

A Review of the Scholarly Debate on the Meaning of “Head” (κεφαλή) in Paul’s Writings

By Alan F. Johnson*

From at least the middle of the twentieth century there has been an ongoing, sometimes acrimonious debate over the meaning of the metaphor “head” (Greek, *kephalē*) in Paul’s letters, especially his use in male-female contexts such as 1 Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23. The literature is extensive. The debate continues.

However, few, who have tentatively embraced a position themselves, have been able to access and to read all the significant discussions. This article is an attempt to review the most significant scholarly literature that has emerged in the debate and to summarize each without critique. The focus is narrow and should not be taken as a summary of all aspects of the debate on male and female relations in the church, home, and society.

I offer the following review as the fairest attempt that I can give of the history and current state of the issue. At the end I give my own brief application of the results to 1 Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23. Only the most significant contributions (in my estimation) from all sides can be included. I offer my apologies to any who were overlooked.

The history of the debate

Stephen Bedale (1954)

We begin with an early seminal article by Stephen Bedale. ¹ Amazingly brief for the firestorm it sparked (4 pages), the points Bedale raised continue to be played out in the current debate. Bedale argued that since the normal Greek metaphorical meaning of *kephalē* would not be understood as ‘ruler’ or ‘chief,’ Paul must have been influenced by the Greek version of the Old Testament (LXX) where *kephalē* was used sometimes to translate the Hebrew *ro’sh* (when it meant ‘ruler’ or ‘chief’).

However, *ro’sh* could have a second figurative meaning as well in other contexts, ‘first’ or ‘beginning’ (translated by the Gk. *archē*, ‘first,’ ‘beginning,’ ‘principal’). The two words (*archē* and *kephalē*) became “approximate in meaning” in ‘biblical Greek’ (i.e., Greek influenced by the LXX). Thus in Colossians 1:18, *kephalē* in the sense of ‘ruler’ or ‘chief’ would be an “irrelevant intrusion into the context which is wholly concerned with Christ as *archē*, the ‘beginning’ and ‘first principle’ alike in Creation and Redemption (cf. Rev. iii.14, *he archē tēs ktisews*)” (213). Likewise in Colossians 2:19 and

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Ephesians 4:15 where the body is said to derive its growth and development from the head, it is very difficult to make any sense of it at all so long as *kephalē* is understood as ‘overlord.’ But when Christ is understood to be *archē* in relation to the church, it is possible to see how Christians can grow up into him as the archetypal image of the Second Adam is progressively realized in them. At the same time it is possible to think of the body as the ‘fullness’ or ‘fulfillment’ of the *kephalē* (Eph. 1:23).

On the other hand, and this is important, for Bedale, *kephalē* can also occasionally in certain contexts mean the ‘overlordship’ of Christ (Eph. 1:22). In other contexts *kephalē* stresses the relationship of one being to another in the sense of *archē* (‘first,’ ‘beginning’) and that priority (causal and not merely temporal) “unquestionably carries with it the idea of authority” (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23) (215). As a result, the female is socially ‘subordinate’ to the male as part of the order of creation while otherwise remaining equal in spiritual status or capacities.

Bedale used the word ‘source’ only once in the article as the meaning of *kephalē* and relates this specific sense to two passages only (Eph. 4:15; Col. 2:19). However, his practical equivalence of *kephalē* with *archē* extends the idea of source as ‘origin’ or ‘first’ much further. Commentaries quickly began adopting some or all of Bedale’s views (e.g., Leon Morris [1958]²; C.K. Barrett [1968]³ F.F. Bruce [1971]⁴).

Morna D. Hooker (1963–64)

A brief, but well known and enduring study by the honored Cambridge scholar, Morna D. Hooker, contributed two major points in the understanding of 1 Corinthians 11:3–10.⁵ First, she clarified the double sense of *kephalē* in the passage. Paul seems to use the word to simultaneously refer to both a physical and a metaphorical head. According to Hooker,

Every man who prays and prophesies with his head covered dishonours his head, whereas every woman who prays or prophesies with her head *uncovered* dishonours her head. The reason for this differentiation is given in v. 6, and is based on social custom: in Paul’s eyes an uncovered head is as great a disgrace for a woman as one that is shorn....In communities where it is no longer a disgrace for a woman to be ‘shorn,’ the argument has lost its point....When he speaks of a head being covered or shorn, then it is obvious that he is referring to the man’s or the woman’s own heads, but when he says that a head is dishonoured, we must ask whether the word ‘head’ is to be taken literally or metaphorically....The answer is probably that he does both, but the primary point is that he brings shame on Christ. It is here that we see the relevance of v. 3 to Paul’s argument: the man or

woman who dishonours his or her own head in the literal sense brings dishonour also on his or her metaphorical head. (410–11)

Hooker's second major contribution is to establish clearly that the word "authority" (Greek, *exousia*) in 1 Corinthians 11: 10 refers *not* to a sign of *male* authority over the woman, but rather to the woman's *own* authority to fully participate in worship that glorifies God.⁶ As a redeemed woman she now has the authority to proclaim.

Far from being a symbol of the woman's subjection to man, therefore, her head-covering is what Paul calls it—authority: in prayer and prophecy she, like the man, is under the authority of God. Although the differences in creation remain, and are reflected in the differences of dress, it is nevertheless true that in relation to God 'there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.' (416)

Unfortunately, in my view, while many *commentators* have followed Hooker's interpretation, only a few modern *translations* have captured this sense (some have, e.g., "...as a sign of her authority"—CEV; or "...the woman ought to have authority over her own head"—TNIV).

Robin Scroggs (1972)

Robin Scroggs defends Paul against the allegations that the apostle was the chief chauvinist in the Bible.⁷ According to Scroggs, Paul was in fact the "only consistent spokesman for the liberation and equality of women in the New Testament" (283). Paul's deepest theological conviction about the relationship between men and women is found in Galatians 3:28. Any value judgments based on the distinctions between persons in the society, including men and women, are nullified by their baptism.

In practical application of this fundamental Christian principle (Gal. 3:28) to a specific problem at Corinth in their worship services, Paul appeals to the fact that Christ has his source in God, man his source in Christ, and the woman her source in the man (1 Cor. 11:3). Scroggs follows Bedale in adopting 'source' for the meaning of *kephalē*, but rejects Bedale's sense of 'overlordship' for its meaning in verse 3.

Here no subordination of woman to man is intended; what is expressed is the order of the creative events....Again we have a clear distinction between the sexes, but in this strophe no justification is given for the rule [about head coverings] nor any value judgment made on the basis of the rule. (301)

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However obscure the passage as a whole may seem (1 Cor. 11:2–16), Paul strongly affirms the *authority* of the woman (v. 10). The apostle actually offers a radically new vision of women’s equality and freedom from which the church quickly departed and reinterpreted the texts to teach the older vision of the subordination of women (even in the deutero-Pauline letters).

