

A COMMENTARY ON THE APOSTLE PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

According to the Homilies of St. John Chrysostom and other Fathers of the Church

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Chapter Eleven

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

Relationships in Heaven & on Earth

BACKGROUND to verses 1-16: During his visit to the Corinthian Christians, Paul instructed them as to proper dress in church. Both men and women used to prophesy at that time (Joel 2:28, Acts 2:17, 21:9). Women were to pray and prophesy with their heads covered, men uncovered. It came to Paul's attention that some had reversed these traditions.

11:1. Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ. Paul counsels the Corinthians to do as he does, because he, in turn, follows Christ's example (1 Cor 4:16).

11:2. Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you. It was Paul's custom to offer praise wherever circumstances allowed in order to keep their morale up, a good point for all who are trying to teach God's word to remember. As flowers need sunshine to flourish, man thrives on praise honestly but generously bestowed.

11:3. 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. God's divine plan for man includes a sort of organizational order of authority: a hierarchal interdependence of woman upon man, man upon Christ, and Christ upon God.

GOD: Creator and Ruler of all. Only He is ruled by no-one.

CHRIST: Obedient to the Father, "as the Son of God...as God...not as a slave under command, but as free, yielding obedience and giving counsel. For the counselor is no slave. ... Do not understand it (counselor) as though the Father were in need, but that the Son has the same honor with Him that begat Him."

MAN: Under subjection to Christ and the "head of woman" in the same sense that God is the head of Christ, with equal but different roles.

WOMAN: Under subjection to man, but "as free and equal in honor," not as a slave to her master.

11:4. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. In the times in which Paul lived, wearing a head covering was a sign of subjection to another human being (see Gen 24:65). Since the head of man is Christ, for a male to wear a head-covering in church would take honor away from his Master, Christ, the only one to whom he owes total submission.

11:5-6. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. Since woman is under subjection to man under God's hierarchy, it was the custom in Paul's time for her head to be covered in public, the sign of human authority over her. The respectable woman covered her head at all times, not just during prayer—only women of ill repute appeared outside of their homes bareheaded. Thus a woman who appeared in church without her head covered would bring shame to her head (if married, her husband; if unmarried, her father or other male) for the implication was that she did not accept her position in God's hierarchy—or that she was immoral. Also, then as now, there were those who had fallen into sexual perversions of homosexuality or trans-sexuality and who dressed in such a way

as to obliterate the God-given distinctions of male and female, and some false teachings asserted that there were no gender distinctions for Christians.

What has been annihilated and destroyed *in Christ* is not the natural distinction between women and men, but all division between them, with the enmity and hostility which comes from domination, subservience and tyranny which derives not from God but from the devil and sin.²

Among the Jews at that time, prostitutes were punished by having their heads shaved, thus Paul's reference that it was just as shameful for a woman's head to be uncovered as it was to have a shaved head.

Having been told of their new freedom in Christ (Gal 3:28), referring to freedom from the divisions between male and female outlined above and from bondage to the Mosaic Law (see this study of 1 Cor 5:2), some women misinterpreted this and began to appear in church with their heads uncovered, thus scandalizing the congregation. Paul's message is that they should not defy that which is considered proper feminine decorum.

11:7-9. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.

a. Christ is the head of man and man the head of woman, but only to the extent that man subjects himself to Christ. Male and female have different, yet fundamentally equal roles given to them by God, so that all facets of His work may be accomplished.

It is one of the chief glories of human nature that men and women, although equal, are not interchangeable. Together they exercise a common ministry that neither could exercise alone; for within that shared ministry each has a particular role...with man as the head and woman as the partner or *helper* (Gen 2:18).³

In marriage, as Christ is Head, Savior, Lover and Defender of the Church, so also ought the man to be of his wife (see Eph 5:22-33). A man who loves his wife as Christ loves the Church does not try to dominate or enslave her. He cherishes her, and she responds in kind. They work together to create a strong family unit—a haven from the chaos of the world. If a man revolts against Christ, he loses his privilege of ruling his own wife...The extent to which the husband disobeys Christ is equal to that in which a wife is justified in disobeying her husband...Every woman treated unjustly by her husband seeks from Christ the restoration of her rights; for Christ allows no man to abuse his wife. ⁴

...the partner of one's life, the mother of one's children, the foundation of one's every joy, one ought never to chain down by fear and menaces, but with love and good temper. For what sort of union is that, where the wife trembles at her husband? And what sort of pleasure will the husband himself enjoy, if he dwells with his wife as with a slave, and not as with a free-woman? Though you should suffer anything on her account, do not upbraid her; for neither did Christ do this.

