

1 Corinthians 10 (Conrad Bowman) (7-1-07)

We're in 1st Corinthians chapter 11. I'm going to look at Ch. 10 a little bit, not much though. Paul has already covered that. But, there's just one foundation I want to make sure is down before we proceed with the next chapter. Because they both kind of march together. Now here's something I want to remind you of. We've already been through the pastoral epistles (1 & 2 Timothy and Titus) – Paul's preparation of leadership in the church for maintaining the Gospel from where they were at that time as a young maturing church all the way to the second coming of Christ, the Rapture of the church We labeled that study, *The Pastoral Epistles, Race to the Rapture*, because in 1st & 2 Timothy and Titus what we see is Paul preparing the leadership of the church for sustaining the Body of Christ until Christ Himself returns for His Bride at the Rapture of the Church. So those epistles were dedicated to leadership of the Church, per se. We have already been through James, 1st & 2nd Peter (the Gospel to the Transitional Jew), Romans, and Hebrews (the gospel of the New Testament Age of Grace as it was presented to the Jew before that gospel turned to an orientation to the Gentiles, which was Paul's specific calling).

Now we are in the heart of Paul's instruction to the Church on how to live as believers. That is what the content of 1st and 2nd Corinthians addresses. So I want you to see the brackets here – each one of these segments of the New Testament – and this is especially true of the Pauline epistles – has a specific purpose. And now we come to 1st and 2nd Corinthians, instructions given to us for how to deal with doubtful things; issues that are not specifically dealt with in detail in any other part of the New Testament. 1st and 2nd Thessalonians (the first of Paul's letters to the Church) kind of go along with this, as do Galatians, Colossians, Philippians, and Ephesians – what 1st and 2nd Corinthians deal with – how we are to handle things we have never encountered before, doubtful things, issues that raise questions in our lives as Christians, and that is what 1st and 2nd Corinthians are all about. So here we are, right in the middle of it. We are in Chapter 10 & 11 of the 1st letter, and a 2nd letter will follow. So keep that in mind as we go through these things. The reason why I wanted to get 10 and 11 and kind of cover them together is that In 10 you have 4 spiritual laws given for dealing with doubtful things. You have seen the 4 spiritual laws put out by Campus Crusade. They are presented in a little booklet, must have been 100 million of those things put out. They are all over the place. Well, there *are* 4 spiritual laws presented in 1st Corinthians and they start in verse 23 (Ch. 10). Make sure you have those in your notes or marked in the Notes on First Corinthians. These are the foundation for Ch. 11. Now, in verse 23, Paul says "all things are lawful unto me." Now, what

does he mean by that? Does he mean that there are no laws that govern the believer's life? Is that what he is talking about? Is he talking about antinomianism in the extreme, that there are no governing principles? No. He is not talking about that, because there are laws that govern us. In the Greek text there are many imperative statements that are made. Imperative statements are commands. They are actionable statements of things to be done or observed; they are things that you do because God commanded you to do them. You do them in obedience to God. And the New Testament is full of those actionable statements. Here, in v. 23, we are going to begin to encounter these things. All things are lawful. That is the first spiritual law of the 4 spiritual laws in the Christian life. And it is the Law of Liberty.

The Second Law follows right on the heels of that. The "handwriting of ordinances" that governed Israel was the Mosaic Law given by God directly to Moses. The first Division of that Law was the Ten Commandments – what followed that was the rest of the 613 laws that made up the body called the law (referred to as one grape). There were the 10 commandments, which were the 10 sayings of God – that is the moral law; then you have the ceremonial law, which governed the way the priests occupied the tabernacle (and later the Temple) and performed the services of the tabernacle that presented God and His righteousness. Finally, you have the social law, which governed the life of and relationships between Israelites, and between Israelites and the Gentile people that surrounded them. All of that together constituted The Law. The law. was considered by the Israelites as a single grape, not a bunch of grapes; it was a grape. When you broke The Law you crushed the grape. And The Law *defined sin*. Now, what was that replaced by? Well, the law defines sin; so, if you put that in an equation, you have

$$\text{LAW} = \text{SIN}$$

Now, on this side of Pentecost, Paul is going to say in 2 Corinthians 5:21,

He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us (purpose) in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Now you have the equation;