Fred D. Layman (1980)

Coming from a Wesleyan perspective, Fred D. Layman⁸ wrote an informed article on the question of male headship. Layman states his thesis this way:

Paul did not use the idea of male headship in a governmental nor ontological way as establishing a hierarchical relationship between male and female in which the one was dominant and the other submissive. Rather, he used it (1) to designate the proper relationship between the sexes in the context of the new order, and (2) to insist on the continuation of sexual distinctions and the validity of marriage in the new creation in a polemic with Gnostic claims to the contrary. (47)

After carefully explaining what he means by Gnostic-like thought, Layman examines Ephesians 5:21–33 and 1 Corinthians 11:2–16. In the Ephesians’ text he observes that in most traditional interpretations of this passage, the *kephalē* metaphor is understood as a *physiological* metaphor, i.e., the *kephalē* is ‘prior,’ that part which ‘determines’ or ‘governs’ the body (e.g., “The man is the head of the woman”). Yet Layman denies that Paul ever uses the head-body metaphor in such a physiological sense. Paul does, however, use the *body* metaphor for the *church* in a physiological sense, as analogous to Christians relating to each other, but without the idea of headship present (Rom. 12:4–8; 1 Cor. 12:12–31). Furthermore, Paul spoke of the *kephalē* in isolation from any reference to a body (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 1:22; Col. 2:10).

The body metaphor addressed the matter of mutuality within the believing community; the head metaphor spoke of Christ as the source, beginning, savior, and conserver of the church. The two metaphors do not change these meanings when they are brought into proximity to each other, and to interpret them in correspondence to a physiological model is to create numerous absurdities. Ephesians 4:16 and Colossians 2:19 refer to the church as the ‘whole body,’ which if a physiological model is intended, would have two heads. Nor would the language about the body growing up into the head make any sense (Eph. 4:15). (52)

Christ’s Lordship and his headship are two different but related ideas for Paul. As *Lord* he is the governing rule of all creation. His *headship* speaks of

him as the beginning, origin, and ground of all being and of the new, redeemed creation. Only Christ's headship not his lordship is held up as a model for the Christian husband. Christ's headship toward the church is expressed in his love, self-sacrifice, and provision for the church. Submission to this loving headship is voluntary and becomes transformed into a relationship of mutual reciprocity. Finally, it should be noted that Paul never refers to the wife as the body of the husband (only the husband's own body).

In the other main passage (1 Cor. 11:3), *kephalē* is not female subordination, but Paul's way of stressing that man is the source of the woman (Eve being taken out of Adam, Gen. 2:18–25). Following Hurley (1973—see below), Layman considers the major problem addressed in 11:2–16 to be not the issue of some type of cloth coverings but the problem of hair on the head (either long/short or loose/bound up on the top of the head). Layman suggests that the most likely reason for men and women reversing the normal way the hair was worn was related to a pagan cult that abolished the distinctions between men and women—distinctions which were culturally indicated by hairstyles. This practice in the Christian gatherings for worship would bring dishonor not only on the persons involved but also upon the public moral perception of the gospel of Christ.

James B. Hurley (1981)

In James B. Hurley's publication⁹ of his earlier doctoral dissertation (Cambridge, 1973) we find a rejection of *kephalē* meaning 'source' and a case presented for *kephalē* in 1 Corinthians 11:3 as meaning 'head over' in the sense of *authority over* (actually quoting and following Bedale at this point!). The passage establishes "a hierarchy of headship authority...and that it is ordered" (167). In Ephesians 5:23, *kephalē* has the same sense of 'head over' (authority) in connection with the husband's relation to the wife.

On the other hand, Hurley does recognize that this 'head over' sense does not fit *kephalē* passages such as Ephesians 4:15 and Colossians 2:19 where 'source' is "clearly" more appropriate and the concept of authority is not introduced. Still further, in some texts the idea of 'authority,' 'source,' and 'union' may coalesce (Col. 1:15–20).

In some respects Hurley may best represent the full thought of Bedale more than any recent scholar on either side of the debate. This still leaves open the question of whether Bedale is completely correct or not (see Andrew C. Perriman, below).

Gilbert Bilezikian (1985)

Gilbert Bilezikian wrote *Beyond Sex Roles*¹⁰ principally to refute Hurley's central thesis of male authority over women. In the sections of the work that

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deal with *kephalē*, Bilezikian first cautions us not to equate the English word ‘head’ with the Greek *kephalē*, especially in the English use of ‘head’ to signify ‘chief,’ ‘boss,’ ‘authority,’ ‘ruler.’ In the biblical texts themselves, the idea includes the meanings ‘derivation,’ ‘origin,’ ‘starting point,’ and ‘nurture,’ but not ‘chief,’ ‘boss,’ or ‘authority.’

In 1 Corinthians 11:3, Bilezikian indicates what he feels is the correct sense of *kephalē* in Greek.

The concept might be better served by the expression *fountainhead* or *life-source*. Thus, in the perspective of creation it makes sense to say that Christ is the ‘fountainhead’ of man’s life, and that man is the fountainhead of woman’s life. Likewise from the perspective of the incarnation, God is the fountainhead of Christ’s life. (137)

No lexical evidence for this sense is given beyond the New Testament usage. (Bilezikian does provide this evidence in an appendix in the 2nd edition. See below.) He then concludes that the idea that *kephalē* means ‘ruler’ or ‘authority’ would change the whole meaning of the passage. The order of the couplets (Christ-man, man-woman, God-Christ) shows that a hierarchy of *authority* was not in Paul’s mind.

In discussing Ephesians 5:23 (“the husband is the head of the wife”), Bilezikian examines the other relevant texts containing the *kephalē* wording (Eph. 1:22; 4:15; Col. 1:18; 2:18, 19). Christ is *kephalē* not to the universe but only to the church that is his body in that he supplies the church with its fullness and nurture for growth (*kephalē* means ‘source of life’). The head-body duality stresses not ‘authority over,’ but reciprocity.

Berkeley & Alvera Mickelsen (1979, 1981, 1986)

The Mickelsens published three *Christianity Today* articles¹¹ on the meaning of *kephalē*. I will concentrate on their last article, which incorporated their earlier, more popular arguments. The Mickelsens point out that though the standard classical lexicon for ancient Greek, Liddell-Scott-Jones (LSJ), gives twenty-five different figurative meanings for *kephalē*, it never mentions ‘authority,’ ‘superior rank,’ ‘leader,’ or ‘director’ as possible meanings of *kephalē*. This, the Mickelsens claim, is true for other lexicons of ancient Greek except the Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker lexicon (BAGD) that gives ‘superior rank’ as a possible sense citing two late examples (2nd and 6th cent. A.D.) and two LXX references despite the fact that this meaning for *kephalē* does not appear in the secular Greek of New Testament times.

