

pleasing' of the right and the wrong kind. **not seeking my own advantage** (cf. verse 24), **but that of many**: lit. 'the many', the mass of mankind (cf. Rom. 5.15, 19, where there is an echo of 'the many' of Isa. 53.11 who are 'accounted righteous' because of the Servant of Yahweh).

**that they may be saved**: cf. 9.22, 'that I might by all means save some'.

**11.1.** In this, as in other respects, he presents his own course to them as an example to follow (see note on 4.16). He, in turn, set Christ before him as his exemplar in this and other respects; 'for Christ did not please himself' (Rom. 15.3) but made himself the servant of all (cf. Mk 10.45; Lk. 22.27). It is not the example of the Lord in present exaltation that Paul has in mind but the example he set when 'he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant' (Phil. 2.7; see also note on 2 C. 8.9). It is instructive to compare the qualities which Paul recommends to his readers when he urges them, in one form of words or another, to be **imitators . . . of Christ** with those which characterize Jesus in the Gospels (see notes on 13.4-7; 2 C. 10.1).

#### COMMENDATION AND CRITICISM 11.2-34

##### *The veiling of women* 11.2-16

**2. I commend you:** From this point to 11.34 Paul seems not to be answering questions raised in the Corinthians' letter, but rather commenting on a statement which they had made in it: 'we **remember you in everything and maintain the traditions even as you have delivered them to us.**' 'That is fine', says Paul; **'I commend you'**. The **traditions** (Gk *paradoseis*) were the instructions, relating to matters of doctrine and practice alike, which he delivered to his churches on the authority of Christ. They might be delivered either 'by word of mouth or by letter' (2 Th. 2.15); those to which the Corinthians refer were probably delivered orally. Two traditions which Paul delivered to the Corinthians are elaborated later (11.23ff.; 15.1ff.); with regard to them he says that he himself had 'received' them as the Corinthians in turn 'received' them from him. But it is not necessary to confine all the Pauline **traditions** to things which he himself first 'received' from those who were in Christ before him. Tradition must start somewhere, and while the bulk of apostolic tradition may indeed have

stemmed 'from the Lord' (cf. verse 23), Christian *paradosis* in *NT* is not invariably a synonym for *kyrios* ('Lord'). The 'tradition' of earning one's own living and not becoming a burden on others, to which Paul refers in 2 Th. 3.6ff., was one that was based chiefly on his own example. So the particular 'tradition' which he goes on to emphasize in verses 3-16—his instruction about propriety in regard to the veiled and unveiled head—probably does not go back beyond his own teaching (which he imparted, of course, as one who had 'the mind of Christ').

**3.** Paul, it appears, had taught the Corinthians (as he taught his other converts) that in meetings of the church women should have their heads veiled when they prayed. But this piece of instruction was being ignored in Corinth. What difference did it make in the sight of God (it was probably asked) whether they prayed with or without veils? Learning of this attitude either from the Corinthians' letter or from his three visitors, Paul deals with the matter in a variety of ways, appealing (*a*) to the order of creation, (*b*) to a common sense of seemliness, (*c*) to the teaching of 'nature', (*d*) to the general practice of the churches.

As for the order of creation, there is a hierarchy of the order: **God—Christ—man—woman**. Each of the first three members of this hierarchy is the **head** of the member following. By **head** in this context we are probably to understand not, as has frequently been suggested, 'chief' or 'ruler' but rather 'source' or 'origin'—a sense well attested for Gk *kephalē* (cf. S. Bedale, 'The Meaning of *κεφαλή* in the Pauline Epistles', *JTS* n.s. 5 (1954), pp. 211ff.). In the light of the account of the formation of Eve from **her husband** (Gen. 2.21-23), man is the source of woman's existence ('she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man'). Since it is not true of married couples in general that **the head of a woman is her husband** (*RSV*) in this sense of **head**, it is better to translate with *NEB* (cf. *RV*), 'woman's head is man' (and so also in Eph. 5.23, even if there the principle is applied more particularly to the husband-wife relation than here). Again, **Christ** is the source of man's existence because he is the archetypal Man (but cf. 15.46-49) and also because he is the agent in the creation of all things (8.6; cf. Col. 1.16), **every man** included—and it is **man** in the sense of 'male' (Gk *anēr*) that is relevant at this point in Paul's argument. Lastly, it is from **God** the Father that **Christ**, as Son, derives his eternal being (cf. 3.23; 8.6).