

A VERSE BY VERSE

STUDY OF I CORINTHIANS 11:1-16

BY CARROL R. SUTTON

I trust that as we engage in our study tonight, that each one of us may do so with the proper attitude of heart, and that we may have the proper respect for God and for His will. We should have the same disposition or attitude that characterized the Psalmist when he said in Psalm 119:97, *"O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day,"* and as he expressed in Psalm 119:127-128, *"Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right and I hate every false way."* We need to recognize the importance of truth and to have a love for the truth. It is not a matter of what I may like or dislike personally. It is not a matter of what we may have practiced or may not have practiced in the past, but as we investigate together the Word of God, we should be determined that we want to learn what truth is and have a love for that truth enough that we would be willing to let it abide in our hearts and be practiced in our lives.

If you have your Bibles, you might care to turn with me to the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians that we might notice a verse by verse study of the first sixteen verses. Surely this subject is an important subject because it is a Bible subject. I know of no Bible subject that is a "touchy" subject; yet many times there are those who will lightly pass over certain Bible subjects because they say, "this subject is a touchy one." It may not be this particular subject that we are considering. It may be some other Bible subject. I have met a lot of "touchy" people over the past twenty-five or thirty years, but I have never run across a "touchy" Bible subject. If God saw fit to reveal it, I need to study it. As I learn what it teaches, I need to preach it and practice it. Surely, all of us should have this attitude or disposition of heart. In Second Timothy 2:15 the Apostle Paul admonished Timothy *to study, that is, to give diligence "to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* Many times we reach certain conclusions (that are false) on various subjects because of a lack of study, and a failure to properly analyze what God has revealed on the subject. Sometimes because of the wrong attitude, we might not examine as we should certain things that God has spoken.

I want us to begin our study tonight, before we begin a reading of those verses, by turning to the first chapter of that same letter and noticing who the author of it is, and to whom the letter was written. First Corinthians 1:1-2 says, *"Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, Unto the church of God which is 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."* First, we see that an inspired man penned this epistle. In fact, Paul who wrote this letter, was an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. We learn from verse 2 that Paul is writing to *"the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints."* Thus the Apostle Paul addressed this letter to the saints of God at Corinth, but he did not stop there. It was not purely a local matter. It was not simply a letter given to contain instructions that were purely for their benefit; we notice in the latter part of verse 2 that Paul said, *"with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours."* So this letter was, indeed, written to the Corinthian saints, but not to them only. **IT WAS WRITTEN FOR THE GUIDANCE OF ALL CHRISTIANS IN EVERY PLACE, AND IT IS QUITE OBVIOUS THAT IT WAS WRITTEN FOR ALL TIMES.** Often times there are those who will take principles of truth and will make a specific application to some specific situation, and then if that specific situation does not exist somewhere else, they simply pitch out the principle of truth that they had applied in that specific situation. Like, for example, there are those who have thrown out, as far as application to present situations is concerned, First

Corinthians 14:34-35. They have done so upon the premise that we cannot duplicate the assembly that is found (or mentioned) in that particular chapter. They say that assembly was one in which spiritual gifts were in operation, and since spiritual gifts are not in operation today, the principles that regulated those gifts or that regulated those people who were in the assemblies in which spiritual gifts were being exercised, are not applicable today. I have heard a number of brethren say, "unless you can duplicate the assembly of that particular chapter, then you cannot apply verses 34-35 today." But I want us to make this observation before we go into a study of these first sixteen verses of I Corinthians 11. In Acts 20:7 we read, "*And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them,...*" All of us who are Bible believers understand this to be divine authorization to partake of the Lord's Supper upon the first day of the week. We can find the Lord's Supper commanded in other passages, but we do not find, however, a command to partake of the Lord's Supper upon the first day of the week. We have here, though, (in Acts 20:7), a divine, approved example of where early disciples did partake of it upon the first day of the week. Obviously, this is authorization for Christians today to partake of the Lord's Supper upon the first day of the week. It should be noted, however, that it is utterly impossible for us to duplicate that assembly of Acts 20:7 today! We simply cannot duplicate that assembly! If we can throw out I Corinthians 14 upon the basis that we cannot duplicate the assembly that may be under consideration there, then we can throw out Acts 20:7 upon the same basis. That assembly in Acts 20:7 had an inspired Apostle in it and that inspired Apostle preached the Word of God to the people present. We cannot find such an assembly today! We cannot find an assembly where an inspired Apostle preaches as did the Apostle Paul in Acts 20:7. Furthermore, in that assembly when one went to sleep and fell out of the window and killed himself, that inspired Apostle could walk out and raise that man (Eutychus) from the dead. We do not find such a situation today! If we are going to say that the principles of First Corinthians 14, and we could add First Corinthians 11, do not apply today upon the basis that we cannot duplicate some particular thing (or assembly) in those chapters, then, to be consistent, we must do away with Acts 20:7 because we cannot duplicate the assembly of that passage! Of course, I reject all such reasoning because I do not believe that it is correct.

