

Who is Your Covering?

There is a popular teaching coming from the pulpits of many apostate churches today which claims that Christians must have a "spiritual covering". This teaching as it is presented in today's church is a far cry from what Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 11.

The covering taught by most pastors today is the idea that a Christian must be a member of a church and must be spiritually submitted to a particular pastor. Many will tell you that if you are not submitted to a church hierarchy you are out of the will of God and are under the influence of Satan. All of this is evidence of the Nicolaitan error Jesus spoke of in Revelation 2:6

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. 1 Cor 11:3

Notice that Paul does not say the head of every man is his pastor, or an apostle, or any other church official. The head of every man is Christ. Period!

Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. 1 Cor 11:4-5

Paul is not talking here about wearing a hat or a prayer shawl or the length of ones hair. What he is saying is this. Every man who covers his head by submitting himself to another man dishonors his true head which is Christ. And any woman who worships without the covering of her husband dishonors her husband.

There is no higher authority in the body of Christ than the individual believer. All Christians are seen by God as kings and priests. All are called saints. All who do the will of God are counted as sons of God. Every man will be accountable by himself for his own actions or inactions vis-à-vis his relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Your pastor or apostle to whom you've submitted yourself will not be there to speak for you.

Some will point to Hebrews 13:17 as a reason we should spiritually submit to men.

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. Heb 13:17

The Greek word which is translated *them that have the rule* is the word hegeomai {hayg-eh'-om-ahee} which means to lead or to go before. Our misunderstanding of this principle stems from our conformity to the world and the way leadership is exercised in this earthly realm.

But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Mat 20:25-27

We see here that leadership in the Kingdom of God consists of servanthood. Those who God has called to the five fold ministry are placed there to be your servant not your master. You are not called to serve them. So those who have rule over us must be those who give of themselves to see that we are conformed to the image of Christ. What they will give account of is how well they performed their role as servant.

Unfortunately, just as Paul prophesied in Acts 20:29, grievous wolves have entered into the church intent on drawing away disciples unto themselves. One way they do this is to intimidate people into following them. It is amazing the amount of fear and guilt these supposed shepherds put on the unsuspecting sheep.

I've heard one pastor tell his congregation that all their prosperity is due to his faith. He talks often about people who have left his church and are now poor and sick. The people who sit under him are afraid to leave.

I listened once to [Clarence McClendon](#) tell a congregation that God put them under their pastor and that if they ever left that pastor they were in rebellion to God. People were whoopin and hollerin and cheering him on. He went on and on getting all worked up until he finally said: **"I know you have Jesus but Jesus is not enough!"**

A stunned silence filled the auditorium. McClendon got a funny look on his face as if he himself was surprised that those words had come out of his mouth. After a moment he composed himself and began to tap dance and back track trying to explain what he really meant. But I knew what he meant. Jesus said out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Luke 6:45). That was the spirit of antichrist (in place of Christ) talking out of that man's mouth. What is really sad is that not one person got up and left. After a couple of awkward minutes they were back whoopin and hollerin for this wolf in sheep's clothing.

I know that there are rebellious people in the body of Christ who refuse to submit to any authority. This is not what I am counseling. I have no problem submitting to Godly authority when I see it. I must say that Godly authority is a rare thing in the church today but it does exist.

The people to whom you should submit are those who have gone before you. Those who know more than you do. No single individual, be it pastor, teacher, apostle prophet, or evangelist has all the answers for every situation you will face in life. We are all only parts of the body. No single person is the complete body except Christ. That is why you should submit to Him. If Christ leads you to an individual for a time of instruction then sit and learn from that person. But understand that it is the gift in them to which Christ has led you, not the person.

So, the lesson here is this. Submit yourself to Christ. He is your head. Allow him to be your teacher. If he sends you to a person for a season fine, learn from that servant. But you should never allow that person to exercise rulership over you in the earthly sense. If you are born again and filled with the Holy Ghost, you are perfectly capable of hearing from God yourself. You are perfectly capable of understanding the bible yourself. You are perfectly capable of obeying God yourself.