

Born to Self; Born Again to Self-Denial

(1 Cor. 11:2-34)

Bigger than wearing hats in church or overindulging at Communion!

Problem #1 Taking the freedom to enjoy equal value (see Gal.3:28) to mean freedom from Creation standards, structure, and design.

Problem #2 The selfish exploitation of the New Creation community during the most profound symbol of our unity and value to Christ—the Lord’s Table.

Our worship may not be worship unless we get these two major relational/ social issues right...

- More than ever gender clarity (real manhood/ womanhood) will be the Church’s gift to a seriously confused world. Our settled pleasure and joy in God’s creation design and the modelling of it, not only tremendously honours Christ, but offers a powerful alternative to the broken, fractious ways of the world.

- Unless we, the Church, are able to supernaturally love and care for the body of Christ from the very deepest recesses of authentic hearts, I don’t believe we have a chance at loving a lost and unlovable world into the kingdom of Christ. Our love and joy toward Christ’s New Creation is our only hope of embracing the Great Commission with any credibility or desire.

1. Let’s talk about worshiping God in “whatever you do,” like honouring the structural design of Creation...

- “not seeking my own good, but the good of many” (1 Cor. 10:33)
- “the example of Christ” (Rom. 15:3)

“Do not cause anyone to stumble...” (1 Cor. 10:32) by realizing that...

- It’s about AUTHORITY- the universe Christ created is structurally designed with “kephale”/ headship/ authority (3-6)

Ignoring customary distinctions between the sexes is disgraceful. The Church is called to model what is theologically true.

- It’s about DESIGN – the human creation brings glory to God by taking delight in the purposefulness and intentionality of Creation (7-12)

Together a man and woman bring glory and praise to God by delighting in the practice of a complementary relationship that reflects the Creation design.

A woman brings glory and praise to her husband in the church gathered by operating in whatever way that is customarily done.

- It’s about COMMON SENSE – men are to be men; women are to be women (13-16)

Nature itself testifies to proper practice and distinctions between the genders—Salvation is not intended to change Creation; it is intended to redeem those aspects of creation that are fallen.

2. Let’s talk about worshiping God “whether you eat or drink,” like honouring the cost of the New Creation...

“When you *come together*, it is not the Lord’s Supper you eat,” unless...

- You * REMEMBER- prioritize our remembrance of Christ’s immense and profound sacrifice (24-25)
- You * PROCLAIM- moved to action by the memory of what we are all about because of what Christ is all about (26)
- You are * NOURISHED – spiritually nourished by sharing in the sufficient grace of Christ as we eat and drink the symbols of communing in Him.

Bad Manners at this table can lead to sickness and even death (27-32)

Worshiping the Lord “flows in all of life” as we delight in the design of God’s Creation and take great joy in Christ’s New Creation.

(*See Piper, 1997)