Their examination of the LXX metaphorical uses of *kephalē* opened up a new debate on whether the term is “naturally” and “frequently” used in the sense of ‘leader,’ ‘chief.’ The Hebrew term *ro’sh* (“head”) is used in the Old Testament

180 times for a 'chief something' (e.g., man, city, nation). In 109 of these times, *ro'sh* is translated by *archon* ('leader,' 'chief') rather than *kephalē*. *Kephalē* is used only eight times (less than four percent) when *ro'sh* means 'leader,' 'chief.' The conclusion is that the use of *kephalē* to translate *ro'sh* as 'leader' is "rare" and is not found in well-known passages, thus limiting the knowledge of this sense to first century reader/hearers.

In the New Testament, *kephalē* is better translated 'source of life,' 'top or crown,' 'exalted originator,' 'completer,' and not by 'authority over.' These meanings, however, are derived not from extra-biblical or LXX uses, but primarily from the context of Paul's argument in passages containing the words. Thus in 1 Corinthians 11:3, *kephalē* means 'source,' 'base,' 'derivation.' In Ephesians 5:23, *kephalē* means 'the one who brings to completion,' stressing on the one hand, the unity of Christ and the church, husband and wife, and on the other, the mutually interdependent relation between the two in each of the pairs.

Wayne Grudem (1985)

With Wayne Grudem,¹² we have the beginning of what has come to be called "the battle of the lexicons." His first study challenges the position of Bedale, the Mickelsens, Bilezikian, and even the well-respected LSJ lexicon. The charge against Bedale, the Mickelsens, and Bilezikian is that under close examination, Grudem can find no non-biblical Greek examples (including the LXX) where *kephalē* means 'source.' (In two cases he allows the *possibility* but argues that another sense fits better.)

He then builds a case for the meaning of *kephalē* as 'authority over' and concludes that this sense was a "well-established and recognizable meaning" in the New Testament period (59). Here he faults LSJ for not including this meaning in its range of meanings for *kephalē*. On the other hand, BAGD is the lexicon of preference because it correctly includes the LXX usage of *kephalē* as 'authority over' as well as several other references with the same sense.

Grudem obtained a printout from the University of California's database of all known Greek literature (*Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*—TLG) from the eighth century B.C. onward. Some 12,000 instances were narrowed to 2,000, of which Grudem found 323 additional word uses. From these he found 49 metaphorical uses (including the LXX and the New Testament) of *kephalē* where he painstakingly argues in each of these examples that *kephalē* means 'authority over' as the best sense. He then shows how all the references to *kephalē* in the New Testament can be explained best by the meaning 'authority over' and not 'source.' Furthermore, it is a proper extension of this 'authority over' sense to also include 'leadership,' 'guidance,' and 'direction.'

To Grudem's credit, he attempted to focus the debate on the actual evidence of non-biblical Greek examples and attempted to explain these references in the context of where they were found. He also correctly acknowledged that the

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Mickelsens did in fact recognize that ‘authority over’ was a possible sense of *kephalē* in ancient Greek, however rare it might be. Unfortunately, Grudem, like most others, did not define what he meant by the English word ‘source.’

Gilbert Bilezikian (1986)

The first major response to Grudem’s research came from Gilbert Bilezikian in a paper presented for a plenary session of the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society.¹³ He takes up and examines Grudem’s fifteen non-biblical examples of ‘authority over’ in ancient Greek. In each case, Bilezikian deconstructs the argument Grudem advances for the sense of ‘authority over.’

Bilezikian concludes that “the survey...did not yield a single instance in which *head* is used with the meaning of ‘ruler or person of superior authority or rank’” (233). Instead, in the New Testament *kephalē* means “a person or thing from which something else is derived or obtained” (235). However, and this is important, Bilezikian admits that this sense is *rare* and “only occasionally is used in this way” (235). But Paul could have well picked up this meaning and used it with a Christian sense in his letters. Furthermore, *kephalē* is never used in extra-biblical ancient Greek in a male-female context.

Bilezikian proposes that in 1 Corinthians 11:3, *kephalē* means ‘source’ or ‘origin,’ and in Ephesians 5:23, it means ‘source’ of *life* (Saviorhood), source of *servanthood* (gave himself), source of *nurture* (to make her holy).

Walter L. Liefeld (1986)

In his early study of 1 Corinthians 11:2–16,¹⁴ Walter L. Liefeld rejected as unlikely the popular and traditional understanding of *kephalē* as ‘ruler’ with the implication that what Paul was doing in 11:3 was setting up a “chain of command.” He warned, however, that we should beware of pressing “one meaning fits all” for *kephalē* and suggested that there was no single or even dominant meaning for *kephalē*. The sense of the metaphor might even change in a single passage. (in this he anticipates Dawes, see below).

Liefeld, at least initially, sided in part with Grudem stating that the meaning ‘source’ adduced by Bedale as a clue to some of Paul’s passages, lacks clear evidence....Those who would claim such a meaning in the New Testament have to rely only on the context, not on any external evidence prior to the first century. (139)

Further, Liefeld warns that there is no single more frequent metaphorical use of *kephalē* over the other possible senses (contra Grudem, Bilezikian, Mickelsens). He wants to keep *kephalē* in the mainstream of Greek and LXX thought and see *kephalē* as that part of the body that was (1) prominent, (2) representative, and less frequently, (3) eminent or most honored part of the body

in the common perceptions of honor and dishonor with respect to the 'head' in the first century.

Finally, Liefeld states plainly that in light of Grudem's study "it is no longer possible to dismiss the idea of 'rulership' from the discussion" of *kephalē* (139). Whether Paul uses this sense or whether it is the main meaning throughout Paul is another matter. In 1 Corinthians 11:3, it makes more sense to Liefeld to see *kephalē* as meaning 'prominent' or 'honored' member than as 'source' or 'ruler.'

Catherine C. Kroeger (1987)

Catherine C. Kroeger¹⁵ begins her discussion of *kephalē* with the following statement: "The concept of *head* as 'source' is well documented in both classical and Christian antiquity and has been long accepted by scholars" (267). For evidence of this she turns first to older Latin-Greek dictionaries that list among definitions for *kephalē* the Latin *origo* ('source' or 'origin'). Turning to church leaders of the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., Kroeger argues that they refer to *kephalē* as the 'source' (this is her translation of their word *archē*, 'beginning,' 'origin'). Ancient views of the function of the head physiologically lead to the conclusion that they viewed the head as the source of sperm and hence of the source of the generation of life or of the whole bodily condition.

