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Gospel Order

When the Universe was created the laws of physics, chemistry, etc. were applied to all that was created. There is order in everything God has done and is doing. Mankind is the only variable in God's creation - we were given choice. Today we can see where the choices of mankind has led this world, and we can see the condition of our lives because of personal choices, and even choices made by others concerning us. As they say, "the buck stops here." It stops with us as individuals. Therefore the focus must be on the changing self, with the aid of the Spirit of the Truth. Then, and only then can God use us effectively to influence other souls to make better choices.

1 Timothy 2:11-14: *11. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. 12. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. 13. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. 14. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.* These verses must be considered with what Paul taught overall about the relationships of men and women. Order applies not only between men and women, but in other ways to all individuals, regardless of sex. What was Eve's transgression? The original carries the idea of being contrary to - Eve made a choice which was contrary to God's way. Note that the scripture says that Adam was not deceived, but it does not say that Adam did not transgress. Adam was told directly by God not to eat from the wrong tree. **Romans 5:12:** *[On account of this], as by one man the sin (nature) entered into the world, and the death by the sin (nature); and [in this way] the death passed to all mankind, for [in this manner] all have sinned:* [Greek] (supplied). Because of one man's choice we have all inherited a sin-nature. Simply put, the sin-nature is not understanding the character of God, nor trusting Him. Neither Adam nor Eve knew God. As you and I, they started out knowing about God, but not knowing God.

To better understand why Paul addresses this issue, lets go back to the Garden of Eden: **Genesis 2:16-18:** *16. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou may freely eat: 17. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eat thereof thou shalt surely die. 18. And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.* At the time God gave instruction to Adam about what should not be eaten, Eve was not yet created; and yet, the first few verses of chapter three reveal that Eve knew about the forbidden tree. So, who gave instruction to Eve? Paul stated: *I suffer not a woman to teach... the man.* In the beginning, God intended that the woman was to be taught by and learn from the man. Adam is the one who gave Eve instructions about the trees. The Lord told Adam that if he ate from the forbidden tree *you shall surely die* (Gen 2:17). The serpent said, *you shall not surely die* (Gen 3:4). The serpent modified the words of God with another interpretation.

Genesis 3:6: *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.* Paul is looking at this story allegorically. To eat the fruit of a tree spiritually, is to teach yourself something. Eve first ate the fruit, then gave to her husband and he accepted it. Paul also stated that the woman was deceived but not the man. So, Adam's transgression went against the direct instruction of God, where Eve went against the instruction of her husband - i.e she usurped authority over her husband, and he

allowed it. Can you see these same issues today? *She wears the pants in that family* - how many times have you ever heard that reference about a couple? Originally, God intended that a married couple would remain partners for their lifetime. Now, look at the effect of sin - multiple partners, multiple spouses and often children with more than one partner; and often the children not being sure who to call Dad.

When man and woman were originally created, God set up order within the family structure, but with choice. After sin entered, does God still expect His creatures to be in order? Yes, because what God did was for the benefit of mankind. This order is stated another way by Paul: **1 Corinthians 11:3**: *But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.* You could refer to this idea as gospel order, because order in a sinful world will not work unless both spouses are serving the Lord, and teaching their children to do so. Look at the reason for gospel order of men and women.

The marriage of a man and a woman is to be viewed allegorically as a type of Christ and the Church: **Ephesians 5:20-33**: *20. Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; 21. Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 22. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. 24. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loves his wife loves himself. 29. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord (loves) the church: 30. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband. How many problems would be solved today; how much abuse, violence or murders would never happen if this concept were practiced? How often have you observed children running the family?*

Is it wrong, for the world in which we live today, for a woman to teach in church, or even preach? I do not think so. But there still needs to be gospel order. Women as prophets are mentioned several times in the Bible: Mariam, sister of Moses & Aaron, Ex 15:20; Huldah, 2 Ki 22:14; Phillip the evangelist had four daughters that prophesied, Acts 21:8-9; Noadiah was a false prophetess, Neh 6:14. Here is an example from the Bible that illustrates why God used women: **Judges 4:4-9**: *4. And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time. 5. And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim: and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment. 6. And she sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedeshnaphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun? 7. And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand. 8. And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go. 9. And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou take shall not be for thine honor; for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.*

Barak was not fully convinced that God spoke through Deborah. He was not listening to the voice of God in his conscience, and so, if Deborah would go with him, then he would believe that she was convinced that God

gave the instructions. The man would not take the lead as the Lord desired when He told Deborah to call Barak, in answer to the people's prayers to end the twenty years of oppression by Jabin, king of Canaan (Jdg 4:2-3). In the end, the honor for destroying Sisera went to a woman (Jdg 4:17-21; 5:24-27).

How can we know from the Bible that Adam and Eve did not know God? Again, considering the story of Adam and Eve allegorically: **Genesis 2:8:** *And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.* The idea of man being placed in the garden in the east side of the land of Eden fits with the process of east to west in the tabernacle service. God's promise is to make us kings and priests (Ex 19:5-6; Rev 1:5-6). The tabernacle service, when understood today as an allegory, reveals man's spiritual development toward becoming a high priest. Another clue that Adam and Eve did not know, nor trust God is that after they sinned they hid themselves out of fear (Gen 3:3:8). They did not understand Him as a God of love.

One of the footnotes in my study Bible, in reference to Genesis 1:26, 27 states: *In the beginning, man loved God...* Can you love someone that you do not know? This is just another very subtle and false idea handed down from men by tradition. As far as God, we started in this world the same as Adam - knowing about God, but not knowing Him by experience, and therefore, not understanding how gospel order applies in our family relationships, in the church or in society in general, and how love plays such a key role. Can you see how important it is to understand the relationship between the Father and the Son of God? Their relationship is a perfect example of gospel order. Paul said that the head of Christ is God (1Cor 11:3), but other doctrines say they are the same. Every religious organization teaches a distorted view of the Father and Son. Occasionally, I hear someone preach on gospel order. But where is there an example to follow?

When people begin to see this concept, it brings up all kinds of questions pertaining to their situation. While a man might be able to make helpful suggestions, only God can provide answers for each situation. We all need to think about our own role and seek God to understand how to live with the personal mess we have helped create. Among men, women and children, gospel order is extremely important and only works when all participate. And the foundation of gospel order is in understanding that the Son is not co-equal (cf Jn 14:28; 20:17; 1 Cor 15:28), nor co-eternal with the Father (Jn 18:37; Mic 5:2; Pr 8:22-26). The Son being subject to the Father, and humanity being subject to the Son is the perfect picture of gospel order. **2 Timothy 2:7:** *Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.* Amen.