$$\text{LAW} = \text{SIN} = \text{CHRIST}$$

because it was Christ who on the cross was made to be sin, or who was made to be the law embodied in flesh. He died as a Man, in order to fulfill every requirement of The Law that defined sin. Now Christ Himself becomes our standard of righteousness attained in the same manner as The Law was God's standard of righteousness unmet for the Jew. When Paul says all things are lawful unto me under law as a principle, he's right, because Christ has satisfied The Law in particular and law as a principle. All Paul, or any man or woman, has to do is become equal to Christ. Now that we all can agree is an impossible task. The only way Paul could do that was for the Father to take him and join him to Christ, bind him to Christ, and that is what union with Christ and union with God is all about. So Paul says all things are lawful unto me. I can do anything under law (as a principle), but he says, all things are not expedient. And there is the second law. The first one is the lawful law. We are not subject to law because *the law has been satisfied*. We are now subject to the life of Christ as our standard. And the second law then becomes – all things are lawful but all things are not expedient (lit. "profitable" here, expedient in the King James) I'm using the New American Standard. This is the Law of Expediency.

"All things are lawful unto me (he restates that) but not all things edify." So, here we have a third law. One is the Law of Liberty, Two is the Law of Expediency – it has got to be profitable to the believer. Third, is the Law of Edification. Edification in the Greek means 'to build up.' So, whatever you are governed by in life's circumstances, whatever action you are taking, is ultimately governed by the Law of Edification. In other words, if I am going to do something in conjunction with John, there are several things that govern that. First am I free to do it. Yes I am. Second, is it *profitable to John* for me to do this thing? Third, does it *build John up*? Now you begin to see the orientation of my life and how my actions as a believer are governed by his benefit and his good. I'm living my life now on the basis of his need. And that's true of every one of us. So those three laws push us all into one corner. And it is the corner that Paul described to the Galatians when he said; "bear ye one another's burden and fulfill the law of Christ." See that perfect continuity of Paul's message to the Corinthians and to the Galatians.

The fourth of those laws is the Law of Sacrifice which says – there are some things that are absolutely lawful for me to do because I'm dead to the law as a new creation believer. But I'm not going to do them. I'm free in my liberty to deny myself that thing because it may cause my brother to stumble; again, an 'others' orientation.

Now that's chapter 10. Ch. 10 had a lot of stuff in there, but this is the heart of it; the four spiritual laws of the Christian life. They are the Law of Liberty, the Law of Expediency, the Law of Edification, and the Law of Sacrifice. There we have it and I will read it for you.

"All things are lawful unto me but all things are not expedient or profitable. All things are lawful but not all things edify or build up. Let no one seek his own good but that of his neighbor. Eat anything that is sold in the shambles – the meat market – ('shambles' in the King James) without asking questions for your own conscience's sake, for the earth is the Lord's and all it contains. Etc. Verses 23 through 33.

If an unbeliever asks you to a feast . . . " "If anyone says to you, this meat has been offered to an idol, do not eat it for the sake of the one who informed you and for his conscience sake.

That is not clear in your English text, but it is clear in the Greek text. "Do not eat it for his conscience sake. I mean not your own conscience, but the other man's, for why is my freedom or liberty judged by another's conscience. If I partake with thankfulness . . ." Here is the scenario: An unbeliever has bid you come to a feast, and you consider it carefully, and you know that food is going to be served, and if food is served, what is the first thing you are going to do? You are going to thank God for the food. That's a foregone conclusion that goes into your consideration of whether you are going to go or not. So you are going to go, and you are going to be thankful for the food. And the unbeliever says, "Oh, I forgot about that, John, you are a Christian, this meat has been offered to the idol at the temple that I attend." Then, what is John's position? You set the meat aside. Why? Because it is an issue in the mind of the one who served it to you. You are at liberty to forego your freedom to take that food because you know it doesn't mean a thing. But because it is an issue in the mind who served it, in consideration of that person's standing in relationship to God, you forego your liberty to eat. You eat the vegetables, but not the meat. You forego that privilege. You see that our liberty as believers is not our liberty to *do* things, it's our liberty to *constrain* our own selves and forego privileges that are ours in order to make the point with the unbeliever about their relationship to God and their relationship to the things that surround them. You are saying; 'I don't need these things. I can do without these things.' Now the whole of Paul's ministry and Paul's message is right here; don't be entangled or encumbered with the things of this world. If God calls you as a single person, stay single. If God calls you as a married person, stay married. Don't seek to be something you are not. If God

