

**Series** - Be Wise (15 of 22)  
**Topic** - Rediscovering Traditions (1 Corinthians 11:2-16)

**Date** - 15 Sep 2019  
**Speaker** - Ps. Ernie Song

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## WELCOME [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

[Ice Breakers 1](#)

[Ice Breakers 2](#)

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## WORSHIP [15 min]

You may select songs like “Sing To The King”, “Highest Praise”, “Pilgrimage” or “When Jesus Comes Again”.

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## WORD [45 min]

### Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the sermon discussion, cell members will:

1. Understand God’s divine design for the family unit with regards to spiritual authority; and
2. Know how to show honour to each other, men and women.

### Sermon Summary

1. As Christians, our moral authority lies in the unchanging Word of God. It must always be the yardstick by which we live our lives.
2. Paul was pointing to the God-instituted family hierarchy in 1 Cor 11:7-9. While head coverings for women may be more culturally relevant to the 1<sup>st</sup> century Corinth, God’s truth is for wives to honour their husband’s role as the head of the family and for husbands to love their wives as helpers (equal in value but with different responsibilities).

### Sermon Recap

#### **a. Introduction – The assault on traditions**

In our generation, the ethical lines are becoming increasingly blurred. More and more, we see traditional and Godly values being undermined. Pastor Ernie illustrated this with a 2-by-2 matrix (Illustration 1) and explained that many things that were clearly immoral and illegal in the past are slowly being redefined to be both moral and legal. One example is the LGBTQ agenda that is pushing for homosexual activities to be accepted as moral and to be legalised.

Illustration 1

<b>Moral &amp; legal</b>	<b>Moral, but illegal</b>
<b>Immoral, but legal</b>	<b>Immoral &amp; illegal</b>

Pastor Ernie reminded us that as Christians, our moral authority lies in the unchanging Word of God. It must always be the yardstick by which we live our lives.

With this, Pastor Ernie discussed the issue raised by the apostle Paul in 1 Cor 11:2-16: an issue of women's clothing.

**b. The significance of head coverings for women**

In this passage, Paul teaches that women must cover their head. During the time of the early church, it was customary for women to wear head coverings. Why?

1. It was considered indecent for a woman to expose her hair; her hair was to be seen only by her husband. By uncovering her head, a woman was seen to be disrespecting her husband.
2. Women who did not wear head coverings were associated with prostitution.
3. Head coverings signified gender, as only men did not wear head coverings.

Given the above cultural associations with wearing head coverings, why were the women in the Corinthian church not covering their heads? Some of the female members of this church were from well-to-do backgrounds, so they would braid and decorate their hair in fashionable styles and show it off by not wearing any head covering.

**c. Spiritual reason why women should not uncover their head**

Paul went on to give a spiritual reason why it was not right for women to uncover their head:

- a. Man is made in the image of God (v 7)
- b. Woman is the glory of man, for woman was made from man (v 8)
- c. Woman was made for man (v 9)

From the 3 verses above, Paul was pointing to the God-instituted family hierarchy.

What does it mean that woman was made for man? We turn back to Genesis for an answer. In Genesis 2:18, God says that it was not good for man to be alone, and so made him *a helper*. Woman (a wife) was created to be a helper to man (a husband). This does not mean that woman is below man in any way, but that woman

complements man, and vice versa. When both man and woman recognise and perform their roles according to God's design, man will bring glory to God, and woman will bring glory to man. (See this helpful article on the role of woman as a helper to man: [Link To Article](#))

When a woman did not wear her head covering, she was disrespecting her husband's role as the head of the family and therefore dishonouring the God-instituted family hierarchy.

**d. Application**

What are some practical actions we can apply?

1. Dress modestly. Wives, honour your husband by dressing modestly.
2. Represent your husband well. Wives, don't gossip about your husband behind his back.
3. Create a culture of honour at home. Mothers, model what it means to honour your children's father.

(For a more detailed understanding of the passage: [Link To Article](#))

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**Discussion Questions**

1. **What are some traditionally accepted values that, in our day and age, are being undermined? How are these values different from what your parents taught you when you were younger?** [15 min]

***Leader's Notes:** This is an ice-breaking and relate question. This question is meant to help members draw the connection to Pastor Ernie's introduction about what used to be clearly known as immoral or illegal, but are being gradually accepted as moral and/or legal. If members are more senior in age, the question could be posed as not what their parents taught them, but what they teach their children/grandchildren.*

*One timeless principle from 1 Cor 11:2-16 is that Christians should not try to blur all distinctions between the sexes. God created men and women as sexual beings with sexual differences. For example, we must not try by dressing or grooming to make it impossible to recognise a person's gender.*

2. **Read Genesis 2:18. Pastor Ernie pointed out that when the Bible says that the woman is a helper to the man, both are made equal in God's sight. It does not mean that the woman is of lower stature than the man. What then does it mean for a woman to be a "helper" to man? How does this understanding change the way you view the dynamic between husband and wife?** [15 min]

***Leader's Notes:** This is a reflect question. Refer to the website in the sermon synopsis for a clear explanation of what the word "helper" means in this context. Steer the discussion toward trying to get members to agree on the equality of value of men and women, with a clear understanding of what it means for the wife to be a helper to her*

husband. Galatians 3:28 speaks to this equality before God, as we (both male and female) are all one in Christ Jesus. Within the context of a marriage or a family unit, the husband and the wife are equal in value in God's sight but have different responsibilities, functions and roles. In 1 Cor 11:3, Paul is not claiming that every man is an authority over every woman.

Include singles into the discussion by asking how they can model that to younger women/girls (e.g., treating their father, brother, male friends with honour).

- 3. Pastor Ernie gave 3 application points for women. Pick one point and share how you would apply it to your family/circle of friends. For the men, how would you encourage and support your wife/female friends in this?** [15 min]

**Leader's Notes:** A response question. The key point of this question is to ask for commitment to live out the principle the apostle Paul spelt out in this passage. Be encouraging and supportive of any ideas/suggestions that members put forward.

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## WORKS [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. Every RiverLifer will honour the family hierarchy as God instituted it.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 1. Water Baptism Class

**Sat, 28 Sep | 9am-3pm | Faith Chapel**

Register for this class at the Information Counter by Sun, 22 Sep. For enquiries, please contact Karen Koh at 6511 4139 or email her at [karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg](mailto:karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg). Our next baptism service will be on Sun, 17 Nov.

**Church Vision**

"A radiant disciple-making church catalysing Kingdom transformation in our communities and the nations."

**Mission**

We exist to make disciples who behold Christ and reveal Him.