

ROLES OF MEN AND WOMEN
IN
CONTEMPORARY CULTURE AND CHURCH:
MODELS OF CHANGE COMPATIBLE
WITH SCRIPTURE

MODELS OF CHANGE II

Thursday, April 25

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LECTURE TWO

Thursday, April 24

Models of Change II

At the conclusion of our first session yesterday morning, we left with the challenge, namely *the need to develop models of change*. As we pointed out, divisiveness has been the pattern for change. In our first lecture, we promised ideas to challenge our traditional thinking on this matter. We remind you that these ideas are experimental. They are meant for trial and testing before they are accepted, adopted or rejected. We plead for a careful hearing for these models. We are familiar with the traditional approaches. We have come to assume automatically that they constitute unchanging truth though they may reflect little more than our unawareness of our "acculturation". The scripture warns about having eyes to see and ears to hear but failing to see and hear. This warning is given because of the human tendency to consider traditional, customary beliefs as the only possible way to view God's working with us.

DIVISIVENESS AS A MODEL OF CHANGE

I want to review briefly with you our own history of division into factions among Churches of Christ. We could have chosen any number of Protestant religious bodies and found they have paralleled our own history. For example, the Baptists have as many or more subgroups than we do in Churches of Christ. Similarly, you could trace the same path with Pentecostal, Methodist or Lutheran fellowships. All of Christendom has used divisiveness as the pattern for change.

In tracing the "divisiveness" in our own movement, I am reminded of the life experience of my grandfather who was the patriarch of the North Arkansas congregation where I worshipped as I grew up. He had twelve adult children who had large families of their own. When my grandfather addressed the congregation, his own family constituted a majority, qualifying him as the leading elder. In reflecting about his life span, it is of consequence that it extended back more than two decades into the nineteenth century and reached down into the early part of the second half of the twentieth century. For Churches of Christ, that was a particularly significant time in our history. During my grandfather's adult years most of the major division in the churches of Christ occurred (See Fig. 2.1). This included the 1906 split between the Churches of Christ and the Disciples of Christ. Later, in 1925, *factionalism developed over the Sunday School or Bible Class position*. A few years afterward, in 1930, there was a division over the *one-cup or multiple-cup issue*. Each of the latter two groups currently number over 500 congregations. After the Second World War, in 1949, *factionalism developed over what became known as anti-institutionalism*.

In the 1990 census, there are now over 2000 congregations adhering to this position.

Figure 2.1

DIVISIVENESS AS THE PATTERN FOR CHANGE

Churches of Christ in the 20 th Century	
=====	
1906	Factionalism results in the Separation of the Disciples of Christ from the Churches of Christ in the National Census.
1925	Factionalism over Sunday School or Bible Classes. In the 1990 Census, approximately 500 congregations in the U.S.
1930	Factionalism over One-Cup, Multiple-Cup. In the 1990 Census, approximately 500 congregations in the U.S.
1949	Factionalism over anti-institutionalism or the Sponsoring Church in Missions and other works. In the 1990 Census over 2,000 congregations in the U.S.

Figure 2.1

Without a Theology of Change, We cannot Separate the Unchanging Substance of the Gospel from the Changing Form of the Expression of Our Discipleship

Many of you in the audience this morning have lived through this divisiveness. In a very real sense, this chart (See Fig. 2.1) represents our personal history. *We, who worshipped at the Crossroads Church of Christ in North Arkansas, were originally on the right side of all of these issues.* That is the case, since I grew up in an *anti-Sunday School, anti-woman teacher, anti-Bible Class, anti-institution, anti-multiple-cup congregation.* This factionalism is a personal matter for me. I can still see in my mind faces of family, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles and cousins who were involved in these struggles and some remain in these groups. As would be the case for those of you who have shared this period of history in the church, this divisiveness is a family matter. In the 1960's and 1970's, I frequently traveled from California to North Arkansas to be with my parents when they were facing ill health. During these difficult times, it was a family member from the "one-cup" fellowship who was always there standing by my side to help. It is hard to feel ill toward an individual who is with you in needful situations. So, this history of divisiveness is a personal, family story.

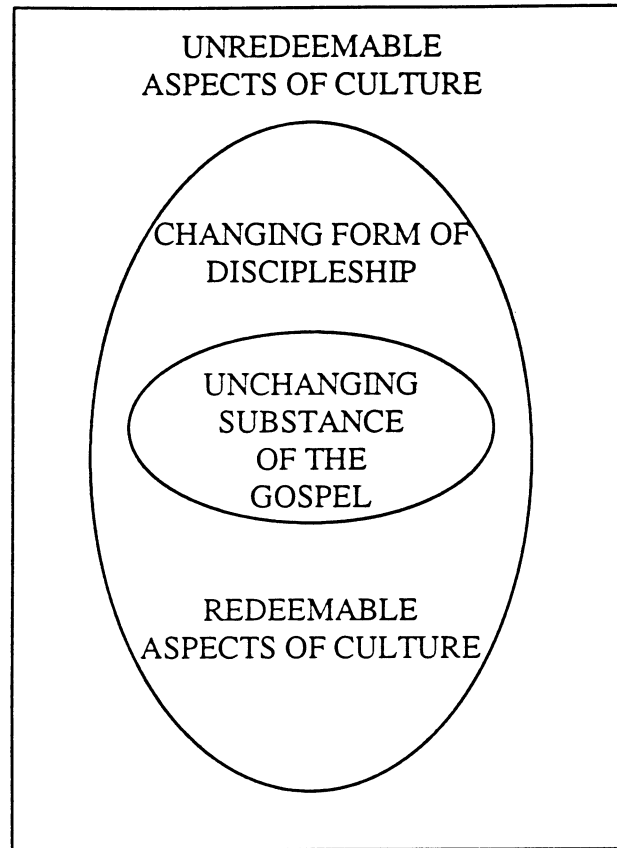
From the days of my youth, I remember my grandfather teaching a Sunday School class out under the old oak tree in front of the Crossroads Church building during the Ozark summertime. He led the congregation through all of the divisive issues which we have mentioned. In time, we did adopt Bible classes, but not without struggle. In time, we did allow women to teach the children in classes, but not without struggle. In time, we did adopt multiple-cups, but not without struggle. In time, we did move out of an anti-institutional stance with regard to cooperation in missions, orphanages and Christian schools. Again, this was not without struggle. Through all of this conflict, Granddad was not successful in preventing divisiveness from affecting his own family. Some broke away and stood firm on the position that these changes represented a departure from the faith.

From one particular point of view of scripture, *I would agree with those who refused to accept these changes from the tradition!* I think they were right and we of the so-called mainline were wrong on these issues in certain respects. *They were right in that they were adhering more closely to literal New Testament practice than we who made these changes.* My own understanding of the first century culture and church situation would lead me to agree with those who resisted the changes which led to divisiveness, which resulted from the literal application of the New Testament pattern. Let us look at this matter more closely. Even though you can engage in all manner of inference from the New Testament, I simply do not believe that the early church knew and practiced Sunday School classes or Bible classes as we do today. *That was simply not a pattern of that particular culture at that time.* The “anti-class” contention has literal history on its side. Furthermore, I am fully convinced that Jesus used one cup in the upper room when he instituted his supper. The “anti-multiple-cup” position has literal history on its side. With regard to the “institutional” debate, I am persuaded that the first century church did not know or practice the institutional arrangements which we have established for doing our Christian work today. Thus, the “anti-institutional” argument has literal history on its side.

HOW CAN THERE BE CHANGE WITHIN THE UNCHANGING?

The problem of divisiveness leaves us with a knotty situation on our hands. *It is the issue of how do you justify change in our religious practice.* I argued yesterday that the women’s movement and *the critique of the patriarchal stance of scripture is another example of the general problem of how we are to deal with change.* Let us turn now to that problem and, in the process, we will deal with some of the “factional” concerns which we have listed that led to division as a result of “change”. Our first step, which we have charted for your consideration (See Fig. 2.2), will call for a distinction between the “unchanging and the changing” aspects of Scripture teaching. We are proposing *a model for change within the unchanging.*

Figure 2.2
Culture and Gospel



UNCHANGING SUBSTANCE

CHANGING FORM

Revelation

Historical
Information

Brute Facts

Social Facts

Figure 2.2 Culture and Gospel

Our initial focus (See Fig. 2.2) calls for a consideration of Paul's view of human culture. When we consider the first century world, we first take notice of an unredeemable aspect of culture. The apostle Paul is extremely clear that *there are aspects of culture that cannot be redeemed*. He calls those factors "the works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19-21) and "the mind of the flesh" (Rom. 8:7). These practices, attitudes and beliefs are rejected and *there will remain an unchanging negation of them* in Christian history. On the other hand, *there are structures and roles within culture that can be redeemed*. We will paraphrase Paul and have him say, "We can work with certain cultural ways. Even though they reflect political, social and legal aspects of the first century Roman world, we can work

with them, but when culture changes, we will work with something else.” This is the way, I believe, Paul is looking at human society. Human culture is viewed as a changing phenomenon, and is comprised of both redeemable and unredeemable features.

UNCHANGING SUBSTANCE VERSUS CHANGING FORM

With regard to the gospel, I am proposing that we also distinguish between an “unchanging substance” or content and a “changing form in the expression of our discipleship”. The designation of the unchanging substance or content, which we have placed in the center of our illustrative chart (See Fig. 2.2), is the *narrative or story of Jesus, and the pattern of the Messiah. Our unity must be in this story.* For example, here at the Pepperdine University lectures, we walk around these beautiful grounds and share moments with a large audience of people of like faith. What a privilege we are enjoying. We are all drawn here by a common vision, and this vision is the same one which Paul grasped on the road to Damascus. The vision is that *Jesus of Nazareth is God’s son. Jesus is God’s disclosure of Himself to us. Jesus is the unique thing about the Christian gospel.*

C.S. Lewis¹, perhaps the best noted Christian writer of our century, stated in his book entitled the Abolition of Man that the ethics, the moral teachings, and the values found in the Bible can be duplicated in the writings of the moral teachers outside of Judeo-Christian history. For instance, the religious writings from ancient India contain moral instruction about obedience and respect for parents, concern for proper neighbor relations, regard for the rights and property of others and even injunctions to cultivate reverence. Lewis was correct in that the uniqueness of Christianity is not its moral, ethical stance. It has a great moral, ethical stance. But the thing that is unique is the concept of *Immanuel, God with us in His Son who dwelt among us, and who calls us to share in his fellowship with God.* That is why Paul can say, “I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2). For Paul, the gospel is the good news to the world. The good news (1 Cor. 15:1-8) is the act of God in the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, his ascension to the right hand of God and his promised return to gather his people. Paul is specifying *the unique aspect of Christianity.* This is the unchanging story. No one can change this story and still have the Christian gospel. *This story, this narrative, is the unchanging substance of the gospel.*

Once more, the unchanging pattern of the Messiah is the Living Word, Jesus the Christ, God’s Son. It is the story of the one who came as a living demonstration of the two great commandments on which all of our relationship to God depends. It is the Law and the Prophets. Jesus said of himself (John 5:30), “I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me.” In Gethsemane he prayed before the cross, “Father, not my will, but thine be done”

(Mat. 26:39). He *lived* the first great commandment, namely, “love God with your whole being.” He also *lived* the second great commandment. He again said of himself, “I came not to be served but to serve and to give my life a ransom for others” (Mat. 20:28). He was *neighbor love* in human form, the *living word* (John 1:14).

