



THE VEILED WOMAN

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January 1, 1987

by Milburn Cockrell Second Printing

Printed in the U.S.A. by Barea Baptist Church Bookstore P.O. Box 39 Mantachie, MS 38855



The picture above from the Handbook of Bible Manners and Customs by James M. Freeman was published in 1874. This book contains 168 engravings. Under veils it has this covering under which it reads “head-dress.” It is said to be the redidim, a kind of head veil. Some brethren contend that the headcovering of a Jewish woman was a veil which covered the face and head. Let such brethren consider this picture which proves otherwise. The man who wrote this book had no thesis to defend. He was just concerned with facts.

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INTRODUCTION

Some of my friends, not to mention my enemies, will wonder why that I have bothered to even take time to write a book on the woman's head covering. They will say, "Why spend time on one of the least commandments in the Scriptures?" To which I reply that I find no non-essentials in the Bible. To break one of the least commandments and to teach men so is to be least in the kingdom (Matthew 5:19). All commandments, small or great in the eyes of men, are for the benefit of God's people. It is my duty as a minister of the gospel to teach all that is commanded in the Bible. To omit any teaching is to deprive God's people of the blessing of obedience. This I will never do.

People who visit our church are often surprised to see so many women with hats on their heads in our services. At times they ask questions about this practice. The main purpose of this book is to answer some of the questions and to give the scriptural reasons why we teach that women should wear hats in church.

In some areas there is a mighty movement to discredit the head covering and any preacher who dares to affirm that it is God's truth. Hence, I feel compelled to defend the faith of the early churches as seen in I Corinthians 11:1-16. The head covering on the head of a woman in public worship is one of the old landmarks of our Baptist faith which needs to be reset.

Some of the attacks upon those of us who believe in the head covering are rude and unbecoming to those who profess godliness. I shall cite a few cases. One prominent preacher in our ranks is known to have repeatedly laughed and made fun of any woman who wore a hat to church. Another in his Bible conference asked repeatedly why the women had those little things on their heads. If women are wrong in wearing hats to church, surely such mockery and ridicule from men who profess to be ministers of the Word are not the way to convert our sisters. Another preacher tried to prejudice his people against the teaching by telling his people that it was a heathen custom not for Christians to observe today. Another preacher of the Reformed strip publicly said that some women thought that they would go to Hell if they did not wear their coverings. Both of these preachers know better than to misrepresent our position so grievously. Another pastor on leaving his church warned his people about calling any man who believed in the head covering. In his opinion any person who teaches the head covering for women is the worst of all heretics.

I have never made the head covering for women in church a test of fellowship, nor do I have any plans in the future of doing so. I know that some of my brethren are honest in their contention that the hair is the head covering for women. I respect their views. I will never laugh nor make fun of them for their sentiments. I can only hope and pray that they shall be as charitable toward me. If we must differ on some points of doctrine, then let us do it in love that men may know that we are Christ's disciples.

The writer of this little booklet has fond memories of his grandmother, Nancy Tempie Cockrell (a Baptist), who wore a bonnet on her head at all times as far back as I can remember her. She always said from the time that I was a small infant that I would be “her preacher.” She died on my seventh birthday in 1948, long before I ever announced my call to the gospel ministry. As long as I have a mind which can remember, I shall recall her bonnet on her head, her long hair, and her Christlike spirit.

CHAPTER

1

An Exposition of I Corinthians 11:1-16

Among the Lord's people there is much debate, and, in some cases, much discord as to whether or not a Christian woman should wear a hat in public worship. This contention centers around I Corinthians 11:1-16. Some say the covering commanded in these verses for a woman is her hair which is given her for a covering. Others say Paul wrote about an Oriental custom which is in no way binding on our modern-day churches. Still others, like myself, are convinced that the Scriptures teach that a woman should wear a hat to the services of the church.

Any discussion of this subject must be greatly concerned with the scriptures in question. My purpose in writing this little booklet is to examine these verses in order to discover their correct interpretation I have no axe to grind with those who do not see eye to eye with me on this topic. I ask only the right to be heard as to my position. My writing is not designed to convert all the great theologians, or to silence all critics. My design is to instruct those who honestly and sincerely desire to know what the Bible teaches on this subject that they may obey their Lord.

No text should be separated from its context. This chapter deals with two ordinances or commands: (1) The unveiled head for men and the veiled head for women in public worship; (2) The Lord's Supper. To my surprise, the first half of the chapter has been ignored by most churches and pastors, while the last half is almost universally observed by all denominations. There were two disorders in the assembly at Corinth with which this chapter is concerned: (1) Some of their women were coming to church unveiled; (2) Some of their members abusing the Lord's Supper. This chapter is intended to correct these two errors.

VERSE ONE

“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”

I shall not linger long of this verse as the meaning is clear. Christ was Paul's example. Every pastor, as well as every Christian, must be a follower of Christ. Church members should follow their pastor as long as he follows Christ. Church members should follow their pastor and people to obey when Christ speaks in His Word.

VERSE TWO

“Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.”

Here we see the importance of keeping apostolic tradition. “Ordinances” would be better translated “traditions” or “precepts.” The Greek word translated “ordinances” is *paradosis* which literally means “something handed down from one to another.” The traditions under consideration are apostolic maxims of faith and practice, delivered either orally or in writing by Paul (I Corinthians 11:23; 15:3; II Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6). This includes the head covering for women in public worship and the Lord’s Supper which follows in this chapter. Please observe that the word “ordinances” is in the plural form.

The stress in this verse is upon the keeping of the ordinances, or commands, as Paul delivered them (I Corinthians 14:37; 4:16-17). The doctrines, or rules, respecting good order and government in the church were to be believed and practiced. The apostle did not impose his own notions upon the church. He delivered to the Corinthian church what had already been delivered to him by God (I Timothy 1:11; Galatians 1:11-12). That which he would have them to keep was not some fleeting custom, or a man-made tradition. Earlier he had written: “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (I Corinthians 14:37; cf. II Peter 3:15-16).

It is wrong to assume that what Paul is about to write is some Oriental custom of a bygone age which has no meaning to our present-day churches. It would be as logical to say that prayer, the headship of the man over the woman, short hair on a man, or the Lord’s Supper was to be observed only by the Corinthian church in the apostolic age.

Two symbols follow: (1) The head covering for the woman, a symbol of her subjection to the man; (2) The Lord’s Supper, a symbol of the death of Christ. There is no justification for accepting one and not the other. The two of them are traditions to be kept. It is the height of inconsistency to give the last part of the chapter a universal application for all churches for all time, and then to limit the first part to particular church for a particular period. This is to wrongfully divide the Word of truth and to handle “the word of God deceitfully” (II Corinthians 4:2).

VERSE THREE

“But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ: and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.”

This verse begins with the words: **“But I would have you know...”** It is as if God knew we might think the things to follow were insignificant and not worth knowing. Those who dare to take and leave scriptures at pleasure are inclined to ignore these verses on the head covering, but God would have His people to know these things.

In this verse Paul takes up the important subject of headship, or the order of rank in creation. The woman is subordinate to and is under the rule of the man; the man is subordinate to and is under the rule of Christ; Christ, in His mediatorial office, is subordinate to and is under the rule of God the Father. The use of “every man” indicates the widest application and a universal principle.

“But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ...” This does not merely mean every Christian man, or even every married man, as some hold. “Every man” means every man. Christ is the ruler, director, and chief of every man on earth, especially a Christian man. Every man must own Christ as his Master and Head; he must recognize his subordination to Him. Christ is the Creator and Preserver of all men without exception (Acts 17:28; I Timothy 4:10). In the millennium all men will own Christ as their head, but today it is known only in the church of God.

“...the head of the woman is the man...” The ruler director, and chief of woman is man (Genesis 3:16). Again, this must not be limited to married women or Christian women. Woman’s demeanor, her dress, her conversation, in public should recognize her subordination to the man. This fact is proven by the inclusion of “the head of Christ is God.” It is interiority of rank rather than of person that is here spoken of.

“...The head of Christ is God.” This is the sense of Christ’s human nature. In the covenant of grace, the Son took a subordinate position to the Father and was obedient to Him (Matthew 26:39, 42; John 10:18; Philemon 2:8; Hebrews 5:8; 12:2). It would seem that if our Divine Christ has no problem in subordination to Christ, nor the woman to the man.

VERSE FOUR

“Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonored his head.”

