SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · LIVING IN THE LIGHT

†
11:26

DEEP DIVE

1 Corinthians

Chapter Eleven, Verses 1–34

Headship, the Table, and the Body — order in worship and love at the Lord's table — one gathered church under one Head

NASB 1995 | VERSE BY VERSE | FOUR VOICES | WITH DIAGRAMS

Paul praises what the Corinthians held to and refuses to praise what they did with it: he guards an order in worship that runs from God down, then rebukes a church that shamed its poor at the very meal that proclaims one body — and lands the whole correction on three words: "wait for one another." Read through four teachers — **David Guzik**, **R.C. Sproul**, **C.H. Spurgeon** and **Matthew Henry** — with the Greek behind Paul's key words.

THE PASSAGE

1 Corinthians 11:1–34

heads · creation · custom · table · examine

THE METHOD

Verse by Verse

Color-coded by teacher

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Six movements from "be imitators of me" to "wait for one another"

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"This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." — 1 Corinthians 11:24

SECTION I · THE PASSAGE

1 Corinthians 11:1–34

Headship, the Table, and the Body — Praise, an order that runs from God, a supper that was not the Lord's, and a table that proclaims His death until He comes

† How to Read This Study

This study walks 1 Corinthians 11 in 6 movements, in Paul's own order. Each movement opens with the full NASB 1995 text of those verses, marked with the Berean colors and shapes; then the Greek behind the key words; then the teachers, each in his own color — **David Guzik**, the pastor who walks the text verse by verse; **R.C. Sproul**, the theologian who presses every word for its doctrine; **C.H. Spurgeon**, the preacher who turns the doctrine into a call to the heart; and **Matthew Henry**, the Puritan commentator who gathers it into plain, practical counsel. The figures draw the argument so you can see where Paul is going. Read the Scripture first; then let each voice add its angle.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word
R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier Ministries
C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle
MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · 1 Cor. completed after 1714

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED
God — His character & actions
Command / instruction
Key repeated word
Sin / warning
Promise / blessing
Time / place / contrast

KEY VERSE · 1 CORINTHIANS 11:26

"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."

† Before the Passage

Chapters 8–10 dealt with Christian liberty and food offered to idols, and they closed with a principle — "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (10:31) — and an example: "Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ" (11:1). Henry thinks the chapter break falls one verse late and that 11:1 "seems to have been a more proper close to the last"; Guzik agrees it most likely looks back to chapter 10. Either way, at 11:2 Paul turns to a new subject that runs to the end of chapter 14: what happens when the church gathers. Head coverings (11:2–16), the Lord's Supper (11:17–34), spiritual gifts (12–14) — three questions about one assembly.

Two first-century facts make this chapter breathe. First, the early church ate together: the bread and the cup were taken within a shared meal, the love feast, usually in the home of a member wealthy enough to host. Guzik notes that Roman dining was ranked — "it was expected that the 'upper class' would receive better and

more food than the ‘lower class’” — and Henry pictures the rich who “ate and drank up the provisions they themselves brought, before the poor were allowed to partake.” Second, head coverings carried public meaning. Guzik: to wear one “was a public symbol of being under the authority and protection of another.” Henry adds that customs differ — in the East covering meant subjection, where in his own England “being bare-headed betokens subjection.”

The chapter reaches deep into the Old Testament. The argument of verses 7–9 stands on Genesis 1–2: man made in God’s image, the woman fashioned from the man and brought to him as “a helper suitable for him” (Genesis 2:18). The Supper stands on the Passover — “this day will be a memorial to you … a permanent ordinance” (Exodus 12:14) — and on the covenant sealed with blood at Sinai (Exodus 24:8) and promised anew through Jeremiah (Jeremiah 31:31). Paul says he “received from the Lord” what he delivered (v. 23): his account is the earliest written record of the words Jesus spoke over the bread and cup, matching Luke 22:19–20 almost word for word.

Read the chapter as a hinge on one word: praise. “Now I praise you” (v. 2) opens the first half; “I do not praise you” (v. 17) and “In this I will not praise you” (v. 22) open the second. The Corinthians were holding the teaching and breaking the love. Order, then love — and over both the same Head. Our four teachers do not all agree on the first half: whether the head covering is a binding sign or a local custom carrying a permanent principle. Sproul leans one way, Guzik and Henry the other, and we will let each speak in his own words.

I
MOVEMENT

1 CORINTHIANS 11:1–6

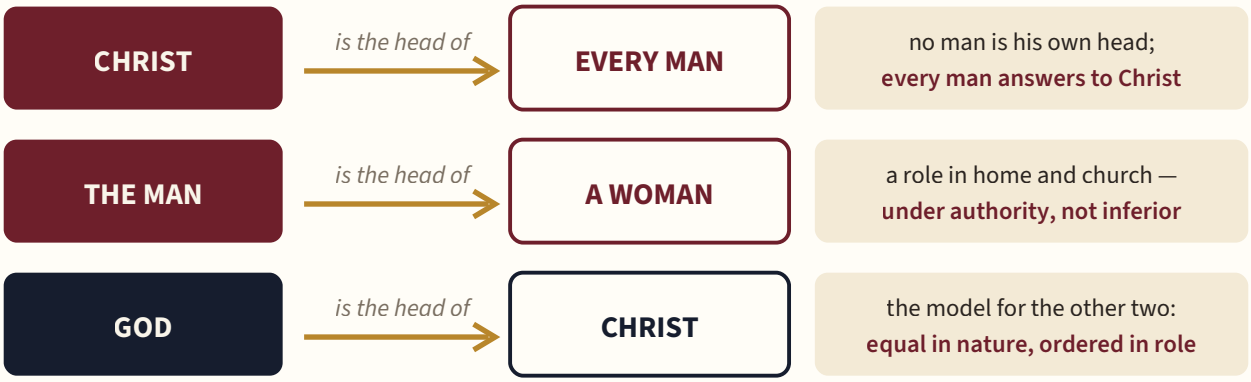
Imitate, Hold Fast, Honor the Head

An example to follow, praise for what they kept, and an order that runs from God

> 1 *Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.* 2 *Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you.* 3 *But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.* 4 *Every man who has something on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head.* 5 *But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for she is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved.* 6 *For if a woman does not cover her head, let her also have her hair cut off; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her cover her head.*
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1–6

FIGURE · THREE HEADS AND A GUARDRAIL

THREE HEADS IN ONE VERSE · 1 CORINTHIANS 11:3



The Son is "equally God," yet "totally under the authority of God the Father" (Guzik).