CHRYSOSTOM⁵

. Man is the glory of God and woman the glory of man. That is, God made man, his ultimate creation, and took pride in him, and then made woman from man, so man could be comforted by, helped by, and take pride in her. Each completes the other. Together they are more than either can be alone. Man and woman brought together by God in Holy Matrimony form a triad, reflecting the Trinity in Heaven. Thus, Christ is (or should be) the head of every Christian home. If family members understand

this, they will look to Christ and His teachings for guidance in all things, and there will be harmony, not resentment of roles. The relationships of a husband and wife to each other do not (and should not be allowed to) interfere with the personal, individual relationships of man and woman separately to Christ. (See Gal 3:28, which speaks of all, male and female, being *one in Christ*, and 1 Peter 3:7, which speaks of husband and wife *being heirs together of the grace of life*.)

c. Woman is from man, not man from woman. However, woman was made from man's *side* (Gen 2:21/Greek), which includes flesh, tissue and blood as well as bone, so they are of the same substance, equal but different human beings.

For they were joined to each other from the sides, they who walk side by side, they who together look where it is they walk.
AUGUSTINE⁶

d. Woman was made for man, not man for woman (Gen 2:18), but all men are born through woman, including Christ, sanctifying womanhood (1 Tim 2:15).

e. *Chrysostom* adds that an additional reason for woman 's position in this hierarchy is that she yielded to the temptation of the serpent in the Garden of Eden (1 Tim 2:14).

You see, she was not subjected as soon as she was made; nor, when He brought her to the man, did she hear any such thing from God; nor did the man say any such word to her. He said indeed that she was *bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh* (Gen 2:23), but of rule or subjection he nowhere made mention to her. But when she made an ill use of her privilege and she who had been made a helper was found to be an ensnarer and ruined all, then she is justly told for the future, *your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you* (Gen 3:16).⁷

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: (a). How can Biblical teachings be used to promote healthy relationships in a marriage?

This hierarchal order is necessary because "equality of honor causes contention."⁸ In order to insure peaceful relationships, an order of authority must be in force, as it is in any organization. There are even hierarchies of equal but different roles in Heaven, as reflected in the Holy Trinity and among the spirits.

...these holy spirits of our heavenly fatherland are indeed always spirits but cannot always be called angels; for then only are they angels when by means of them certain things are announced. Accordingly, through the Psalmist it is said: *Who makes His spirits angels* (Ps 104:4), as though saying: Who when He wills makes angels (messengers) of those spirits who stand forever in His Presence.
GREGORY THE GREAT⁹

There are nine orders (Dionysius the Areopagite called them choirs) of spirits (celestial beings) who, like us, were created by God. They are divided into three hierarchies.

Seraphim, Cherubim & Thrones: These are "councilors." They have no direct dealings with man but are absorbed in unending love and adoration of God. No other creature is so intensely capable of loving God,¹⁰ ...except perhaps she who is *queen* (Ps 45:9), the Theotokos, who, in her role as Mother of God, is called more honorable than the Cherubim, and incomparably more glorious than the Seraphim.¹¹

Dominions, Virtues & Powers: These are understood to be the governors of space and the stars. Our

orb, consequently, as part of the galaxy, is under their dominion; otherwise, we have no direct contact with the second choir.¹²

Principalities, Archangels & Angels: These have this earth of ours in their special charge. They are the executors of God's will, the perpetual guardians of the children of men, and the messengers of God. They who announce things of lesser significance are called angels; they who make announcements of greater significance are called archangels.

11:10. For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Chrysostom explains that during the Divine Liturgy, the whole sanctuary and the space before the altar are filled with the heavenly Powers come to honor Him who is present upon the altar.¹³ Paul writes here that because of the presence of these angels, women were to cover their heads in church, in acknowledgment of and submission to God 's order of things.