DISCIPLESHIP AS THE CONTINUING STORY OF JESUS

Now, there is an extended story of Jesus’ life. He calls us to discipleship. It is a call to follow the pattern of the Messiah. *His invitation is that we make his story, our story.* The call restates the pattern of the Messiah, namely, “If you would come after me, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me.” This is the vision that Paul caught. Once captured by this vision, Paul can say, “I will count my religiosity, my zeal for the law as a Pharisee, my coveted membership in the tribe of Benjamin, my lineage as a Hebrew of Hebrews, my blameless life in the Law, all of these I count as rubbish because *I have been captured by the master story, the vision of the life and pattern of the Messiah.* When Paul writes to the Philippian church (Phil. 3:2-21), he states the master motive of his life “*that I may know Jesus and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.*” It is in this context that he states, “I will count everything as loss except this goal.” *Since this is the ultimate goal of life, it must be foremost in our definition of the unchanging substance of the gospel.* Paul clearly states that *everything in our earthly life is secondary to our being captured by the vision of the pattern of the Messiah* and our fulfilling the law of Christ, by making his story our story.

THE UNCHANGING ASPECT OF OUR DISCIPLESHIP

Paul will ground some aspects of the “form of our discipleship” in the unchanging substance or the pattern of the Messiah.. Consider the ordinance of baptism. To the Roman believers, Paul notes that in initial obedience, in baptism, in immersion into Christ, we are united with him in his death, burial and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-11; Col. 2:12). *The action of baptism is given its meaning from the very life pattern of Jesus.* This makes it not only meaningful as a symbol but “*unchangeable,*” since it participates in the unique, once-for-all story of Jesus. *Similarly, in our participation in the Lord’s Supper, we re-enact his path to the cross in the breaking of the bread and the taking of the cup.* We, in this public act, carried out in concert with other disciples, signify not just Jesus’ brokenness for others, but we also make a public gesture of the inward commitment of our life to live as one “*given for others*”. *Jesus himself established the meaning and significance of the loaf and the cup* and, consequently, that is the only meaning they can have. Both baptism and the Lord’s Supper are symbolic of our making his story our story.

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With regard to the call for purity of life, Paul grounds this aspect of our discipleship in the pattern of the Messiah. When Paul wrote to the Corinthian church concerning sexual purity (1 Cor. 6:9-20), he appeals to the price of their redemption at the cross. “You are not your own; you were bought with a price, so glorify God in your body” (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Your bodies are members of Christ (1 Cor. 6:15) and have become a temple of the Holy Spirit which you have from God (1 Cor. 6:19). Therefore, you must not take the members of the body of Christ and engage in immorality. *Purity of life is grounded in the unchanging substance of the gospel, the imitation of the Messiah.*

With respect to acts of charity, Paul grounds them in the cross, in the unchanging substance of the story of Christ. When Paul is appealing to the Corinthians to give of their means on behalf of the poor in Judea, he calls upon them to remember the “grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich” (2 Cor. 8:9). Now, Paul says, I want you to share out of your abundance with others in their time of want (2 Cor. 8:13-15).

THE CHANGING FORM OF THE EXPRESSION OF OUR DISCIPLESHIP

It is important to take notice of how Paul grounds our discipleship in the unchanging substance of the gospel. *But, now we must turn to consider ways in which we must express the form of our discipleship in the reality of historical, cultural change.* We call your attention to our chart of the Unchanging Substance and the Changing Form of the Expression of our Discipleship (See Fig. 2.3). Looking at the center of the chart (See Fig. 2.3), we note that we have been a people who have said that covenant faithfulness means we must adhere to the unchanging substance of the gospel. We were correct in that respect. However, we fell short in that our obedience and *covenant faithfulness today requires two things.* It requires *first, that we adhere to the unchanging substance.* It also requires a *second* emphasis, namely *that we preach, teach, expect and demand change in the form of discipleship* (See Fig. 2.3). Unless we do both of these things we will not honor the image of Christ in our time.

In Figure 2.3, with respect to the changing form of the expression of our discipleship, *there are explicit acts which the early Christians performed that are no longer a form of the expression of discipleship today.* These changes are sometimes discounted as insignificant. These changes are easy for us to accept, due to the fact that history or tradition has already made us comfortable with them. However, we miss the critical point that *these changes demonstrate a powerful principle already operative for us.* With respect to the changing form of how we express discipleship consider the following. In the first century, the church followed the command to greet with a kiss (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 20; 1 Th. 5:26; 1 Pet. 5:14), to wash one another’s feet (John 13:14-15; 1 Tim. 5:10), and

Figure 2.3
A MODEL FOR CHANGE WITHIN THE UNCHANGING

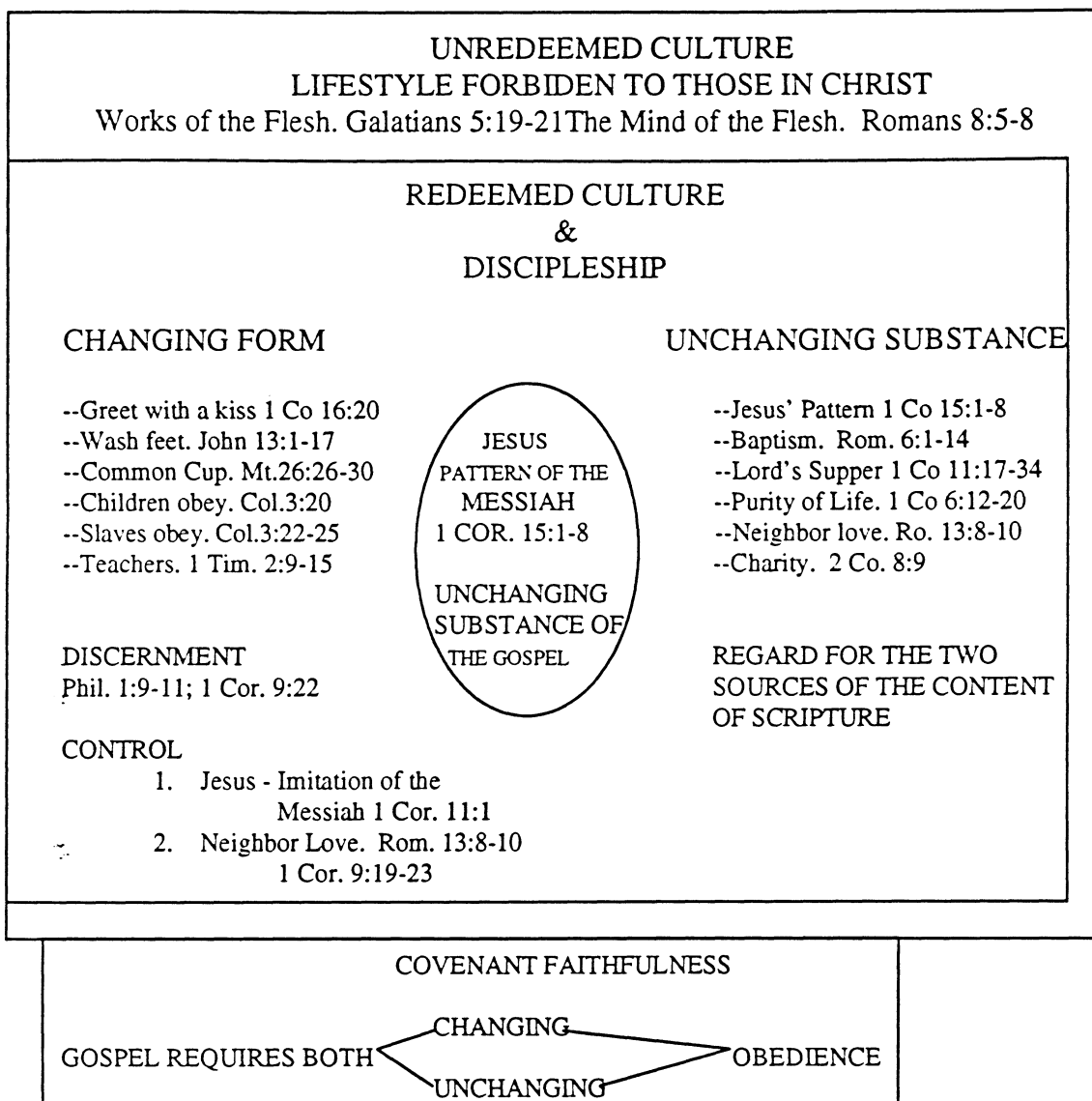


Figure 2.3 A MODEL OF CHANGE

to use a common cup in the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 10:16-17; Mat. 26:27). Furthermore, the twelve year old female child would have been required to obey her father's troth (Eph. 6:1), uniting her in marriage to an adult male, sometimes twenty or more years her senior. The Christian Roman citizen would have been required to obey rather than to speak out against the emperor (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17). The Christian slave would, of necessity, obey the slave master (Eph. 6:5). Christian women would have been required to learn in silence (1 Cor. 14:34-35) and they would not have been allowed to teach and have authority over males (1 Tim. 2:11-14). This was the proper form of the expression of discipleship in the first century. It was the appropriate conduct in that historical

time. As we proceed, we will see that *we have changed, and rightly so, all of the above practices of the form of the first century discipleship without disturbing the unchanging substance of the once-for-all gospel, the pattern of the Messiah.*

I. A MODEL OF SOCIAL FACTS: John Searle

How are we to conduct our discipleship today; that is the current question. In order to probe more fully this matter of the changing form of the expression of our discipleship, I want to introduce a model of culture developed by John Searle² at the University of California in Berkeley. This model will help us understand how we construct our social reality. Searle divides the *fact universe* into *brute facts* and *social facts* (See Fig. 2.4). Brute facts are unchanging. As such, they are observer independent. They are unaffected by the way we think or talk about them. *Brute facts are "givens" and would be there even if all humans ceased to exist and were no longer present to think and talk about them.*

Figure 2.4
(Adapted from John R. Searle. 1995. *The Construction of Social Reality*. New York: The Free Press).

THE FACT UNIVERSE

I. BRUTE FACTS	OBSERVER INDEPENDENT	EARTH/STONE WHICH WE CALL YOSEMITE
II. SOCIAL FACTS	OBSERVER DEPENDENT	YOSEMITE IS A NATIONAL PARK
=====		
HOW SOCIAL FACTS OPERATE		
"X"	"Counts As"	"Y" IN "C"
\$20 Treasury certificate	"Counts As"	Money IN Contemporary U.S.A.
\$20 Confederate Treasury Note	"Counted As"	Money IN Arkansas in 1862
Wife Wearing a headcovering	"Counted As"	Respect IN 1 st Century Corinthian Church Service
Wife Wearing a headcovering	"Counts As"	Respect IN Modern IRAN
Wife Wearing a headcovering	"Counts As"	Nothing IN 1996 in a California Church Service

Consider the first example(See Fig. 2.4). Many of you know the geographical location of Yosemite, and Half Dome, the great granite rock located in Yosemite Valley. That rock and that geographical locale constitute a brute fact. We expect this bit of geology and geography called Yosemite to be there whether we, as humans, are able to observe it or not. *By contrast, a social, institutional fact would be observer dependent. This means that it depends on how people think about it and what they have agreed to do about it.* For example (See Fig. 2.4), it is a “social fact” that Yosemite has been designated a National Park for recreational use. This “social fact” required an agreement and enabling legislation to constitute it, to create Yosemite National Park for recreational use. Obviously, this is a changeable agreement. The environmentalists, for example, may fear that the logging industry will influence Congress to enact legislation to allow logging operations and destroy our National Park System. I do not think there is a danger to Yosemite Park as long as there is a United States of America. However, if the United States ceased to exist and another nation was established, Yosemite might cease to be a National Park for recreational use, and its forests exploited. This is an illustration of the way a human agreement can establish a social institution and create an aspect of social reality.