Charles Williams gives this rendering of the verse:

Any man who prays or preaches with anything on his head dishonors his head. 1

“Prophesying” in verse 4 means public speaking in the church (I Corinthians 14:4, 23-25, 31). It also includes those who hear prayer and preaching in the church. The woman should join with the man and go along with him in her heart (I Kings 8:62; I Corinthians 14:16). Man is to pray and speak in public worship with his head uncovered---without a hat on his head. A.T. Robertson tells us:

Having his head covered (kata kephales echon). Literally, having a veil (*kalumma* understood) down from the head... 2

Conybeare renders it:

...with a veil over his head. 3

Writing of the expression **“having his head covered,”** M.R. Vincent says:

Lit. having something hanging down from his head. Referring to the *tallith*, a four-cornered shawl having fringes consisting of eight threads, each knotted five times, and worn over the head in prayer. It was placed upon the worshipper’s head at his entrance into the synagogue. The Romans, like the Jews, prayed with the head veiled. So

Aeneas: ‘And our heads are shrouded before the altar with a Phrygian vestment’ (Virgil, *Aeneid*, iii. 545) The Greeks remained bareheaded during prayer or sacrifice, as indeed they did in their ordinary outdoor life. The Grecians usage, which had become prevalent in the Grecian churches, seems to have commended itself to Paul as more becoming the superior position of the man. 4

Man, in public worship is not to wear a veil, or turban, or a hat. He is to remove his hat as a mark of respect for Christ when in His presence in the church. This verse most men still keep to this remote day, although most do not know why they remove their hats in church services. Christ, the head of every man, is not presently seen. So no covering is to be seen on the man’s head. The man has no visible head present in the church services. For a man to enter the church and to speak with this hat on is to dishonor his spiritual head which is Christ (v. 3). Any man who prays or preaches in church with a hat on his head has no respect for the Master he professes to serve.

VERSE FIVE

“But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.”

Williams gives it:

And any woman who prays or prophesies bareheaded dishonors her head, for it is one and the same thing with having her head shaved. 5

Evidently some of the women at Corinth were coming to church without a covering on their head. This is the error that Paul sought to correct. The loose-living Corinthian women seem to be the only people in the New Testament who dared to do such a thing. It is plain from what follows that Paul wanted the women in public worship to wear a head covering.

“...dishonoreth her head” means not her natural head, or even her figurative head---her husband. It means the man in general who is the head of the woman (v.3). It would include her father, her husband, her pastor, and every other man. In putting off her veil, she puts off the symbol of her subjection to man, which is her true honor. By coming to church uncovered she indicates she wants to be like the man, for she has cast off her headship. She says by being uncovered: “I am not going to be subject to the man as the Bible teaches. I have as much right to have my hat off in public worship as a man.”

“...for that is even all one as if she were shaven.” John Gill says on this expression:

To be without a veil, or some sort of a covering on her head, according to the custom of the country, is the same thing as if her head was shaved; and every one knows how dishonorable and scandalous it is for a woman to have her head shaved; and if this is the same then it is dishonorable and scandalous to her to be without a covering in public worship. 6

In the Scriptures the head covering is an emblem of modesty (Genesis 24:65) and conjugal chastity (Genesis 20:16). The uncovered head indicated unfaithfulness on the part of a woman (Numbers 5:18; Proverbs 7:13-14; Isaiah 7:20).

The long hair and veil are both intended as a covering of the head of a woman, as a sign of true womanliness and of the right relation of woman to man. The absence of one had the same significance as that of the other. Her long hair teaches her to wear a veil (I Corinthians 11:15). If she is not going to wear a covering on her head, then she might as well shave her hair off and lay aside all the usual indications of modesty and subordination.

VERSE SIX

“For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.”

Williams gave it:

For if a woman will not wear a veil, let her have her hair cut off too. Now if it is a dishonor for a woman to have her hair cut off, or her head shaved, let her wear a veil. 7

If a woman puts off the artificial covering, let her be consistent and take the next step, putting off the natural covering of the hair, which is intended for the same purpose. The veil and the long hair are on the same side, and the unveiling and the short hair are on the same side. So if a woman refuses to wear a hat to church she should cut her hair close like a man, or shave her head like a man shaves his face.

In verse 5 Paul used the word “shaven” (Greek *xureo*---to use a razor to shave), but in verse 6 he uses both “shaven” and “shorn.” “Shorn” in the Greek is *keiro*, and it means “to shear as a sheep, to cut the hair short.” Here is seen the importance of both long hair on a woman as well as a hat. The word “covered” is used twice in this verse. Both of these are a translation of the Greek word *katakalypto* which means “to be veiled or covered.” When he speaks of the natural covering of her hair he used *peribolaion* which means “something cast around” (I Corinthians 11:15).

In the first part of verse 6 it is said that if she refuses to wear a head covering, let her cut her hair short. The covering in verse 6 is not the hair, for if the hair is short you cannot cut it short. Much less can you not shave the head of a baldheaded woman! If the covering is the hair, as some teach, it would be best for both men and women to shave their heads and wear wigs, which in the case of men could be removed when in church, and in the case of women could be worn in church. If the hair is the covering, then when a man begins to wear a long hair he has adopted the covering!

Sad to say, but most Christian women have removed their hats in church, and they have cut their hair very short. Both things are in direct violation of the teaching of Scripture. In this they are being conformed to the world, a thing also forbidden in Scripture (Romans 12:2).

VERSE SEVEN

“For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.”

Man, as the lord of the earth (Genesis 1:26-28; Psalm 8) reflects the sovereignty of the Creator over all things. He is the glory of creation and lives to glorify God (II Corinthians 8:23). On the other hand, woman is the glory of man, for she was taken from him and formed for him (I Corinthians 11:8-9). It is a glory for man to have a loving and devoted helpmeet like woman. Such is a crown of honor and glory to him. In the case of woman, the word “image” is omitted, although she, like the man, is in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Paul is expounding the relation of the woman, not to God, but to man.

According to Genesis 2, woman acquired this image indirectly by derivation from man, not directly from God, thus the sign of her dependence on man is most fitting to her. Another good reason for her to wear a covering to church! A woman uncovered in church is not the glory of man.

VERSE EIGHT

“For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.”

In the original creation the woman was made from the man (Genesis 2:18-23). Eve was made from Adam’s rib. She took her nature and name from the man. The man is like a veil placed between her and God. She should wear a covering in public worship to show her subordination to man in the order of creation.

According to ordinary generation, man is of the woman. He is conceived in her, borne by her, and born of her.

“Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.”

Man was made for God and woman for the man (Genesis 2:18). She was created to aid him in his duties, to comfort him in affliction, and to partake of his pleasure.

VERSE TEN

“For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of angels.”

Williams puts it:

This is why woman ought to wear upon her head a symbol of man’s authority, especially out of respect to the angels. 8

On this verse Henry Alford says:

The woman ought to have power (the sign of power of subjection); shewn by the context to mean a veil. 9

John Gill informs us concerning this expression:

For this cause ought a woman to have power on her head, &c. The generality of interpreters, by power, understand the veil, or covering on the woman's head, as a sign of the man's power over her and her subjection to him. 10

The word for "power" in the Greek text is *exousia* which means "authority." It seems to me that the sign is used for the thing itself in this verse. The hat on a woman's head is the symbol of the authority that the man with the uncovered head has over her. She must wear on her head the symbol of the authority under which she has been placed by God. Two reasons are given for this: (1) Because woman is from the man; (2) Because of the angels.

But what is it meant by "because of the angels"? Good angels are present in our church services (Psalm 138:1; I Corinthians 4:9; Ephesians 3:10; I Timothy 5:21; Hebrews 1:13). Isaiah 6:2 tells us that the elect angels veil their faces before Jehovah. These celestial spirits delight in orderly subordination of the several ranks among themselves. They are shocked and offended by seeing a woman come to church without the symbol on her head of her subjection to the man. A Christian woman ought to avoid offending these elect angels because she requires their protection more than even the man, her being the weaker sex. By offending the angels, she may forfeit their protection and make herself liable to an attack from the demons.

There is one thing that I am sure of from this passage. Satan hates to see a woman with her head covered in church. The symbol on her head shows to even Satan she is no rebel against God like he is. This puts him to shame, for she is doing what he failed to do. When Satan was in submission to God he was a covering cherub (Ezekiel 28:14). When he rebelled against God he lost his covering. No wonder Satan has turned so many people against women wearing hats to church! A woman with a hat on her head honors the man as her head and shames Satan for his rebellion to God. An uncovered woman in church is a rebel against God, just like the Devil is.

VERSES ELEVEN AND TWELVE

"Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God."

Each sex is incomplete without the other; neither is independent of the other. The need each other for happiness and in sexual relations. "In the Lord" means in relationship to each other as Christians in religious worship (I Peter 3:7). In the original creation the woman is of the man, but in the continuance of the race the man is of the woman. "All things of God" means that all of these relations have a Divine origin. The natural order is the Divine order.

VERSE THIRTEEN

“Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?”

Williams has it:

You must judge for yourselves in this matter. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with nothing on her head? 11

J.B. Phillips renders it:

Do you think it right and proper for a woman to pray to God bare headed? 12

In this verse Paul has appealed to their natural sense of right and wrong. The question shows that it would have been considered improper for a woman to pray in church uncovered. The matter of women wearing hats in public worship was so well understood in that day that Paul could appeal to their own natural sense of right and wrong to prove his point. When a woman rejects the emblem of subjection (the hat) to the man, she passes at one leap beyond both the man and angels. The bareheaded woman in public worship is in rebellion to God’s natural order and His written Word.

VERSE FOURTEEN

“Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?”

The law and light of nature---good common sense---teaches that a man should have short hair. Long hair on a man looks unmanly and exposes him to shame and contempt. This is the general custom the world over. In Scripture only the man who took a Nazarite vow was permitted to have long hair (Numbers 6:1-5). The priests in Israel were forbidden to “suffer their locks to grow long” (Ezekiel 44:20). Some preachers need to obey the Scripture.

VERSE FIFTEEN

“But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.”