For although you despise your husband [or any particular male, who may in fact, be disobedient to Christ], yet reverence the angels. CHRYSOSTOM¹⁴

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: (b). Jesus said, *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them* (Mt 18:20). If then, when we gather to celebrate the Divine Liturgy, Jesus is among us in that sense and also through the Eucharist, if the Holy Spirit is among us in response to our prayers inviting Him to bless us and to change our gifts of bread and wine into the very Body and very Blood of Christ, and if angels are among us to honor Christ, how can there be inattentiveness and lack of participation in the Liturgy?

11:11-12. Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. For as the woman was from the man, even so the man is also through the woman; but all things are from God. The hierarchal order notwithstanding, male and female are both from God and are dependent upon each other, for woman was made from man (Gen 2:22), and man is born through woman. Male and female each have their distinctive, irreplaceable, and important roles in the order of creation. Jesus Christ entered the world as a male, exalting the male role and rendering the eternal Priesthood of Christ a male prerogative; but He was born through Woman, redeeming and exalting the female role and rendering the woman of whom He was born the most highly honored of all creatures.¹⁵ Only woman has the awesome privilege of being the bearer of children, with the ability to nourish them from her body (a fact not lost on pagans, who often worshiped the female).

A woman does disservice to herself if she covets the male role rather than taking pride and joy in her own God-given role and trying to be the best woman she can be; and a man distorts the beauty of God 's creation if he fails to give the female role the respect it deserves. A true understanding of the different but equal roles God has given to man and woman includes honor, glory and respect for each, as well as great opportunities for service.

But if any say, How can this be a shame to the woman, if she ascends to the glory of the man? we might make this answer: She does not ascend, but rather falls from her own proper honor. CHRYSOSTOM¹⁶

11:13-16. Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to

him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God. That a woman's hair is her glory was especially true in Paul's day, when women were traditionally completely covered in public. To allow herself to be seen with her hair uncovered in church would bring attention to her and be a distraction to the worship of God.

The length of a man's hair has carried various connotations throughout history. In Old Testament times, keeping one's hair long was a sign of holiness (Num 6:5). In the fourth and fifth centuries, shearing or even shaving of the head was practiced by monastics of both sexes as an outward sign of forsaking worldly appearance and love of the body.¹⁷ In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, man's hair and beard at full natural length became the sign of monasticism and asceticism in the East in the place of the original practice of shearing. At the time Paul wrote this Epistle, however, for a man to let his hair and beard grow to full length was a symbol of his devotion to a worldly study such as philosophy, poetry, etc. It was also the pagan custom at the time for men to cover their heads when praying, and long hair on a male was considered the same as covering his head. Among early Christians, therefore, perhaps in an attempt to counteract pagan symbolism, women were to have their heads covered in church and men's heads were to be uncovered.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: (c). Does woman's position in God's hierarchy mean that women of our time should cover their heads in church?

BACKGROUND to verses 17-34: It was the practice of the early Christians to gather together for the Sacrament of Eucharist as part of a common meal (Jude 12, Acts 2:46), in imitation of the Mystical Supper of our Lord (Mt 26:26-29). The forerunner of this meal that Jesus ate with His Apostles was not the Passover meal¹⁸ but most likely the Jewish religious supper called the Chaburah, which included the ceremonies of bread breaking and of the cup of the blessing. During the meal, the host broke a loaf of bread in pieces while pronouncing a blessing and gave a fragment to each person at the table, as a sign of unity among them. At the end of the meal, the host similarly pronounced a blessing over a special cup of wine, and after sipping a little from it, passed it around to each of those present. Again, the common cup symbolized unity among the group.

At the Mystical Supper, Jesus repeated this ritual but with an added dimension. That which, "among the Jews had been a mere sign of unity and fellowship, was transformed into real union and oneness by sharing in the one Body and Blood of Christ."¹⁹

The common meal was a way for wealthier Christians to share what they had with the poor, who had little or nothing to bring. It became known as the Feast of Love (Agape), which took place every evening. Because of abuses, some of which Paul mentions here, this meal was gradually separated from the Eucharist, which came to be celebrated in the morning, with the Agape meal in the evening.

11:17. Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. Paul admonishes the Corinthian Christians because their coming together for the common meal and the Eucharist was not producing the love and fellowship that was its intent.