Furthermore, she argues from other church leaders of the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. that they viewed God as the 'source' (*archē*) of Christ and quoted 1 Corinthians 11:3, "God is the *head* of Christ." In all of these examples it should be noted that Kroeger assumes that *archē* means the same thing as the English word 'source.' There is no discussion of the possible difference between 'beginning' or 'first,' and 'source' or 'origin.'

Finally, and importantly, it should be noted that though Kroeger believes that 'source' is a well-documented sense of *kephalē*, she does admit that in the New Testament period, *kephalē* may rarely have had the sense of 'boss' or 'chief' as it does in English and Hebrew.

Richard S. Cervin (1989)

The principal challenge to Grudem's study of *kephalē* as meaning 'authority over' comes from Richard S. Cervin.¹⁶ Cervin first critiques Grudem's method and states that fourteen ancient Greek lexicons do *not* give 'authority over' as a possible meaning of *kephalē*. Only one does and it indicates that 'leader' is a Byzantine period sense (5th cent. A.D.). He then somewhat agrees with Grudem that *kephalē* meaning 'source' is certainly *not* common, but disagrees that it *never* means 'source,' citing two clear cases.

After setting aside the twelve Pauline references as evidence (since these are contested in the debate), Cervin then examines in detail all the examples that Grudem gives for *kephalē* meaning 'authority over.' He finds only four

unambiguous cases where *kephalē* could possibly mean ‘ruler’ or ‘leader’ (three from the LXX) and one case where ‘source’ would be better (*Shepherd of Hermas*). Otherwise in all the other examples Grudem cites of *kephalē* meaning ‘authority over,’ Cervin finds that the meaning of *kephalē* is better understood as ‘preeminence.’ In other words, the bulk of Grudem’s examples turn out in Cervin’s view as non-examples.

Finally, Cervin reviews the first study of Fitzmyer (1989—see below) that largely agrees with Grudem, and finds Fitzmyer’s evidence also lacking. He grants, however, that ‘leader’ or ‘authority over’ could possibly be meant in some texts, but there are no unambiguous examples.

Cervin raised the bar in the discussions to press for an even closer examination of the wider contexts of the word’s usage.

Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J. (1989, 1993)

Entering into the discussion of the issue of the meaning of *kephalē* is the prominent (no pun intended) Roman Catholic scholar. His earlier piece¹⁷ basically argued against the *kephalē* as ‘source’ view held by Scroggs and Murphy-O’Connor.¹⁸ Instead, Fitzmyer argued from the LXX uses of *kephalē*, several Philo texts, an example from Josephus’ *Jewish War*, and a fourth century church leader that “a Hellenistic Jewish writer such as Paul of Tarsus could well have intended that *kephalē* in 1 Cor 11.3 be understood as ‘head’ in the sense of authority or supremacy over someone else” (510). He also would like to change LSJ to include this sense of ‘authority over.’

In a more recent article (1993),¹⁹ Fitzmyer engages Grudem and Cervin and uses the TLG source to add many more examples than appeared in his previous study. Fitzmyer concludes (1) that *kephalē* could indeed be used in the sense of ‘source’ (contra Grudem), (2) in at least a dozen examples, *kephalē* clearly has the sense of ‘ruler’ or ‘leader,’ and in some cases it is even so explained (agreeing with Grudem). This latter sense did not appear in Greek literature until the last pre-Christian centuries and at the beginning of the Christian era. While conceding that four leading lexicons of ancient Greek usage omit this meaning, Fitzmyer does cite two other German lexicons of ancient Greek that do list ‘ruler’ or ‘leader’ as a possible sense of *kephalē*.

Wayne Grudem (1990)

This article by Wayne Grudem²⁰ is primarily a response to Cervin (1989) but includes critiques also of the Mickelsens (1981; 1986), Bilezikian (1985), Tucker (1986), Payne (1986), Liefeld (1986), Kroeger (1987), and Fee (1987). According to Grudem, Cervin has rightly shown the weakness of the argument for ‘source’ as a *common* meaning for *kephalē*. Cervin wrongly dismisses the Pauline texts as evidence for the meaning of *kephalē*. Furthermore, he wrongly dismisses the LXX evidence and the BAGD lexicon that includes it. Cervin also

wrongly rejects the Plutarch texts because they are affected by the Latin *caput*. He unwisely discounts the Apostolic Fathers as evidence for the meaning of *kephalē* even though they postdate Paul.

The references of *kephalē* in Ephesians 4:15 and Colossians 2:19 are better understood not as 'source,' but as 'nourishment' and the idea of 'leader' or 'authority' is never absent since Christ, who is the person referred to, is the authority and leader. However, some secondary overtones of 'preeminence' could be possible for *kephalē*, if we include also the meaning of 'authority over' as the reason why there is preeminence.

As for the Mickelsens' views, there is no LXX evidence for 'source' as the meaning of *kephalē*. However, Grudem does admit that *kephalē* as 'ruler' or 'leader' is *not common*, but is nevertheless a valid sense. The Mickelsens' meanings of *kephalē* for the Pauline texts have no support from actual uses in contemporary Greek. Payne's (1986)²¹ criticism of 'authority over' for the sense of "the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor. 11:3), because it suggests a subordinationist view of Christ that the church denied, is rejected by Grudem. Grudem says, "From the time of the eternal generation of the Son [A.D. 325]," the doctrine of the Trinity "has been taken to imply a *relationship* between the Father and the Son that *eternally* existed and that will always exist—a relationship that includes a subordination in role, but not essence or being" (457).

Grudem admits to some corrections arising from Bilezikian's critique, but basically disagrees with his conclusion that *kephalē* means 'source.' The same challenge is given to Kroeger and Fee.²² Based on recent studies by Peter Cottrell and Max Turner (1989)²³ which argued that 'source' is not a recognized meaning of *kephalē*, Grudem concludes that even if 'source' or 'prominent part' is valid (he does not concede that this is clear), it must include *also* the idea of 'authority over' for *persons* who are designated as 'head.' Unfortunately, again, Grudem does not define what he means by the English word 'source' or what he means by 'metaphor.'

Andrew C. Perriman (1994)

Andrew C. Perriman²⁴ reexamines the lexical texts cited by both Grudem and Fitzmyer for 'authority' and 'leadership' and in each case finds that the texts do *not* refer to 'ruler' or 'leader' in using the metaphor *kephalē*. Rather, in each case the thought is 'representative,' 'prominent,' or 'illustrious.' While these examples illustrate a certain association of *kephalē* with the figure of a ruler or leader, we cannot assume that the same association lies behind the Pauline texts. Further, no text can be cited where *kephalē* denotes the authority or sovereignty of one man or of men over others.