HOW SOCIAL OR INSTITUTIONAL FACTS CHANGE

John Searle has provided *a generalized model to explain how social facts change.* The simplicity and power of his model makes it not only interesting but very effective in explaining much of our human behavior. It is useful in explaining not only the social realities which govern our legal relations, but also such matters as the Pepperdine Lectureship, which is a social fact created by human agreement. Note how Searle encapsulates the generalized model in the expression “X” counts as “Y” in “C” (See Fig. 2.4). To explicate this model, look at a twenty-dollar bill. Notice the inscription on it which reads, this treasury note, “X”, counts as legal tender, “Y”, for payment of private and public debt in the United States of America, “C”. This “social fact” is constituted by an agreement. As long as that agreement stands, what the twenty dollar treasury note asserts about itself will be true. But consider how change may affect this social fact. My family lived in North Arkansas in the 1860’s during the Civil War. They kept some of the old confederate money. During my childhood, my cousins found my great aunt’s trunk and foolishly plundered it. They found some of the old confederate money and used it as play money. As I recall, they found twenty dollar confederate treasury certificates. These certificates counted as money, as legal tender, in Arkansas in 1862. In Searle’s model (See Fig. 2.4), we could say, “X” a twenty-dollar Confederate treasury certificate, counted as “Y” that is, as money, as legal tender for payment of private and public debts, in “C”, the Confederate States of America in 1862. By 1866 this “social fact” was no longer true and these certificates were simply

pieces of paper. They no longer had the status of legal tender. *This change in valuation illustrates a social fact. When the agreement that established the social fact disappears, the social fact changes.*

A BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATION OF A CHANGING SOCIAL FACT

In our next illustration (See Fig. 2.4), we take up the “social fact” wherein Paul is instructing the Corinthian women to wear a head covering when they pray or prophesy in the public assembly in order to show respect for men or husbands (1 Cor. 11:2-16). Paul is using the “social fact” that “X”, a woman wearing a head covering in a public assembly, counts as “Y”, namely respect for men, in “C”, the city of Corinth in the middle of the first century in the Roman Empire. There are still places in the late twentieth century where this “social fact” or agreement still stands. *A wife, or a woman wearing a head covering counts as respect for men in modern Iran today.* (Fig. 2.4) Recently, a national news bulletin broadcast the story of an eighteen year old young woman in Iran who went into a public gathering without a head covering. The crowd turned into a mob and killed her. She had violated a “social fact” of current Iranian life. *It is evident that a wife or woman wearing a head covering still counts as respect for men in modern day Iran to this hour.* By contrast, in California in 1996, a woman wearing a head covering of the type worn by the women of Iran today or the women of first century Corinth, would count as insensitivity to current styles of dress. In actual fact, whatever a contemporary woman in the United States wears on her head, it does not indicate anything about her respect for a man or a husband. Head dress simply does not have this significance in our society. Social facts change. However, *we could turn the head covering issue into an “unchanging brute fact”.* As an illustration, I had a friend who went to Saudi Arabia to assist in developing their school system. He recounted that in the mid-day summer sun on the desert, the temperature could easily attain 130 degrees Fahrenheit. It is a reality that we humans, as biological beings, cannot walk around in extreme sun and heat for any length of time without a head covering. If you did, another “brute fact” will make itself evident in the form of heat stroke and death. In contrast to the “social fact” about customs of respect and head coverings, this “brute fact” is independent of what we think and say about it. Furthermore, it is an unchangeable fact with respect to our bodies whether we are rich or poor, young or old, and even whether we are male or female. *Social facts can and do change; brute facts are unchangeable.*

As we develop our models of change, we are concerned with “social facts” as they affect the changing forms of the expression of our discipleship. We have established that social facts are constituted by human agreement. Consequently, *when these agreements cease or change, then the social fact will change.* For this reason, we observe cultural changes when we move from one geographical locale to another or when we shift from one historical period to another.

II. RULE THEORY AS A MODEL OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE: George Lindbeck

At this point, let us look at a model called "Rule Theory" which will *supplement the generalized model of "social facts" from Searle by focusing directly on change in religious doctrines.* This model should be of particular interest to those of us in the Restoration Movement because it is directly applicable to the use of direct commands, approved examples and necessary inference for establishing church practice. This form of Biblical authority is in a "rule format" and allows a ready application of "Rule Theory" formulated by George Lindbeck³ at Yale. *According to Lindbeck, Christians want rules that are infallible, unchanging, and normative. His model proposes to give us inspired, once-for-all standards of truth, and yet allow for change in scripture teaching in order to maintain historical relevance.* That may sound like having your cake and eating it too. But rule theory is more than clever. Lindbeck proceeds to deliver what he has promised. *In rule theory, both the eliciting conditions or problem, and the rule developed in response to the presenting conditions are tied together.* Let us consider an example of the way rules arise. Some of you who enjoy watching football may remember an event which occurred some years ago. The Oakland Raiders won a very significant game of the season on an unusual play. As the game clock ran out of time, the Raiders were in the midst of the final play. They were down near the goal line. As I recall, Fred Billetnikoff, a veteran player, had the ball. He was tackled short of the goal line. He fumbled the ball forward. Some claimed that he simulated a fumble. Nevertheless, he fumbled the ball forward to a team mate who caught it and ran into the end zone, scoring the winning touchdown. Due to the controversy over the play, the league decided that this type of play was not tolerable. So they established a rule that eliminated the possibility for a team recovering its own fumble to advance the ball on a fumble. We can see how certain conditions arise and in order to meet the problems created, a rule is established. *The rule applies to the specific conditions which it addresses. According to Lindbeck's rule theory, "as long as the originating conditions that called forth the rule are in place, the rule applies in the same way." If the conditions are different, then the rule will not apply. In rule theory, it is the conditions that change, the rule remains constant.*

RULE THEORY ILLUSTRATED

Consider our rule theory chart (See Fig. 2.5). As you will note, in Great Britain you drive on the left side of the highway, whereas, in the United States you drive on the right side of the highway. The rule concerning driving has a simple principle behind it, namely, to provide for safe movement of automobiles along the highway. In this instance, the identical principle is applied in opposite ways. Though the principle of safe movement of cars on the highway is implemented in opposite rules, these rules are correct and true in each instance.

It is self-evident that this is right due to the difference in the agreements about driving in the United States and in Great Britain. *Furthermore, as long as the originating conditions and agreements which brought forth the rules hold, the rules will apply in the same way.* Obviously, these rules could change and Searle has shown us that social facts do change.

RULE THEORY

COMMAND OR RULE	APPLICATION				
	20 th c. USA	20 th c. GB	1 st c. COR	1 st c. EPH	20 th c IRA
DRIVE ON THE RIGHT	Yes	No	?	?	?
DRIVE ON THE LEFT	No	Yes	?	?	?
WOMAN TO WEAR A HEAD COVERING (1 Co 11:5)	No	No	Yes	?	Yes
GREET WITH HOLY KISS (1 Co 16:20; 1Pe 5:14)	No	No	Yes	Yes	?
COMMON CUP Mt 26:27; 1 Co 10:17; Mt 26:23; (Michael Rockefeller)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
SLAVES OBEY YOUR MASTERS Eph 6:5-8Alabama in 1860 (Yes) versus 1866 (No)1 Co 7:21-24 Both Yes and No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
WIVES SUBMIT TO YOUR HUSBANDS Eph 5:22.This was True in Jewish, Greek, & Roman Culturein the first Century Roman World.	?	?	Yes	Yes	Yes
WASH ONE ANOTHER'S FEET John 13:14-17; 1 Tim 5:10 (Helmut Koester on changed conditions)	No	No	?	Yes	?

When the Cultural Situation today is the same as the Conditions which called forth the Rule in the New Testament Age, then the Rule applies today. A rule can be "once-for-all" in its validity but transitory in its application.

Adaptation of Rule Theory from Lindbeck, George (1984). *The Nature of Doctrine*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press.

FIGURE 2.5
RULE THEORY

RULE THEORY APPLIED TO RELIGIOUS DOCTRINES

1. Rule Theory and the Example of Respect

Let us apply rule theory to the instance (See Fig. 2.5), in which Paul instructs a woman to wear a head covering while praying or prophesying in the public assembly in the city of Corinth in the first century. (I Cor. 11:5) This is a clear example of a religious rule or doctrine. As we noted previously, Lindbeck's model calls for a religious rule to meet the three conditions; namely, it must be infallible or inspired, it must be unchanging or once-for-all, and it must be normative or a standard for truth. Despite these stringent criteria, rule theory

allows change. *I believe that Lindbeck's rule theory provides a more adequate explanation of this text (1 Cor. 11:5) than the traditional approaches.* The conditions of "respect" in Corinth in the middle of the first century brought forth this rule. These originating conditions about how women were to show respect to men are bound to the rule and its application. In "Rule Theory", as long as these conditions are constant or present, the rule applies in the same way. *This readily explains why a Christian missionary in Modern Iran would abide by this exact rule and require Christian women in 1996, in Iran, to wear a head covering in the public assembly of the church.* This practice would still be necessary in order to fulfill the conditions of respect for males to be shown by women in Iran to this very hour. Paul views this as a matter of "neighbor love" and "mission consciousness" for believers not to give offense or put a stumbling block in the path of those we would lead to Christ. In other words, *when the conditions which brought forth the rule still hold, then the rule applies in the same way.* The rule is infallible, unchanging as a standard of truth, but when the conditions change the rule no longer applies. This pattern enables "Rule Theory" to explain why we do not require a woman in the United States, in 1996, to wear a head covering in a public assembly. The condition, "respect for males" in a Western democracy, is no longer associated with a woman's head dress. *The model explains why this "infallible rule" no longer applies. Neighbor love is no longer expressed in conditions that were in place in first century Corinth. This is a critical discrimination and illustrates the power of the model.* The rule concerning women wearing a head covering was generated to ensure that "respect" was shown to men in a culture that required a particular behavior of the woman. When the culture no longer ties respect to this behavior, it is no longer incumbent on the woman. *But we must be careful at this point. The rule is still valid. The rule is still infallible, unchanging and normative. It is regulating correct behavior. The conditions have changed, the rule has not.* Interestingly, rule theory has no difficulty with the fact that the application of an unchanging, infallible rule can be "yes" and "no" at the same historical time or at a later time. It can readily account for a "yes" to the woman to wear a head covering in first century Corinth, with a "no" to the need for wearing a head covering to show respect in present day America. It can readily account for a "yes" to the requirement to wear a head covering in modern day Iran. When the originating cultural conditions which brought forth the rule are present, then the rule applies. When the originating conditions which brought forth the rule are not in place, then the rule will not apply. Furthermore, *in the face of this change, the rule can still be infallible, unchanging and normative. It should be evident that rule theory has great explanatory power.*

2. Rule Theory and Social Greeting

Let us take up another example of *a religious rule which we have discarded* (See Fig. 2.5). Scripture repeatedly instructs us to "Greet one another with a kiss" (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20). Paul did not originate this rule of

greeting with a kiss. This was common practice in the Mediterranean world of his day. Paul gave it a Messianic emphasis, namely, "Greet with a *holy* kiss." Today, in the United States, we greet one another by shaking hands. *We brush this ancient rule aside as trivial, and miss the whole point that we are witnessing a straightforward example of how the unchanging substance of the gospel was always separate from the changing forms of the expression of our discipleship.* To greet with a kiss was true in first century Corinth, and is still true in the Middle East today. Recently, I saw Yasser Arafat on the evening television news being greeted by other Arab leaders. These Middle East leaders were greeting each other with a kiss. Rule theory explains both the continuance of this practice in some contemporary cultures as well as its disappearance in others. Utilizing John Searle's model of "social facts", we understand that they are constituted by "agreements" with respect to meanings and values. We know from rule theory that the eliciting conditions and the consequent rule which meets the needs arising from the conditions are tied together. *Thus, when the cultural understanding today is the same as the cultural conditions which called forth the rule in the New Testament age, then the rule applies today.* Lindbeck summarizes by saying, "a rule can be once for all in its validity, but transitory in its application."