Now let us turn to chapter 11 and begin reading in verse 1. Paul said, "*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*" The NEW AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION says: "*Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.*" In chapter 4:16 Paul had said, "*Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.*" Here in verse 1 of chapter 11 Paul adds the thought "*as I follow Christ.*" There are a number of scholars such as BARNES, CLARKE, JOHNSON, JAMIESON, FAUSSET and BROWN who suggest that this verse belongs to the preceding chapter; that may be so. Now let us read verse 2. "*Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I deliver them to you.*" The word *ordinances* means *traditions*, and the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION says *traditions*. There are *human* traditions and *inspired* traditions. Now if these *traditions* were inspired, they were not *human* traditions, but they were *inspired ordinances*. Thus, they were *injunctions*; they were *instructions*; they were *orders*; they were *commandments of God*! We learn from these verses that Paul praised the Corinthian brethren and others to whom he was writing for remembering him in all things and keeping the *ordinances*, or *instructions*, or *injunctions*, or *commandments*, or *precepts*, or *traditions* as he had delivered them. THAYER'S LEXICON says on page 481 that ". . . objectively, what is *delivered*, the *substance of teaching*, so of Paul's teaching, 2 Thess. 3:6; in plur. Of the particular injunctions of Paul's instructions, 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 2:15..." It is quite obvious that we have here simply instructions or ordinances or commandments, or precepts or traditions that God had inspired the Apostle Paul to deliver and he was commending or praising the brethren because they had remembered him in all things and kept the inspired traditions as they had been delivered.

Let us now read verses 3 through 16 and then we will drop back and begin a study of these particular verses. Paul said:

"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. 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. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. 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. 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. 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. 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. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels. 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. Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? 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. But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God."

Without doubt, I believe that this passage is teaching that men should not cover their heads while praying or prophesying and should not have long hair. Without doubt, I believe that this passage teaches that women should cover their heads while praying or prophesying and should have long hair. As we study these verses, I trust that we can clearly see that these are the proper conclusions that we should draw from the passage.

The Apostle Paul begins in verse three discussing **headship**. Please notice that he says, *"But I would have you know."* I do not want you to guess about it; you do not have to wonder about it, *"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."* We can clearly see that God is over Christ, that Christ is over man, and that man is over woman. Now this is God's order of headship: God over Christ; Christ over man; man over woman. In a general sense, men are over women. In a particular way, each husband is over his own wife. But verse 3 teaches, I believe, that in a general sense, God is over Christ, Christ is over man, and man is over woman. Thus, woman has been placed in subjection to man. After setting forth this principle of headship of man over woman, obviously Paul is going to show something based upon this principle.