11:18-19. For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. It was impossible for the Christians of Corinth to partake of the Lord's Supper with the proper feeling and meaning because there were many disagreements among

them. However, God allowed discord in the Church because the various matters of contention that arose served to reveal the true nature of each of them (another test) and to separate heresy from truth.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: (d). How did disagreements among the early Christians help to separate heresy from truth?

11:20-22. *Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.* In general, they were not being considerate of each other. They were not waiting for latecomers (possibly servants, who had to discharge their various duties before being free to attend), some were just plain gluttonous, and those who had plenty were not sharing with those who had little to offer, thereby bringing shame to the Church and neglecting as well as insulting the poor.

11:23-25. *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."* To induce them to repent, Paul recounts the events of the Mystical Supper, when Christ instituted the Sacrament of Eucharist, the means by which Christians receive His Body and His Blood and continually become one with Him.

11:26. *For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.* Eucharist is also a reminder of His sacrifice for us. The implication is that it is unthinkable that anyone would dare to receive this awesome Mystery, which anticipates the Second Coming of Christ, while being part of dishonoring his brother and neglecting the poor.

11:27. *Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.* He who receives the Body and Blood of Christ without trying to become Christ-like in his actions not only receives no profit from the Sacrament but is considered just as guilty of the Crucifixion of Christ as those who participated in it:

Those who distribute or receive the Eucharist unworthily wound His Body every day.
TERTULLIAN²⁰

...that is, they shall have the same guilt, and the same punishment, as those who crucified Christ. For as those butchers became guilty of His Blood, so likewise are they who partake unworthily of the Eucharist.
CHRYSOSTOM²¹

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: (e). If there are those who distribute the Eucharist or administer any other Sacrament or blessing from the Church while being themselves unworthy, what is the result to those to whom they distribute these gifts? Does the validity of the gifts depend upon the worthiness of the celebrant?

11:28. *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.* A Christian must always evaluate his actions and motives to be sure he is really trying to do all things in the manner Christ would. This type of introspection is at the root of the Sacrament of Confession, which is

available in the Church to remove any barriers of sin between man and God, enabling him to go forward with confidence to receive Holy Communion.

11:29. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. He who receives Holy Communion without making a sincere effort to live in a Christ-like manner does not realize the danger in which he puts himself.

But why does he eat judgment to himself? Not discerning the Lord's Body : i.e., not searching, not bearing in mind, as he ought, the greatness of the things set before him; not estimating the weight of the gift. For if you should come to know accurately Who it is that lies before you, and Who He is that gives Himself, and to whom, you will need no other argument, but this is enough for you to use all vigilance, unless you are altogether fallen.

CHRYSOSTOM²²

11:30. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. During the Divine Liturgy, the priest invites all to receive the Body and Blood of Christ with the words: "With fear of God, with faith and with love, draw near." Prayers at that moment exclaim:

Behold, I approach for Holy Communion, O Creator, burn me not as I partake, For you are Fire which burns the unworthy...do cleanse me from every stain.²³

This reminds us dramatically that those who receive the Body and Blood of Christ hypocritically exclude themselves from the Kingdom of God and, therefore, from His promises.

Has this Table which is the cause of so many blessings and teeming with life, become judgment? Not from its own nature...but from the will of him that approaches. For as Christ's presence, which conveyed to us those great and unutterable blessings, condemned the more those who did not receive Him: so also the Mysteries become provisions of greater punishment to such as partake unworthily.

CHRYSOSTOM²⁴

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: (f). What is the meaning of Chrysostom's words above?

On the other hand, Holy Communion is the greatest of all blessings for those who understand its power and wonder:

Holy Communion, being divine food and medicine, affords our souls nourishment, growth, strength, health, and even more importantly, eternal life. It is also a safeguard and cure for the ills of our bodies, because the abundance of grace with which Holy Communion enriches the soul is also communicated by it to the body, which is so intimately united with the soul. The grace that the soul receives exercises wholesome influence on the body, whose sensual nature is consequently weakened.²⁵

11:31-32. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. God sometimes allows difficulties to befall us to teach us something, to awaken us from our indifference to Him, to test our faith, or to show us the error of our ways while we still have time to repent, which includes change (see this study for 1 Cor 10:1-13). If we would assess ourselves and honestly strive to grow in those areas in which we fall short of Christ's example, we would not have to suffer the consequences.

