

The Royal Route to Heaven

1 Corinthians Chapter 11

Paul's statement in verse one of Chapter 11 is a bold statement, "*Imitate me...*" We will see that this statement can be a conclusion to Chapter 10, and a wonderful opportunity to consider the standard Paul gives as he finishes the statement with, "*...just as I also imitate Christ.*" We will also read of the godly order of authority, an order that brings peace to the Christian home. And this chapter concludes with instruction on the proper way to observe the Lord's Supper, as we reflect on the cross and the meaning of the fellowship of Communion.

Pray that this study will challenge and encourage you to follow the godly examples of scripture and walk in a way that you are an example to others as you continue on the Royal Route.

Key Word(s)

Read through the entire chapter, looking for words or themes that are repeated. You might want to underline them in your Bible.

1. In the first verse of Chapter 11 we find the word "imitate" used twice.
 - a. Write a definition below that applies to usage of the word in this chapter.

2. In the first few verses a word we find that is used several times is "head".
 - a. How many times did you find this word?

 - b. Write a definition below that applies to the usage of the word in this chapter.

3. Make note of any other words that are repeated or that you feel are significant here and include a definition.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:1.

The first verse of Chapter 11 should really be included with Chapter 10, but we will use it to lead us into a review of some previous chapters. As we consider what it means to imitate Paul, we must realize that it is not every single detail of his life we are to imitate, but the heart of his life. Let's look back at a few verses that show us his heart.

1. Read the verses below from previous chapters in 1 Corinthians and write the instruction Paul gave that we should imitate.

a. 1 Corinthians 1:31

b. 1 Corinthians 8:13

c. 1 Corinthians 9:19

d. 1 Corinthians 10:31-33

2. What do we learn about Paul's priorities from the following verses written by Paul?

a. 1 Corinthians 2:2

b. 1 Corinthians 3:11

3. Consider the following aspects of the instruction to imitate Paul:

a. Why? See 1 Corinthians 4:15-16.

b. How? See 1 Corinthians 11:1.

4. In his other letters to the church Paul also gave instruction about following his example. What do you find in the following verses from the letter to the Philippians that you can imitate?

a. Philippians 3:12

b. Philippians 3:13

c. Philippians 3:14

d. Philippians 3: 15-16

e. Philippians 3:17

Read 1 Corinthians 11:2-16.

As we go on and scan the next 15 verses, keep in mind that Paul refers to customs and traditions. Our customs and traditions may be different, but the principle is the same.

1. From 1 Corinthians 11:3 write the order of authority given by God.

2. Now we read of the traditions of the time for showing respect to God's order of authority.
 - a. What does verse 4 tell us of the tradition for men?

 - b. What do verses 5-6 tell us of the way a woman was to show respect?

It might help to know that the prostitutes of Paul's time shaved their heads.

3. It is important to have an order of authority, but this in no way indicates that one is better or more important than the other. How does 1 Corinthians 11:11-12 clarify God's view of men and women?

4. As Paul explained the reason for the traditions of head coverings, he also explained the motive behind it – respect for God given authority. Paul addresses another motive, but for wrong behaviors, in 1 Corinthians 11:16.
 - a. What is that motive given in this verse?

 - b. Proverbs 21:9

c. Proverbs 26:21

d. Define contentious.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-26.

Next Paul looks at the manner in which the Corinthian church has been observing the Lord's Supper. He says, "... *I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse.*"

1. What problems does Paul point out in 1 Corinthians 11:18-19?

2. Explain the ways the Corinthians were disrespecting the Lord's Supper from verses 20-22.

3. Paul gives a very simple and accurate explanation of the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. These verses are often read as we observe the Lord's Supper, so let's look closer.
 - a. What did Jesus say about the bread?

 - b. What did Jesus say about the cup?

 - c. Why are we to observe the Lord's Supper?

4. Read each of the accounts of the Lord's Supper below and write any additional things Jesus said.
 - a. Matt. 26:26–29

 - b. Mark 14:22–25

c. Luke 22:14–20

Read 1 Corinthians 11:27-34.

After explaining the true way of observing the Lord’s Supper Paul gives a warning about dishonoring it.

1. In 1 Corinthians 11:27-30 Paul talks about taking the bread and the cup in “*an unworthy manner*.” Next time you come to observe the Lord’s Supper consider these verses and come with a worthy attitude and heart. Describe what a worthy heart looks like below.

2. Paul, in verse 28, says each man (or woman) ought to *examine* or *judge* themselves.

a. How would you do this?

b. What does Psalm 139:23-24 add that would help us?

In closing...

1. This chapter began with a challenging statement by Paul: Imitate me as I imitate Christ. From what you have learned of Paul in this study, what is one way you would like to imitate Paul’s Christ-like attitude or behavior?

2. This chapter has presented principals for honoring our God given authority.

a. Who is the authority God has put over you?

b. How can you honor this authority?

3. We looked closer into the manner and meaning of communion this week. How would you explain to a new believer what communion is to you?