Verse 4 says: *"Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head."* I take this to mean, not only those who may lead in prayer, but "every man" who prays. I take this to mean not merely men who may have been prophets of God who were inspired to speak, but "every man" who either spoke by inspiration (or spoke that which inspired men had taught him) or who prayed. This verse says, *"having his head covered, dishonoureth his head."* In verse 3, Paul sets forth some divine principles upon which divine rules or regulations are based. In verse 4, Paul indicates that a man is not to cover his head while praying or prophesying, or he would dishonor his head. Man is not to cover his physical head while *"praying or prophesying."* If he does, he will dishonour his spiritual head, Christ. Whether the "head" that is "dishonoured" is man's physical head or Christ his spiritual head, man certainly ought not to cover his head while *"praying or prophesying."* We find this fact further stated very clearly in verse 7. One thing that we need to keep in mind that often times has been overlooked, is the fact that these first sixteen verses are giving instructions to men as well as women. These verses deal with how men are to appear while engaging in whatever is suggested by the expression, *"praying or prophesying,"* as well as to how women are to appear. Whatever these verses teach with reference to men not covering their heads while *"praying or prophesying,"* the opposite is taught with reference to women! However, most of the time the men who object to women covering their heads, will *not* cover their own heads in worship. If the passage teaches that women ought not to cover their heads, then it teaches that men ought to cover theirs. I do not know any person who believes that this passage teaches that women should *not* cover their heads while *"praying or prophesying,"* or that men should cover theirs. Do you? I do know some people who say they believe that this passage does not teach that women should cover their heads while *"praying or prophesying."* Now for a question: Does it teach that men are not to cover their heads while *"praying or prophesying?"* I believe that it does so teach. If it does not, *is there* a passage that does? If so, where is it? Now for another question: Does this passage teach that women should not cover their heads in public worship? Is there any passage that so teaches? If so, where is it? If not, why do so many "preachers" get "steamed up" when they hear of or see women who *cover* their heads?

Obviously, the idea involved here in *"having his head covered"* is that of *wearing* something on the head. When men *"prayed or prophesied,"* they were not to cover their heads. At other times, they could cover their heads and not be doing wrong, but at this particular time (while *"praying or prophesying"*) men were to be sure that their heads were not covered.

Since this verse says "every man..." I want to emphasize that it does not mean *only inspired* men. It means "every man" who prayed as well as "every man" who prophesied. It says every man "praying OR prophesying." It does *not* say "praying AND prophesying," but it says "praying OR prophesying." It included men who did either! It does not limit the "praying" to *leading* in prayer. It does not limit "praying" to silently following in prayer. It includes every man who prayed!

The word "prophesying" as used in this passage, no doubt, included *inspired teaching*. Was "prophesying" limited to "speaking by inspiration?" If so, how do we *know* that it was so limited? If it was so limited, did those men who publicly taught God's word (who were *not* inspired) have the right to cover their heads while so doing? In discussing the word, "prophesying" in the passage, Albert Barnes, a noted Presbyterian scholar, says: "The word *prophesying* here means, evidently, *teaching*; or publicly speaking to the people on the subject of religion;... Whether these persons who are here said to prophesy were all inspired, or claimed to be inspired, may admit of a question. The simple idea here is, that they spoke in the public assemblies, and professed to be expounders of the divine will." NOTES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT by *Albert Barnes*, I Corinthians, page 202. *Adam Clarke*, a noted Methodist scholar, commenting on "praying or prophesying," says: "Any person who engages in public acts of worship to God, whether prayer, singing, or exhortation: for we learn, from the apostle himself, that *προφητευσειν*, *to prophesy*, signifies *to speak unto men to edification, exhortation, and comfort*, chap. 14:3. And this comprehends all that we understand by *exhortation* or even *preaching*." CLARKE'S COMMENTARY, Vol. VI, page 250. *David Lipscomb* and *J. W. Shepherd* says: "Praying and prophesying are the two exercises in which the churches engage in the assembly. All pray, or should pray; one leads, the others pray as sincerely as does the leader. The purpose is to show how the woman is to appear before God in the assembly, not that she should lead in the service. Most assuredly the apostle does not here tell the women how to lead in the prayer and teaching in the assembly, and in chapter 14:34; I Tim, 2:11-12, gives specific directions for her to keep silent... Then a man must not have his head covered when he comes before God, either with long hair or with hat, veil, or cloth of any kind. This would be a shame to him..." A COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLES by *David Lipscomb*, Vol. II, I Corinthians, page 163. Whether "prophesying" was limited to "teaching by inspiration" or not, does *not* invalidate the teaching of this passage. All honest, informed people know that Christians (men and women) *pray* today as they did in the first century.