THE GUARDRAIL · 1 CORINTHIANS 11:11–12

"in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman"

woman from man (Gen 2:22) · every man born through woman · "all things originate from God"

Read the three rows of verse 3 against the bottom band: the God–Christ relationship defines what headship means, and verses 11–12 keep it from becoming domination.

κεφαλή

KEPHALĒ · "HEAD" · G2776

The word of the paragraph: fourteen times in vv. 3–13 in the NASB, sliding between the head on a man's shoulders ("has something on his head," v. 4) and the person who is his head ("disgraces his head" — Christ, v. 3). Some scholars argue *kephalē* means only "source," as the head of a river. Guzik grants the sense but says it cannot stop there, because "in Biblical thinking a source has inherent authority"; the God–Christ pair shows headship carries leadership and accountability without inferiority. The same word names Christ as "head over all things to the church" (Ephesians 1:22) and the husband as head of the wife "as Christ also is the head of the church" (Ephesians 5:23).

μιμηταί · παράδοσις

MIMĒTAI · PARADOSIS · "IMITATORS" · "TRADITIONS" · G3402, G3862

Mimētēs (G3402, our "mimic") is an imitator who copies a pattern; Paul has used it already (4:16, "be imitators of me") and will again (Ephesians 5:1, "be imitators of God"). The limit is built in: "just as I also am of Christ." *Paradosis* (G3862) is what is handed on — positive here and in 2 Thessalonians 2:15, negative when it is merely human (Mark 7:8; Colossians 2:8). Its verb *paradidōmi* (G3860), "I delivered," returns in v. 23 for the Supper.

καταισχύνω · ἀκατακάλυπτος

KATAISCHYNŌ · AKATAKALYPTOS · "DISGRACES" · "UNCOVERED" · G2617, G177

Kataischynō (G2617) is to put to shame, dishonor publicly. It appears in v. 4 and v. 5 of the covered man and the uncovered woman, and again in v. 22 of the rich who "shame those who have nothing" — both halves of the chapter turn on honor and shame. *Akatakalyptos* (G177), "uncovered," occurs only here (vv. 5, 13) in the New Testament. Verse 5 says the dispute is over the sign, not over whether women pray and prophesy — that is assumed.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik hears verse 1 as a challenge: Paul was willing to be an example, while we too often say, "Don't look at me, look at Jesus" — but the phrase has a limit: "follow me as much as you see me following Jesus." He reads verse 2 as sarcasm, since the Corinthians did not in fact remember Paul in all things. Verse 3 is the foundation: "head" means more than source, and the three relationships share one principle. "It is essential to understand that being under authority does not equal inferiority"; Jesus is fully under the Father and fully God (John 5:19; 10:30). The covering "was a public symbol of being under the authority and protection of another," and he warns, with Fee, that "veil" wrongly suggests a full face covering.

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier Ministries

In *Knowing Scripture* (the excerpt reprinted at headcoveringmovement.com), Sproul uses this passage to teach the difference between principle and custom. He lays out four options — "It is entirely custom," "It is entirely principle," or two mixtures of principle and custom — and notes that "Paul provides a rationale that is based on an appeal to creation." In a Ligonier Q&A he grants that commentators usually explain the covering from Corinthian culture, where an uncovered woman might be taken for a prostitute; but where Paul gives his own reason, he says, we should not supply another one. That is why, for Sproul, "it's a mistake to just dismiss this as a contemporary custom."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · 1 Cor. completed after 1714

Henry thinks verse 1 "seems to have been a more proper close to the last" chapter, and draws the rule from it: "We should follow no leader further than he follows Christ," for "Christ's pattern is a copy without a blot; so is no man's else." Unlike Guzik he takes the praise of verse 2 as sincere and wise: "When we reprove what is amiss in any, it is very prudent and fit to commend what is good in them." The women in question "prayed and prophesied even in their assemblies"; Paul does not here forbid the act but rebukes the manner — "The manner of doing a thing enters into the morality of it." He reads the headship of verse 3 strongly, as the woman's subjection, though not "with such dominion as Christ has."

II
MOVEMENT

1 CORINTHIANS 11:7–12

Creation Order, Mutual Dependence

Genesis 2 behind the argument — and "in the Lord" beside it

7 For a man ought not to have his ⇄ head covered, since he is △ the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. 8 For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; 9 for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. 10 Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of

> *authority on her ↻ head, ◷ because of the angels. 11 ◷ However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. 12 For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and △ all things originate from God.*
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 11:7–12

> *"Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.""*
>
> GENESIS 2:18

> *"The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man."*
>
> GENESIS 2:22

εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα

EIKŌN KAI DOXA · "IMAGE AND GLORY" · G1504, G1391

Eikōn (G1504) is the word of the Septuagint at Genesis 1:26–27, "in our image"; *doxa* (G1391) is splendor, honor, the weight that reflects another. Man is "the image and glory of God"; the woman is "the glory of man" — Paul does not say she is not the image of God (Genesis 1:27 says she is). *Doxa* appears three times in the chapter: twice in v. 7 and once in v. 15, where a woman's long hair is "a glory to her." It is a word about reflection, not about rank.