puts you in a place, minister in the place where He has planted you. When He wants you to minister somewhere else, He will move you somewhere else. You begin your Christian work here. Missionary work starts across the street and next door. It doesn't start in Africa if you are in Houston. It starts in Houston. It is very local. You have heard it said that "all politics is local," well, in the same sense, *all mission work is local*. It starts right here. If somebody comes to me and says I have been called to the mission field, I say great, where are you serving now? 'Well I'm getting ready to go to India.' "No, where are you serving now- Today? If God calls you to mission work, you ought to be in mission work here, right where you are. And if God wants you in India, you will get to India. It might be kicking and screaming, but you will get there. Now the same thing is true of all of us. We all envision serving God somewhere that is more comfortable, or more interesting, or more challenging than where we are. Now Paul expands on that in Ch. 11. (I want to jump into Ch. 11. I'm famous for introductions that take a whole hour, and never get to where we want to go).

Paul says,

Be imitators of me just as I also am of Christ.

And he ties that together. This is division two of First Corinthians, and it is Ch. 11 through 14. The subtitle of this is *The activities and fellowship of the Church*. So Paul – and that's where we are going, Chapters 11, 12, 13, & 14 – says,

Be imitators of me just as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the traditions just as I delivered them to you.

Paul has used this term *traditions*, in the sense of *holding to the traditions* or habits or practices of the preceding generation. And he says this often. He says to hold firmly to those traditions just as I delivered them to you. And this is very, very, important. One is, the traditions that he ties to his own conversion to Christ, and to his relationship to Christ; now he is delivering those same things to them and is admonishing them to hold to those looking forward, because strength and stability is found in them. Whenever we change a practice, we want to make sure that the change is on the basis of doctrinally sound judgment. That is why we have church leadership, because leadership should guide us in those changes.

Now, "but," (but introduces a contrast) "I want you to understand" (in contrast to making decisions without doctrinal input and leadership)

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." [Now, that is the principle – the principle is] – "Christ is the head of every man, man is the head of woman, and God is the head of Christ. Every man who has something or a covering on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head.

The word *prophesying* does not mean *foretelling* what is coming but *forth-telling* or *announcing* what God's purpose is at a particular time. Prophesying is not foretelling, but forth-telling. We today use the term *preach* for that, to preach forth. Every man who preaches forth, or is praying, with his head covered, disgraces his head. What does that mean to you? Why is that true? Why should a man not pray, or preach, with his head covered? What do you think? Charles Pirtle says that it signifies that he is praying on the basis of what he is receiving from God, so his head is uncovered.

In the fashion of the orient, it was common to wear a turban, or head covering. In that head covering a man would wear the insignia of his social or military rank or some mark of his family's standing. His head covering presented him in the office he occupied, his earthly office, the office he occupied over men. That is where his rank, his mark of an office, was worn, it was like a badge. He wore it on his head. So when he got ready to pray, he took his rank off. Now he is looking at a congregation and everyman has his head uncovered. They are all equal. It demonstrated that principle. He laid aside his office, he laid aside his rank, and he became one of the assembly, the ecclesia, the 'called out body,' and in that sense he unified himself with every man there. So he takes off his rank, and his mark of privilege, and he lays it aside. No wealth, no position, just one of the assembly, and he prays, or forth-tells God's word, from the basis of his standing as one of the assembly. So this a departure from man's natural impulses.

Every man that prays (with his head covered) disgraces his head who is Christ. But, every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head for she is one and the same with her whose head is shaved.

It says that the woman then should cover her head when she prays. Why is that? Because when the woman is preparing herself for her public appearance, her hair is her glory (naturally, is what Scripture tells us), but in her hair she would

weave strands of gold, or she would put on a tiara with gems in it. The mark of her husband or family's wealth was shown in her hair, in her head dress. So for the same reason as her husband, when she got ready to pray, she covered those locks and what they displayed to others. She couldn't take it all down, so she covered it up. It covered those marks of family wealth or family position so that all the women were equal. This is the exact same principle as with her husband. She identified with every other woman in the place.