Let us consider some other translations of the expression, " <i>having his head covered</i> ,"	
" <i>having anything on his head</i> ."	William Tyndale's Translation of 1534
	and Thomas Crammer's Translation of 1539
" <i>with a veil on his head</i> ."	The N. T. Translation by James Moffatt
" <i>wears a veil</i> ."	The N. T. in Modern Speech by Weymouth
" <i>having a veil upon his head</i> ."	James MACKNIGHT'S Translation

It is quite obvious, as pointed out earlier, that the expression, "*having his head covered*," involved man in *wearing* some type of head covering. He was not to do that while "praying or prophesying."

The expression, "*dishonoureth his head*" means "*disgraces*" or "*puts shame on*" or "*defileth*" his head. The man who "prays or prophesies" wearing a head covering dishonors Jesus Christ who is his head.

Let us now consider *verse 5* which reads as follows: "*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*." Paul said, "every woman that prayeth or prophesieth," not necessarily women who led in prayer or who led in prophesying," but it says "every woman that prayeth or prophesieth." Every woman who participates in whatever the expression, "that prayeth or prophesieth" involved, was included! So every woman who *prayeth*, although someone else led the prayer, would certainly be included in the expression.

"Uncovered" means "*not covered, unveiled*" according to THAYER'S LEXICON, page 21. "*With her head uncovered*" simply means "*bareheaded*" and is so rendered in the following "versions" or "translations."

TYNDALE'S TRANSLATION OF 1534
THE BISHOP'S BIBLE OF 1568
THE TWENTY CENTURY N.T.

THOMAS CRAMMER'S TRANSLATION OF 1539
RIVERSIDE; GOODSPEED; WILLIAMS
AMPLIFIED N.T. & THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE.

The head to be covered is the woman's physical head. The expression, "*the woman be not covered*" in verse 6 indicates, without question, that "*her head uncovered*" of verse 5 is *her own physical head*. Covering her head is equivalent to covering *her!* In order for a woman to "be covered," she must cover her head. For a woman to be "uncovered," or "unveiled" means she is "bareheaded."

The woman who "prays or prophesies" with her head "unveiled" or "uncovered" or "bareheaded" *dishonoureth her head: For that is even all one as if she were shaven.*" As we have already noticed, the idea suggested by "dishonoureth" is that of "*disgracing, causing shame or defiling.*" Now let us consider the expression, "*for that is even all one as if she were shaven.*" The word "*for*" as used here, adduces the cause or gives the reason of the preceding statement. The reason the uncovered woman (while praying or prophesying) would dishonor her head is here stated. It is even all one as if she were shaven. Paul is not saying that the "*uncovered*" woman is shaven, but that she is the same (with respect to dishonoring her head) that she would be if her head were shaven. It was a shame for a woman to be shaven. So the last part of verse 5 tells us why it was a dishonor for a woman to pray or prophesy bareheaded: "*for that is even all one as if she were shaven.*" Let me ask you a question: Is it a shame for a woman to be shaven today? If it is, why cannot we make (and should) the same argument today? If it is not a shame for a woman to be shaven, no one has a right to ever criticize any woman who may shear or *shave her head*. Of course, to all of us who understand and respect the Lord's Word on these matters, it is a shame for a woman to be shaven! Those who believe otherwise should be consistent and also contend that it is not a shame for a man to have long hair.

Verse 6 reads as follows: "*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.*" "*The woman*" and "*her*" of this verse indicates that "*her head*" of verse 5 is her own physical head, not man (generally) or her husband (specifically). Contextually, we can see that Paul is suggesting that the woman is to be covered while engaging in praying or prophesying; at this particular time. At other times, she may be "uncovered" and be pleasing in the sight of God. This definitely implies a "covering" that can be worn at times and removed at other times. The *hair* is not the covering under consideration in this verse.

