



LETTERS TO THE CHURCH [1 CORINTHIANS 11–12]

1 Corinthians 11–12 focuses on gender and culture, the Lord's Supper, identity in Christ, and the Spirit's work within the church. Paul's instructions on headship and head coverings in chapter 11 remind us that marriage relationships are rooted in mutual honor and self-sacrificial love, reflecting the relationship between Christ and the church. Head coverings, tied to cultural norms in Corinth, highlighted respect and order in worship, showing that Paul's concern was less about a dress code and more about God's people being distinct from the pagan world around them.

The Lord's Supper was a central practice of Christian worship, not simply a ritual but a proclamation of Jesus' death until His return. Paul warned against taking communion in an "unworthy manner," emphasizing self-examination not as condemnation but as a reminder to approach God's table with reverence and unity. The Lord's Supper calls believers to remember Christ's sacrifice and to participate in it with humility and gratitude.

Chapter 12 highlights spiritual gifts and their purpose: the common good. Every believer has been given at least one gift by the Spirit, not as a personal achievement but as a contribution to the flourishing of the whole body. Paul's imagery of the church as a body illustrates interdependence—each member, though unique, is essential to the health and mission of the community. Withdrawing from community weakens the body of Christ, while full participation strengthens everyone.

Finally, the sermon connected these teachings to our identity in Christ. Just as Simba in *The Lion King* needed to be reminded of who he truly was, Christians are often tempted to forget their true identity. Lies from the enemy—whether about worth, ability, or belonging—undermine both individual lives and the wider church community. Scripture counters these lies by declaring us children of God, new creations, chosen, empowered, and deeply loved. Living into this identity is crucial for both personal faith and the health of Christ's church.

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. What would Paul's teaching on headship and head coverings mean to the Corinthians? What lessons might we glean and apply to our lives today...specifically within the context of community?
2. What does it mean to examine ourselves before taking communion, and how can we practice this without slipping into shame or fear?
3. In what ways have you seen spiritual gifts used for the common good, and how might you more intentionally use your own gifts in your community?
4. The body metaphor emphasizes that every member is needed. How can we better embrace and value those in the church who are very different from us?
5. What lies about your identity are you most tempted to believe, and how does Scripture speak truth to those lies?