We now have models from Searle and Lindbeck that clearly demonstrate how "social facts" or "cultural rules" arise, are constituted, and when we are to apply them. Furthermore, these models enable us to meet a significant need for retaining our religious teaching as infallible, unchanging and normative while allowing for change in our practice. *Religious rules need the advance given by Lindbeck, since we want them to remain normative.* It would be of no consequence to have cultural rules become irrelevant and simply disappear. However, this would create special problems for religious rules, since we view them differently, namely as inspired, once-for-all and the standards of truth.

3. Rule Theory and the Lord's Supper.

Another practice that has disappeared in the mainline Churches of Christ and a number of other religious bodies (See Fig. 2.5), is the use of the common cup in the observance of the Lord's Supper. This is another instance of a clear teaching from Jesus which has been changed as a form of the expression our discipleship. On the night before the cross, after observing the Passover, Jesus took the cup, blessed it and gave it to his disciples with the command, "Drink of it, all of you" (Mat. 26:27, RSV). Jesus and the disciples passed a common cup. The cultural conditions, the cultural awareness which would include their medical knowledge, allowed for the sharing of a common cup. Culture is encapsulated experience or knowledge and their medical knowledge, experience and awareness would not only have allowed the sharing of a common cup, their culture required it. *In the first century culture, the sharing of the common cup*

was the most intimate form of fellowship. A great deal of historical, cultural ignorance has gathered around the issue of the use of multiple cups among religious people. I do not wish to belittle the seriousness with which some people still adhere to the practice of using a common cup in the observance of the Lord's Supper. It is found today in the high church settings of Episcopalian congregations. I recognize that a number of Christian people feel that this is an aspect of our fellowship that should be respected and that we should imitate Christ in this matter.

This change in our practice provides a critical example of the need to develop models of change whereby we can teach and expect change apart from divisiveness. I lived through and listened to the arguments over multiple-cups versus one-cup. It was a struggle over the need for change, while appearing not to change, in order to protect the plea that we were following exactly the New Testament pattern of worship. *One of the arguments over the "contents" versus the "container" illustrates our lack of understanding of culture. It was the contention that we could change to multiple cups because it was the contents and not the container, whether one or many, that had meaning and significance.* Perhaps I am betraying my heritage but I no longer believe that this argument would have even been conceivable to first century people. This argument looks too much like a rationalization after the fact. It appears to be designed to give the impression that we can make the shift from one-cup to multiple cups without having actually changed anything of significance. I am convinced that this argument would look foolish to a contemporary cultural anthropologist, and for a very good reason. *The cultural historian would point to solid evidence that, for the ancient people, both the cup and the contents had great symbolic meaning in the New Testament age.* First century people certainly knew the difference between a cup and its contents, however, both had significance. I am persuaded that it is our lack of cultural awareness that has caused us to misunderstand the meaning and significance of the one-cup issue. When Jesus served the common cup and each of the twelve partook of it, they were all signifying their unity with Him. The evidence for this understanding is present in the context without looking to cultural data. Immediately before the institution of the supper, Jesus had stated the serious significance of sharing a common container. Moments before passing the cup, he had spoken of Judas betraying him that night. He said of Judas, "he who dips with me in the bowl will betray me" (Mat. 26:23). In other words, part of the heinousness of Judas betrayal was the fact that he had in that very moment shared a common container. Jesus expressed his disappointment, that one who had engaged in this most intimate form of sharing and fellowship, namely sharing the same container, would then betray him.

It is important that we understand this practice of an institutional or social fact which we have changed. The significance of the common cup antedates the time of Jesus. In the book of Samuel, (II Sam. 12:3), Nathan tells David a story about a rich man who took a poor man's little ewe lamb, the only thing he

had, and served it to feed his guests. Nathan heightens the rich man's despicable act by describing how precious that little lamb was to the poor man. He recounts that this lamb slept in the bosom of the poor man *and even drank from his cup. There was no more intimate fellowship than sharing the common cup. Jesus and the disciples used a common cup and both the contents and the container had significance and meaning.*

Let us take note of a modern incident which illustrates how cup and contents are both still meaningful in a culture where the originating conditions of the first century world are still present in a twentieth century culture. *This is an example of a culture which still has the same understandings about the meaning of sharing a common cup as was the case in the New Testament age.* In the 1960's Michael Rockefeller, the son of Governor and later Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, was involved in anthropological work in the New Guinea jungle. He and a friend were studying and filming a headhunting tribe in the remote, relatively unexplored portion of the New Guinea jungle. Rockefeller later disappeared, and despite repeated attempts by the family, he was never found. His friend escaped, and brought back the film which they had thus far completed. They had filmed a night ceremony where the tribe had gathered to prepare themselves for a headhunting raid on a neighboring tribe. Rockefeller and his companion were in fear for their life, and had planned to slip away from the village during or after the ceremony. As part of the ceremony, the tribesmen were brewing a pot of alcoholic beverage. To our hygienic culture, the pictures revealed a very unsanitary appearing scene. As they prepared to drink together, the natives were apparently chewing some kind of brown root. The juice from their tobacco substitute was running down their chins. Rockefeller's friend stated his concern over what they knew was on the menu. It was enough to turn the stomach of a Westerner. There was a moment in the ceremony when all the men formed a circle. The leader of the group dipped a large gourd, the common container, into the brew bubbling in the pot. He took a drink, and without so much as wiping the running stain from his mouth, passed the common container down the line of seated men. As revolting as the prospect of sharing this common container was, neither Rockefeller nor his companion were willing to make the argument which some proponents of multiple cups have made in our churches. If they had followed the reasoning used by some who justify multiple cups, they would have said to these tribesmen, "let us understand, it is the *contents* and not the *container* that is meaningful. I will use my own cup to get a drink, if you please." They clearly understood that all who partook of the same cup that night were symbolizing by that act that they were in fellowship in this circle of warriors. *The cultural anthropologist would know that both the sharing of the common cup, as well as partaking of the contents, had the utmost significance and meaning.* Just as was the case in the New Testament age, our hygienic concerns would not have been understandable. Rockefeller and his friend perceived the meaning and significance and became converts to the use of a common cup on the spot, that very night. When one is in fear for one's life,

it is easy to dismiss our quibbling and easy rationalizations and get right to the facts of the matter.

Since we have the command of Jesus in the New Testament for the use of a common cup, how do we justify changing this practice? We have rejected the rationalization that the ceremonial or symbolic meaning resides in the contents and not in the container. In an ancient culture, this would never have been the issue. I wish to propose that *we should not use a common container today for two reasons. Both of these reasons reflect "cultural change" which should guide the form of the expression of our discipleship today. The first reason for changing to multiple cups is the fact that our cultural awareness, which includes our medical knowledge, will not allow us to use a common container because to do so would involve us in violating neighbor love, the second great commandment. Let us start with a practical example. I attended a "one-cup" public school as an elementary child in the depression years of the 1930's in North Arkansas. In this one-room country school, there was, at the back of the row of seats, a galvanized bucket filled with drinking water from the well in the school house yard. Hanging from a nail beside the water bucket was a dipper from which all of us twenty or so children drank. We did so until the government instituted a program of free vaccination for school children and the county nurse visited our little school house. When she became thirsty, she went to the back of the room and discovered the "common cup" from which we all drank. She proceeded to call a meeting of the school trustees and, I am sure, she tried to explain to those Ozark mountaineers about bacterial infection. Regardless of whether she was able to communicate this problem, she was clear in saying that we children were to be provided individual drinking cups or she would close the school. As you can imagine, this created no little stir in the neighborhood. The debate spread to the local church. If it was unsanitary to share a common cup at school, then how could we share a common cup at the Lord's Table? My grandfather was able to introduce multiple-cups following this episode but not without some loss of membership from those who felt this was a significant departure from the New Testament Pattern of worship.*

How does this matter of the common cup relate to neighbor love? The matter is self-evident. For example, if I have active tuberculosis, which is now becoming highly resistant to antibiotics, and I continue to share a common cup with you, I have violated neighbor love. *The sharing of the common cup in the first century, with its cultural awareness, was symbolic of a deep, caring fellowship, given their cultural or medical knowledge. Today, the same act would be symbolic of a lack of care or concern for my neighbor's health and welfare. This reflects the impact of cultural change upon the form of the expression of our discipleship.* It does so despite the fact that the "brute fact", which would pertain to the matter of communicating infection by the use of a common container has not changed. It is social understanding or cultural knowledge that has changed. Searle taught us that brute facts are independent

of how we think or talk about them. *However, a "social fact" or institutional fact is observer dependent. By being observer dependent it is thereby dependent upon the "knowledge" and "awareness" available in the culture of a particular historical period.* Our knowledge and awareness today does not allow us to share a common cup as a symbol of intimate caring for the other person. In a situation where infection is present, we know the use of a common cup will spread disease. We no longer view the sharing of a common cup as a sign of neighbor love. In fact, our understanding leads us to the opposite conclusion, namely that sharing a common cup is a sign of a lack of neighbor love. Lindbeck's rule theory taught us that the originating conditions are bound to the rule, since they prompted it in the first instance. In a modern culture, we could scarcely conceive of this infallible rule ever being applicable again. According to Lindbeck's rule theory, a rule though infallible in its expression of neighbor love in the first century, could cease to be applicable in changed conditions. Only in a culture such as the one visited by Michael Rockefeller in New Guinea in the 1960's, which lacked our contemporary medical understanding, could there remain a practice of the use of a common cup, where the sharing of the common cup would still have the original meaning of intimate fellowship and caring for the neighbor.

A second reason for not sharing a common cup at the Lord's table is closely related to our first argument but extends to the fact that we are forbidden in scripture to put God to the test. In response to the first rationale about the danger of infection. Consider the argument made by some, "I will let God take care of the germs, I am going to drink of the cup." At first, this appears to be a high level of commitment to God. However, with our cultural, medical awareness, it will not bear examination. For example, if I knew that you had active tuberculosis, and I chose to drink of the common cup with you, I am consciously, with full awareness, either being willfully reckless with my health, or I am putting God to the test. As evidence for this assertion, the gospels record the temptation of Jesus. In one instance, Satan took Jesus up on the pinnacle of the temple and said, "Cast yourself down because God has given his angels charge over you; they will bear you up lest you dash your foot against a stone." Jesus knew what happened when you jumped from a tall building. He understood that as a human being, he would, in the normal course of events, fall and kill himself! Without that knowledge, of course, there would not have been a temptation to test for a special relationship to God. Jesus replied to Satan with another scripture from Deuteronomy. "It is written that you shall not tempt the Lord your God" (Mat. 4:5-7). *Now consider the case when we partake of a common cup with full awareness of the possibility of infection. Assume that we partake and then say, "let God take care of the germs." We are deliberately putting God to the test.* This is the very thing which Jesus declared to be wrong in dealing with the temptation put before him by Satan. In view of these facts, I would contend that we should set aside the common cup for at least two higher principles, namely the principle of *brotherly love* and the *principle of not putting*

God to the test. However, it is critical that we recognize that this shift in our practice rests on "cultural change." In these instances, cultural change directly impinges on the form of the expression of our discipleship. Clearly, to fail to teach, expect and demand change in the form of the expression of our discipleship with regard to the common cup, can lead to our being guilty of sin against the neighbor. "Whoever knows what is right to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin." (James 4:17). It will not do to simply shrug this matter aside as something we have already settled. It is true that our historical conditioning, our modern acculturation, allows us to readily think this way. But, what we are facing are clear examples of the fact that "substance" and "form" must be separated in our obedience to the gospel. The "form" of the expression of our discipleship is interlocked with "culture" and "cultural change," whereas, the "unchanging substance" of the gospel, the story of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, is undisturbed by the change in the form of discipleship.