As to *kephalē* meaning ‘source’ or ‘beginning’ of something, Perriman states that Bedale’s argument is flawed, and ‘source’ and ‘beginning’ are not the same or interchangeable.

Metaphor is a form of speech that is particularly sensitive to context, and while it is the case that when the reference is to a river, the idea of ‘source’ may emerge quite naturally as a secondary connotation, there is no reason to suppose that the same connotation is relevant when the metaphor is applied to some quite different subject...what J. Barr calls ‘illegitimate totality transfer.’ (613)

The texts cited by Cervin and others are either non-cases or refer to ‘beginning’ (*archē*), not to ‘source.’

First Corinthians 11:3 must be understood in its context as a unique use of *kephalē* as a metaphor. It has nothing to do with a man’s authority over a woman. The main theme of the passage concerns the shame or dishonor that attaches to a woman if she prays or prophesies with her head uncovered; it is a question of whether the woman’s behavior brings glory or dishonor on the man.

Perriman concludes his study by noting (1) both current positions (‘source’ or ‘authority over’) are weak lexicographically, (2) ‘prominent’ fits the texts well, (3) we cannot use other Pauline passages to define 1 Corinthians 11:3, and (4) the passage does not teach the ‘authority’ of a hierarchy.

Judith Gundry-Volf (1997)

In Anthony Thiselton’s view (2000—see below), Judith Gundry-Volf²⁵ offers a genuine breakthrough in the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:2–16 that he characterizes as “the most seminal study of all.”²⁶ Gundry-Volf argues that the lexical debate alone is insufficient to understand Paul’s intent. She wants to integrate Paul’s (1) creation, (2) cultural-societal, and (3) eschatological or new creation concerns into her exegesis. Gundry-Volf proposes that Paul’s goal in the whole section of 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 is to correct behavioral problems at Corinth that have diminished the credibility of the gospel in the wider society.

In 11:2–16, Paul addresses the problem of shame/dishonor that both men and women are causing each other and the adverse consequences that this shameful behavior has for the mission of the church because of the way they are covering or uncovering their heads in worship (vv. 4–6). This is not a problem of women free spirits who are insubordinate to male authority, or a problem of homosexuality, or female sexual provocation, or even the problem of women obscuring male glory to God by being uncovered. Rather, some in the church ignored the social boundaries between men and women signified by the cultural rules of distinguishing male from female by how they covered their heads. The

women dishonored the men (their 'heads') and the males shamed in turn Christ (their 'head').

Therefore the question of what *kephalē* means in verse 3 is not to be sought by going elsewhere in Paul's writings or by immediately jumping to verses 7–9 and reading an authority-subordination sense back into verse 3. Instead, the sense of *kephalē* should come from verses 4–5 which presuppose the meaning of *kephalē* in verse 3. "To shame one's head is to do the opposite of what is expected, namely, to honor the head. For the head signifies what is preminent" (following Cervin) (159).

Nevertheless, she continues, "the patriarchal connotations of 11:3 do not disappear when one opts for the translation of *kephalē* as 'one who is preminent' rather than 'ruler' or 'source.' All these possible translations have patriarchal connotations" (159). Verses 7–9 then explicitly take up this problem by drawing out the theme of 'glory' from the creation accounts in Genesis 1 and 2 read through a gender-based, patriarchal interpretive lens. Paul argues from this that a woman's head should be properly covered to show respect or honor to a man in a patriarchal social-cultural situation.

However, this is not the whole story. Paul abruptly turns and shows that he can also argue from the creation order now ("man comes through a woman," 11:11–12) and that in the new creation ("in the Lord") *woman* is now prior to man and "all things are from God" including the woman, a view that denies the exclusive privilege of man argued for in 11:7–9.

Paul is not claiming here that man needs woman as his subordinate and woman needs man as her 'head,' nor even simply that they are essential to each other according to God's design, but that since neither exists without the other, neither has exclusive priority over the other and therefore gender does not determine priority in their relationship 'in the Lord.' In 11:11, therefore, Paul undermines gender-based hierarchy in the *body of Christ*....At the same time the difference between man and woman remains. (163)

This tension must be maintained between the redeemed order where gender distinctions remain but are socially relativized, and the way this truth is expressed in the social-cultural situation of patriarchy.

Unfortunately, Gundry-Volf's work on this passage and Galatians 3:28 is buried in little known scholarly publications. In my opinion her work warrants more widespread reading and discussion.

Gregory W. Dawes (1998)

Gregory W. Dawes' important work on Ephesians 5:21–33 is not well known in the larger discussion.²⁷ The first seventy-six pages of his book deal

with the mostly neglected or misunderstood subject of *metaphor*! Dawes not only distinguishes metaphor from analogy and model, but also clarifies ‘dead’ metaphor from ‘live’ metaphor. The meaning of a ‘dead’ metaphor (one having a common range of meanings) can be studied lexically and its meaning possibilities listed. ‘Live’ metaphors on the other hand cannot be studied lexically since they are the creation of the author and get their meaning from some unexpected association with something else.

I remember a seminary professor who regularly prayed that the Holy Spirit would ‘electrify’ our lives. I had heard of ‘electrify’ before but never or since in connection with the Holy Spirit. This is a ‘live’ metaphor and will not be found in dictionaries under the word ‘electrify.’ In such cases only the *context* of the term can determine its sense. Further, an author may vary the metaphorical meaning of an expression from one context to another and even change it within the same context! This is a point that has not been sufficiently noticed in the debate over the metaphorical meaning of ‘head.’

In a chapter on *kephalē*, as in “The husband is the *head* of the wife” (Eph. 5:23), Dawes concludes, presumably to the delight of patriarchal-complementarians, that

whatever other [metaphorical] senses the word *kephalē* may have had, the context in which it is used in Ephesians 5:22–24 demands that the meaning ‘authority over’ be adopted. For in verses 22–24 the word is used...to reinforce the case for the ‘subordination’ of wives. It can only fulfill this function if it carries with it some sense of authority. (134)

However, he then goes on to criticize both the patriarchal-traditionalists for finding only *this* meaning in the word regardless of the context, and the egalitarians for refusing to see ‘authority over’ as the sense in at least this context of Ephesians 5:21–33.

However, egalitarians should not despair because Dawes finally concludes that

[A] close reading shows that what Ephesians asks is that both wives and husbands live lives of mutual subordination and self sacrificing love, after the example of Christ....While married couples are joined in a particularly intimate, bodily union (Eph 5:31), a union which demands that they care for and take responsibility for one another, it is also because they are ‘members of...[the] body of Christ’ (cf. Eph 5:30), and therefore ‘members of one another’ (Eph 4:25), that they are bound to this new and distinctively Christian ethic. (233)

Ultimately, the same tension seems to exist here in Ephesians 5:21–33 as in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16—a tension in the former, between loving mutuality based on equality of genders and between the asymmetrical, patriarchal-submission order. In the Corinthian passage, there is a tension between one-directional subordination and the *subversion* of patriarchal order, since the apostle concludes by saying, “Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man or man independent of woman. For just as woman came from man, so man comes through woman; but all things come from God” (vv. 11–12).

