

1 Corinthians Study 16

Read 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

KEY VERSE—

“But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.” (11:3)

SUMMARY—

In this entire section, wearing the veil is really a secondary issue—at stake is a more permanent truth about men and women in God’s order of things (11:2-3). Both the actions of men and women reflect back on their head (11:4-6). He next addresses various reasons for this sign of her subjection--because woman is the glory of man (11:7), because woman was taken from man (11:8), because woman was created for the man (11:9), and because of the angels who did not keep their proper place of subjection (11:10; cf. Jude 6). Even so, God established an interdependence between men and women (11:11-12). Spiritual wisdom and everyday living show the need for some representation of that subjection (11:13-15). Finally, if such a subject brings contention, then the very submission it represents is compromised (11:16).

QUESTIONS—

- 1) What has been one of the great problems in the Corinthian church, which is further illustrated in this section (11:16,18; cf. 1:10)?
- 2) This section is about more than just customs and hair length. What else is it about (cf. 14:40)?
- 3) What does he praise the Corinthians about (11:2)? What were these traditions he delivered to them (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6)?
- 4) Why does he introduce the point about rank and authority in 11:3?

5) Why is this the divine order between man and woman (11:3)? Do these passages shed any light?

⇒ 1 Timothy 2:13-14--

⇒ Genesis 2:18-23--

⇒ Genesis 3:16---

6) Under whose power was this prayer and prophecy being uttered (11:4-5; cf. 14:14-16,26)?

7) Were there female prophets in the early church during the days of spiritual gifts (Acts 2:17-18; 21:8-9)? Where were prophecies to be uttered (14:3-5,14-16; cf. 11:17-19)? If a female prophet was uttering a message given to her by God, what might some people assume about her actions (1 Timothy 2:11-12)? What was she to do to insure that both she and other people recognized her submission to God and man (11:5-6,10)?

8) When she uttered the prophecy given to her, was she assuming authority or submitting to God's command by uttering it? What was a woman who was praying and prophesying acknowledging when she wore a veil (11:3)?

9) What does the head symbolize throughout Scripture (see Genesis 3:15; Psalm 68:21; Ephesians 1:22; 4:15)?

10) Why would it be improper for a man to cover his head when praying or prophesying (11:7)? Why should the woman who prays and prophesies cover her head (11:7-10)?

⇒ 11:7b—

⇒ 11:8—

⇒ 11:9—

⇒ 11:10—

11) Explain the phrase “because of the angels” [it must be important since he says they are to do this “because of” angels] (11:10). What do angels have to do with this (6:3; Jude 6)?

12) Man was created in what two phases (Genesis 1:26-29; 2:18-25)? In spite of this distinction, what still exists between male and female (11:11-12)?

13) Who has determined the places of men and women (11:12)?

14) The issue in Corinth is much deeper than wearing a veil. What does Paul want them to recognize (11:3)? Why does the veil then become an issue (11:13-15)?

15) Should they be able to judge accurately about this situation (11:13)? Why (2:14-16)?

16) Did God give woman the veil and long hair—or did God give her the instruction to be in submission, and these were methods by which she showed that submission (11:12,15)? Did Paul bring the veil to Corinth, or was it already there?

17) Is it an inherently immoral thing for a man to have long hair or a dishonorable thing (11:14; cf. Numbers 6:1-21; Judges 13:5,7)? Is it an inherently immoral thing for a woman to have short hair (11:15)? Was Paul speaking of length or of being womanish (11:14-15)?

18) Paul speaks of two different coverings for a woman. What are they?

19) If brethren became contentious over the wearing of a covering, what were they compromising (11:16)?