

Week 19 LEADER Discussion Questions

DEAR LEADERS—This week's passage is famous for being hard to understand, so the questions are meant to help us focus on what is most clear. It's highly possible for people to ask questions you find difficult to answer. It's perfectly acceptable to provide the answer, "I'm not sure."

Text: 1 Cor 11:2-16

Icebreaker: What's your favorite type of hat? Do you have a specific hat you can't live without?

1. Read this week's passage. What stands out to you from the text or from the sermon you heard Sunday?

This question might be more dangerous this week if someone wants to focus more on the things that are unclear in the passage. You should feel encouraged to redirect the conversation to those things that are more certain.

2. Paul's instructions relate to the regular worship gathering in Corinth but include specific cultural details that sound odd to us now. What do you think is most clear from the passage?

Here are a few considerations: (1) There are differences between men and women that are meant to be reflected in how we worship. (2) Both men and women are presented as participants in public prayer and prophecy (prophecy is similar to how we think of teaching and preaching. (3) While men and women are distinct, they are interdependent. There is an equality between them even though they are distinct from each other.

3. What do you notice about the instructions Paul gives to men and women regarding head coverings in a worship setting?

Men and women are given instructions that are opposite from each other even though they are engaging in the same activities. Paul basis this off of what he says in the rest of the passage; however, it is almost certain that there are cultural circumstances at play with head coverings that are unique to Paul's day and the city of Corinth.

Application: There's a lot we may not understand here, but one clear insight is that distinctions between men and women ought to be reflected in worship rather than diminished. Do you see the church today valuing and maintaining the unique differences of men and women? Explain.

4. Application: Verses 7-9 and 11-12 speak of the differences between men and woman but also of their interdependence. Why is it important to emphasize the dependence of men and women on each other as we also talk about their differences?

It's possible for us to focus so much on the difference of the instructions that Paul gives men and women that we lose sight of what men and women have in common. They are both dependent on each other as woman "came from man" in Genesis 2, but men "come from women." Conversations about differences can easily imply that one is better than the other, so it's essential to keep in mind that men and women each have value and glory.

5. Application: Most scholars believe the core issue in these verses has to do with physical attire that distracted from God's glory during worship. What can distract us from giving our undivided attention to God's glory in our own worship settings today?