Anthony C. Thiselton (2000)

In perhaps the premier and definitive interpretive commentary on 1 Corinthians to date, Anthony C. Thiselton²⁸ has reviewed carefully the debate in depth, evaluating more than *eighty* publications! Accordingly, three viewpoints on the metaphorical sense of *kephalē* have emerged: (1) ‘authority over’ (Fitzmyer 1989, 1993; Grudem 1985, 1990, 2001); (2) ‘source,’ ‘origin,’ ‘temporal priority’ (Bedale 1954; Bruce 1971; Murphy-O’Connor 1989, 1997; Fee 1987; Schrage 1995); and (3) ‘preeminent,’ ‘foremost,’ ‘representative’ (the part representing the whole) (Cervin 1989; Perriman 1994).

After critically examining each view in detail, Thiselton leans toward the third view and highlights Gundry-Volf’s exegesis of the passage in 1 Corinthians 11:3–16 (mentioned earlier in this paper). He uses the following English words to express the meaning of the three uses of *kephalē* in 11:3: ‘preeminent’ (of Christ), ‘foremost’ (of man), and ‘preeminent’ (of God), while retaining the translation of *kephalē* as ‘head,’ with the added qualification that the English word ‘head’ does not exactly coincide with Paul’s use of *kephalē*.

Thiselton concludes that the evidence from ancient Greek literature for *kephalē* meaning ‘authority over,’ as well as the evidence for it meaning ‘source’ is definitely shrinking. This makes it increasingly difficult to argue for either ‘authority over’ or ‘source’ as exclusive senses or to argue any longer that either is the ‘common’ meaning of *kephalē* in the New Testament period, much less in Paul’s writings.

Wayne Grudem (2001)

Again, Wayne Grudem²⁹ responds to several authors who had written studies on *kephalē* since his earlier rebuttal (1990)—scholars with whom he mostly disagrees. The bulk of his article focuses on a critique of an entry on “head” by Catherine Kroeger in the *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (1993). In that article Kroeger argues that early evidence from church leaders supports the meaning of *kephalē* as ‘source’ as well as some new evidence from non-Christian sources. Aside from some petty inaccuracies, Grudem’s main criticisms are as follows. Kroeger has falsely given the impression that Chrysostom (A.D. 347–407) believed that *kephalē* meant ‘source’ and not

‘authority over.’ Grudem counters that in the *full context* of the Chrysostom statements, this is not the case. Additional statements from Chrysostom clearly show that he believed firmly in male authority over women and understood *kephalē* in this way.

Further theological questions are raised for Kroeger. Does “the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor. 11:3) teach (given the sense of *kephalē* as ‘authority over’) the “eternal subordination of the Son” in the Trinitarian Godhead (which is Grudem’s view but understood by Kroeger as heretical)? Or, if *kephalē* means ‘source’ (Kroeger’s view), how do we avoid the Arian heresy of the Son being created by the Father?

The last criticism comes in the form of a detailed analysis of fourteen further examples she gives of *kephalē* meaning ‘source.’ Grudem claims that all of these examples are false and do not prove her case.

The article closes with brief attention to articles by Turner,³⁰ Fitzmyer,³¹ Arnold,³² Dawes,³³ Perriman,³⁴ May and Joe,³⁵ Brown,³⁶ Keener,³⁷ and Groothuis,³⁸ – some agreeing and some disagreeing with Grudem. He concludes that ‘authority over’ as the meaning of *kephalē* is “firmly established” (64).

Philip B. Payne (2008)

Philip B. Payne’s long awaited monograph on the gender issue (*Man and Woman, One in Christ*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan) is in the final editing process and soon forthcoming. However, a greatly abbreviated summary of his exegesis of 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 was published last fall in *Priscilla Papers*³⁹ that gives some hints as to how he will handle the *kephalē* sense in 11:3 in the larger treatment.

Payne identifies the problem at Corinth with ‘disgraceful’ hairstyles—men’s *long hair* conveys effeminacy and symbolizes effeminate homosexuality, while women’s *loose hanging* hair signifies “undisciplined sexuality.” *Kephalē* in verse 3 is understood as “source relationships, highlighting the respect each person owes to his or her source” (10). Payne cites fourteen reasons for accepting “source” as the best translation for *kephalē* in this passage.

The following verses (4-10) emphasize social and theological reasons why men and women ought not to wear hairstyles that repudiate heterosexual marriage—“the archetypal relationship of Adam to Eve is the antithesis of homosexual relationships” (13). Finally, verses 11-16 stress the non-hierarchical unity with difference of the man and woman leading to their equal standing and privilege. Verse 11 emphasizes the fundamental principle that in the Lord woman and man are not separate, affirming their equal standing and privilege, like Gal 3:28. Verse 12’s “even as... so also” shows that man and woman should both respect each other as their source. Verses 13-16 apply this explicitly to men’s and women’s hair.

His views on Ephesians 5:23 are summarized by Payne himself along the following lines.

I take seriously the obvious apposition which is most naturally understood as clarifying what Paul means by *kephalē* in Eph 5:23. "He savior of the body" is in apposition to "Christ head of the church" and I believe that defines the sense in which Paul intends his readers to interpret "head." Christ is head of the church in the sense that he is its savior. What that means for the church and for husbands called to follow Christ is explained in verse 25 and following, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...." The submission of both v. 22 (which is grammatically dependent on assumption of the verb from v. 21) and v. 24 is one expression of the mutual submission, "submitting to one another in reverence for Christ," that should characterize relationships within the body of Christ.⁴⁰

Concluding observations and implications for understanding 1 Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23

Where does the above summary of the debate leave us? How can we move forward in our understanding of the key texts that affect our Christian attitude and practice in the home and church? Let me try to summarize what I have concluded through this meta-study. In my judgment (not all will agree) the following points should be taken into consideration in all future discussions of *kephalē* and how 1 Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23 are interpreted and applied.

The lexical battle

1. The actual *non-contested* evidence outside the Bible for *kephalē* meaning 'source' or *kephalē* meaning 'authority over' in first century Greek usage is shrinking (but not totally absent). Which option is 'weaker' remains debatable. Either option remains *rare* from a lexical standpoint.
2. Most all parties now agree that in certain contexts *kephalē* may mean either 'authority over' or 'source.' Whether *both* senses are ever or always present is debatable.
3. A discernable trend may be noticed to accept the general background of the metaphorical sense of *kephalē* as stemming from the anatomical relation of the head to the body as its most 'prominent,' 'respected,' 'preeminent,' or 'illustrious' part.