ἐξουσία · ἄγγελοι

EXOUSIA · ANGELOI · "AUTHORITY" · "ANGELS" · G1849, G32

Verse 10 says literally that the woman ought "to have authority on her head"; NASB supplies "a symbol of" in italics, KJV renders it "power." *Exousia* (G1849) is elsewhere a person's own right or authority (8:9, "this liberty of yours"; 9:4–6) — so some read the covering as the sign of her authority to pray and prophesy, others (Henry) as the sign of being under another's power. "Because of the angels" (*angelous*, G32): Guzik and Henry both take these as the holy angels present in worship (compare 4:9; Ephesians 3:10); Henry also reports the view that evil angels are meant.

χωρίς

CHŌRIS · "INDEPENDENT OF / WITHOUT" · G5565

A preposition meaning "apart from, separate from." Verse 11 uses it twice: "neither is woman *chōris* man, nor is man *chōris* woman." It is the hinge after "However" (*plēn*): having argued from creation's order, Paul immediately argues from creation's interdependence — woman *ek* (from) the man at the beginning, every man *dia* (through) a woman since, and "all things *ek* God." The same prepositions that set the order also bind the two together.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik lists Paul's reasons — the order of authority, the order of creation, and the presence of angels — and observes: "Significantly, none of these three reasons are culture-dependent." His conclusion is careful: "The principles are eternal, but the out-working of the principles may differ according to culture." He applies headship to the home and to church office (pastors and ruling elders), not to society at large, and calls it "ridiculous" to think every woman is under every man. He is blunt with men: their failure to lead as Jesus leads "has been a chief cause of the rejection of male authority, and is inexcusable." And verses 11–12 guard it all: "Men and women need each other, so there is no place for a "lording over" of the men over the women."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier Ministries

Sproul's whole case rests on these verses. In the *Knowing Scripture* excerpt he writes, "Appeals to creation ordinances reflect stipulations a covenant God makes with humanity" — they are not local etiquette but "rooted in basic human responsibility to God." Such ordinances stand unless later revelation modifies them, as Jesus reached back to creation on marriage. In the Ligonier Q&A he states it simply: the reason Paul gives "is rooted and grounded in creation," "And if there's anything that's transcultural, it's that which is rooted and grounded in creation." For Sproul, then, verses 7–9 are why the matter cannot be settled by an appeal to Corinthian culture alone.

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · 1 Cor. completed after 1714

Henry reads verse 7 as dominion: man is "the representative of that glorious dominion and headship which God has over the world," and the woman shares God's image "at second-hand." The angels may be good angels whose presence "should restrain Christians from all indecencies in the worship of God," or evil ones; either way, worship should show reverence and contentment with our rank. Then he guards the argument himself. Man and woman "were made to be a mutual comfort and blessing, not one a slave and the other a tyrant." And the balance: "As it is the will of God that the woman know her place, so it is his will also that the man abuse not his power."

III
MOVEMENT

1 CORINTHIANS 11:13–16

Nature, Custom, and Contention

Three appeals — your judgment, nature, the churches — and a door closed on quarreling

13 *Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her* ⟲ *head uncovered?* 14 *Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him,* 15 *but if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? For her hair is given to her for a covering.* 16 *But if one is inclined to be* ⚠ *contentious, we have no other practice, nor have the churches of God.*

1 CORINTHIANS 11:13–16

φύσις · ἀτιμία · κομάω

PHYSIS · ATIMIA · KOMAŌ · "NATURE" · "DISHONOR" · "HAS LONG HAIR" · G5449, G819, G2863

Physis (G5449) is the way things are made — Paul uses it of what is "natural" and "unnatural" in Romans 1:26–27. *Atimia* (G819) is dishonor, the opposite of honor (*timē*). *Komaō* (G2863), "to let the hair grow long," appears in the New Testament only in vv. 14–15. Verse 15 adds that her hair is given "for a covering" — *anti peribolaiou* (G4018), a wrap or mantle (the word of Hebrews 1:12, "like a mantle"). Readers differ on whether Paul means the hair *is* the covering or that nature's covering points to the cloth one; Guzik calls the hair "nature's veil."

φιλόνεικος · συνήθεια

PHILONEIKOS · SYNĒTHEIA · "CONTENTIOUS" · "PRACTICE" · G5380, G4914

Philoneikos (G5380) is "fond of strife" — *philos* + *neikos*, a lover of winning. The adjective occurs only here; its noun *philoneikia* (G5379) occurs only in Luke 22:24 — the "dispute" among the disciples at the Last Supper over who was greatest. *Synētheia* (G4914) is custom, settled practice (John 18:39, "you have a custom"). Paul ends the debate with the practice of "the churches of God": Corinth is not free to invent its own worship.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik hears "Judge among yourselves" as an appeal to what the Corinthians already knew, especially those from a Jewish background, where even men covered their heads to pray and a woman praying uncovered was unthinkable. He refuses to turn verse 14 into a hair rule: Paul himself kept a vow in Corinth (Acts 18:18), and long hair is not in itself sin, though a man must not take the appearance of a woman (Deuteronomy 22:5). His dry line: "It is far better for most preachers to be concerned about the length of their sermons instead of the length of people's hair." Long hair is "nature's veil," and verse 16 is Paul's appeal to apostolic authority against the contentious.

