

Turning the World Right-side Up

by David A. Huston

This article is presented to challenge Christian men to assume their role as the leaders of their homes.

WHEN THE APOSTLES CAME to Thessalonica, they were declared to be the men who had “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6). But this was the perspective of those who were opposing the gospel of Christ. From God’s perspective, the apostles were not turning the world upside down; they were turning it right-side up. And this is the mission of every apostolic man today.

From the beginning of time there has been a divinely established order, which Paul described when he wrote, “But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God” (1 Corinthians 11:3). In this order, God is the head of Christ (meaning that the Spirit is the head of God’s manifestation in flesh); Christ is the head of man; and man is the head of woman.

This divine order was not established arbitrarily but was based on the principle of origination. It begins with God because He alone is without origination. He has always been. If we could go back before the beginning, we would find that there was nothing but God. Christ, however, has not always been. He originated in God and, according to Revelation 3:14, is “the Beginning of the creation of God.” This does not mean that Christ existed with God as a separate divine being. It only means that before God did anything else, He determined that He would one day come in the flesh.

In describing Jesus Christ, Paul wrote, “And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist” (Colossians 1:17). This tells us that everything that God created was based on His initial plan to become a Man. As Peter wrote, “He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you” (1 Peter 1:20). Since the Man, Christ Jesus, originated in the mind of the eternal God before creation began, God is the head of Christ.

Based on His predetermined plan to one day come in the flesh, God made mankind. The Bible says that the first man was made in God’s “own image” (Genesis 1:27). In other words, he was made according to the pattern God had

already determined for His own humanity. As Paul explained, Adam was a figure of “Him who was to come” (Romans 5:14). Since Adam’s origin was based on the Christ who was to come, Christ is the head of Adam and therefore the head of all men, since all came from Adam.

Finally we read, “Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman” (Genesis 2:22). Since the first woman originated in man, man is the head of woman. This means that in every family, the divinely ordained order is God, Christ, the husband, and then the wife. Some have said that man was not made the head of women until after they had sinned and that in the church, men and women are entirely equal. But Paul confirmed that the order of headship is based on the origin of the first woman when he explained, “For man is not from woman, but woman from man” (1 Corinthians 11:8). This means that the headship of man preceded the introduction of sin.

The divine principle is that the originator always has authority over whatever it originates. This is true in many aspects of life. For example, an author has authority over his book, an architect has authority over his building, a painter has authority over his painting, and parents have authority over their children. In the same way, God has authority over Christ, Christ has authority over man, and man has authority over woman.

The world we live in is currently operating under a different principle. In many households, the divine order has been turned on its head with the wife being the head of her husband. Isaiah prophesied that this would be the case even in the church when he said, “As for My people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them” (Isaiah 3:12). Whenever the divine order is reversed, Jesus is effectively toppled from His role as the head of the man. A man cannot be under the headship of Jesus and his wife at the same time.

It seems today that nearly every family coming into the church must be reordered. This is because many men today are passive in their home life and are perfectly content to let their wives be in charge. But this has never been God’s plan. In His order of things, men have been selected to be the leaders. This does not mean women do not have any say or should be treated like second-class citizens. It only means that men are to lead the way, carry the load, and make the final decisions.

Some men think that being the head gives them the authority to order their wives around. They see headship as a position of power rather than a ministry of leadership. But we should keep in mind that even though it was Eve who first disobeyed God, the Bible says, “Through one man sin entered the world” (Romans 5:12). This means that even though the woman sinned first, God considered her husband to be the responsible party.

It was after Adam and Eve sinned that God told the woman that her husband would “rule over” her (Genesis 3:16). But the Hebrew word He used for “rule over” implies connectedness and ministry, not domination. In fact, within its meaning is the idea of two things being parallel to each other. This kind of leadership suggests two people walking together, side-by-side, one leading the way for the benefit and blessing of the other. It suggests the yoking together of the leader with the led.

The same Hebrew word is applied to Jesus Christ in the prophecy of Micah 5:2, which speaks of Him as the “one to be Ruler in Israel.” Jesus confirmed that this was His style of leadership when He said, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:29).

Headship is simply another word for leadership, but it is a special kind of leadership. It is leadership based on relationship that exists for the benefit of the one being led, not the one leading. Christ is the head of man for man’s benefit, not His own. And in the same way, Adam was to be the head of His wife for her protection and care, not just so he could tell her what to do. As the weaker vessel, she needed someone stronger than herself helping her to navigate through life without being snared by the devil.

Every Holy Ghost filled man has been given the Spirit of the greatest Leader who ever lived. This means that every apostolic man is called to some form of leadership, whether as the leader of his family or some area of leadership within the local assembly. We should note that family leadership pre-existed church leadership by many centuries. According to Paul, no man is qualified to lead in the church until he first demonstrates the quality of his leadership at home: “If a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?” (1 Timothy 3:5).

The key to being a strong leader, whether in the home or the church, is following the leadership of the Holy Spirit. But this is not a passive endeavor. It requires seeking God in prayer, studying God’s Word, and taking the initiative in spiritual activities, such as worship, fellowship, ministry, and evangelism.

The Bible says that Eve gave the fruit to her husband and he ate. This was the first and greatest leadership failure in human history. Adam’s passive compliance has affected everyone of us. The very moment he ate, the divine order was turned on its head. By yielding to his wife, Adam placed Satan at the top and crowned him the “ruler of this world” (John 12:31). Now the order was Satan, then woman, then man, with God at the bottom. And that is the current state of things.

This is why every apostolic man must cast off the spirit of this world and stand firm for the ways of the Lord. Our charge in these last days is to turn our world right-side up, restoring every Christian home to the proper divine order and putting Satan under our feet where he belongs. Apostolic men must take the lead in this great task, because from the beginning God has chosen men to be the leaders of His people.

Note to the reader:

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