4. There seems to be growing agreement that *kephalē* as a metaphor can have different senses in different contexts and even different senses in the same context.
5. If Paul is using *kephalē* as a *living* metaphor in any place (i.e., a rare or unique use), the precise sense of *kephalē* may be ascertained only by the context, not by lexical studies of ‘dead’ metaphors (having a standard sense).
6. Prejudice seems evident in those studies that fail to recognize possible multiple meanings of *kephalē* and instead continue to force all texts in Paul to conform to a single primary meaning, whether ‘source’ or ‘authority over.’
7. Several of the studies above may operate with the fallacy of reading modern ‘egalitarian’ models back into the biblical texts or to see more recent ‘modified- patriarchal’ (e.g., ‘complementarian’) positions as present in the Pauline uses of *kephalē*.
8. If there is any change in the LSJ lexicon to include ‘authority over’ (as some have suggested), there should be also a corresponding change in the BAGD lexicon to include ‘source’ or ‘origin’ as another (rare) but possible sense of *kephalē*.
9. The word *kephalē* should continue, as in most translations, to be rendered by ‘head’ yet with the recognition that the English word ‘head’ is not an exact equivalent of *kephalē*.

Applying this study to two key Pauline texts

Briefly, but hopefully with profit, I would like to suggest how this study might be applied to 1 Corinthians 11:3 and then to Ephesians 5:23.

1 Corinthians 11:3

“The head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor. 11:3–TNIV). This passage is notoriously difficult to interpret. First, it is my position that female *insubordination* to male authority is *not* the primary problem addressed by Paul. Rather, as the text goes on to tell us, it was dishonoring behavior of culturally inappropriate head/hairstyles practiced by both men and women as they were alternating in leading prayer and preaching in the public worship of the church (vv. 4–6; 11–16).⁴¹ While Paul may use *kephalē* in the sense of “source” (see Payne), I am more inclined here to see *kephalē* as ‘prominent’ or ‘honored’ of the male-female relation along with a Jewish-gendered reading of the creation accounts (Gen. 1 interpreted by Gen. 2) as Paul’s argument to root out this unacceptable *practice* (vv. 7–9).

The use here of *kephalē* in my opinion includes incidental overtones of patriarchal cultural expectations regarding male *honor* that Paul wants to preserve publicly for the sake of the *mission* of the church. We must remember that the church met in homes that were open to the public as they met. Any deviance from the patriarchal norms of male respect/ honor, evidenced outwardly by the way the hair was worn on the head, would be seen as a radical social aberration and would produce unnecessary and serious opposition to the fledgling church at Corinth—a concern Paul has in the larger context of 8:1–14:40.

Such a reading of 11:3–10 addresses the honor/shame problem and at the same time preserves the biblical distinction between male and female that Paul wants. He thus adapts (not changes) the gospel to the surrounding culture without compromising its essential message.⁴² That Paul can in another context, that of the actual nature and functioning of the church (“in the Lord”), argue for a completely non-gendered and egalitarian reading of creation is witnessed to in 11:11–16. Both readings of creation must be kept in tension and not reduced to an either/or approach.

Ephesians 5:23

“The husband is the head [*kephalē*] of the wife as Christ is the head [*kephalē*] of the church” (Eph. 5:23 TNIV) presents another interpretive challenge. Hierarchical-Complementarians will argue that since *kephalē* means ‘authority over’ in reference to Christ in other passages (e.g., Eph. 1:22; Col. 2:10), his headship here is also to be understood as ‘authority over.’ This is confirmed by the command for wives to *submit* themselves to their husbands’ ‘authority over’ them (v. 22).

Yet, this reading, in my opinion, not only fails to take seriously other possible linguistic senses for *kephalē* but also ignores or relativizes the importance of first century Mediterranean patriarchy as the social-cultural context of Paul’s injunctions. Further, this interpretation does not adequately grapple with how this Pauline teaching might be understood and applied in modified-patriarchal or egalitarian cultures such as in most of the West today and increasingly also in Eastern societies.

A better approach, in my judgment, would be to retain the sense of *kephalē* as ‘authority over’ in this context, but to argue that in a changed cultural context such as ours the best *application* of Paul’s teaching is ‘mutual submission’ or ‘mutual yielding’ or ‘deference’ (Dawes).⁴³ As Kevin Giles, aware of the discussion outlined above, and adopting the sense of *kephalē* as ‘authority over’ for this passage has recently argued:

The word [*kephalē*], however, is given new content. To be the “head” of one’s wife, Paul explains, involves not rule, but sacrificial, self-giving,

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agape-love. Jesus exemplifies this kind of leadership in his self-giving on the cross. It is the leadership of the servant who is willing to serve even to the point of giving one’s life for the other. Not one word is said in this passage about who makes the final decision on important matters. In Ephesians 5:21ff, Paul is seeking in his cultural setting to transform patriarchy—male authoritative leadership—not endorse it. When first read it would have been the men in that church who felt threatened by the counter-cultural teaching Paul enunciates. In its original historical context, this was a liberating text. It should be read in this way today.⁴⁴

An approach I favor would be to understand *kephalē* as in 1 Corinthians 11:3 as ‘prominent’ or ‘honorable’ of the husband vis-à-vis the wife in terms of the patriarchal social structure of Paul’s day. Paul then redefines this ‘honored’ position not in terms of Christ’s *Lordship* over the church, but his *kephalē* that is manifest in his love and servant-self-giving and other-nurturing and promoting aspects of his relationship to the church. This same model is to be the example that a Christian husband follows as he relates to his wife and she in turn yields herself in ‘respect’ to this kind of *kephalē*, i.e., her loving, caring, protecting spouse.

Again, in our non-patriarchal culture (one not *requiring* male honor), *mutual* yielding (v. 21) and *mutual* respect in my judgment best fulfills this model of Christ. His example is beautifully portrayed in the foot-washing account and commanded to all believers, including husbands and wives, in their relation to each other (John 13:1–17).

ENDNOTES

* A term used especially in the natural and social sciences to describe a study that reviews multiple primary studies on a topic, then synthesizes and concludes where these studies seem to be pointing. Portions of this paper appeared in *Priscilla Papers* 20 (2006) 21-29.

¹ Stephen Bedale, “The Meaning of *kephalē* in the Pauline Epistles,” *Journal of Theological Studies* ns50 (1954): 211–16.

² Leon Morris, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*, TNTC (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1958).

³ C.K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).

⁴ F.F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians*, NCBC (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1971).

⁵ Morna D. Hooker, “Authority on Her Head: An Examination of 1 Cor. XI.10,” *New Testament Studies* 10 (1963-’64) 410-16.