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier Ministries

Sproul is candid that his reading is not the common one: "Now, I'm in a minority in that point," he says in the Ligonier Q&A. In *Knowing Scripture* he goes further in humility: "I certainly do not know the final answer to the question." Where a command's status stays uncertain after careful study, he would rather risk being overscrupulous than be guilty of demoting a transcendent requirement of God — but he limits that rule: "This is a guideline of last resort and would be destructive if used as a first resort." And he will not bind consciences: "We do not have the right to legislate the consciences of Christians where God has left them free."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · 1 Cor. completed after 1714

Henry paraphrases Paul's appeal: "consult your own reason, hearken to what nature suggests." Nature has made a distinction between the sexes, and civilized nations have kept it; for a man to cherish long hair is "a token of softness and effeminacy." Verse 16 turns to the churches: "Custom is in a great measure the rule of decency." Paul "does not silence the contentious by mere authority," Henry notes, but shows them how odd they would look quarreling against a custom in which all the churches concurred. He also says plainly that in that age and country the token "was a veil" — a sign tied to its time.

IV
MOVEMENT

1 CORINTHIANS 11:17–22

A Supper That Is Not the Lord's

Praise withdrawn — the body divided at the very meal of oneness

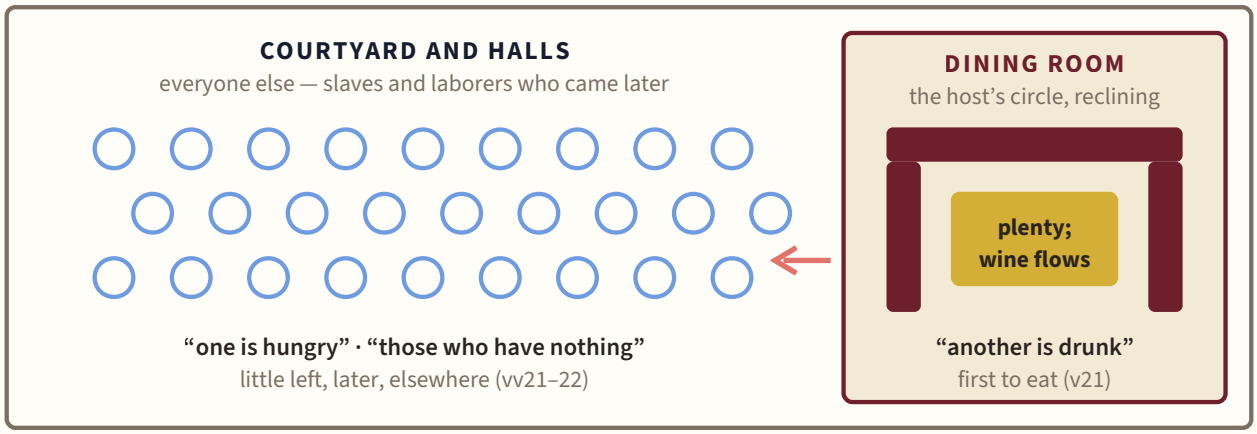
17 But in giving this instruction, I do not ⟳ praise you, because you ⟳ come together ⚠ not for the better but for the worse. 18 For, in the first place, when you ⟳ come together as a church, I hear that ⚠ divisions exist among you; and in part I believe it. 19 For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you. 20 Therefore when you meet together, ⚠ it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, 21 for in

> *your eating each one takes his own supper first; and ⚠ one is hungry and another is drunk.* 22 *What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? 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 will not ⇄ praise you.*
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 11:17–22

> *"Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread."*
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 10:17

FIGURE · ONE HOUSE, TWO SUPPERS

ONE HOUSE, TWO SUPPERS · 1 CORINTHIANS 11:20–22



PAUL'S VERDICT

"it is not to eat the Lord's Supper" (v20)
"each one takes his own supper first" (v21)
"do you despise the church of God" (v22)

PAUL'S REMEDY

"wait for one another" (v33)
"let him eat at home" (v34)
one loaf, one body (10:17)

The love feast met in a host's home; carry Roman ranked dining into it and the host's circle eats first and well while the rest go hungry — exactly the scene of verses 21–22.

συνέρχομαι

SYNERCHOMAI · "COME TOGETHER" · G4905

To assemble, to gather in one place. Five times in vv. 17–34 (vv. 17, 18, 20, 33, 34 — NASB "meet together" in v. 20) and twice more in chapter 14 (14:23, 26). The second half of the chapter is about what happens when the church gathers, and whether it gathers "for the better" (*kreisson*) or "for the worse" (*hēsson*). Gathering is not automatically good.

σχίσματα · αἱρέσεις · δόκιμοι

SCHISMATA · HAIRESEIS · DOKIMOI · "DIVISIONS" · "FACTIONS" · "APPROVED" · G4978, G139, G1384

Schisma (G4978) is a tear in cloth (Mark 2:21); it opened the letter (1:10, "no divisions among you") and will return in 12:25. *Hairesis* (G139) is a chosen party — the "sect" of the Sadducees (Acts 5:17), the "factions" of Galatians 5:20 — and only later "heresy." *Dokimos* (G1384) is "tested and approved," like assayed metal (Romans 16:10; 2 Timothy 2:15). Its verb *dokimazō* is the "examine" of v. 28: the factions test the church now; each man is to test himself at the table.

κυριακὸν δεῖπνον

KYRIAKON DEIPNON · "THE LORD'S SUPPER" · G2960, G1173

Kyriakos (G2960), "belonging to the Lord," appears only twice in the New Testament — here and in Revelation 1:10, "the Lord's day." *Deipnon* (G1173) is the main evening meal. Paul's point turns on the possessive: they were eating "his own supper" (*to idion deipnon*, v. 21), and a supper that belongs to self cannot be the one that belongs to the Lord. "Takes … first" is *prolambanei* (G4301), to take beforehand; "despise" is *kataphroneō* (G2706), to look down on (Matthew 18:10, "do not despise one of these little ones").