Woman’s long hair is her natural covering and a providential indication of the propriety of the veil for a woman. Her hair is her most beautiful ornament. “Covering” here is the Greek word *periobolain* which means “something cast around,” doubtless referring to her hair being cast around her head.

A Christian woman should think long and consider much before cutting her hair short like a man. To cut her hair short is to deface the order of the Creator. It is to cut off her glory. Every God-fearing man in the world is delighted to see a woman with long hair, a woman who obeys the Scriptures. Therefore, we can be certain of one thing: The woman who cuts her hair very short is not seeking to gain the admiration of Christian men, nor to obey the teachings of the Bible.

VERSE SIXTEEN

“But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.”

Those who oppose the head covering make much of this verse, especially the words “no such custom.” They try to make the words of Paul to say that if anyone is going to be contentious, then forgot about a woman wearing a veil in order to have peace at any price in the church. It comes as no surprise that most who oppose the head covering are contentious about a woman going bareheaded, and they preach against women wearing hats to church. In a few words they make Paul to say: “If a woman does not wish to wear a veil, Christian women who hear preachers say such shout a hearty, “Amen”.

Some who believe in the head covering for women in church have equally twisted this verse. They say that these words show that the apostles and the early churches did not have the custom of contentiousness. However, I Corinthians 1:11 is against this view as there were contentions in the Corinthian church. Nor are contentions limited to this single church of the apostolic age.

Most of those who translate the New Testament, whether liberals or conservatives, do not seem to have much problem with the sense of this verse. Consider how they translate it:

But if anyone is inclined to be contentious about it, I for my part prescribe no other practice than this, neither do the churches of God (Williams). 13

Well, I acknowledge no other mode of worship...(James Moffatt). 14

...I can say that we have no such custom (of woman going bareheaded)...(Olaf M. Norlie). 15

...I for my part recognize no other practice in worship than this...(Edgar J. Goodspeed). 16

...we hold to and recognize no other custom in worship than this...(The Amplified N.T.). 17

...we have no other practice...(The New International Version). 18

Others give similar renderings. Thus, it appears that the meaning of the Greek text is clear to most scholars.

Most of the older commentators have no problem with the meaning of I Corinthians 11:16. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown inform us:

No such custom---as that of women praying uncovered. 19

Matthew Henry (1662-1714) declares:

It was a common usage of the churches for women to appear in public assemblies, and join in public worship veiled: and it was manifestly decent that they should do so. Those must be very contentious indeed who would quarrel with this, or lay it aside. 20

The words of Adam Clarke (1762-1832) are weighty and worth considering:

If any person sets himself up as a wrangler, puts himself forward as a defender of such points---that a woman may pray or teach with her head uncovered, and that a man may, without reproach, have long hair---let him know that we have no such custom as either, nor are they sanctioned by any of the churches of God, whether among Jews or among Gentiles. 21

Frederic Louis Godet (1812-1900) stated:

The only custom of which the whole passage has turned: women speaking without being veiled. Paul means that neither he, nor the Christians formed by him, nor in general any of the Churches of God whither those which he has not founded or those properly his own, allow such procedure in their ecclesiastical usages; comp. xiv. 36, 37, where the ideal simply indicated here is developed. ---The material proof of this assertion of Paul's is found in the Christian representations which have been discovered in the Catacombs, where the men always wear their hair cut short, and the women the palla, a kerchief falling over the shoulders, and which can be raised so as to conceal the face (Heinrici, p. 324). 22

M.R. Vincent discloses:

Not the custom of contentiousness, but that of women speaking unveiled. The testimonies of Tertullian and Chrysostom show that these injunctions of Paul prevailed in the churches. In the sculptures of the catacombs the women have a close-fitted headdress, while men have the hair short. 23

Millard J. Berquist, the Southern Baptist commentator, tells us:

Paul insisted that the Corinthian women should wear veils covering their heads when they attended the public worship services. The Jewish Christians had no difficulty in the matter. Jews had always had this custom in their temple and synagogue worship, for men as well as women. On the other hand, the Greeks of both sexes were accustomed to worshipping in their pagan temples with heads uncovered. In the Christian churches the custom was for men to worship with bared heads and women with veils. 24

It is very clear from Paul's use of the argument of the custom of that day in verse 13 that it was almost the universal practice of Christian women in every place to worship with a covering on her head. If it had not been a common practice in the Corinthian Church in Paul's

day, he would not have asked the question that he did: “Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?” Evidently, of all the churches known to Paul there were no women worshipping bareheaded save a few at Corinth. But just a few was more than Paul wanted to see.

Really there is nothing in the context to warrant the meaning that the churches had no such custom of women praying covered. Verse 13 is surely against the idea. In verse 2 Paul urged them to keep apostolic traditions or customs, not ignore them. To make Paul say in verse 16 that there was no such custom among the churches of women wearing hats to public worship is to make Paul contradict himself in verse 16 to what he said in verse 2. But Paul, writing under Divine inspiration, did not contradict himself. Why would he take 15 verses to urge women to wear a veil or hat to church, and then take one verse to say that the head covering is “really a non-essential”?

The physical constitution of the woman is still the same (vv. 13-15), the story of creation has not changed (vv. 8-12), and the relation of man and woman has not changed. Neither has the need of a woman wearing a covering to church changed. Paul bases the need of a covering on a woman’s head in church services on the permanent relation of man and woman since the creation.

It is strange to me that verse 16 is used by some to overturn what Paul had said about a woman’s covering, but not to overturn any other thing that he said in this chapter! They do not use it to overturn what Paul said about the headship of man over the woman, or the woman having long hair, or the man short hair. Why not use verse 16 to overturn these truths as well? If they followed their rule used against the head covering, they would also teach that women no longer ought to be in subjection to the men, that men should have long hair and women short hair, and that men ought to wear their hats in public worship! Oh, consistency! Thou art a jewel Divine!

A SUMMATION OF I CORINTHIANS 11:1-16

It appears to me that there are a number of reasons given by Paul in this passage for a woman to wear a hat to church. They are as follows:

- (1) It is an apostolic tradition which must be kept (v. 2); What Paul wrote in I Corinthians was the commandments of the Lord (I Corinthians 14:37) and for all the churches to practice (I Corinthians 1:2; 4:16-17).
- (2) For a woman to fail to wear a covering is to dishonor man who is her head (vv. 3, 5). If she refuses to wear a covering, she should cut her hair close like a man (v. 6) or shave her head (v. 5).
- (3) In verse 6 is the plain command from Paul: **“Let her be covered,”** or as the Greek has it: “Let her be veiled.”

- (4) In verse 10 the woman is told to have on her head the symbol (a hat) that the man is over her in the order of creation (vv. 7-10)
- (5) Failure to wear a covering in church offends the elect angels who cover their faces to show reverence and respect to God (v. 10; Isaiah 6:2).
- (6) It was almost the universal custom in that day for women in public worship to be covered (v. 13).
- (7) Woman's long hair, her natural covering, teaches her to wear an artificial covering over her hair (vv. 14-15).
- (8) The Apostle Paul and the early churches recognized no custom as being right, save that of women wearing head coverings in church services (v. 16).

SOME PRACTICAL REASONS FOR THE COVERING

- (1) It is right because it is commanded: **“Let her be covered”** (I Corinthians 11:6). Those who love Christ will keep His commandments (John 14:15). The Lord's sheep hear His voice (John 10:27). I John 2:3-4 declares: **“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”**
- (2) None of the elect angels would dare to come before God uncovered. An uncovered woman in the church services is guilty of an act that no angel would dare to commit.
- (3) I Corinthians 11 makes it plain that a woman should wear a covering to public worship. When a Christian woman refuses to wear her hat, she comes in the door in rebellion to God and His Word. How can a bareheaded woman worship God when in her very dress she has rejected His teaching on the symbol of Divine order in the church? If one cannot worship God if there is ought between another Christian and herself (Matthew 5:23-24), how can she worship Him if there is ought between her and God? In truth it cannot be done!
- (4) Disobedience is a terrible thing (Acts 5:29; I Samuel 15:22; Matthew 7:24; Luke 8:21). The rejection of one of the least commandments of Christ is a wicked sin against a holy God. “Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:19).
- (5) Christian women who have long hair and a hat on their head in church will never be mistaken for an immoral woman or a part of the women's liberation movement! She will have the respect of every decent, God-fearing, Bible-believing man. She will honor God and His word and have the protection of the elect angels. Who would want

to trade this for the praise of a few women-chasers and some dissolute women?
Surely no sane Christian woman.

- (6) The veiling of a bride before coming into the presence of the bridegroom is a very ancient custom (Genesis 24:65), indicating modesty and subjection to her husband. Isn't it strange that this is an accepted custom at weddings by our people, but it is thought by some to be a terrible thing for a woman to wear a veil to church to show her subjection to man! They see nothing wrong with a wedding ring---a pagan custom---yet they believe it is an awful thing for a woman to wear a hat to church services!
- (7) Men remove their hats in church and women are to keep their hats on to show the distinction between male and female (I Corinthians 11:4-10). This distinction is also to be seen by women having long hair and men short hair (I Corinthians 11:14-15). Modern-day Christians still believe that men should remove their hats in church and practice such. Nevertheless, they think women should come bareheaded so as to look like men! Then to make bad matters worse, the women are coming to church with short hair and the men with long hair! The Bible seems to have little or no place in the life of the average churchgoer. Do you want to be known as a Bible-rejecter?
- (8) For a woman to wear a head covering in church is to symbolically testify of her belief in the Genesis account of creation (I Corinthians 11:8-10). Failure to wear a covering to public worship is a symbolic rejection of God's creation of the universe.