What we are talking about here is a union of equals. When we are joined to Christ, "He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us, in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." When the Father joins us to Christ, He joins us to Christ as equals. We were made to be the same righteousness that Christ was made to be in His resurrection. And, we are joined to the Son of God, who is the Only Begotten Son, who died and rose and ascended and now sits in heaven at the Father's right hand. We are joined to Him as equals before the Father. Does that stagger you just a little bit? It does me every time I think about it. It staggers me, because I know my life, and I know His life, and there's a great gulf between the two. Right! And yet, Scripture tells me repeatedly that when the Father looks at me, He sees me standing on the ground of peace and in the righteousness of His Son; and He accepts me on that basis. That's really staggering isn't it? You go to the Old Testament and you see Aaron and his sons, in their robes, and the sacrifice would be made and they would take it into the tabernacle or later, take it into the temple for the presentation to God, and then the priests would eat of the sacrifice. Right there is a mark of difference between the priests and the Israelites gathered at the door of the Tabernacle; because the Israelite at the gate never ate any of the sacrifice. Aaron ate on their behalf. See the difference between your standing and theirs? You, my brothers and sisters, every time we practice the Lord's table, we take the body and blood of Christ in representative form, we look back on His perfect sacrifice, and we take that piece of bread and small cup of wine, and we share it together. We are doing what the Israelite was not allowed to do because it was reserved to priests. And we do it as equals because we are all believer-priests. In practice, each man with his head uncovered, as an equal with every other man. Every woman with her head covered, as equals. And we don't use head coverings here at BridgePoint. It is not necessary. The principle is equality. There is no rank in this congregation. There is no hierarchy of authorities within this congregation, by God's own design. Elders are men from within this union of equals who are recognized for their abilities and their understanding of the Word and the demonstration of an ear to God's leading on behalf of all of us. That's the elders. Deacons likewise -- same thing. It is an expression of their gift of service. They serve the Body as a

body of equals. When women serve the Body, they serve as one of a body of equals. There is no rank here. It does not elevate you to become an elder. Does not elevate you to become a deacon. That doesn't raise you up in some way; actually, it puts an extra burden on you. So now you are carrying a load that the other guys don't carry. You become a bigger work horse, so to speak. The demands on you are going to be even stronger. So, let's go on with this.

(Conrad asked if there were any questions through verse 5 (Ch. 11)). Pirtle asked a question, and made a comment that it is a widely held opinion that the position of the submissive woman was a subservient position, and that is patently untrue. What Paul is establishing here is a bond of a universal union of equals of both men and women in submission to God. The whole purpose of going back to Ch. 10 was to show that the practice of liberty is the liberty from the assertion of your rights as an individual. That's what we are freed from. The minute we begin to assert our 'rights' as a person then we have stepped outside the bounds of what Paul is clearly teaching about unity. The first thing you give up when you come to Christ is your 'rights.' You don't have any more rights. All the rights are His. You do things for the benefit of others, and that's the norm of the Christian life. And it is not just others who are inside the Body; it is also for others outside the Body. There are things you will forego doing as a believer in order to bring that unbeliever one step closer to opening their ears to the gospel. And if they see you as a rigid individual who can't bend at all, they will run from that. And that is not what Christ has put us here for. He was willing to give up his very life and take every step he took in order to redeem those who hated him the most. That is where we ought to be. That is precisely where we are expected to be. We are trained to treat our neighbors and friends kindly and to come down hard on our enemies. That is the way we are trained as individuals. That is not the way Christ would have us think or have us act or have us do.

Verses 6. If a woman does not cover her head . . . (Remember that man is not to have his head covered --- since he is the image and glory of God – image is the word *icon*, and glory *doxa* is the same word as shining), because the woman is the shining or glory of man, she shines forth on the basis of both of them.

Now, I could stop right there and it would be profitable to go back to Genesis and reestablish that whole business of God's creation of man and woman as a single spiritual entity clothed in light, shining and displaying the glory of God, the very presence of God on earth. Then in Ch. 2 He made man a body of clay and put that body asleep and took a rib out of it and separated Isha ('out of man') from Ish ('man') separated the two, and now you have two halves of what

is the whole. Man without woman is half an individual floating through life. And then when his wife comes along all at once he is completed and they are whole again. So you don't have man as a anomaly in creation. When Paul says; "if God calls you and you are single, stay single. But if God calls you and you are married, then stay married. Remain in the state wherein he calls you." Because God knows better what He is doing than you do. You see the way he does that on a regular basis. But, says Paul; "if you can't behave in an appropriate fashion toward the woman in your life, that He has brought into your life, then go ahead and marry. Because the marriage bed is undefiled." It is legitimate. It is glorious. Undefiled. So go ahead and marry. Because you were single, now you are whole again, and you can serve God. But, know this, there is going to be some trouble. Because there is distraction there. Why? Because a single individual when God calls, drops everything and follows and goes where God says. A married individual, and I don't care what the call is, when God calls, you turn to your spouse, and you say here is a call, what do you think. Ok. There is that one distraction. Because God has got to call both of you. Heaven forbid that God calls one as a missionary, and they move to some far out place at the end of the string and the other person hasn't received the call at all. Now you do have problems. Now you have got real problems. Why? Because there is one half there and the other half here, and both of the halves have to get the call.