⁶ Fee further adds to the evidence for this sense by pointing out that *exousia* never has the passive sense or does the idiom “to have authority over” ever refer to an external authority different from the subject of the sentence (Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987) 519.

- ⁷ Robin Scroggs, "Paul and the Eschatological Woman," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 40 (1972) 283–303.
- ⁸ Fred D. Layman, "Male Headship in Paul's Thought," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 15 (1980) 46–67.
- ⁹ James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1981).
- ¹⁰ Gilbert Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1985).
- ¹¹ Berkeley and Alvera Mickelsen, "Does Male Dominance Tarnish Our Translations?" *Christianity Today*, Oct. 5, 1979, 23–26; "The Head of the Epistles," *Christianity Today* (Feb. 20, 1981) 20–23; "What Does *Kephalē* Mean in the New Testament?" in *Women, Authority and the Bible*, ed. Alvera Mickelsen (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1986) 97–132.
- ¹² Wayne Grudem, "Does *kephalē* (Head) Mean 'Source' or 'Authority Over' in Greek Literature? A Survey of 2,336 Examples," *Trinity Journal* 6 NS (1985) 38–59.
- ¹³ Gilbert Bilezikian, "A Critical Examination of Wayne Grudem's Treatment of *kephalē* in Ancient Greek Texts" in *Beyond Sex Roles*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1985) 215–252.
- ¹⁴ Walter L. Liefeld, "Women, Submission & Ministry in 1 Corinthians," in *Women, Authority & the Bible*, ed. Alvera Mickelsen (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1986) 134–153.
- ¹⁵ Catherine C. Kroeger, "The Classical Concept of *Head* as 'Source'" in Gretchen Gaebelein Hull, *Equal to Serve* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming Revell, 1987) 267–283.
- ¹⁶ Cervin, Richard S. "Does *Kephalē* Mean 'Source' or 'Authority Over' in Greek Literature? A Rebuttal," *Trinity Journal* 10 NS (1989) 85–112.
- ¹⁷ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "Another Look at *Kephalē* in 1 Corinthians 11:3," *New Testament Studies* 35 (1989) 503–511.
- ¹⁸ Jerome Murphy O'Connor, *1 Corinthians* (Wilmington, De.: Michael Glazier, 1982).
- ¹⁹ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "*Kephalē* in 1 Corinthians 11:3," *Interpretation* 47,1 (Jan. 1993) 52–59.
- ²⁰ Wayne Grudem, "The Meaning of *Kephalē* ('Head'): A Response to Recent Studies," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 1991) 425–468.
- ²¹ Philip B. Payne, "Response," in *Women, Authority and the Bible*, ed. Michelsen, 121–124.
- ²² Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987) 501–505.
- ²³ Peter Cottrel and Max Turner, *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1989) 144.
- ²⁴ Andrew C. Perriman, "The Head of a Woman: The Meaning of *Kephalē* in 1 Cor. 11:3," *Journal of Theological Studies* 45 (1994) 602–622.
- ²⁵ Judith M. Gundry-Volf, "Gender and Creation in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16: A Study in Paul's Theological Method," in *Evangelium, Schriftauslegung, Kirche Festschrift für Peter Stuhlmacher*, ed. Jostein Ådna, Scott Hafemann, and Otfried Hofius (Gottingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997) 151–171.
- ²⁶ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000) 803.

- ²⁷ Gregory W. Dawes, *The Body in Question: Metaphor and Meaning in the Interpretation of Ephesians 5:21–33*, *Biblical Interpretation* 30 (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1998).
- ²⁸ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000) 812–823.
- ²⁹ Wayne Grudem, “The Meaning of *Kephalē* (‘Head’): An Evaluation of New Evidence, Real and Alleged,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44.1 (March 2001) 25–66.
- ³⁰ Max Turner, “Modern Linguistics and the New Testament,” *Hearing the New Testament*, ed. Joel Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans and Carlisle: Paternoster, 1995) 165–172.
- ³¹ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “*Kephalē* in 1 Corinthians 11:3,” *Interpretation* 47.1 (Jan. 1993) 52–59.
- ³² Clinton Arnold, “Jesus Christ: ‘Head’ of the Church (Colossians and Ephesians), *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ*, ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans and Carlisle: Paternoster, 1994) 346–366.
- ³³ Gregory W. Dawes, *The Body in Question: Metaphor and Meaning in the Interpretation of Ephesians 5:21–33*, *Biblical Interpretation* 30 (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1998).
- ³⁴ Andrew C. Perriman, “The Head of a Woman: The Meaning of *Kephalē* in 1 Cor. 11:3,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 45 (1994) 602–622.
- ³⁵ Grace Ying May and Hyunhye Pokrifka Joe, “Setting the Record Straight,” *Priscilla Papers* 11/1 (Winter 1997) 1–10.
- ³⁶ Judy Brown, “I Now Pronounce You Adam and Eve,” *Priscilla Papers* 13/4 (Fall, 1999) 2–3.
- ³⁷ Craig Keener, *Paul, Women, Wives* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992) 34.
- ³⁸ Rebecca Groothuis, *Good News for Women* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1997) 151.
- ³⁹ Philip B. Payne, “Wild Hair and Gender Equality in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16,” *Priscilla Papers* Vol. 20, No. 3 ♦(Summer 2006) 8–18.
- ⁴⁰ Letter to the author, November 1, 2007, and approved for inclusion in this paper.
- ⁴¹ The question of whether Paul is dealing with hair itself (long or short; loose or pinned-up) or some cloth hood is still debated. Veiling is considerably less likely. A growing number of scholars are now arguing that ‘hair style’ itself is the marker of sexual identity (Hurley, Layman, Padgett, Gundry-Volf, Blattenberger, Johnson, Payne, John R. Werner). It was apparently the view also of John Chrysostom (4th cent., see *The Homilies of Chrysostom on Corinthians*, 152).
- ⁴² This understanding also avoids the potentially serious Christological problem with the expression, “the *kephalē* of Christ is God” that unnecessarily but unfortunately has resulted when some interpret *kephalē* as ‘authority over’ and then take this to imply, ‘the eternal subordination of the Son’ (e.g., Grudem and other’s, see Kevin Giles, *Jesus and the Father. Modern Evangelicals Reinvent the Doctrine of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2006) 306–312.
- ⁴³ Alan F. Johnson, “A Christian Understanding of Submission,” *Priscilla Papers* 17,4 (Fall 2003) 11–20.

⁴⁴ Kevin Giles, unpublished lecture notes. See his related comments in his essay, “An Egalitarian-Complementarian Reading of Scripture,” in *The Trinity & Subordinationism: The Doctrine of God & the Contemporary Gender Debate* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2002) 203–08.