WHAT KIND OF A COVERING?

Many debate the material, the color, the length, and the shape of the covering for women in church. To me this is so much time wasted. The Apostle Paul did not make a lot of legalistic stipulations about the length and material of the covering, so why should we? The kind of veiling in terms of style and material is not clearly stated in Scripture. The Greek word suggests something spread out. The veil is the symbol of man's headship over the woman as assigned by the Creator; therefore, it is not worn for protection from heat or cold (nothing says it is wrong to do so). It is to be worn to church because it is a sign or symbol of man's headship over woman. Its size and color does not determine its effectiveness, provided it may be seen on a woman's head.

The small veils that some wear can be seen on a woman's head. The larger ones can be more clearly seen. The larger the veil, the more clearly can the symbol be seen. *Young's Analytical Concordance* to the Bible defines the Greek word *katakaupto* used in I Corinthians 11:6 to mean "to cover fully."

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22. Godet, Frederic Louis, *Commentary on First Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 1977), p. 560.
23. Vincent, M.R., op. cit., p. 787.
24. Berquist, Millard J., *Studies in First Corinthians* (Nashville, Tenn.: Convention Press, 1960), p. 82.

CHAPTER 2

Objections Considered and Answered

1. *“If you are going to use the verses in I Corinthians 11 to teach that women must wear a hat to church, then you must also let her pray and prophesy in church, for if the verses teach the covering they must also teach the other as well. Hence your views on the woman’s place in the church go out the door.”*

These verses do not teach that a woman can pray and prophesy in the assembly when the men are present. Paul merely mentions what some were doing in the Corinthian church without expressing an opinion until chapter 14:34-35: **“Let your woman keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.”** He again expresses his views in I Timothy 2:8-12.

This is Paul’s usual manner of writing in this epistle. This is how he dealt with lawsuits (I Corinthians 6:4,7) and idolatrous feasts (I Corinthians 10:21-22) in this same book.

The mention of a thing by Paul without condemnation gives us no right to infer that he favored it. He writes of the Olympic games and Greek races, and does not condemn them. Does that mean he favored them? The apostle mentioned them simply for the purpose of illustration because those to whom he wrote were familiar with these things. In I Corinthians 8:9-13 he speaks of sitting at meat in an idol temple without saying it is wrong. But we must not assume he saw no harm in a Christian sitting at meat in idol temple. In I Corinthians 10:14:21 he condemns this practice. When he wrote the 8th chapter he knew what he was going to say in chapter 10, and he reserved his condemnation till then. Even so, in I Corinthians 11:5 Paul writes of the practice of the Corinthian women praying and prophesying in church, but chapter 14:34-35 he condemns all public speaking of women in church.

2. *“Paul is dealing with some women who had broken an Oriental custom of his day, but this custom is not for modernday churches.”*

This objection is wrong for a number of reasons. First, it was not the custom of Grecian women to worship with a covering on their head as a general rule. A.T. Robertson tells us:

The Greeks (both men and women) remained bareheaded in public prayer and this usage Paul commends for the men. 1

But it was a universal custom for women in Christian churches to wear head coverings. The Jewish Christians had no problem with the coverings. Most gentiles did not either, save a few women in the Corinthian church. This can be seen from I Corinthians 11, especially verse 13 and 16.

Second, by the rule of interpretation offered by the objector, you can overturn all the truth in this chapter. It would be just as well to say that prayer, the leadership of man over woman, and the Lord's Supper were mere Oriental customs not for our day. Paul is not writing here of traditions to be thrown away, but of traditions to be kept (I Corinthians 11:2). If a man is sincere in this objection he should wear his hat to church next Sunday morning, just to prove his point to all concerned. Let him see if the church people believe he is honoring his head, Christ. Let him see if the people believe he is honoring his head, Christ. Let him see if the people think even to this remote day that it is right for a man to wear a hat in church.

Even to this distant day it is still a general custom among Christian men to remove their hats in church---a custom based on the teachings of the Bible (I Corinthians 11:4. Years ago the women wore hats or bonnets to church in obedience to Scripture. Some of us are old enough to remember when it was so. Now the women have in most cases ceased to do this. Why? Has the Bible ceased to be binding? Those who have made the change are obligated to give their reasons for doing so. The plain truth is that this custom has been abandoned because women's libbers, humanities, communists, and evolutionists aim to make women masculine in their position, their attitudes, their dress, and their work! That is why women cut their hair short like the men. There is almost total rejection of Biblical principles on the part of most women in our churches. This breakdown in modesty and morality has brought into our churches worldliness and robbed us of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Worst of all, we now have women in the ministry!

The Prophet Isaiah lists the taking off of the veil as one of the first indications of breakdown of modesty and morality in Babylon's decline: **"Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones, and grind meal; uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers. Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen..."** (Isaiah 47:1-3; cf. 3:18-20).

The expression, **"uncover thy locks,"** in verse 2 simply means to take off the veil and to expose the locks of hair on the head. It is literally in the Hebrew **"pull back thy veil"** 2 or **"remove thy veil,"** 3 or **"doff your veil."** 4 Sad to say, in my lifetime I have lived to see women do just what the prophet writes of here. I have seen them take off their veils, shorten their dresses uncover their legs, and expose their bodies. Modern-day women are no longer **"tender and delicate,"** for now we have manly women. Modernism has removed one of the old landmarks of our fathers, and we have not yet come to realize it. If Babylon did not escape judgement for doing these things, neither can our Baptist churches.

Third, one can see from I Corinthians 1:2 that this letter did not deal with matters limited to the Corinthians Church: **"Unto the church of God at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus**

Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.” The words **“with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord”** cannot be limited to one church in the first century. Furthermore, this epistle makes it plain that Paul taught the same doctrine that he taught at Corinth in all other churches: **“Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church”** (I Corinthians 4:16-17). Paul did not fill his epistles with useless customs of a few Oriental people. He wrote the commandments of the Lord (I Corinthians 14:37).

3. *“Paul makes it clear in verse 15 that the covering of which he speaks is a woman’s hair, not some artificial covering such as a hat.”*

This objection will not stand up under examination. First, it would make little sense for Paul to take 15 verses to tell women to wear their hair to church. The hair is a part of her head, and she could not possibly come to church without it, unless she had no hair.

Second, this objection will not fit verse 4: **“Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head.”** Does this mean that a man cannot preach or pray unless he is baldheaded? If so, a good number of ministers are disqualified to fill the ministerial office. Can a man not go to church unless he takes his hair off? The answer to such questions is known to all. The honest student of the Word must surely see that a man is not to preach or pray with his hat on his head in church.

Third, this objection will not fit verses 6 and 7 where it is said if she be not covered, let her be shaven. The word “shaven” in the Greek means “to shave entirely with a razor.” If the modern theory of the objector is true, then Paul said: “If she has no hair, then shave her hair off.” What? Shave the head of a baldheaded woman! Such a meaning is contrary to Scripture and all common sense. Any person knows that if a woman has no hair you cannot shave off what she does not have!

Fourth, the view which makes the covering the hair ignores the word “also” in verse 6 which means “in addition to.” **“For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn...”** The use of the word “also” plainly indicates that Paul is speaking of a covering in addition to the hair.

Fifth, the proper translation of the word “covered” in verses 6 and 7 is “veiled.” There is no way you can make a veil a woman’s hair. Everyone knows that a veil is worn over a woman’s hair. Most brides know this. It is pity that some ministers of the gospel are not as well informed.

4. *“Paul does teach a covering in I Corinthians 11, and I believe in one. However, the covering is not a hat but long hair.”*

Some of the things already mentioned under objection 3 answer this. Nevertheless, I shall give a few more for the consideration of the objector. First, the error of this idea is that the objector fails to see that the hair is a part of a woman’s head, whether long or short. Note a few expressions in Scripture: **“...the hair of thine head...”** (Song of Solomon 7:5). **“... hair of his head began to grow again...”** (Jude 16:22). **“...nor was a hair of their head singed...”**

(Daniel 3:27). “...more than the hairs of my head” (Psalm 40:12). “...the very hairs of your head are all numbered...” (Matthew 10:30). “...there shall not a hair of your head perish...” (Luke 21:18). “...there shall not an hair fall from the head...” (Acts 27:34).

Second, this objection cannot be reconciled with verse 6: “**For if the woman be not covered, let her be shorn...**” This objection would have Paul saying: “If a woman does not have long hair, let her cut her hair short.” What? How could you cut your hair short? This would be to make it what it already is. The verse makes no sense if the covering is long hair as some contend.

Third, the covering in verses 3-7 is something which can be put on and off at one’s pleasure in the case of both the man or woman. This must be a hat, for the hair is not so easily taken on and off at will.

It is not the intentions of this writer to knock long hair. The Bible teaches that a woman should have long hair (I Corinthians 11:15; Luke 7:38). Personally, as a man, the longer a woman’s hair is the better I like it. Any woman who professes to be a Christian and has her hair as short as a decent man is a disgrace to her sex and her God. I believe in long hair on women, but I believe she is to wear in church an artificial covering over her hair. She is to cover her glory in the church out of respect to her head, the man.

