to names.

- The Godhead

Being sent to earth to bring redemption, Jesus came under the headship of His Father. Because He represented the Father, it was necessary that His name point to the One who sent Him. The name "Jesus" (or Joshua in Hebrew) means literally, "Jehovah is salvation." Thus, we read in the prayer of Jesus these words:

Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, the name which Thou hast given Me . . . (John 17:11)

This is the only name given under heaven by which we can be saved, for it expresses the authority of the Godhead in the church (Colossians 3:17).

- Christ and the church

Jesus Christ is Lord and head over all things to the church (Ephesians 1:22). In a future sense, He will also be "Husband" of the church with her becoming His bride (Revelation 19:7-8). Just as Jesus came forth from the Father and bore His name, so also the church has come forth out of the side of Christ, being purchased by His blood,

and she is to bear His name for identity. We who believe are *Christians* for we have received His life and are in union with Him. This name points to our Head. To adopt and emphasize a denominational name for our identity can only serve to weaken the Lord's headship since it points to an earthly authority. To some this may appear to be unimportant, but it is just such little things that mask the headship of Christ in the church.

- Marriage

In marriage the wife takes her husband's name. They are to live and serve the Lord together so that their name is always associated with integrity and righteousness in the church. Divorce among Christians is a reflection of sin and a broken headship.

THE PRINCIPLE OF COMPLETENESS

Biblical headship will never denigrate or weaken those in submission; on the contrary, it will liberate, mature and fulfill those who embrace it.

- The Godhead

All things, past, present and future, that serve to accomplish the purpose of God come forth out of His divine will. This will is expressed in scripture as the will of the Father (John 5:30; Matthew 6:10). However, only when Jesus came in the flesh to reveal the Father, to proclaim and demonstrate His will, could mankind know and understand Him. And only when the Holy Spirit came to indwell believers could they truly embrace and do the will of God. Thus, the ministries of Jesus and the Holy Spirit *fully and completely* express the Father's will and Person in salvation.

- Christ and the church

*And He (God) put all things in subjection under His feet and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the **fullness (completion) of Him** who fills all in all. (Ephesians 1:22-23)*

Jesus is not simply sitting on His throne waiting for His followers to rise up and work for Him. In fact, we have been brought into a life-union with Him who is our head, that He might work through each member to accomplish His purpose. It is the vibrant flow of divine

life and anointing of the Holy Spirit in the church that makes it truly the body of Christ. Each member is called and equipped in the Spirit to contribute a unique portion of the life of Christ, so that in the integrated total of all members there is a complete, full expression of Christ to the world. Thus, an assembly is a local expression of the body of Christ.

The headship of Christ in the church is resident in His anointing upon each individual member as they walk in obedience to His lordship in their lives. One aspect of this anointing is the governmental role of church overseers. It is vital that these men do not violate the lordship of Christ in personal lives for this is what enables members to truly be a body and not just an amorphous collection of saints.

*. . . holding fast **to the head**, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments grows with a growth which is from God. (Colossians 2:19)*

It is good and proper for each member to recognize the place he (or she) has been called into the body of Christ, and the giftings of the Holy Spirit which unites him to the head and equips him to serve. The liver can never take the place of the kidney, nor can a finger be an ear (1 Corinthians 12:14-28). Furthermore, a church can only mature in Christ as long as this union to the head (headship) remains in place for each member.

*But speaking the truth in love, we are **to grow up in all respects into Him, who is the head**, even Christ, from whom the whole body being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. (Ephesians 4:15-16)*

The completeness that Christ brings to the church is reflected in the diversity of ministers He anoints to oversee and shepherd the church. A pastor, teacher, evangelist, prophet and apostle will each bring a different dimension of the Lord's ministry and grace to His people. This serves to keep the people's eyes on the Lord more than on one minister. It takes all five of these gifts from Christ to equip the saints and bring them to maturity (Ephesians 4:11-13). As elders oversee the flock they must be conscious of their need to personally

hear the Lord's voice. This may come to them from their peers or from any member of the church, including their own wives.

- Marriage

The headship of man in marriage is evident from the following facts concerning our first parents (1 Corinthians 11:7-9).

- a. Adam was created first and named by God.
- b. He was created out of the soil over which he was to rule.
- c. Woman was made at a later time and was named by Adam.
- d. She was made out of Adam and was made for him.
- e. The woman was deceived; Adam was not.

The creation of Adam and Eve, their joint service and their relationship together, was designed by God to reflect Christ and the church. Both were made in the image of God but for different roles. Being equal in worth but not interchangeable in function. Adam could not fulfill his commission apart from the input of his wife; she completed him (1 Corinthians 11:11). Successful Christian marriages require the same mutual dependence, without which a couple will not fulfill the call of God upon them in the church. This dependency in marriage is under attack by Satan today as he seeks to pervert the roles of husband and wife, for he recognizes that the family is the nuclear unit of the church. The following verse, which defines a powerful defense against Satan, also expresses a beauty that the Lord sees in godly wives.

... let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gently and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. (1 Peter 3:4)

Conclusion

As this age draws to a close, Satan has a three point strategy to thwart the purpose and headship of God.

1. To deceive unsaved mankind and take the place of God in their lives. This deception is centered in the New Age Movement which

will eventually deceive all who do not love the truth so as to be saved (2 Thessalonians 2;9-12).

2. To destroy male headship in the marriage and strong fatherhood in the home, and through abortion, pornography, drugs and the occult to destroy the children of this generation. Weak families mean a weak church.

3. To destroy male leadership in the church. Primary qualifications of elders are largely defined by specific qualities of their family and home lives (1 Timothy 3:1-6; Titus 1:5-9). God always refers to Himself by masculine terms; He is our Father, not our Mother; He is our King, not our Queen. So long as we are in fleshly bodes God has ordained male leadership in the family and church to prevent Satan from perverting His headship.

Satan's attack on male leadership is led by demonic spirits that seek to manipulate and control men (often using women). Such spirits are back of the Pro-Choice and Feminist movements. They are also back of homosexuality, "gay rights" and other perversions of the sexes. It is interesting that in Satan's kingdom of darkness, witches are over warlocks in covens. The dominant spirit over all these demonic forces today in America is the spirit of Jezebel.¹

God's remedy for Satan's attacks is simple but profound.

1. Forsake any pretense of professing what is not true in your life; develop the reality of walking in obedience to revealed truth (3 John 3-4; Galatians 5:25).

2. Make the lordship of Christ become the center focus of your life and ministry.

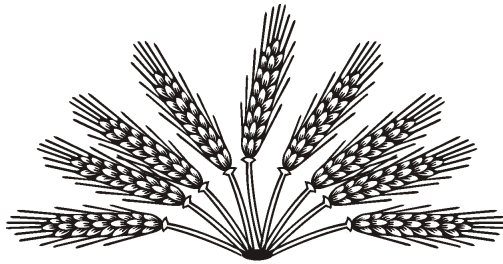
3. Be accountable to those overseeing you in the Lord, and if you are in a position of authority walk in the principles of biblical headship pointing people to the one and only head of the church. Remain within the sphere of your ministry unless and until the Lord enlarges it (2 Corinthians 10:13, 15).

4. If you seek to be an elder, remember that there are no self-made leaders. The Lord calls servants and servants become leaders. Spiritual authority can only be conferred by God; self-centered ambition

will always ruin a leader. Our ministry function must never become an idol.

5. Finally, recognize that biblical headship is a fulfilling, liberating and protective relationship that is to be sought and embraced with all of your heart.

1. Dale Rumble, THE SPIRIT OF JEZEBEL, Fountain of Life Tract.



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