

## Head Coverings For Women - 1 Cor. 11:2-16

The passage, 1Co\_11:2-16, is about the order of headship and is stated as being God first then Christ then man then woman. In this passage God is telling us that a man SHOULD NOT have a head covering as he was made in the image of God but woman SHOULD wear a covering to show her submission to the authority of man which was established at the beginning of creation. Man's authority over women was established in Eden (Gen\_3:16) and the order of creation is restated in 1Co\_11:7-9 - that is, man first then woman. Also, in 1Co\_11:16 it is made clear that this teaching is not a cultural thing nor something peculiar to the Corinthian church but for all the churches and for all time.

After talking about head coverings, God then reminds us of the order of creation, in 1Co\_11:7-9, and then in 1Co\_11:10 He says, "*For this reason, and because of the angels, the woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head*". Exactly what "*because of the angels*" means does not really matter as the fact is, ministering angels (Heb\_1:14) have always been with us in every church worldwide so women in all churches ought to wear the sign of authority because of them. We may not know the reason but God does and He said that women should cover their head because of it.

The remark is often made that long hair is the woman's covering spoken about in this passage. However, it doesn't make any sense for God to give us a long argument about covering and not covering heads and then tell us that He was only talking about the length of a woman's hair after all (1Co\_11:14-15). If we replace the word 'covering' with 'hair' then the verses make no sense at all as the following shows -

1Co 11:4 Every man who prays or prophesies with **hair** dishonors his head.

1Co 11:5 And every woman who prays or prophesies **without hair** dishonors her head--it is just as though her head were shaved.

1Co 11:6 If a woman does not **have hair**, she should have her hair cut off; and if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, she should **have hair**.

1Co 11:7 A man ought not to **have hair**, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man.

As we can see from the above, hair is obviously not the covering God wants women to wear. Also, if long hair was meant to be the woman's covering then we would need a long-hair policeman at the church door to see if a woman needed an extra covering because her hair was not long enough - and what would the standard hair length be?

From <http://earlychurch.com/HeadCovering.php> -

The historical record reveals that the early churches all understood Paul to be talking about a cloth veil, not long hair. The only thing that wasn't clear to some of the early Christians was whether or not Paul's instructions apply to all females or only to married women. The reason is that the Greek word *gyne*, used by Paul, can mean "a female" or it can mean "a married woman."

From <http://www.kingshouse.org/headcovering.htm> -

"Many today, in mimicking what they've heard, say that the woman's hair is her covering, as it seems to imply in verse 1Co\_11:15. Such statements are not at all original or honest. Besides, the Greek word used for 'covering' in 1Co\_11:15 ("for her hair is given her for a covering") is completely different from the one translated 'covered' prior to this in Chapter 11. This Greek word (*peribolaion*), here in verse 15, means to 'wrap around'. Hence the meaning would be ... "for her hair is given her for 'to be wrapped around'". There is no clear idea here, nor from any early Church writer, that the 'hair' is the women's 'covering'. Furthermore, it would seem to be negating what Paul had just spent 13 verses on prior to this in chapter 11. The words translated "covering", "covered" or "cover" prior to 1Co\_11:15 use an entirely different Greek word (*katakalypto*). This one means to 'veil or cover up oneself'."

**JFB Commentary:**

1Co\_11:14 The fact that nature has provided woman, and not man, with long hair, proves that man was designed to be uncovered, and woman covered. The Nazarite, however, wore long hair lawfully, as being part of a vow sanctioned by God (Num\_6:5). Compare as to Absalom, 2Sa\_14:26, and Act\_18:18.

1Co\_11:15 **her hair ... for a covering** — Not that she does not need additional covering. Nay, her long hair shows she ought to cover her head as much as possible. The will ought to accord with nature [Bengel].

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<http://www.christianissues.biz/miscellaneous.html#headcoveringsforwomen>