5. *“These verses are only for a married woman who is to show her subjection to her husband. They do not apply to young girls or unmarried women.”*

This is untrue. Paul does not say in any verse “married man” or “married woman.” Rather, he says “**the man**” (vv. 3, 7-9, 11-12, 14) and “**every man**” (vv. 3-4), “**woman**” (vv. 3, 6-12), and “**every woman**” (v. 5). If one is a woman or a man then Paul is speaking to him or her, but if they are neither male or female, then this is not for them. “**Every woman**” includes every woman in the world. The head covering is to be worn because the Creator put man over the woman after the fall (Genesis 3:16). Is Christ only the head of a married man? Certainly not! May unmarried men wear their hats to the services of the church? No, never!

6. *“I believe that a woman should wear a hat all the time, not just to church. Because no woman does this I feel justified in not wearing a hat to church.”*

There are some women who believe and practice wearing a covering all the time. Those who wear a covering all the time certainly put to shame those who never wear a covering at any time. I believe that Paul is dealing in I Corinthians with church decorum. The praying and prophesying is in church capacity as much as the observance of the Lord’s Supper which follows. The context would seem to me to limit the wearing of a hat by women to church services. If this is not the case, then it is wrong for a man to wear a hat to work or in the field, a thing which would seem most improper. But surely it would not be wrong for a woman to wear a hat all the time if she wants to do so. Some dear sisters do, and I have the utmost respect for their strict obedience to the Scriptures.

CHAPTER TWO FOOTNOTES

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CHAPTER 3

What Others Have Said

Students of church history know that because of Paul's teaching in I Corinthians 11:1-16 that the early churches in Rome, Antioch, Corinth, and Africa practiced what he taught them. They kept this apostolic tradition as he commanded them (I Corinthians 11:2). For a woman to wear a head covering in public worship was the norm in the first century. The only exception seems to have been a few rebellious women in the church at Corinth. Paul condemned their practice as being unscriptural and contrary to nature. He also declared that such a custom of women worshipping uncovered was unknown to him, save in this one instance at Corinth, and to the churches which he had founded.

The church fathers speak out in favor of women wearing the veil to church services. The scattered small bodies of true disciples during the Dark Ages held to this truth, although little is said of it in history as it was taken for granted that it was so. The wearing of a head covering among women of all European countries is evidence by portraits and old printed woodcuts in books. The custom is still preserved to some degree among the Mennonites, the Brethren, the Catholics, and the Baptists. The Scottish Anglican and Presbyterian churches still practice it to some degree. But the present trend in all denominations is away from a woman wearing a covering in church. This departure came especially after the Second World War and during the days of women's liberation.

Cantankerous critics and vicious cavilers charge that no one holds to this teaching except a few fanatic and radicals. Furthermore, it is charged that no real prominent scholar ever held to such a ridiculous idea. To which I would reply that those who think such should seriously consider the authorities already quoted in this book. But now I will give some more for their consideration. From the quotes which follow it can be seen that some very learned men of all denominations have held to our position.

THE CHURCH FATHERS

Irenaeus (A.D. 175-195), bishop of Lyons, believe in the head covering for women in church. He translated I Corinthians 11:10 like this:

A woman ought to have a veil upon her head, because of the angels. 1

Titus Flavius Clement (A.D. 155-220), the first known Christian scholar of Alexandria, Egypt, in the Instructor says:

For this is the wish of the Word, since it is becoming for her to pray veiled. 2

Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus (A.D. 160-230), was born in the city of Carthage, North Africa. He joined the Montanists in his later life. He is considered by most to have been a man of Baptist principles and practices. He wrote a book on *The Veiling of Virgins*, showing how that young girls were as much responsible to wear veils on their heads to church as married women. He viewed the unveiling of young girls as a great evil. Those who question whether young girls as a great evil. Those who question whether young girls should wear veils to church would do well to read this book by this old Baptist.

I do not have space to publish all he wrote on this subject in this little booklet. I will give you a few gleanings:

Accordingly, since the apostle is treating of *man* and *woman*---why the letter ought to be veiled, but the former not...3

So, too, did the Corinthians themselves understand him. In fact, at this day the Corinthians do veil their virgins. What the apostle taught, their disciples approve...4

Christ is He who bids the exposed and wives of others to veil themselves...For it is they which must be subjected, for the sake of which 'power' ought to be 'had on the head:' the veil is their yoke. 5

Writing on the subject of prayer, Tertullian wrote:

Again, while he says that 'nature herself,' which has assigned hair as a tegument and ornament to women, 'teaches that veiling is the duty of females,' has not the same tegument and the same honour of the head been assigned to virgins? 6

He goes on to speak of the universal veiling of women which prevailed even in Israel.

John Chrysostom (A.D. 345-407) of Constantinople in his Homilies on First Corinthians XXVI writes:

...For perhaps some one might here have doubt also, questioning with himself, what sort of a crime it was for the woman to be uncovered, or the man covered? What sort of crime it is, learn now from hence.

Symbols many and diverse have been given both to man and woman; to him of rule, to her of subjection: and among them this also, that she should be covered, while he hath his head bare. If now these be symbols, you see that both err when they disturb the proper order, and transgress the disposition of God, and their own proper limits, both the man falling into the woman's inferiority, and the woman rising up against the man by her outward habiliments.

For if exchange of garments be not lawful, so that neither she should be clad with a cloak, nor he with a mantle or veil...7

Eusebius Hieronymous Jerome (A.D. 345-419), the Latin church father, in Letter CXLVII tells how the virgins and widows of his day wore coverings:

...not that afterwards they go about with heads uncovered in defiance of the apostle's command, for they wear a closefitting cap and a veil. 8

NON-BAPTIST SCHOLARS AND WRITERS

John Trapp (A.D. 1601-1669), a commentator of the Church of England, on I Corinthians 11:10 says:

To have power That is a veil, called in Hebrew Radid, or Radad, to bear rule. And indeed what was this subjection to the husband, but a kind of power and protection derived to the wife, in respect of her former estate. 9

Joseph Bingham (A.D. 1668-1723), rector of Havant and tutor at University College in Oxford, wrote two large volumes on Christian antiquities. He speaks of women wearing veils to church:

They prayed with their head uncovered, according to the Apostle's direction, as esteeming it a great indecency to do otherwise...on the other hand, as both nature and custom had made it decent for women to be covered, for they were very precise in requiring this to be observed especially in religious assemblies. Some pleaded an Exemption of Girgins in the café, which gave occasion to Tertullian to write his book *De Velandis Virginibus*, wherein (z) he argues both Virgins and Matrons to be under the same obligation of being veiled or covered in the time of Divine Service. 10

Daniel Whitby (A.D. 1638-1726), an Anglican scholar trained at Oxford, says on I Corinthians 11:10:

(*Moreover*) for this cause ought the woman to have power (*a veil*) upon her head...11

Thomas Scott (A.D. 1747-1821), the successor of John Newton, writing on I Corinthians 11:10, says:

On this account therefore, the woman ought to be covered with her veil, even when praying or prophesying, as an emblem of her being under the authority of the man. 12

Charles Hodge (A.D. 1797-1878), a leading American scholar of Princeton, informs us in his comments on I Corinthians 11:5:

In one form or other, the custom was universal for all respectable women to appear veiled in public. The apostle therefore says, that a woman who speaks in public with her head uncovered, dishonoureth *her head*. 13

On verse 10 he says:

The apostle had asserted and proved that the woman is subordinate to the man, and he had assumed as granted that the veil was the conventional symbol of the man's authority. The inference is that the woman ought to wear the ordinary symbol of the power of her husband. As it was proper in itself, and demanded by the common sense of propriety, that the women should be veiled, it was specially proper in the worshipping assemblies, for there they were in the presence not merely of men but of angels. 14

Henry W. Soltau (A.D. 1805-1875), known for his scholarly books on the tabernacle in Israel, states his views:

In the New Testament, the woman is directed to cover her head, I Corinthians xi. 3-10, because "the head of the woman is the man;" whereas the man is to be uncovered, because he is the image and glory of God. In the assemblies therefore of the people of God, the woman, standing as a representative of the Church in subjection to Christ, covers her head; the man, being a type of Christ Himself as the Head of the Church. 15

Frederic Louis Godet (A.D. 1812-1900), the Swiss Protestant Reformed scholar of his day, stated:

It should be noted, however, that each of the reasons given for the wearing of the veil is taken from permanent facts, lasting as long as the present earthly economy. Paul did carry his point, for early church history bears witness that in Rome, Antioch, and Africa the custom became the norm. 16

Henry Allan Ironside (1876-1951), author of numerous commentaries on the Bible and other books, wrote a commentary on I Corinthians. He titles his comments on I Corinthians 11:1-16 "The Veiled Woman." He says concerning this passage:

...I come into the presence of God and Christ and of the angels who are learning the wisdom of God in the Church, and I remove my hat. For the same reason when a woman comes into the church, she keeps her hat on... This is right because it is commanded. God has spoken and it is very often in little things like this that we test our state, whether there is self-will working or whether one is ready to be subject to the Word of God. 17