11:33-34. Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. But if

anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come. Paul encourages them to show consideration to one another, and to remember the purpose and value of fellowship with one another—the reason for the Agape Feast. It always boils down to love: the ultimate goal.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT COMMENTS

(a). How can biblical teachings be used to promote healthy relationships in a marriage? It is easy for husband and wife to begin to take each other for granted and to neglect to extend to one another the niceties that are often offered rather easily to strangers or casual acquaintances. Paul wrote that *marriage is honorable* (Heb 13:4). Husband and wife should remember to honor each other and each other's role in their partnership. Each should do those little things that encourage love to grow, be patient and forgiving with the other (Col 3:13), not let anger carry over to a new day (Eph 4:26), and continually work at their relationship, as they would work at anything that is very important (1 Cor 13:4-7).

(b). Jesus said, *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them* (Mt 18:20). If then, when we gather to celebrate the Divine Liturgy, Jesus is among us in that sense and also through the Eucharist, if the Holy Spirit is among us in response to our prayers inviting Him to bless us and to change our gifts of bread and wine into the very Body and very Blood of Christ, and if angels are among us to honor Christ, how can there be inattentiveness and lack of participation in the Liturgy? The answer can only be lack of awareness. Many people do not know what the Divine Liturgy is all about, and the ways in which worshippers are invited to participate. Fr. Stanley Harakas' classic book, *Living the Liturgy*, uncovers the secrets of that service. It is a wonderful tool for learning to make the Liturgy the "work of the people" that it is meant to be. The ride to and from church (with a captive audience) is a good time for parents (grandparents, etc.) to teach children about the spiritual world and matters of faith. Often the best teaching takes place not from the pulpit or in the classroom but as the everyday events of life provide opportunities. Every Christian should continually grow in knowledge of the faith for his/her own spiritual well-being and to be ready and able to pass it on.

(c). Does woman's position in God's hierarchy mean that women of our time should cover their heads in church? Women (as well as men) should not defy current thinking as to what is considered proper dress in church, for to do so would call attention to themselves and be a distraction to others in their worship of God. Neither should men or women dress in such a way as to obliterate the God-given distinctions of male and female. There is no gender-identity crisis in the Church. Men and women are distinct, with equal but different roles.

One school of thought says that women should still wear head coverings in church—and some do, as an act of reverence and obedience. Another says that they need not, else we would also have to revert to the other modes of dress of Paul's time (as well as to the social norms of the day, such as the custom of shaving the head of a woman considered immoral). It might also be considered that wearing a head covering when most do not could have the undesirable effect of bringing attention to the wearer.

The important point is that Christians, men as well as women, should always dress respectably, especially in church. The outward appearance of a person reflects his inner attitude. Hence an outward appearance of respect in church reflects an inner awareness of the presence of God in His house and consideration of all that is taking place there. No-one should come to the house of God to

worship and to receive the Body and Blood of Christ dressed in poor taste, or ostentatiously, in clothes and jewels that would call attention to him/herself, possibly causing feelings of pride in oneself and envy in those looking on. Neither, however should a person have less concern for what is worn to church than would be the case if s/he were meeting with someone considered by the world to be very important. When we gather together in church, the heavenly hierarchy is among us.

(d). How did disagreements among the early Christians help to separate heresy from truth? Disagreements among the early Christians prompted the Apostles and those who had learned from them and traveled with them to clarify, in writing, points of disagreement. Thus the truth, as Christ delivered it to His Apostles and disciples, was sorted out and preserved.

(e). If there are those who distribute the Eucharist or administer any other Sacrament or blessing from the Church while being themselves unworthy, what is the result to those to whom they distribute these gifts? Does the validity of the gifts depend upon the worthiness of the celebrant? As is the case with everyone who calls himself a Christian, an ordained priest of the Church must strive throughout his life to grow in holiness, as a reflection of his faith and to provide a good example. The question of whether a priest really had faith in Christ and became a priest for the right reasons, and whether he did his best to fulfill his calling are matters that Christ will judge. However, if it were to happen that one who is blatantly sinful continues to function as a priest, he would do so and distribute the Body and Blood of Christ and other blessings of the Church without loss of benefit to the recipient. God's grace is transmitted through the ordained priest and is valid regardless of the sanctity of the instrument through whom it is given.