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik credits the Corinthians for gathering at all (Hebrews 10:25), "but sadly, it was not for the better but for the worse." He sees a purpose in verse 19: "God allows factions so that, over time, those who really belong to God would be made evident." The meal was a love feast joined to the Lord's Supper, and Corinth carried its banquet habits and its class system inside: "Ancient culture, much more than modern American culture, was extremely class conscious." The rich were not sharing with the poor, and some went home hungry while others got drunk. Paul's message, he says, is plain: "If you want to eat or drink selfishly, do it at home!"

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier Ministries

The Tabletalk daily study "Blessing and Judgment" (Ligonier; carried on Bible Gateway as *Tabletalk Devotions with R.C. Sproul*) describes wealthy believers gorging at the Supper and leaving too little for others, so that the meal kept believers from communing both with one another and with Christ. The same study sets this abuse beside Rome's teaching that the Mass repeats Christ's sacrifice, and answers from Hebrews 10 that His one offering is complete. For Sproul's tradition, the Supper is profaned both when its meaning is added to and when its fellowship is broken.

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

In his expository reading of 1 Corinthians 11:17–34 (printed with his sermons; sermonindex.net), Spurgeon says, "It is a very bad state of things when we meet for worship" and go away no better. He notices Paul's restraint — "I partly believe it" — as a model of "not believing anything against our brethren too quickly." The Corinthians "brought their own food with them," and "the richer ones feasted to the full" while the poor went without. His paraphrase of verse 22 is brisk: "Go home, and eat and drink," and "do not come to the sanctuary for such a purpose."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · 1 Cor. completed after 1714

Henry opens with a warning for every church: “The ordinances of Christ, if they do not make us better, will be very apt to make us worse … if they do not melt and mend, they will harden.” He insists “There may be schism where there is no separation of communion” — people can sit at the same table and still be schismatics. Their supper “was coming to the Lord’s table, and not coming”; “What was appointed to feed the soul was employed to feed their lusts and passions.” And he will not let the poor be forgotten: their souls “were as dear to Christ, and cost him as much, as those of the rich.”

V
MOVEMENT

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26

Received from the Lord

The words of institution — the night, the bread, the cup, and the proclamation until He comes

23 *For △ I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus*
◷ in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 *and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said,*
“△ This is My body, which is for you; ▤ do this in remembrance of Me.” 25 *In the same way He took the cup also*
after supper, saying, “This cup is ☆ the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in
remembrance of Me.” 26 *For ◷ as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, ▤ you proclaim the Lord’s death*
☆ until He comes.

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26

“And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.””

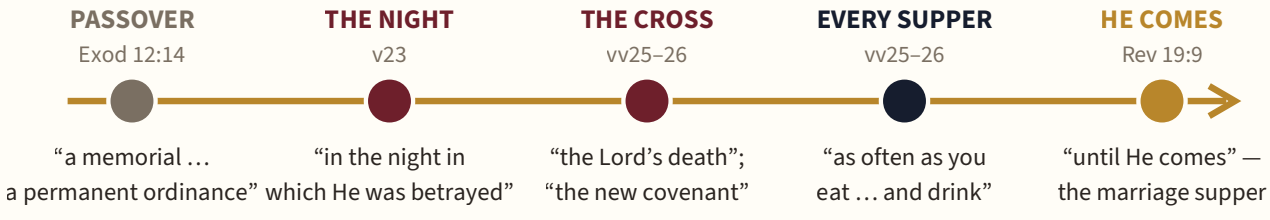
LUKE 22:20

“So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.””

EXODUS 24:8

FIGURE · THE TABLE LOOKS FOUR WAYS

THE TABLE BETWEEN TWO NIGHTS AND ONE COMING · 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26



LOOK BACK	LOOK IN	LOOK AROUND	LOOK AHEAD
remembrance	*examination*	*the body*	*proclamation*
"do this in remembrance of Me" (vv24–25)	"a man must examine himself" (v28)	"wait for one another" (v33)	"you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes"

Every Supper stands on the line between the cross and the coming — and preaches both.

Guzik: "we preach a sermon to God Himself, to the Devil and all his allies, and to the world who watches."

The Supper stands on the timeline between Passover-and-the-cross and the coming of Christ, and it asks every guest to look back, in, around and ahead.

παρέλαβον … παρέδωκα … παρεδίδετο

PARELABON … PAREDŌKA … PAREDIDETO · "RECEIVED … DELIVERED … WAS BETRAYED" · G3880, G3860

Paralambanō (G3880) and *paradidōmi* (G3860) are the technical pair for receiving and handing on a tradition — the same pair that introduces the gospel in 15:3 ("I delivered to you … what I also received"). In one verse Paul uses *paradidōmi* twice: "I delivered" and "He was betrayed" (*paredideto*, imperfect — "while He was being handed over"). On the night He was handed over, He handed Himself to His own.

εὐχαριστήσας · ἀνάμνησις

EUCHARISTĒSAS · ANAMNĒSIS · "HAVING GIVEN THANKS" · "REMEMBRANCE" · G2168, G364

Eucharisteō (G2168), "to give thanks," gives the church its word "Eucharist." *Anamnēsis* (G364) occurs four times in the New Testament — Luke 22:19, here twice (vv. 24, 25), and Hebrews 10:3, where the old sacrifices brought "a reminder of sins year by year." Under the old covenant the repeated sacrifice reminded of sin; under the new, the repeated meal reminds of Christ. It is an active calling-to-mind, not nostalgia — the Passover word "memorial" (Exodus 12:14) carried forward.