William Smith, classical examiner in the University of London, says:

Among the Jews of the New Testament age it appears to have been customary for women to cover their heads (not necessarily their faces) when engaged in public worship. 18

The New Bible Commentary says:

10 A woman should (lit.) ‘have authority on her head’ (cf. RSV mg.) *i.e.* wear the veil in public, to symbolize submission to her husband, and to protect her honour and dignity before other men. An unveiled woman in public would be despised and insulted.
19

H.H. Halley, a scholar known to all of this generation, says:

It was customary in Greek and Eastern cities for women to cover their heads in public, except women of immoral character. Corinth was full of temple prostitutes. Some of the Christian women, taking advantage of their new-found liberty in Christ, were making bold to lay aside their veils in Church meetings which horrified those of the more modest type. They are told not to defy public opinion as to what was considered proper in feminine decorum. 20

BAPTIST SCHOLARS AND WRITERS

Augustus Hopkins Strong (1836-1921), author of a standard Baptist book of theology, wrote:

...and Paul cautioned Christian women to have their heads covered when they prayed or prophesied in public (I Corinthians 11:5) ...21

I Corinthians 11:10 – *“for this cause ought women to have a sign of authority (i.e., a veil) on her head, because of the angels.* 22

Isaac Massey Haldeman (1845-1933), pastor of the First Baptist Church of New York City, stood with us on this matter:

If the New Testament Christian women are commanded when in public assembly to cover their head: they are commanded to do so because while Jesus Christ is the head of the man, the man in the public assembly as the representative of Christ in office bearing and teaching is over the woman and considered as her head there, and the covered head is the sign of the woman’s obedience to this ordinance of the Lord. 23

Thomas Treadwell Eaton (1845-1907), president of Union University at Murfreesboro and editor of the *Western Recorder*, quotes I Corinthians 11:5 and declares:

Here the Apostle mentions women’s praying and prophesying in the church, simply condemning the uncovering...Similarly in I Corinthians 11:5, the Apostle is talking about decorum, and showing that women ought to have their heads covered. 24

James Madison Pendleton (1845-1907), author of *The Baptist Church Manual*, professor at Union University, and editor of *The Tennessee Baptist*, comments on I Corinthians 11:4-5 thusly:

...the context shows that to wear a covering on the head indicates subjection. To avoid this appearance of subjection, man must be seen in unveiled dignity, that he may not dishonor his head...the thing proper in the man is improper in the woman. This is because the woman occupies the place of subjection. 25

Harvey Boyce Taylor (1870-1932), editor of *News and Truths* and the organizer of the Amazon Valley Baptist Faith Mission, said:

Women are prohibited from having any place in the work of our churches that puts them in authority over their brethren. So important is this that Paul in I Corinthians 11:3-10 says that whenever a woman comes into church assembly she ought to have a veil or covering of some kind on her head as a sign that she is under authority, not in authority. 26

Ezra Palmer Gould (1841-????), the Northern Baptist commentator and professor at Newton Theological Institute, wrote:

The long hair and the veil were both intended as a covering of the head, and as a sign of true womanliness, and of the right relation of woman to man; and hence the absence of one had the same significance as that of the other. 27

Thomas Paul Simmons (1898-1969), author of a theological book and founder and editor of *The Baptist Examiner*, held our position:

See I Corinthians 11:3-10. It is quite evident that this refers to public worship. It may be said that inasmuch as women are not allowed to prophesy, that this does not apply when women keep their places. But praying is mentioned also. And, although women are not to lead in public prayer, yet they should pray silently and thus participate in the worship. This passage by no means intimates that if a woman has long hair, this is all the covering she needs. Paul simply states that the fact that it is natural for women to have long hair is only an indication of the need of an additional covering. This covering is to be worn in public worship as a sign of the woman's subjection to her husband, or to man in general if the woman is unmarried. 28

C.D. Cole, the well-known Kentucky Baptist writer, declared:

The truth of the subordination of the woman to the man has a divinely appointed symbol. This truth is to be symbolized by the woman wearing long hair and when in church, an additional covering. This covering is a sign by which the wife acknowledges the authority of her husband, who is her natural head; and a hat or veil as an additional covering, when in church, to acknowledge the authority of man in religious matters. 29

Others could be quoted, but these should be sufficient to show that our position is not without scholarship. In the next chapter I shall give a sermon preached by Arthur W. Pink which was preached at the Particular Baptist Church, Belvoir Street, Sydney, on Sunday evening, May 16, 1926. It appeared in *Studies in the Scriptures* of November 1926 on pages 257-263. It speaks for itself. Surely no one would call the scholarship of Bro. Pink in question his scholarship!

CHAPTER THREE FOOTNOTES

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28. Simmons, T.P., *A systematic Study of Bible Doctrine* (Clarksville, Tenn.: Bible Baptist Book & Supplies, 1979), P. 415.
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CHAPTER

4

Headship

By Arthur W. Pink
(1886-1952)

Tonight, instead of preaching a textual sermon as usual, I feel led of the Lord to expound a sixteen-verse passage in the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Before we turn to that, however, let me preface what I have to say by a few exegetical remarks.

The first four books of the New Testament give us the historical foundations upon which Christianity is built, namely, the birth, the life, the death, the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus Christ. The fifth book (the Acts) completes that foundation by telling us of the descent of the Holy Spirit and of the extension of God's mercy unto the Gentiles. The sixth book (the Epistle to the Romans) contains an exposition of the gospel of God. It is the great doctrinal treatise of the New Testament. It gives an interpretation and it sets forth the application of what is historically given us in the Gospels and the Acts. Now the distinctive theme of the first Epistle to the Corinthians is that of church order and church government, so notice the order in which the truth of God is given us in the New Testament: ---First, the historical foundation, laid in the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, followed by the coming of the Holy Spirit during His absence; then the first of the Epistles gives us an exposition of the gospel of God---interpreting and applying those historical principles. That having been done, the next thing the Holy Spirit gives us is a treatise upon church order and government.

Now in the 18th chapter of the Acts we learn how that Paul came to Corinth and while he was there he preached the gospel; how that the Lord appeared to him and said to the Apostle, “**I have much people in this city,**” and in consequence Paul remained there eighteen months preaching the gospel. God honoured that preaching and through grace many believed, and those believers were baptized, and, being baptized, they were organized into a local church or assembly---the church at Corinth. From Corinth Paul journeyed to Ephesus, which was a city not very far distant where he remained three years. After the apostle settled in Ephesus, Apollos, a man mighty in the Scriptures, went yonder to the church at Corinth, preached the Word, strengthened their hands, but---O the sad “buts”---but after the apostle's departure, and notwithstanding the help of Apollos, the tares crept in among the wheat and the leaven was introduced into the pure meal, and it was because of that the apostle was moved by the Holy Spirit to write this Epistle to this church at Corinth.

That which first gave rise to the need of it was certain disorders and abuses that had crept in among the saints in the Corinthian church, and it was to remove those abuses and to correct

those disorders that the apostle was led to write this Epistle. A party spirit had come in and the sequel was that the saints were divided into cliques---contending and opposing companies---that is dealt with in the first four chapters of the Epistle. Then there was a great laxity to maintain church discipline. So lax were they that even fornication tolerated in their midst, therefore in the fifth chapter the apostle insists upon the duty of the church to exclude immoral members. In the sixth chapter, the Apostle rebukes the church because brother was going to law against brother--- a most reprehensible thing. Then in the seventh chapter we find him discussing various aspects of the marriage relationship. In the eighth chapter he treats of the lawfulness or the unlawfulness of meats which had been previously offered to idols. In the ninth and the tenth he speaks of the exercise of self-denial and the foregoing of our rights for the sake of weaker brethren, and then in the 11th chapter, which we are to look at in a moment the apostle takes up certain grave abuses that had crept into the public worship of the assembly.

Now before I proceed further let me say that the Scriptures contain nothing that is solely local and ephemeral. Most of the Bible was written in the first instance to meet local needs, but because human nature is the same in all ages and the same all over the world, and because God changes not, the great principles of His Word are of general application and are perpetually binding. I say that because there are some who claim that much in this first epistle to the Corinthians only had to do with local conditions that then existed and does not apply to the churches of God today. I emphatically deny it. No part of Scripture is obsolete. All Scripture is needed by us and all Scripture is for us today.

Now the passage that I want to take up is found in the 11th chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. The opening verse of this chapter, strictly speaking, belongs to the preceding one, the second verse beginning a new section. **“Be ye, followers of me, even as I also am of Christ”** concludes what the apostle had been saying at the end of chapter 10. The second verse of chapter 11, begins a new section. **“Now I praise you brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.”** Interpreters are divided as to the meaning of that second verse---whether the apostle meant what he said, or whether he was speaking ironically. He says, **“I praise you, brethren because ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you.”** Personally, I believe that was the language of irony, because I think it is very clear that in this Epistle there is most conclusive proof that they were not keeping the ordinances as they were delivered to them---far from it. It was because they were not, that he had occasion to write this Epistle to them. But be that as it may. Pass on now to the third verse.