I am saying this to you, not as excusing those who may exercise the priesthood unworthily: for such as these I weep and sorrow exceedingly. Nevertheless, I declare that it is not fitting that they be judged by those they rule; especially by the ruder kind. Though their conduct may be greatly criticized, you, if you pay heed to yourself, will suffer no harm from them in regard to the things entrusted to them by God. For if He made use of the voice of an ass to speak [Num 22:22-34], and bestowed spiritual blessings by means of a soothsayer; because of the Jews, working by the mouth of a dumb beast, and by the unclean tongue of Balaam, how much more for you who are worthy, even though the priests be wholly unworthy, will He do all things, and send His Holy Spirit upon you?

And neither does a mind that is pure draw down grace because of its purity; it is the divine favor that does all: For all things, it says, are yours, whether it be Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas (1 Cor 3:22). For what the priest has had entrusted to him, it is God alone who bestows; and however much human wisdom may help us, it will ever appear less than grace...

But why do I say priests? For neither an angel nor an archangel can do anything in regard to what is given us by God. It is the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost Who disposes of all things: the priest but lends his tongue and puts forth his hand. For it would not be just that because of the wickedness of another they should suffer injury who draw near in faith to the symbols of our salvation.

CHRYSOSTOM²⁶

"The valid officiation of the sacraments does not depend upon the moral character of the officiator, for if the validity of the mysteria depended upon the officiator's personal character, justification and sanctification would be doubtful and uncertain. Scripture does not touch directly on this question, but the influence on the sacraments of the personal faith and piety of the officiator has always been rejected. ...The officiator of the sacraments of the Church, as the indispensable organ, has been ordained by God Himself for the sanctification of the members of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ.

...(he) utters the pronouncement of the sacraments in the passive voice or in the third person, saying, 'The servant of God is..., not 'I,' etc."²⁷

(f). What is the meaning conveyed by Chrysostom 's words, the "Table which is the cause of so many blessings and teeming with life become(s) judgment"? Just as Jesus' presence in the world brought blessings to those who received Him as the prophesied Messiah and condemned those who rejected Him, the Body and Blood of Christ, which is continually offered through the Church, brings blessings to those who partake worthily and condemnation to those who partake unworthily, as well as to those who reject the opportunity.

¹ Schaff, Homily XXVI, Vol. XII, p.150.

² Orthodox Church in America, Dept. of Religious Education, *Women and Men in the Church*, p.44.

³ Ware, "Man, Woman and the Priesthood of Christ," *Women and the Priesthood*, ed. Thomas Hopko, p.29.

⁴ Apostolos Makrakis, *the Interpretation of the Entire New Testament*, Vol. Two, p.1468.

⁵ Schaff, "Homilies on Ephesians," Vol. XIII, p.144.

⁶ Elizabeth P. Clark, "On the Good of Marriage," *Women in the Early Church*, p.28.

⁷ Schaff, Homily XXVI, Vol. XII, p.150.

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ Toal, Vol. Three, p.205.

¹⁰ Mother Alexandra, *The Holy Angels*, p.5.

¹¹ Nicholas Elias, "Magnificat to the Mother of God," *The Divine Liturgy Explained*, p.171.

¹² Alexandra.

¹³ Jean Danielou, *The Angels and their Mission, according to the Fathers of the Church*, p.62.

¹⁴ Schaff, p.153.

¹⁵ Makrakis, p.1469.

¹⁶ Schaff, "Homily XXVI," Vol. XII, p.152.

¹⁷ Nicon D. Patrinos, *A Dictionary of Greek Orthodoxy*, p.356.

¹⁸ Mastrantonis, p.123-4.

¹⁹ Kucharek, *The Ancient Celebration of the Eucharist*, p.176.

²⁰ Rohrdorf, et al, "A Eucharistic Faith," *The Eucharist of the Early Christians*, p.147.

²¹ Toal, Vol. Two, p.143.

²² Schaff, Homily XXVIII, Vol. XII, p.164.

²³ Elias, p.195.

²⁴ Schaff.

²⁵ Elias, p.22.

²⁶ Toal, p.275.

²⁷ Mastrantonis, p.113.