In verse 8. The man does not originate from woman but woman from man. That's demonstrating that God is a God of order.

For indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman was created for the man's sake, therefore the woman ought to have authority over her head because of the angels. Because of the angels.

Do you have any thoughts or comments on that? The woman ought to have authority over her head because of the angels. Where in the world did that come from? Why should a woman have authority over her head? It is because we are surrounded by 'so great a crowd of witnesses.' We are here as God's great *show and tell*, before an angelic order for whom there is no redemption. Christ did not die for the angels who sinned. He died for man; to redeem mankind. He died *as a man*, was resurrected *as a man*, ascended *as a man*, and sits in heaven today *as a Man* at the right hand of the Father. So Christ's death and the plan of salvation was a plan of salvation *for mankind*. It did not include the angelic order that fell. So they have a determined interest in the affairs of man because it is through God's dealing with man that they see the mercy and justice and love of the

Father. Otherwise, all they see is His hand of judgment. They knew God face to face, sinned, and He judged them and their actions; He prepared the lake of fire for them, and destined them for it; and on the way, He created this cosmos and put man here so that they could see the full facet of His glory and His mercy and His love. "By means of the church," we are told in Ephesians, "is made known" unto the world "the manifold (multi-faceted) wisdom and character of God." That is the message of Ephesians. There again you see that wonderful consistency of Paul from letter to letter.

Therefore, the woman ought to have authority over her head because this angelic order is looking on, and they want to see *her* submission to God's authority and order, and they want to see *his* submission to God's authority and order, and they want to see *your* submission to God's authority and order. And you cannot take the place of your wife in submitting to God's authority. She has to do it *of her own will*. Why? Because she is an independent one from among equals in God's world and the church. And everyone has to be seen independently in submission to God's instructions. (That is a door cracked open to a whole new study – a year long. We will get there one day.)

However, in the Lord neither is woman independent of man, nor man independent of woman, for as the woman originates from the man, so also man has his birth through the woman

That is Genesis 3:15 – coming to pass, and all things originate from God. Remember Genesis 3:15 – where He promised Eve that the Redeemer would come of her own line, would come of one of her progeny. In time one of her children would be the Kinsman Redeemer.

Judge for yourselves, therefore, is it proper for a woman to pray to God with head uncovered? [Absolutely not] Does not even nature itself teach you that if man has long hair it is a dishonor to Him. But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her for her hair is given to her for a covering, but [contrast] if one is inclined to be contentious we have no other practice nor have the churches of God.

We see that contention trumps everything. So there you go; if you do not want to be submissive, throw the rule book away, and go ahead and do what you are going to do anyway. But, when you do, you put yourself directly under God's judgment call.

But in giving this instruction I don't praise you because you have come together not for the better but for the worst, for in the first place when you come together as a church," [or as a called out body, an *ekklesia*], I hear that the divisions exist among you and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you in order that those who are approved may have become evident among you – so it says – it is talking about their approval – there are factions among you in order that those who are approved may become evident among you; therefore when you meet together you are not meeting to eat at the Lord's table, for in your eating each one takes his own supper first, one is hungry and another is drunk.

They had turned this Lord's table celebration into a feast in which they brought their own meals. Some did not have anything to bring, and were hungry. Others brought too much and got drunk. What?

Don't you have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the assembly of God and shame those who have nothing. What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? And this I will not praise you for I receive from the Lord that which I also delivered to you.

And then comes the Lord's Table. The Lord's Table is a solemn ceremony, and it carries with it some warnings, and there are two warnings given in the rest of this chapter against taking the Lord's Table lightly. The next few verses describe the Lord's Table and all that it means. It is a ceremony of a remembrance of the Lord's death. Some churches, the Catholic Church is one, some Episcopal Churches are another, believe in the doctrine of transubstantiation – that when you take that wine, it literally becomes the blood of Christ. Or, when you take the bread, the host, it literally becomes the flesh of Christ. There is no such warrant for that in Scripture. That is found elsewhere. But that is the Doctrine of Transubstantiation. That is not our position. This is a memorial service that looks back to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ and what He obtained for us because He became Sin. He became Sin. Think on this. We often think of our becoming the righteousness of God in Him. But the strength of that passage is Christ the righteous one being made to be Sin for us. (See Notes on 2 Corinthians 5:21)