διαθήκη · καταγγέλλετε

DIATHĒKĒ · KATANGELLETE · "COVENANT" · "YOU PROCLAIM" · G1242, G2605

Diathēkē (G1242) is the Septuagint's word for *berith*, covenant — an arrangement set by one party. KJV's "new testament" is the same word. "New covenant" takes us to Jeremiah 31:31, the only Old Testament verse with the phrase. *Katangellō* (G2605) is to announce publicly — the verb Acts uses for preaching Christ (Acts 4:2; 13:5; 17:3). Every Supper is a sermon, and it runs *achri* (G891), "until" He comes.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik stresses that Paul did not invent this: he received it from the Lord, by revelation or through the apostles. The setting is Passover: the unleavened bread with its stripes and piercings, and the cup Jesus took, "known as the cup of redemption." Then the claim of the words: "What mere man could have the audacity to institute a new covenant between God and man?" He surveys transubstantiation, Luther, Calvin and Zwingli, and lands on this: the bread and wine "are not mere symbols, but they are powerful pictures to partake of and to enter into." And proclaim means preach: "we preach a sermon to God Himself, to the Devil and all his allies, and to the world who watches."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier Ministries

Preaching Luke 22 (May 2016), Sproul called the upper room the night a new covenant was instituted and ratified in Christ's blood the next afternoon: "Tonight, we are eating and drinking the ultimate Passover." On Mark 14 (May 2007) he called Judas's act "premeditated treason against the King of kings" and held that Christ is truly present at the table: "There is a reality involved in the celebration of the Lord's Supper that goes beyond a memorial." A Tabletalk study under his name on Luke 22 adds the warning of remembrance: we break His covenant when we forget Him and His great work.

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's second published sermon, "The Remembrance of Christ" (No. 2, 7 January 1855), on "This do in remembrance of me," begins with an uncomfortable fact: "Christians may forget Christ." "Forget him who ne'er forgot us!" The table helps memory: "Bread broken — so was your Saviour broken." In "The Lord's Supper — Simple but Sublime!" (No. 3151) he calls it "a happy memorial," a feast and not a funeral, and makes it personal: "The Lord of glory loved me, and gave himself for me." In "The Right Observance of the Lord's Supper" (No. 2638): "Think much at the table, but think of nothing but Christ."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · 1 Cor. completed after 1714

Henry notes that Paul "was not among the apostles at the first institution" but received it by revelation, and delivered it "without varying from the truth a tittle." Because the apostle still calls it bread after the blessing, he "knew nothing of their monstrous and absurd doctrine of transubstantiation." The motto of the ordinance is "When this you see, remember me," and showing His death means more than recalling it: "We declare his death to be our life." It is to be frequent and to last until He comes: "The Lord's supper is not a temporary, but a standing and perpetual ordinance."

VI
MOVEMENT

1 CORINTHIANS 11:27–34

Examine Yourself, Wait for One Another

The manner, not the man — a Father's discipline, and the whole correction in one verb

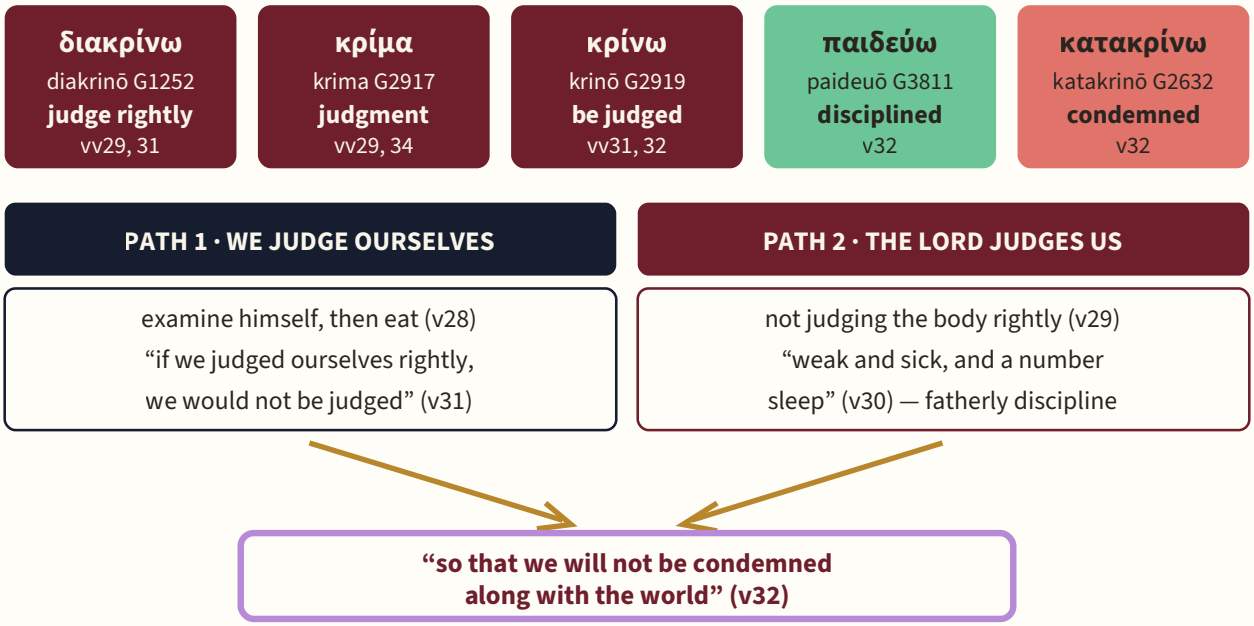
27 Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord ⚠ in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. 28 But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself ⚠ if he does not judge the body rightly. 30 For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. 31 But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are

> *△ disciplined by the Lord so that we will ☆ not be condemned along with the world.* [33] *So then, my brethren, when you ⇄ come together to eat, ▤ wait for one another.* [34] *If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you will not ⇄ come together for judgment. The remaining matters I will arrange when I come.*
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 11:27–34

> *"FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES."*
>
> HEBREWS 12:6

FIGURE · ONE ROOT, FIVE WORDS

ONE ROOT, FIVE WORDS · KRINŌ IN 1 CORINTHIANS 11:29–34



Both paths end outside condemnation. Discipline is a Father's, not a Judge's sentence (Heb 12:6).