“But I would have you know.” Here is where the theme of this chapter begins. “I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.” Now in the verses that follow attention is given to details that many of us may think are insignificant and trifling, dealing with such small matters that one wonders why they ever found a place in the Word of God. It is because God knew that we would think these were trifles that he begins this passage by saying “I would have you know.” My friends, there is nothing small or trivial in the things of God. Big doors swing on little hinges. To natural reason it was a very small thing that brought about the downfall of the human race---just the plucking of fruit, yet disobeying the Almighty. “I would have you know,” then says the Holy Spirit through

the apostle, “that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.” Here the apostle takes up the most important, but the well-nigh totally forgotten subject, of headship, and before mentioning the thing which he was about to condemn he states the principle on which that condemnation rested; namely, that order and subordination pervade the entire universe and are necessary to its well-being. Now that third verse tells us the woman is subordinate to and is under the rule of Christ; and that Christ, in His mediatorial character, is subordinate to and is under the rule of God.

Now then, having stated that fact, having laid down that principle---that of headship or rule pervading the entire universe---in the fourth and fifth verses the apostle says, Since God has established this order both men and women are commanded to act in accordance therewith, and especially so when they enter on of God’s churches.

“Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head” (v. 4).

Notice it does not say dishonoureth his own head, though that is included; but it says **“dishonoureth his head.”** Who is his head? Who is the head? Who is the head of man? The previous verse has told us: **“The head of every man is Christ.”** Therefore, for any man to enter a church and to pray or prophesy, speaking as God’s mouthpiece, with his head covered, dishonours his spiritual head which is Christ, and also dishonours himself---his own head. Let me give you a simple illustration. Suppose that a major or a general should appear at the head of his soldiers in the uniform or the garb of a common soldier, instead of in his official accoutrements; he would both dishonor his king and he would disgrace himself. So any man who enters the church praying or prophesying with his head covered dishonours his spiritual head---Christ---and disgraces himself.

“Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head” (v.5). That also has a double significance: she dishonors her natural head which is her husband or her father or her eldest brother as the case may be---the head of the household---and she also dishonours her spiritual head, namely, her brethren in Christ who have the rule in the church. She dishonours her head because she refuses to wear the sign and symbol that she is in subjection to another. Go back to the third verse. **“The head of every man is Christ; the head (the ruler) of every woman is the man; the head of Christ is God.”** Now God has appointed that because man is the head, because headship or dominion or rule has been delegated by God unto the hands of man, God has ordained that that shall be symbolically shown forth when he enters the house of God. His head shall be uncovered; his head shall be revealed; his head shall be manifest, because God has given to him the headship. But because God has not given headship to the woman, because he has placed her in subjection to man, therefore that must be symbolically shown forth by her having head covered, her head concealed, showing that she is not her own head and her own ruler. In other words, dear friends, God has given to woman the place of subjection, and all His ways are in harmony with that.

If you go back to the Old Testament Scriptures you will find God never made provision for a woman to occupy the throne of Israel. Woman had no part in the priestly ministrations in the tabernacle or the temple. God never made a covenant with a woman---never. Never once in

the Old Testament do you find the woman offering sacrifices unto God, and when the Lord would make known to Israel the weakness of their own government He likened it unto being ruled by women and children. Turn back to the third of Isaiah and the 12th verse: --- “As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them.” That was when the government of Israel had failed, had broken down, when the king was no longer obeying God, when he was no longer administering the law in righteousness. When government had failed, God spoke of that failure in a figurative way by likening them to being ruled by women and children.

But perhaps some of you are saying in your minds, But that is all in the Old Testament; that all belonged to Judaism; things are very different in Christianity. Why, my friends, if you think so you are sadly mistaken, for Christ observed the same principle that woman has been given the place of subjection. Christ never called a single woman to be His apostle. Christ never commissioned a woman to preach His gospel. Christ never appointed a woman to hold office in His churches. The woman is created for the home and has not been called by God to take part in public affairs, still less administer government, and, my friends, the very fact that today we find that more and more woman is taking the place of man in public affairs is a moral scandal and is a witness to the decline and corruption of law and order, and is among the solemn signs of the times forecasting that day when the will of God will be finally and openly repudiated.

Now coming back to I Corinthians 11, the 5th verse: ---“**But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head; for that is even all one as if she were shaven.**” That is to say, she is not only lacking in respect for others, but she has none for herself. Any woman that will come into the house of God without a hat or without a covering for the head or removes that covering after she enters the house of God, not only has no respect for her brethren in Christ, but she is without self-respect; for God says it is even all one as if she were shaven.

Now, I make no apology, my friends, for speaking on this subject tonight. It is a part of the whole counsel of God, and, as I have already shown you, this passage begins by saying “**I would have you know;**” therefore it is not without significance, not without importance, and not without value.

“**For if the woman be no covered**” (If she refuses to wear a head-covering, a hat or veil), “**let her also be shorn**” (have her hair cut) (v.6). And in view of that fashion which is becoming increasingly popular among women today, that “**also**” there is most solemn and searching. My friends, I fully believe that the vast majority of Christian women who have had their hair cut have done so in ignorance of the teaching of God’s Word and of the requirements of God. I cannot make myself believe that my sisters in Christ have deliberately defied God: charity requires that I must conclude that they have done it in ignorance of the Scriptures: and it is because of the ignorance that prevails so widely today that I feel it laid upon me to give you what God says on this subject tonight.

Now what is so solemn in that sixth verse is the word “also.” I want you to notice that the Holy Spirit has there linked two things together. “If the woman be not covered” (have a hat on her head when she enters the church) “let her also be shorn” not shaven, but shorn---have her

hair cut). The Holy Spirit has joined the two things together and it is not difficult to see why because the cutting off of the long hair exposes the head: it reveals the size and shape of it, and the cutting off of the hair places her on the same level before God as those who enter the church without a hat on at all! The two things are inseparably linked together here. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." God estimates and regards the cutting off of the hair on the same level as entering His house without any hat on! Look at that sixth verse again please: --- "If the women be not covered let her also be shorn." In other words, God requires a double covering. He has given the woman the long hair to cover her head naturally, so that her head is covered when she is outside the church to show that she is not her own ruler, her own head, but in subjection to another; but when she enters the house of God, another covering is required, to show that she is also in subjection to her spiritual head---those who have the rule in the house of God.

Now, in that sixth verse, the second half, there is an "if" which may perhaps have puzzled some of you: --- **"but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn."** The Word **"shame"** there means a disgrace. If it be a disgrace for a woman to be shorn or shaven let her be covered. Now the word "if" there does not raise a doubt. The word "if" there does not open the door for debate: the word "if" there is used---as it so frequently is in the New Testament---in the sense of "since" or "because." **"If I go away I will come again."** Since I go away, because I go away, and prepare a place for you, I will come again" (John 14:3). "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above" (Colossians 3:1). Since ye be risen, because ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. So, the "if" in this sixth verse has the same force of "because" or "since." Since it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven. Now brethren and sisters there you have the clearly revealed mind of God. God says it is a "shame," a disgrace for a woman either to have her head shorn or shaven. If in ignorance of God's mind your head has been shorn, then let it grow again!

In Scripture, the cutting of the hair symbolizes one of two things: it is either a mark of lamentation (See Job 1:20), or a sign of degradation (see Jeremiah 7:29).

Now coming to the seventh verse: ---**"For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God."** The man is **"the image and the glory of God."** That takes us back to the first chapter of Genesis and the 26th verse. You remember we read there that God created man in His own image and likeness. Those two words do not mean the same thing. "Likeness" means a resemblance; "image" means that which represents. The image on our coins is a representation of the King---his majesty, his dominion, his authority. **"Man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image"**---he represents God on this earth. What did God immediately say to Adam in the first chapter of Genesis and the 26th verse after that it was said, **"Let us make man in our image"**? He said, "Let them have dominion." That is the thought. Then man is not only the image, but he is the "glory" of God. In what sense is man the glory of God? How does man glorify God? By his submission and by his obedience. The seventh verse concludes by saying: ---**"but the woman is the glory of the man"** ---not the "image" of the man. The woman does not represent the man: rule and headship have not been committed to her, but she is the "glory" of the man. In what sense? How? The woman is the glory of the man in the same way as the man is the glory of God, by submission and by obedience to her head.

To amplify that turn with me now to Ephesians 5:22. Remember, dear friends, that I am reading now from the Word of God: may it come home in power. Ephesians 5:22: ---“**Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife.**” Now turn over to Titus 2, verses 3 to 5. I will give you the first verse for a certain reason. Titus 2, beginning at verse 1: ---“**But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.**” These were the words of the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul to the young pastor Titus, and here is what the aged apostle says to him. These were the words of the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul to the young pastor Titus, and here is what the aged apostle says to him. These were words of counsel to this young man. “**Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.**” Now notice what he was to speak and what were the things that became “sound doctrine”; “**That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands.**” I am not reading now from a Church of England prayer-book. There has been a hard fight for years to expunge that word from the marriage-ceremony there, but if they expunge it from the marriage-ceremony of the Episcopal Church they will never expunge it from God’s Word. This is God’s Word---“**obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God be not blasphemed**”---as it is blasphemed on many sides today through the wives; disobedience. Now one other passage in I Peter 3, verse 3 to 6: ---“Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair” (which by the way presupposes long hair because you cannot “plait” short hair!), “**let not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel: But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.**” It may be of great ridicule in the world: it may be scoffed at by your sisters: it may be taken advantage of by an ungodly husband: but it is of “**great price**” in the sight of God, and He says so. “**For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands; Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well.**”

Now come back to I Corinthians 11, verses 8 and 9: ---“**For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.**” There the apostle appeals to two facts in connection with man’s history which bring out the subordination of the woman to the man. First, he tells us that the woman was formed out of the man, and derived her origin from his. Listen! The man and the woman were not created together; they were not created simultaneously (at the same time); the man and not the woman was created first, and the Holy Spirit here appeals to that fact in connection with their history to support what he is here dealing with---the subordination of the woman to the man. Second, it says in verse 9, that the woman was created on man’s account and not man on her account. “**Neither was the man created for the woman; but woman for the man.**” And my friends that is not negative by what you have in the Epistle to the Galatians where we are told that in Christ there is neither male or female but we are all one in Him. That verse has to do with our standing before God and not with our walk here in this world: just as II Corinthians 5:17 says, “**If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all**

things are become new.” That has to do with our standing before God; it has no reference to our actual experience and state, as the words “in Christ” plainly show.