4. Rule Theory and Christian Humility

Figure 2.5 refers to another example of a change in the form of the expression our discipleship. *We are commanded by Jesus to wash one another's feet (John 13:12-15). There is a tendency to dismiss this teaching as something which everybody understands as something not significant for our discipleship. This is another clear example of the need for the development of models of change in the form of our discipleship. We need to be careful about our cavalier attitude on this matter. As I ponder this incident, I am at a loss for words to describe the startling nature of what is here described. Next to the cross, this must surely be one of the most stunning events in scripture. On this night before the cross, the disciples in the upper room saw the basin of water and the towel provided by the host for someone to perform the menial service of washing the feet of those who reclined at table. Not one of the twelve rose to provide the servant task. Peter, James, John and all the rest avoided the task. Jesus, as master and Lord, arose and took the towel and the basin of water and performed the servant task. The disciples experienced an act of humble service which is unimaginable when we consider that this is the Son of God who will shortly return to the presence of the Father who acts as slave to all. This is not a "charade". Jesus is performing an expected service. This is a genuine act of kindness. Jesus is meeting a real human need. He does say, "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14). This is another clear instance of a religious rule. Now, are we justified in not doing this act today? How can such a striking example from the Lord himself be considered part of the changing form of the expression of our discipleship?*

This particular example provides a significant step forward in our understanding of the importance of developing models of change. *They are necessary in order for us to truly honor the original gospel.* Helmut Koester⁴,

in writing concerning primitive Christian heresy, states that "*tradition as such becomes heresy as soon as one attempts to use it as if the historical context had not changed since it was formulated.*" This is directly applicable to this incident where Jesus washes the disciples feet and commands that they do likewise. It will provide yet *another specific instance of how change in cultural meaning can change the form of the expression of our discipleship.*

The rule from Jesus concerning the command to wash one another's feet can become a mere ceremonial act. As an illustration, *the Roman Catholic Pope performs a ceremonial foot washing service, on occasion, with the television cameras focused on him. The first problem with such a ceremony is that it is not designed to meet a real human need. The second problem is that it has not arisen in a natural human context of service to others..* In our modern, hygienic age, where we sell deodorant and foot powder as though they were life's necessities, there is not a genuine need for this kind of act. *When the Pope performs this ceremony, before the eyes of the watching world, it unavoidably becomes a charade. It is a kind of "play" and will inevitably trivialize one of the most reverent acts of human history, namely, the moment that Jesus, the Son of God humbled himself as a slave to his own disciples.* In Helmut Koester's terms, we "*pervert*" the original gospel, when we transport the first century tradition directly, and without change, into the late twentieth century as though culture made no difference in the meaning of the event. This should be self-evident in this instance. Admittedly, the kind of humble service which Mother Teresa performs in assisting the dying poor by washing their bodies, is much closer to an imitation of what Jesus did in the upper room. But even here, we have changed the form of obedience and we would appeal to the principle rather than to the specific act. It is important to note that we are observing exactly what happens when we fail to realize what Lindbeck has stated that the rule and originating conditions are bound together. The rule meets a particular set of conditions. *To ignore the changed conditions "perverts" the rule and, for New Testament rules, this results in a "perversion of the gospel".*

To press this matter of the significance of cultural change on our obedience, I recall instances of *individuals who felt compelled to follow literally the practice of foot washing.* In my home community in the Ozarks, a charismatic group of Christians met in the old country schoolhouse. I am certain that it was out of a genuine concern to do all that Jesus commanded which prompted them to schedule a foot washing service every quarter. *They were very conscientious, and apparently had no models for change. Consequently, they thought they had to practice literal washing of one another's feet.* However, as a young child, I saw a different side. I can remember those hill folk down at the country store talking about the upcoming service. One would remark, "Well, I have to get home tonight. We are having a foot washing service at church. I have to wash my dirty socks and feet." They would jokingly compare notes on who probably had the dirtiest feet. As a child, I realized that there was

something wrong with this practice. One could sense that *this act had turned into a charade, a mere performance without meaning in the sense of meeting an actual human need.* This is an example of what Koester meant by our attempting to transfer the first century tradition to the twentieth century as though its meaning and significance had not changed. This will pervert the meaning of the act performed by Jesus. This is the wrong way to image Christ in the world. Let us not trivialize this matter. *We need to have models of change lest we make light of the sacred.*

5. Rule Theory and Ancient Forms of Obedience

Rule theory offers a model for interpreting the radical changes from the first century to the twentieth century in characterizing the forms of obedience required of believers. For example, a Christian father in Rome in the first century would have been within the bounds of acceptable legal, moral and social custom in arranging the marriage of his twelve-year old female child to an adult male ten, twenty or more years her senior. This was the normal age for such a troth to occur. Paul's command for the child to obey the parent (Eph. 6:1) would have applied to this practice. This is clearly not a "form" of obedience which would be allowable in our contemporary society in the United States. The conditions have changed, so the rule will no longer apply in the same way. The "unchanging substance" of the gospel is not disturbed by this change in the "form" of our obedience. This change is paralleled in the command for the slave to obey the master (Eph. 6:5). This "form" is used by Jesus (Luke 17:7-10) and by Paul (1 Cor. 9:19) to "model" our relationship to God. The "form" is not part of the "unchanging substance," though it can be used in the particular conditions of the Roman world as a model of our relationship to our Lord. Similarly, the command to obey governing authorities (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17) required a passive obedience to an authoritarian dictatorship which is not the model of our obedience in a modern democracy. We are to actively oppose by voice and by ballot those who govern us, when we differ with them. The "form" of our obedience is not tied to the ancient model. The ancient "form" of civil obedience was never part of the unchanging substance of the gospel. Yet, the rules given by Paul and by Peter, were infallible, unchanging and normative, given the presence of the originating conditions which brought forth the rule. *It is the conditions that change, the rule remains invariant. A rule can remain valid while being transitory in its application.*

III. A MODEL OF SCRIPTURE CONTENT: Alexander Campbell

In Figure 2.6, we will propose to extend the models of change which we have derived from Searle's work on "social facts" and Lindbeck's work on "rule theory" to a theory about the sources for the content of scripture as formulated by Alexander Campbell.⁵ In 1827, in his publication entitled *The Christian Baptist*, Campbell describes "the two-source hypothesis" for scripture

content. Campbell notes that many people will remark that the Bible is divine revelation, and mean the whole book. He states that much mischief has come about because this is not a true description of the Scriptures. *The Bible is not a book of divine revelation, rather it contains divine revelation. He does insist it was written by inspiration and the content was selected by the guidance of the Spirit.* Nevertheless, it is inaccurate to call it a book of divine revelation. He is careful to show that *the Bible contains a great deal of material that is not placed there by divine revelation. Much of the material contained in the Bible is simple, historical information.* When we encounter a text which is divine revelation it will often be noted as “God says” or the prophet will add the phrase “thus saith the Lord “. So, it is more accurate to say that there is divine revelation in the Bible, but most of it has its source in human reason and in historical information.

Figure 2.6

CAMPBELL'S TWO-SOURCE HYPOTHESIS FOR SCRIPTURE CONTENT

“Revelation, properly so called, is an exhibit of supernatural things unknowable by any other means in the reach of mortals. Whatever can be known by reason, or the exercise of our five senses, is not a subject of revelation at all. ... For example, that God is a Spirit, is beyond the reach of our reasoning powers to discover, and could not be known by any human means. That a Spirit created matter, or that God made the earth, is a truth which no man could, from his five senses or his reasoning powers, discover. It is therefore a revealed truth. That man has a spirit in him capable of surviving his mortal frame, is also a supernatural truth. That man will live again, and be either happy or miserable in a future state, is another supernatural truth. That God so loved the world as to send his only begotten Son to enlighten, purify, and happify men, is a supernatural truth. Now the Bible contains a thousand things that belong not to this class. For example, Moses writes five books in which he relates many thousand historic facts and incidents, none of which are supernatural, though there are many communications in his writings which are supernatural and rank under the head of divine revelations. This is as true of the apostolic writings as of the ancient Jewish prophets.”

Christian Baptist, 1827, p. 233.

Campbell has an extensive treatment on the two-source theory. Divine revelation is carefully restricted to scripture which reveals to us the mind of God on a subject. It is something which man could not know by the use of his senses and by human reason. It should be self-evident that “no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Cor. 2:11). In Figure 2.7, our first heading is entitled “Historical Information” and the second column is entitled “Divine Revelation.” The first example pertains to our master story. To make the statement that Jesus died on the cross under Pontius Pilate is not a matter of divine revelation, even though it is contained in the Scriptures. It does not constitute the impartation of revealed information about the mind of God anymore than the reporting of the fact that John was beheaded by Herod. Both

Figure 2.7
 TWO SOURCE HYPOTHESIS OF SCRIPTURE CONTENT
 Adapted from A. Campbell, Christian Baptist, 1827, p. 233.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION	DIVINE REVELATION
Jesus Died On the Cross Under Pontius Pilate	"For Our Sins"
Slaves Obey Your Masters	"As to the Lord"
Wives Submit to Husbands	"As to the Lord"
Called as a Slave	"Serve as Lord's Freeman"
Called as a Free Person	"Serve as the Lord's Slave"
Carpenter From Nazareth Washes feet of Twelve Men at Passover	"Son of God Washes Feet of of his disciples"
HYPOTHESES:	
If called in Patriarchal Marriage in Modern Iran.....	"Abide, as to the Lord"
If called in Egalitarian Marriage in Modern U.S.A.	"Abide, as to the Lord"
CHANGING FORM	UNCHANGING SUBSTANCE

Figure 2.7 Two-Source Hypothesis

the crucifixion of Jesus and the execution of John are matters of historical record. Reflect on this for a moment. All manner of persons knew and could have reported accurately on these events who never believed in Jesus Christ. Obviously, the governor, Pontius Pilate knew fully of the events of the crucifixion. Nevertheless, there is an aspect of the crucifixion that is clearly dependent on divine revelation. Under the second heading (Fig. 2.7), you will see recorded under it that part of the crucifixion report which is *inspired revelation*. When you read in the account that Jesus was crucified "for our sins," we now have an interpretation of the cross that only divine revelation can supply. That Christ died "for our sins" tells us how God accepts the crucifixion of His Son. There was no way that man could have known the mind of God with regard to the meaning of the crucifixion except by a divine disclosure. Campbell points out that there are thousands of facts recorded in scripture which are not "divine revelation." It did not require divine revelation to inform the apostles where Jerusalem was located, or who Gamaliel was, or the status of Pontius Pilate in the Roman Government. Included under the heading of

“historical information” are references to places, travel journeys of Paul, all manner of events in the life of the early church, and other such matters which were known by experience and were, therefore, not the subject of special “divine revelation”.