Guzik: "not a judge condemning a criminal; it is a father correcting disobedient children."

Paul plays on the krinō family: judge yourself rightly, or be judged by the Lord as a son — either way, the believer is not condemned with the world.

ἀναξίως · ἔνοχος

ANAXIŌS · ENOCHOS · "IN AN UNWORTHY MANNER" · "GUILTY" · G371, G1777

Anaxiōs (G371) is an adverb — it describes *how* one eats, not *who* is eating. It occurs only here in the New Testament (and in KJV's v. 29 from later manuscripts). The KJV's "unworthily" has kept many from the table until they felt worthy, but no one is worthy of it; Paul warns against careless, loveless, unexamined eating. *Enochos* (G1777) is "liable, answerable to" — the word of Matthew 5:21–22 ("liable to the court") and James 2:10 ("guilty of all").

δοκιμάζω · διακρίνω

DOKIMAZŌ · DIAKRINŌ · "EXAMINE" · "JUDGE RIGHTLY" · G1381, G1252

Dokimazō (G1381) is to test with a view to approval — the root of "approved" in v. 19 — and the verse ends in eating: "and in so doing he is to eat." Examination is meant to bring a man to the table, not to keep him from it (compare 2 Corinthians 13:5). *Diakrinō* (G1252) is to distinguish, discern: "if he does not judge the body rightly" (v. 29) and "if we judged ourselves rightly" (v. 31). Paul then runs the whole family — *krima* (G2917), *krinō* (G2919), *katakrinō* (G2632) — in four verses.

παιδευόμεθα · ἐκδέχεσθε

PAIDEUOMETHA · EKDECHESTHE · "WE ARE DISCIPLINED" · "WAIT FOR" · G3811, G1551

Paideuō (G3811), from *pais*, "child," is child-training — the verb of Hebrews 12:6. The Lord's judgment on His people at His table is a Father's training "so that we will not be condemned along with the world." "A number sleep" is *koimōntai* (G2837), the New Testament's word for believers' death (Acts 7:60; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–15). And the remedy is *ekdechomai* (G1551), to wait for, expect, receive — the farmer who "waits for the precious produce of the soil" (James 5:7). The rich hold their plates until the poor arrive.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik calls the KJV's "unworthily" a source of "serious misunderstanding," because "if anyone needs to remember the work of Jesus on the cross, it is the one who has sinned!" Only the stubbornly unrepentant mock the table. Examination is honest, not morbid, and it ends in eating. He reads "the Lord's body" as the church family as easily as the elements, against using the verse to prove transubstantiation. The judgment has no article: "This chastening is not a judge condemning a criminal; it is a father correcting disobedient children," and he warns that it is presumptuous to read every untimely death this way. On waiting: "It isn't just good manners, it shows love towards others."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier Ministries

The Tabletalk study "Blessing and Judgment" (in the *Tabletalk Devotions with R.C. Sproul* series) reads verses 27–32 as a call to humility, not to perfection: "Paul's point is not that only perfect Christians are worthy to take the sacrament, for perfect people would not need it." Its logic is simple: "Only sinners need the grace of Christ; therefore, only sinners can participate in the Lord's Supper." Self-examination means confessing sin and trusting Christ's forgiveness — and then coming. Its application: "Do not let feelings of unworthiness prevent you from coming to His table."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

In "Examination before Communion" (No. 2699, 2 October 1881) Spurgeon guards the table — "the Lord's table is for the Lord's people" — and opens it wide in the same breath: "The least grain of true faith in Christ qualifies you." In "Fencing the Table" (No. 2865, 2 January 1876) he tests knowledge, faith, repentance, love and obedience, for "You cannot remember a person you never knew," and "It is a contrite heart and a broken spirit that Christ wants here." His exposition of vv. 29–34 sums up the danger — "He sees the bread, but not the body" — and the mercy: "Paul did not mean to say that these persons were lost."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · 1 Cor. completed after 1714

Henry calls unworthy receiving great guilt: “Instead of being cleansed by his blood, they are guilty of his blood.” Yet he will not let the verse terrify the tender: “the Holy Spirit never indited this passage of scripture to deter serious Christians from their duty, though the devil has often made this advantage of it.” The sick and the dead were chastened in love: “It is kindness to use the rod to prevent the child’s ruin,” and they were “punished now that they might not perish for ever.” Self-judgment is the way to escape it: “We may be critical as to ourselves, but should be very candid in judging others.” Last: “Holy things are to be used in a holy manner.”

VII
THEME

CROSS-REFERENCES

The Passage in the Whole Bible

From the garden to the marriage supper — where 1 Corinthians 11 reaches back and forward

“God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

GENESIS 1:27

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,”

EPHESIANS 5:25

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

GALATIANS 3:28

“Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance.”

EXODUS 12:14

““Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,”

JEREMIAH 31:31

“For whom the LORD loves He reproves, Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.”

PROVERBS 3:12

“Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ ” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.””

REVELATION 19:9

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik reads the cup through Jeremiah 31: the new covenant is forgiveness (“their sin I will remember no more”), God’s law written on the heart, and a new closeness — “I will be their God, and they shall be My people” — sealed in blood as the old covenant was at Sinai (Exodus 24:8).

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · 1 Cor. completed after 1714

Henry reads the discipline of verse 32 through Hebrews 12:6 — “divine chastening is a sign of divine love” — and the veil of verse 10 through Rebekah, who “put on her veil” when she met Isaac (Genesis 24:65).

SECTION II · STUDY HELPS

At a Glance

Four voices, one chapter

Four teachers, one chapter — but not one opinion on every verse. Guzik and Henry read the covering as the custom of its day carrying a permanent principle of order; Sproul, by his own admission in the minority, thinks the creation grounds may make the sign itself binding, and says he does not know the final answer. Henry reads headship more strongly than the others, as the woman's subjection. Spurgeon has no sermon we could find on verses 1–16; on the Supper all four agree: it is for sinners who trust Christ, examined and then eaten.