Then in the 10th verse the Apostle gives us a further reason why decorum should be observed in the assembly or church: ---“For this cause ought the women to have power on her head (or, as the margin says), **“a covering, in sign that she is under the authority of her husband.”** **“For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.”** That introduces a phase of the subject that is most interesting and that is little understood, but which I am compelled to pass over entirely through lack of time; but it means this, that the sisters in Christ are commanded by God to observe the laws of propriety in His house not only for their own sakes, not only out of respect for their brethren in Christ, but also because the angels are present. The angels are present in this room right now. At every service, unseen by the outward eye, observing our deportment, noting our order, taking knowledge of our reverence or irreverence, the angels are present. The Holy Spirit here indicates that, and it is because of their presence He stresses the importance, the need, an additional reason, why the sister should observe the place God has given them, and why they should wear the symbol of that place. Just because God has placed woman in the position of subordination her head must be covered.

Now coming to verses 11 and 12: ---“**Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.**” That is to say they are each mutually dependent upon the other. **“For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman.”** That is brought in to humble man. That is brought in to prevent the man from getting a swelled head. That is brought in to show the mutual dependence of the man upon the woman. **“For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God”** which is brought in at this point to show the Holy Spirit is not here discussing the superiority or the inferiority of either the man or the woman, considered in themselves, but what He is dealing with is the position that the Creator of all has assigned unto each. **“All things are of God.”** It is God who has given the man the position of rule: it is God who has delegated authority and dominion to him---not because of any superiority he may or may not possess of himself. As I said a few minutes ago in another connection tonight, the old saying is that comparisons are odious. It is a most invidious distinction to try and draw comparisons between a man and a woman as to which is inferior and which superior. As far as my personal opinion is concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that in many things the woman is the superior. As far as my personal opinion is concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that in many things the woman is the superior of the man: in the finer sensibilities, in the nobler qualities that go to make up character, in patience and powers of endurance, in gentleness, in tenderness, in unselfishness, in ministering to the suffering, in love, the woman is the superior of the man. But that is not what is under discussion here. What is under discussion here is the position that God has given unto each and how that position must be owned and acknowledged by the symbol that God has appointed. Because the woman has not been given rule and headship her head must be covered, and covered with a double covering: first, the long hair that God has given her by nature, so that even when she is outside the church that covering shall indicate that she is not her own head, but that she is under the dominion of the head of her household: secondly, that when she come into the house of God there must be the additional cover of the hat because she is in subjection to her spiritual brethren to whom God has appointed rule.

“Judge in yourselves.” The apostle now appeals to their sense of propriety: **“Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered”** with nothing on her head (v. 13). Do not even natural proprieties and instincts prompt---**“Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering”** (vv. 14, 15). That is the opposite of what you have in verse 6. The short hair is a “shame;” the long hair is a “glory” to the woman. Now what does that mean? Her “glory” is not to be limited to her physical attractions, but refers to the loveliness of submission, and the beauty of obedience.

I want you to turn to John 12, verse 3: ---**“The took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair.”** Now link that up with the verse we have just had in I Corinthians 11: her hair is her glory. Mary placed her “glory” at the feet of Christ! Have you? I mean you brothers as well as sisters. Have I? She wiped His feet with the hair of her head. She placed her “glory” at the feet of Christ. Oh may God give grace unto His daughters her tonight to be lowly and in subjection to Him.

Do you know, my sisters in Christ, that God has given to you a means and a way of imitating and following Christ which is denied to us brethren? He has. When Jesus was here He wore long hair as a sign of His complete subjection to God (see Numbers 6:5). **“The head of Christ is God,”** says the apostle, and when He came here He came in the place of subjection. **“He made Himself of no reputation.”** **“It is a shame for a man to have long hair.”** On the marvel of it that the Lord of glory, the Son of God, should so make Himself of no reputation that He voluntarily entered the place of shame as the symbol of His submission and subjection unto God. And I say, sisters in Christ, there is granted unto you a way and a method of imitating and following Him that is denied even to the brethren. It may cause the world to sneer. It may bring down upon you the taunt of “old-fashioned” and so forth, but what matters that, if it brings upon you the approval of God and brings you into the place of following and imitating Christ in a way that even the brethren cannot!

Now coming back for a final word to I Corinthians 11. The closing verse 16: **“But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the church of God.”** And there the apostle closes his discussion of this section. Having presented the various arguments why God requires the woman to be in the place of subjection, **“if any seem to be contentious”** ---if you want to argue about this and debate the matter---“we have no such custom,” we (the apostles) nor the churches of God. In other words, if the sisters will not listen to what God says, then it is a waste of time for His servants to argue about it. When God’s will is clearly revealed, debate is set at an end for the real Christian. It is either obey or disobey! Submit or defy! If the woman will not bow to God’s precepts, they will not heed our reasonings. In such case, we can only leave them with God to suffer either His chastisements or judgements. This chapter says it is a shame for a woman to have her hair short. It also says the long hair is her glory.

Now just one other word on verse 3. I would not be fair if it were to be left out. Verse 3 says “the head of every man is Christ.” The woman is not her own head for God has placed her under the dominion of man, but the man is not his own head or his own lord. He also is under dominion to another and that word applies to believing brethren, just as much as it does to

believing sisters. Though the Creator has placed rule and dominion in the hands of the man, the man is not to misuse his authority by being a tyrant. He, too, is in subjection to another. **“One is our master, even Christ.”** O brethren in Christ, rule your homes over which God has placed you as the “head”---rule your homes in a way that is pleasing to Him and in the spirit which will glorify Him. Christ said, **“My yoke is easy and my burden is light.”** Then see to it that the yoke and the burden you place on your wife is equally light and is equally easy. O brethren and sister, the Christ home ought to be a veritable Bethel upon earth---the woman (the wife) in meek, God-fearing subjection to her husband ruling in the fear of God reflecting the glory of his Head.

EPILOGUE

My task is done. My pen must rest for a time. I have tried to vindicate the teaching of a woman wearing a head covering in religious services. I bear no bitterness toward those who may be persuaded to disagree with me on this matter I could only hope and pray that the Great Teacher, the Holy Spirit, may be pleased to open many eyes to see this truth. Oh, that every reader would “be fully persuaded in his own mind” (Romans 14:5).

I would appeal to ministers of the Word to preach this truth to their people. But, brethren, do so in fear and trembling. Speak the truth in love to the edifying of God’s elect. Do not try to cram down the throats of your sisters this truth in an ungodly spirit. To do so is to confirm them in their error and to reproach our Lord. Remember the fiery judgement seat **“shall try every man’s work of what sort it is”** (I Corinthians 3:13). Speak this truth to them when impressed by the Spirit with love and respect which is proper to the weaker sex.

No doubt some husband will read this book and see the head covering. He will want his wife to begin immediately to wear one to church. His wife may not be so easily converted to practice this. Brother, be patient. Be kind and affectionate to her. Pray that God will open her eyes to the truth. Do not demand it of her in brute-like spirit. You will only create a problem in your home and possibly your church. Try to instruct her in meekness and tenderness. If she truly believes the Word of God and the Spirit reveals it to her, she will wear a covering because Christ commanded her to do it.

I know that some of my sisters in Christ will read this book and say, “I have never heard it on this fashion. But I can see it in the Book; therefore, I will obey the Scriptures and my dear Saviour.” They will do it with joy and delight because it is commanded in Scripture. They will do it because pleasing Christ means more to them than the smile of the world. They will do it no matter if some men (including a few preachers) make fun of them for doing it. They will do it for the well done of the heavenly Master. They will do it because they fear God.

Other dear sisters will rebel at this teaching. They may even criticize other sisters who obey the Scriptures. Beware, dear sister, of breaking this least commandment. Do you refuse to do it because of what others will say? Or because you really wish to be like the man? Or because your heart is not right with God? Why is it so hard for you to obey Christ? Why does His Word have no place in your heart? Examine your motives for refusing to obey the Scriptures, and I believe that you will see that **“to obey is better than sacrifice”** (I Samuel 15:22). I leave you to God and your own conscience before an opened Bible, knowing that the Word will judge you at the last day (John 12:48; James 2:12).

“Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit” (Galatians 6:18).