1. Content Theory and the Practice of Slavery

Let us consider some implications of the differentiation of the source of Scripture content for our development of models of change in the form of the expression of our discipleship. Look once more at Paul directing slaves to obey their master. He did not invent this “rule”. It was a historical reality. Long before Paul wrote this injunction this rule was in force in the Roman Empire. *It would have been a true statement of the rule with regard to slaves even if Paul had never given this instruction.* But, Paul does add to the rule something which involves “divine revelation”. He takes this social, institutional fact and gives it a revelational note when he says slaves obey “*as to the Lord*”. He adds the promise that whatever good the slave does, the Lord will provide a reward. He also dealt with the role of the master. The revelational aspect for the master calls for the master to exercise his role as one who has a master in heaven. In short, *from the perspective of “divine revelation”, the master is also a slave, namely the slave of Christ. Rome would not so regard the role of the master.* However, it is so regarded from God’s perspective and this understanding of the role had to be communicated to us by a revelation of the mind of God. *A new “social fact” is born for those who fill the roles of master and slave in Christ.*

2. Content Theory and Submission of the Wife

Let us apply our two-source theory with respect to Scripture content to the role of husband and wife. In Paul’s instructions to the Ephesian church, we find the rule, “wives be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord” (Eph. 5:22). *Paul did not originate the first part of that rule, namely “wives be subject to your husbands”.* This was long-standing, historical information. A cultural anthropologist would remind us that this was already a “social fact” long before Paul stated it. It would have been a “social fact” even outside the stream of Judeo-Christian history. It was, as we have been phrasing it, a matter that was “world-wide and history long”. Paul takes up this “social fact” of wifely subjection from straightforward historical experience and adds an aspect from “divine revelation”. *The addition to the rule which historically said “wives be subject to your husbands” of the phrase “as to the Lord” is a transcendent perspective on this commonplace rule.* The historical practice of subjection is now given “value” in Christ in that the wife is subject as a service to Christ. *She would have had to observe the first portion of the rule, namely to be subject to her husband, in the Roman Empire.* The Greek Philosopher Aristotle had made it an emphatic rule that the wife was to be in subjection to the husband and Roman custom dictated the same. Paul lifts our view enabling us to see that this

“subjection” can be completed in the Spirit for the Christian wife and it will “count as” service to the Lord. *A new social fact is born as the gospel embraces those who have the role of husband and wife.*

3. Content Theory and Hierarchicalism

In the last example (See Fig. 2.7), *we will consider the case of one who has been called in a patriarchal marriage.* This, of course, was the normal situation in the first century. The marriage relationship was characterized by male headship and female submission. As a first century Christian, you would have been expected to abide in the marriage roles “*as to the Lord*” (1 Cor. 7:17). Furthermore, if you were in modern Iran today as a missionary of the gospel of Christ you would follow to the letter that same patriarchal model for the roles of husband and wife. Part of our calling, Paul reminds us, is to “give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God” (1 Cor. 10:32). Since modern Iranian culture upholds the rule of patriarchy, of male headship and female submission, it would be incumbent upon you to abide within these cultural rules. As part of our imitation of Jesus in neighbor love, we are not to engage in practices which would offend those we seek to win to the gospel. However, *if you are in Malibu, California, in 1996, you may very well be called in an egalitarian marriage.* Our argument (See Fig. 2.7) *is that we need not be bound by the “historical information” side of the rules for the relationship of husband and wife, since these reflect the culture of Rome and not divine revelation. But, Paul’s statement about our conduct in this role “as to the Lord,” is divine revelation.* This is a statement guiding our conduct from a transcendent disclosure of the mind of God. Therefore, *We would read Paul’s injunction as requiring us in today’s egalitarian marriage to “abide as to the Lord.”* The divine revelation portion of the rule still applies to marriage relations characterized as “egalitarian” in a Western democracy or as “patriarchal” in modern Iran.

What if we were to insist that we must bind *both* the historical information, the ancient “social fact”, about husband-wife roles in first century Rome *and* the revelational charge for the wife to be subject “as to the Lord”? *To be consistent it would seem that we are then obligated to add a requirement to our initial obedience which would be considered as essential for salvation.* As an example, a situation could arise here in Malibu, California, in the late twentieth century where the husband in an egalitarian marriage presented himself for baptism. Assume that his wife, however, did not accept the faith. Would we not be obligated to inform the husband that as part of his obedience to Christ, he must now establish a hierarchical marriage. *Would we not be required to inform him that he cannot practice egalitarianism or mutuality, since only wifely submission is scriptural.* It is highly likely in today’s society that we would be pushing the husband into a situation that would lead to immediate breakup of the marriage. I am not questioning that there are individuals, and perhaps

congregations, which would take such a stand. Nevertheless, I do not believe Paul would be troubled by the historical development which has led to “egalitarian marriage”. *Our model places hierarchical male-female roles in the category of “social fact” and “historical information” rather than “divine revelation.”* Social facts, as we have learned from John Searle, are constituted by agreements within a culture. The forms of cultural roles can change in history. *Our model leaves the unchanging substance of the gospel undisturbed by changes in the cultural or social facts.* The aspect of “divine revelation” about husband-wife roles is unaffected by these historical shifts. Within this model, Paul could easily say, “abide as to the Lord” to a husband and wife in an egalitarian marriage just as he instructed those in the Roman world, called in a patriarchal marriage, to abide “as to the Lord”. Furthermore, Campbell’s two-source theory of scripture content provides a way to properly discern which aspects of the forms of the expression of our discipleship in marital roles will change and which will abide. It calls for us to recognize the social facts of a cultural epoch as matters of “historical information” while allowing the “divine revelation” aspect to remain unchanged. This dovetails with both models from Searle and Lindbeck. Searle teaches us that social facts are constituted by agreement on meanings within a cultural period. Lindbeck instructs us that “rules” are called forth by problems or originating conditions and a rule can be infallible, unchanging, and normative as truth, while allowing conditions within the culture and the attendant agreements about meaning to change with history. In “rule theory”, as long as the originating conditions are in place, then the rule or teaching will apply in the same way. It is the conditions that change, the rule remains valid but applies only when the conditions are appropriate.

MALE-FEMALE ROLES AND MODELS OF CHANGE

I wish now to apply our models of “social facts” from Searle, “rule theory” from Lindbeck, and Campbell’s two-source theory of the content of scripture to the passages that are usually considered critically important in the issue of male-female roles (1 Cor. 11:2-16; 1 Cor. 14:34-35; 1 Tim. 2:9-15).

1. The Issue of Headship in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

We have already discussed at length the first text (1 Cor. 11: 2-16) with regard to some of the issues in Paul’s instructions about women showing respect for males (1 Cor. 11:2-16). However, we need to consider another controversial statement in this first text (See Fig. 2.8). Paul says (I Cor. 11:3), “the head of the woman is the man (or husband, RSV).” Now scholars exegeting this statement ponder it with the seriousness that leads one to believe that they have not made the first basic discrimination between “social facts” and “brute facts” in the “fact universe”, as described by John Searle. *The word “head” had a commonly accepted cultural meaning in Corinth. Paul is stating a changeable*

“social fact” not an unchangeable “brute fact”. The meaning of the concept is a problem for the “cultural anthropologist” who considers “social facts” by

Figure 2.8

1 Corinthians 11:3 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.

Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church.

Historical Information for Greeks BEFORE Paul

(Aristotle) **“Woman is to man as the slave to the master, the manual to the mental worker, the barbarian to the Greek. Woman is an unfinished man, left standing on a lower step in the scale of development. The male is by nature superior, and the female inferior; the one rules and the other is ruled; and this principle extends, of necessity, to all mankind. Woman is weak of will, and therefore incapable of independence of character or position; her best condition is a quiet home life in which, while ruled by the man in her external relations, she may be in domestic affairs supreme.”**

TWO SOURCES OF CONTENT OF SCRIPTURE

Historical Information

Wives Submit to Husbands
Man is the Head of Woman
To Serve & Care for Husband

CHANGING FORM

Revelation

As to the Lord
Christ is the Head of Man
Counts as Service to Christ
1 Co 7:32-35. Also,
Husbands live with
Wife in Mutuality.

UNCHANGING
SUBSTANCE

Figure 2.8

Two Sources for the Content of 1 Corinthians 11:3

examining the culture and its customs to ascertain meanings. It is not to be regarded as a task for the “physical anthropologist” who considers “brute facts” and who would engage in examining bones and taking physical measurements as means to find out if males were actually biologically joined as “head” to female anatomy.

Part of our difficulty with this text (1 Cor. 11:2-16) is due to our “acculturated” way of reading these scripture statements. One could get the idea that some Christians think Paul’s statement that “the head of the woman is the man” meant a “brute fact” of our biology forever unchangeable from creation. That is why we have to “rehearse” the fact that this is a simple, “social fact”. It is a concept originated by the “historical information” available to the Corinthians. Cultural history generated this understanding in Corinthian society. As we noted yesterday, this statement from Paul is certainly not “news”. It contains as much new information as if one stepped out into the sunshine on a bright clear day and announced “the sky is blue.” We are not depreciating Paul, but we wish *to reiterate that his statement to the effect that “the man is the head of the woman” was commonplace knowledge.* It was a “given” in the understanding of the Roman world of that period of history. We must grasp this reality that as a “social fact”, *this phrase in the scripture text was certainly not new information to any of the ancient world, whether Judeo-Christian or non Judeo-Christian.* Paul was very aware that he was working with a “given” of the culture. In fact, I think he chose this expression because *it was one that he knew would not be disputed.* He could count on the fact that the Corinthians would accept without argument the commonplace view that “the man is the head of the woman”. *This aspect of Paul’s statement is a preface to the real issue he wishes to emphasize and one that was new in Corinth, namely “I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ” (1 Cor. 11:3). This is the “divine revelation” side of the argument. This was not a “social fact” in Corinth in Paul’s day, nor was it “historical information” or experience. This was new data for Corinthian men to ponder.* It did not, of course, change the situation in Corinth, or in the Roman Empire, except for those in the believing community.

Now, what we are contending is that Paul is using the form and the structure of the Corinthian culture with respect to male-female relationships, and following the pattern which he used in his dealing with the social roles of master-slave, he is instructing the household of faith in Corinth to how the unchanging substance of the gospel, and the call which they had accepted to the imitation of Jesus, will affect their conduct within these “historically conditioned” roles. The master story, the pattern of the Messiah, can redeem aspects of these structural forms. However, we must not convert these roles, these cultural forms, into the unchanging substance of the gospel. *The ancient roles for male-female relations must not be moved into the center of the vision for our life, and placed there with saving significance alongside the cross of Christ.* That is where

many today have made a serious mistake. The mistake is to fail to recognize Paul's use of a "social fact" which constitutes a "rule" from the "historical understanding" of an ancient people. As such, it does not constitute a "divine revelation". Consequently, the form of these roles remains clearly outside the substance of the gospel just as is true with the roles of master-slave. One can serve "as to the Lord" in these roles from the ancient culture of Rome without thereby bonding them to the unchanging substance of the gospel.