THE MOVEMENT	GUZIK · the text	SPROUL · the doctrine	SPURGEON · the heart	HENRY · the counsel
I · Imitate, honor the Head	Follow me as I follow Jesus; under authority is not inferior.	Principle or custom? Paul gives a creation reason — don't supply a cultural one.	— (no sermon on these verses found)	Follow no leader further than he follows Christ; the manner enters the morality.
II · Creation and the guardrail	None of the three reasons is cultural; no lording over.	Creation ordinances are covenant stipulations, and what is rooted in creation is transcultural.	— (no sermon on these verses found)	A mutual blessing, not a slave and a tyrant; the man must not abuse his power.
III · Nature and custom	Hair is nature's veil; worry about sermon length, not hair length.	In the minority, unsure of the final answer, unwilling to bind consciences.	— (no sermon on these verses found)	Custom is the rule of decency; the token of that age was a veil.
IV · The divided table	Factions reveal the approved; if you want to eat selfishly, do it at home.	Gorging broke communion with one another and with Christ.	A bad state when we meet and go away no better; go home and eat.	Ordinances that do not melt and mend will harden; the poor cost Christ as much.
V · Received from the Lord	Cup of redemption; a new covenant no mere man could make; a sermon preached.	The ultimate Passover; more than a memorial; forgetting breaks covenant.	Christians may forget Christ; a happy memorial; think of nothing but Christ.	Delivered without a tittle changed; His death declared to be our life.
VI · Examine and wait	The sinner most needs the table; a father correcting, not a judge condemning.	Only sinners can come; don't let unworthiness keep you away.	The least grain of faith qualifies; he sees the bread, not the body.	The rod prevents ruin; be critical of yourself, candid with others.

1 CORINTHIANS 11:1–34 · A COMPARATIVE READING

† Key Insights to Carry

- **Verse 3 comes before verse 4.** Paul states the principle — three heads, modeled on God and Christ — before he mentions a covering. Keep that order and the chapter stops being about hats. THE TEXT
- **Under authority is not inferior.** "It is essential to understand that being under authority does not equal inferiority." The Son is fully God and fully submitted to the Father; every headship in the chapter is measured by that one. GUZIK
- **Women prayed and prophesied.** Verses 4–5 assume it. Henry: Paul does "not in this place prohibit the thing, but reprehend the manner of doing it." HENRY
- **The guardrail is in the text.** *Chōris* twice in v. 11: in the Lord neither is independent of the other, and "all things originate from God." Henry: "not one a slave and the other a tyrant." THE GREEK

- **Principle or custom — honest disagreement.** Sproul thinks a creation reason may make the sign binding and admits he is in the minority; Guzik holds "the out-working of the principles may differ according to culture." Both refuse to throw away the principle. SPROUL
- **Praise is the chapter's hinge.** "I praise you" (v. 2), "I do not praise you" (v. 17), "I will not praise you" (v. 22). They kept the teaching and broke the love. THE TEXT
- **The contentious man was at the Last Supper too.** *Philoneikos* (v. 16) is found only here; its noun appears only in Luke 22:24 — the disciples' dispute over greatness at the table. THE GREEK
- **Delivered and betrayed are one verb.** *Paradidōmi* twice in v. 23: Paul handed on what Jesus gave on the night He was handed over. THE GREEK
- **"Unworthy" is an adverb.** It describes the manner of eating, not the worth of the eater. "Only sinners need the grace of Christ; therefore, only sinners can participate in the Lord's Supper." SPROUL
- **The remedy is one verb.** Sixteen verses on judgment land on *ekdechesthe* — "wait for one another" (v. 33). Spurgeon: "The least grain of true faith in Christ qualifies you." SPURGEON

† Questions for the Table

1 **Paul praises the Corinthians in v. 2 and refuses to in v. 22. What changed between the two — and which would he say of us?**

They kept the teaching but broke the love — orthodoxy at the table with contempt beside it.

11:2, 17, 22

2 **How does "God is the head of Christ" shape what headship can mean for me at home and at church?**

Equal in nature, ordered in role — and the head gives himself, as Christ did.

11:3; Eph 5:25

3 **Whom have I been treating as optional — and what do vv. 11–12 say about that?**

In the Lord no one is independent; all things originate from God.

11:11–12; Gal 3:28

4 **Who comes late to our table, and who eats first? Where do I quietly rank people?**

To shame those who have nothing is to despise the church of God.

11:21–22; 10:17

5 **When I take the bread and cup, what am I preaching, and to whom?**

The Lord's death until He comes — to God, the devil, and the watching world (Guzik).

11:26; Rev 19:9

6 **What is the difference between eating "in an unworthy manner" and being an unworthy man — and what keeps me from the table?**

Examine, then eat; the least grain of true faith qualifies (Spurgeon).

11:27–28; Heb 12:6

Paul began with praise and ended with "my brethren." In between he guarded an order the Corinthians were discarding and a love they were forgetting, and he tied both to the same Head. The man who honors the order of God and waits for his brother at the table has understood the chapter — and the Supper, which is Christ giving Himself for you, until He comes.

Teaching the Word. Living in the Light. — Smith For Christ

† Sources

Each teacher's section summarizes the pages below in our own words; short quotations are verbatim from them. Matthew Henry died in 1714 having reached Acts; his *Commentary* on 1 Corinthians was completed after his death by Simon Browne from his notes and method, and is cited under his name as it is published. Henry's Commentary and C.H. Spurgeon (1834–1892) are in the public domain; Guzik and Sproul are summarized — consult each author's own work.

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