2. The Silence of Women in the Assembly. 1 Cor. 14:34-35

In our next chart (See Fig. 2.9), we will consider Paul's instructions concerning the silence of women in the assembly (I Cor. 14:34-35). In this text, we find Paul exhorting "let the women *keep silent in the assemblies*, they are *not permitted to speak*, they are *to subject themselves*, just as the law also says and if they desire *to learn anything let them ask their husbands at home*, for it is *improper for a woman to speak in the assembly*." As before, Paul is using commonly accepted rules from Roman and Corinthian society in his instructions concerning the behavior of women in the assembly. These rules seem to apply particularly to the conduct of wives. They also are designed to specifically address both Jews and Gentiles, as we will find in our exploring the multi-cultural sources lying behind the phrasing of his instructions. *Once more, Paul is "working with" customs that are already in place and which the Corinthians could not readily contest, as a means of securing the conforming behavior he is expecting of women in Christ in Corinth.*

Let us attempt to identify *the sources* of the expressions used by the apostle in placing restrictions or silence on the behavior of women in the assembly. Consider first the phrase "just as the Law also says." This has been particularly troublesome for scholars in view of the fact that *there is no such direct statement in the Law*. For a history of this problem, the reader is referred to the commentary on first Corinthians by Gordon Fee⁶, which provides a summary of some of the controversial approaches to *determining the source of this expression* by Paul. *We will propose an interpretation for consideration which points to a cultural source for Paul's admonition*. In Acts (18:1-8) we find that Paul worked with Jews and God-fearers, as well as Gentiles, in his mission in Corinth. Paul would, of necessity, word his instructions for the behavior of Christian women with a consideration for a multi-cultural audience comprised of both Jews and Gentiles. This phrase, "just as the Law also says," expects a readership with a background in the Law and, probably, awareness of the traditional Rabbinic interpretation of the Law. Although, it is generally conceded that there is no such expression in the Law, a similar phrasing of such an appeal to the Law concerning women's submission is found in Josephus⁷, the non-Christian Jewish historian who was a contemporary of the Apostle Paul. Josephus does appear to be arguing from Rabbinic views of women or the traditional sources of interpretation of the Law current in his time. Josephus and

Paul may be quoting some common source in Jewish contemporary literature regarding the Rabbinic discussion of the Law rather than intending to cite a specific commandment or text in the Old Testament. Unfortunately, Josephus

Figure 2.9

TWO SOURCES OF THE CONTENT OF 1 COR. 14:34-35

1 Corinthians 14:34 Let the women keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says. 35 And if they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Historian Livy quoting Cato (approx. 200 b.c.).

“discussion of a law (the “Oppian Law”) that severely limited women’s public appearance and activities. The Roman matrons were demonstrating and “could not be kept at home by advice or modesty or their husbands orders”. They dared even to approach and appeal to the consuls”. Their actions were considered “shameful”. speaking to other women’s husbands”. Cato says “Could you not have made the same requests, each of your own husband, at home?”

Plutarch (a.d. 46-120).

“Theano (the wife of Pythagoras), Not only the arm of the virtuous woman, but her speech as well, ought to be not for the public, and she ought to be modest and guarded about saying anything in the hearing of outsiders, since it is an exposure of herself; for in her talk can be seen her feelings, character, and disposition”.

Plutarch, (Conjugal Precepts 31), says, “.....the voice of a modest woman ought to be kept from the public, and she should feel shame at being heard, as at being stripped.” In the next paragraph, Plutarch continues, “She should speak either to, or through, her husband.”

Josephus.

The woman, says the Law, is in all things inferior to the man. Let her accordingly be submissive, not for her humiliation, but that she may be directed; for the authority has been given to the man.”

TWO SOURCES OF CONTENT OF SCRIPTURE

Historical Information

Revelation

Woman silent in public assemblies
 Woman speak either to, or through her husband, be submissive, for it God
 is improper for her to speak in public
CHANGING FORM
SUBSTANCE

Give no offense for Gospel
 1Co 10:32
 Order & Propriety is of
 1 Co 14:4
UNCHANGING

does not cite his source. Nevertheless, the existence of a similar statement in Josephus requires recognition of an *apparent common cultural understanding in Judaism of this period that the Law supported the subjection of women*. Paul's readers, with a background in the Law and its interpretation, which would include both God-fearers and Jewish believers, could be expected to have a familiarity with this current interpretation. We are not assuming that Paul is quoting Josephus, nor that Josephus is quoting Paul. They are both apparently appealing to "accepted cultural viewpoints" recognizable to the relevant parties among their readers. All that is here being proposed is that the purpose of the phrase "just as the Law also says," is to specifically address in his regulations on the behavior of women two of the groups, the God-fearers and the Jewish believers, who have a background in the Law and its interpretation. It is not feasible to turn aside and consider the New Testament practice of "zeal for the Law" allowed Jewish Christians (Acts 21:17-26), in contrast to the freedom from observing the regulations in the Law by Gentile believers.

As we turn to historical statements in Gentile sources, we find there are "parallels" in non-Biblical writings to Paul's instructions about the silence and submission of women. The presence of these "historical parallels" lends strength to our contention that Paul is taking a multi-cultural stance in presenting the instructions about women's role in the assembly. The "historical information" lying behind the admonitions establishes that the apostle's instructions do not represent news to the Corinthians, even with all of the cultural diversity present in the congregation. For example, *both the Roman historian Livy⁸ and the Greek moralist Plutarch⁹ provide us with information that women were not to speak in the public assembly in the presence of men*. So, it is reasonable to assume that the Gentile Christians in Corinth, both Roman and Greek, were already aware, from their history, of the social expectations that wives would speak to and through their husbands. As evidence, Livy¹⁰ records an instance wherein the upper-class Roman women were protesting some added restrictions on their freedom. They accosted the Roman consuls in the streets with their complaints. Livy chides them with the statement, "could you not have made the same request each of your husbands at home". In other words, their behavior was considered inappropriate and *the proper approach for a woman in mid-first-century Rome was to speak to her husband in the privacy of her home and seek his representation on her behalf in public*. *Paul's instructions parallel this common understanding in the Empire*.

We certainly cannot accredit the notions about woman's silence, or speaking to and through her husband to "divine revelation" when it appears in Roman and Greek sources. Campbell's two-source theory of Biblical content seems most appropriate in explaining this appeal. Paul's concern for "decorum", "respect", "order", "honor and shame" as aspects of the exhibition of neighbor

love and of the “mission consciousness” which calls for us to give no offense or cause of stumbling to those we seek to win for Christ are readily explainable by taking note of his appeal to both historical information and “social facts” in calling for this particular form of the expression of discipleship on the part of the Corinthian women.

As further illustration of the “historical background” for this teaching, Plutarch¹¹ recounts an event in which a certain woman named Theano, the wife of Pythagorus, exposed her arm publicly, perhaps inadvertently. In any case, her arm was exposed in public and he made an issue of the matter by stating that *“not only the arm of a virtuous woman, but her speech as well, ought to be not for the public. She should be modest and guarded about saying anything in the hearing of outsiders, since it is an exposure of herself, for in her talk can be seen her feelings her character and disposition.”* Clearly, we are dealing with *“historical information”* and *“social facts”* which were simply *“givens”* in the Roman world of the first century. Paul could certainly expect to appeal to these well-known rules of behavior for women. Plutarch makes an even more startling statement about the inappropriateness of a woman speaking in public. He states, *“The voice of a modest woman ought to be kept from the public and she should feel shame at being heard as of being stripped.”* This is an “unthinkable” restriction to our modern ears. It seems outrageous to suggest that a woman may as well be stripped, that is, stand naked in the public assembly, if she is going to speak. What would Plutarch have her do? He would insist that *she should speak either to or through her husband.*¹² Paul’s instructions and restrictions seem mild in comparison to Plutarch’s strong outburst. It should be self-evident that Paul is not originating this kind of restriction on women. He is following the accepted notions of the time, the cultural rules, the accepted social facts, the agreed understanding and meanings about the roles of women and men. *Paul’s use of this background of understanding from culture fits well with Campbell’s theory that scripture contains much that is “historical information” and that it is important to distinguish this material from “divine revelation.”* The inspired apostle is selecting this material under the guidance of the Spirit and making use of it in his instructions concerning the form of the expression of discipleship in the first century world of Rome. These rules are appropriate ways of implementing the revelational side of the issue, namely filling these roles “as to the Lord”, which will prove to be a proper implementation of the second great commandment, namely neighbor love. In fact, we would concur with Lindbeck in arguing that these rules are unchangeable in that given the presence of the originating conditions, the rules will still apply in the same way.

If we proceed to attribute to divine revelation these instructions that a woman is to keep silent in the congregation, that she is not to speak in the assembly, and that if she wishes to learn let her ask her husband at home, then, how are we to avoid the problem of admitting that these “presumed divine” instructions were anticipated by those outside the Judeo-Christian stream of

history, such as the Greek Plutarch, and the Roman Livy. Campbell's theory can deal with this matter in a straightforward manner by admitting what should be self-evident, namely that Paul is using "historical information" or the cultural forms and structures that were already in place. These rules, "as givens," can be appealed to as accepted forms of decorum for women in their public behavior. We are not contending that Plutarch and Livy originated these rules. In all likelihood, they are repeating accepted social facts, just as Paul was. In summary, this text proves to be another example of the presence of "historical information" and "divine revelation" in a set of instructions by an apostle.

This text is a critical one in any discussion of the changing roles for men and women in the church. Let us examine another aspect of the argument. We have attempted to establish that Paul is appealing to "social facts" accepted by his readers in calling for women to learn in silence and to be in subjection (1 Cor. 14:34-35). He is appealing to historical information as a preface to the real issue at hand, namely the great principle of neighbor love which calls for us to seek the good of the other in our behavior. We have argued that the divine revelation side of his instructions are embedded in an appeal to the principle of neighbor love which underlies the approach used in the entire section from first Corinthians chapter eight through chapter fourteen. This immediate text (1 Cor. 14:34-35) is a call for the Corinthian women to imitate Paul's own behavior in which he is seeking to become all things to all people that he might by all means save some. This is his mission strategy. The "divine revelation" involved in this text is not about hierarchical structures for male-female roles. Paul would have been wasting time to spend effort in proving such rules. Furthermore, whether he had said anything about hierarchical roles or not, they would have clearly been the accepted norm before, during and after his life time. Roman society would have taken care of this matter. The larger issue, and that which is "news" or "divine revelation" is the call for the imitation of the Messiah, to follow in the path of the cross, the path of self-giving for others. Subordination is a "rule" that fits the Corinthian culture. These rules, given their originating conditions, will ensure a path of "neighbor love" by attending to the cultural sensitivities of "honor", "shame", and "respect." However, the very opposite result may be obtained by attempting to lift these rules out of their cultural context and transferring them directly into a twentieth century, modern, Western democracy as though there had not been a change from the originating conditions which called forth these rules for the behavior of women. The offense will be the reverse. The absence of women's participation is now a matter of cultural "shame" and a demonstration of a lack of "respect". We should remember Helmut Koester's¹³ warning that such an error may be more than a mistake, it may be a "perversion" of the original gospel.

The other aspect stressed in this section from chapters eight through fourteen of first Corinthians is the instruction that God is the God of Order and

Propriety. Our behavior is to be orderly and decorous or becoming. *There may have been Christian women who saw rightly that the conduct and teaching of Jesus allowed for change in hierarchical relationships. They may have been trying to seize this new freedom in the face of Roman custom, law and social fact.* If so, Paul is reminding them that neighbor love, in the form of the principles of “order” and “decorum,” take precedence in that we are to give no offense to the gospel, in order to secure our rights. He recounts to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 9:1-27) how he has foregone numerous rights accruing to his role as an apostle. As part of this self-surrender of rights, he says that we are to “give no offense to Jew or to Greek or to the Church of God. I have become all things to all people that I might by all means save some” (1 Cor. 9:22). Paul yields his claim to his rights in order to win the great prize (Phil. 3:2-21). His master motive and ultimate goal in life was not the securing of his rights and privileges, but a striving to be conformed to Jesus in his life and death in order to participate in his resurrection (Phil. 3:10-11). *Everything involved in our historical existence, all of these transient, cultural forms, are to be placed as secondary to the ultimate goal.* We observe order and decorum in keeping with these historical forms because we are not to offend and cause anyone to stumble as we seek to win them for the Lord. We actualize neighbor love in the every day observance of these social behaviors. However, *these historical forms may change or even disappear.* We are to see them for what they are, namely “social facts” not unchangeable “brute facts”. They are “rules” which can have lasting validity when their originating conditions are still in place. *But we need no longer apply the rule when these conditions have disappeared or changed.* The rule can be infallible, unchanging and normative. It is the conditions that change, the rule retains its validity even though it can be transitory in its application.

3. Women Restricted from Teaching and Leading Men. 1 Timothy 2:9-15

Our next chart (See Fig. 2.10) presents Paul’s restrictions on women based upon the appeal to the creation narrative (1 Tim. 2:9-15). We will deal with the appeal to the creation narrative in more detail in our third lecture, so we will defer major consideration of this problem for tomorrow’s lecture. Today, *we will focus on verses eleven through fourteen, where Paul writes, “I do not allow a woman to teach or to exercise authority over man, but to remain quiet. It was Adam who was first created and then Eve, and it was not Adam who was deceived but the woman being deceived fell into transgression.” In this text, Paul is using arguments paralleled in Jewish inter-testamental literature and in contemporary writers such as Philo.* Some of the inter-testamental Jewish literature¹⁴ adopts the view that woman reflects the sensual, fleshly side of life. She is seductive and manipulative of the male. Man, by contrast, reflects the rational, cognitive side of life. Philo¹⁵ provides us with an intellectual, dressed-up, version of one first-century Jewish view. He says, *“Since women are more able to be deceived than men the proper relation of a wife to her husband is*

Figure 2.10
TWO SOURCES OF THE CONTENT OF 1 TIM. 2:12-14

1 Timothy 2:12-14. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. 13 For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. 14 And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

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Historical Background

Philo (Gen. 1:33). Since women are more able to be deceived than men, the proper relation of a wife to her husband is epitomized in the verb "to serve as a slave"...

Philo (Questions on Genesis LCL).
"The serpent speaks to the woman because she 'is more accustomed to be deceived than man ... She easily gives way and is taken in by plausible falsehoods which resemble the truth."

Cultural Anthropology. Data on 2,000 cultures (ancient & Modern)

1. Men in Leadership. Older Men must teach Younger Men.
2. Older Women to teach Younger Women.
3. Proper Judgment: Women Inferior as Teachers/Leaders of Men

Josephus.
The woman, says the Law, is in all things inferior to the man. Let her accordingly be submissive, not for her humiliation, but that she may be directed; for the authority has been given to the man."

TWO SOURCES OF CONTENT OF SCRIPTURE

<u>Historical Information</u>	<u>Revelation</u>
Women More Deceivable than Men Men should Teach and Lead in the affairs of Men. Women are to be Silent & Submit to Men.	Salvation of Women Not Based on Leadership of Men but In Christ, as also for Males. Give No Offense to the Gospel 1 Co 10:32 & 1 Co 14:40
CHANGING FORM SUBSTANCE	UNCHANGING

FIGURE 2.10
Two Sources for the Content of 1 Timothy 2:12-14

epitomized in the verb to serve as a slave." In his writings on Genesis, he comments on the temptation account to the effect that *"the serpent speaks to the woman because she is more accustomed to be deceived than man. She easily gives way and is taken in by plausible falsehoods which resemble the truth."*

When we turn to another contemporary of the apostle Paul, the Jewish writer and historian Josephus¹⁶, we find the following: *“The woman saith the law is in all things inferior to the man. Let her accordingly be submissive, not for her humiliation, but that she may be directed for the authority has been given to the man.”* It should be self-evident that *Paul’s statements to the Ephesian church and to Timothy are not new ideas in their time.* One simply cannot brush aside these statements from Josephus and Philo along with a number of other writers from the inter-testamental period. These sources clearly show that part of the *“historical information” of the period was the view that women were more deceivable than men.* This alone would certainly justify a society in restricting women from teaching and leading in the public sphere over men. These citations also strengthen our realization that women were to be submissive and under the direction of men. *This material accords well with the views of cultural anthropology concerning the effect of the differential acculturation experience provided to males and females in ancient societies.*

In our first lecture, we detailed how the inferiority of the woman, with regard to public leadership roles involving males, was the normative picture of the ancient world and was not confined to the Judeo-Christian stream of human history. This picture of male-female relations was worldwide and history-long. From a cultural anthropology view, the restriction of experience and training as well as exposure to the wider culture resulted in a self-fulfilling prophecy, namely that ancient women, as a group, would have been inferior in teaching and leading in the public aspects of the culture involving males. *If we evaluate Paul’s instructions against this background, it would seem a reasonable statement from cultural anthropology that the injunctions concerning women are socially appropriate.* Recall our cultural anthropology picture of the ancient world. In all ancient cultures, men were given the wide social experience in the broader culture required for leadership. They built the ships, they fought the wars, they did the politicking. Women, as a group, were largely confined to more socially restricted, private, and domestic activities. They were confined to activities where they were available to the children. Consequently, women, as a group, lacked the social experience and the prowess in war associated with leadership. They lacked the training and exposure to problems and problem solving in the larger community. All of these experiences are critical for leaders. Obviously, if you deny any group the relevant training, education and social experience they will be inferior in leadership tasks which require such awareness. *It is reasonable to assert that women in this setting would not only be inferior with respect to teaching and leading men, they would clearly tend to be more deceivable than men due to the simple fact of lacking the experience for leading roles.* Paul’s instructions are correct in the context. His instructions clearly reflect the reality of the historical background, whether we are speaking of Jewish, Greek or Roman culture

To counter a claim of those who search the scriptures for exceptions to our general rule and who cite the occasional woman in some leadership role, we wish to point out that it does not disturb the pattern to pick an exception to the general case here and there. As the cultural anthropologist will observe from studies of societies, there is always a "range of tolerance for diversity" within cultures. This does not invalidate the "general" cultural practice and, if the diversity in the role is stretched, it will be viewed as revolutionary or as "disruptive" of order and decorum, and it will tend to bring reprisal on the role occupant who threatens the general cultural practice. Women were in subjection to the rule of men in the Roman Empire. It was a hierarchical, patriarchal society. Paul's instructions to Timothy are in keeping with the propriety and decorum of the culture, and do not turn the gospel into a political, revolutionary movement. *His teaching remains focused on Christ, with the instruction that all social roles are secondary to the ultimate goal of the imitation of Jesus. The political, social roles of a culture are both transitory and accidents of history.*

MODELS OF CHANGE FOR CHANGED CONDITIONS

Our particular concern with male-female roles is a call to change *cultural practice* in the church *not the "unchanging substance of the gospel."* We are living in a new historical age. *In this small slice of history, in a modern western democracy with its technology and its affluence, we now have large numbers of women fully qualified with the broad social experience and relevant education enabling them to competently perform in activities formerly restricted to men.* We are in a new set of cultural conditions. From the "unchanging substance of the gospel" new models will need to be formulated to meet the changed conditions for imaging Christ in our world. The new models proposed herein do not invalidate the original New Testament practice designed for the application of the gospel to first century conditions. It is the conditions that change, not the rules. The rules can be unchanging in their validity, but transitory in their application.

The church must call for the testing of all proposals for change. Change involves us in seeking the guidance of the Word and the Spirit in reaching "consensus" with regard to belief and practice. Consensus requires time for teaching. Many will be impatient with the progress. For the Christian, this problem is more than an issue about "rights"; whether we are concerned with the "rights of women" or the "rights of men". Paul has set before us the matter of exercising or not exercising rights in light of the principle of neighbor love. We have stated our ultimate goal as that of knowing Jesus, being conformed to his image, sharing in his suffering in order to participate in his resurrection life. However, *if we are to set a Christian example in the resolution of this issue, it is*

important that we begin now with our young people in order to prepare them to be able to give an effective answer for their faith in the twenty first century. They will not automatically transcend their "acculturation" from the past. Secular movements concerned with human rights will neglect the Spiritual dimension, which we must forthrightly supply. This is our challenge. Furthermore, in evaluating the models we have proposed, we must remember that we are instructed to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good" (1 Thes. 5:21).

In our next lecture, we will pursue further the problems associated with a *call for teaching models of change in the form of the expression of our discipleship*. We hope to see you again tomorrow for our final lecture in this series. Thank you.

¹ Lewis, C. S. (1947). *The Abolition of Man*. New York: Macmillan. Pp. 95-121.

² Searle, John. (1995). *The Construction of Social Reality*. New York: The Free Press.

³ Lindbeck, George. (1984). *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press. The present author is not to be understood as sharing Lindbeck's concern to treat religious doctrines as primarily second-order propositions where truth is sought only in intra-systemic consistency. Lindbeck does not deny ontological status to religious doctrines but simply tends to place them in the category of second-order propositions. First-order propositions are concerned with truth as "systematic correspondence with the real", i.e., with reference to some objective state of affairs as true or false. Whereas, the test of systematic consistency is the concern of second-order propositions and of religious doctrines in Lindbeck's use of "rule theory". The present author considers religious doctrines as capable of being viewed as both first and second order propositions depending upon the context and the intent. I concur with Clark Pinnock's critique of Lindbeck (*Tracking the Maze: Finding our Way through Modern Theology from an Evangelical Perspective*. 1990. San Francisco: Harper and Row, Pp. 57-59), namely that Lindbeck "should come right out and admit that doctrines do all three things: They make truth claims, they express inner experience, and they serve as rules for God's people. What he is actually doing here is emphasizing and exploring the third function as something that has been neglected. In this respect, he surely has a point." We would add that Lindbeck's assumptions about the nature of propositions does not affect the use of "Rule Theory" in the way proposed in the present paper. The use of Rule Theory is not affected by the argument over the nature of propositions.

⁴ Koester, Helmut. (1971). "The Theological Aspects of Primitive Christian Heresy." In *The Future of Our Religious Past: Essays in Honor of Rudolf Bultmann*. James M. Robinson. (Ed.). London: SCM Press. P. 83.

⁵ Campbell, Alexander. (1827). *The Christian Baptist*. Bethany, VA.: A. Campbell Publisher. P. 233. The proposal by Campbell is not unique in Christian thought. It is part of the problem of the "historical conditionedness" of the Biblical text. For a contemporary statement of this issue, see Dunn, James D.G. (1987). *The Living Word*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. Pp. 12-14. Customarily, Campbell's views are seen as similar to John Locke. (1975, Reprint from 1700). *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

⁶ Fee, Gordon. (1987). *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 699-708.

⁷ Fee, Gordon. (1987) . p. 707. See note 5 above for reference.

⁸ Liefeld, Walter L. (1986). "Women, Submission and Ministry in 1 Corinthians." In *Women, Authority & the Bible*. Alvera Mickesen (ed.). Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press. Pp. 141-142.

⁹ Osburn, Carrol D. (1993). *Essays on Women in Earliest Christianity*. Vol. I. Joplin, Missouri: College Press Publishing Company. P. 231.

¹⁰ See notes 7 & 8 for reference.

¹¹ See notes 7 & 8 for reference.

¹² See notes 7 & 8 for reference.

¹³ Koester, Helmut. (1971). See Note 4 for reference.

¹⁴ Chesnutt, Randall D. (1993). "Jewish Women in the Greco-Roman Era." In *Essays on Women in Earliest Christianity*. Vol. I. Carroll D. Osburn, (Ed.). Joplin Missouri: College Press Publishing Company. Pp. 93-130.

¹⁵ See note 14 for reference (pp. 102-103 in Chessnutt).

¹⁶ See note 14 for reference (p. 105 in Chessnutt).