Paul said; "For if the woman be not covered let her *also be shorn.*" If a woman is not going to cover her head when she engages in praying or prophesying, Paul said, "let her also," i. e. in addition to her not being covered, let her *also be shorn.*" "The word 'also' in this verse plainly shows that the two veils - the natural hair and the veil with which the head was covered - are under consideration." A COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLES by *David Lipscomb*, Vol.II, First Corinthians, page 164. A woman may not be covered and still not be shorn or shaven.

This verse also says, "but if it be a shame for a woman to be shaven or shorn, let her also be covered." Is it a shame for a woman to be shaven? Now since verse 15 tells us that "if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her," it is quite obvious that it is a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, because if a woman is either shorn or shaven, she does not have long hair which is a glory to her. If a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her. But if a woman is shorn or shaven, she does not have long hair. If a woman is shorn or shaven, she either has shorn hair or no hair. The opposite of having long hair is either having short hair or no hair. Relative to long hair and short hair, contextually, "shame" seems to be the opposite of "glory." Here is why: Verses 14-15 suggest that long hair on men is "a shame," but long hair on women is "a glory." Since long hair on women is "a glory," short hair on women is "a shame." Short hair (or no hair) is the result of being shorn or shaven. Therefore it is a shame for women to be shorn or shaven since being shorn or shaven results in short hair or no hair which is a shame! Paul is not questioning whether or not it is a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven when he says, "if it be a shame." In reality, Paul is saying since it is a shame for a woman to be shaven or shorn, let her be covered.

The expression, "let her be covered," means "let her be veiled" (ASV), "let her wear a veil," (RSV), or "let her cover her head." (THE DOUAY-CONFRAFRATERNITY VERSION). It is quite obvious that a woman should *be veiled* or *covered* in the sense of wearing a veil or covering on her head. *So let her be covered*

means *let her be veiled; let her wear a veil; let her wear a head covering*. The word "shame" suggests *base, or dishonourable or disgrace*.

A woman should cover her head when engaging in praying or prophesying. If she is not going to do so, she may as well be shorn, but since it is a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven (and thus have either short hair or no hair), she should wear a covering when praying or prophesying.

In verse 7 Paul says: "*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.*" He has already suggested in verse four that a man who prays or prophesies having his head covered dishonours his head. Now in verse 7 Paul says: "for a man indeed *ought not* to cover his head." If it is alright for a man to cover his head while praying or prophesying, as many preachers claim, I wonder why there are not many (if any) men doing it. I am speaking of men who are acquainted with this passage. I am not talking about the Jews who do not believe the New Testament. It is obvious that they would pay no attention to this passage. So they *do* cover their heads. Why do not those men who claim that this passage does not apply now, cover their heads like the Jewish men do in worship?

In showing why men ought not to cover their heads the Apostle Paul makes an appeal in this verse to creation. Man ought not to cover his head since he is the image and glory of God. So why ought not the man to cover his head? Paul said man "is the image and glory of God." Contextually, would it not follow that the woman ought to cover her head because she is the glory of man?

We learn from verse 8 that "*the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.*" Paul indicates that man ought not to cover his head because the man is not of the woman but the woman is of the man. Would it not necessarily follow then, contextually, that the woman ought to cover her head because she is "*of the man?*" You might ask me why ought not the man to cover his head because he is not of the woman? I do not know why God so arranged it, but He did. Paul gave the reasoning so this is God's will in the matter.

Verse 9 says, "*Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.*" Another reason why a man ought not to cover his head is the fact that the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man. Since the woman was created for the man, would it not follow that she should cover her head?

Are these facts which are stated in verses 7-9 still just as true now as they were nearly two thousand years ago? When Paul made his appeal to headship in verse 3 he was not dealing with something that was true only in the first century. When Paul made his appeal to creation and showed how that man is the image and glory of God; that the woman is the glory of the man; that the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man, he was not appealing to something that was only true in his day. These facts have been true since creation and are still true today. Since these facts are still true, the rules, injunctions, or commandments based upon these facts and principles are still applicable today. If not, please explain why they are not applicable now.

In verse 10, the Apostle Paul makes an appeal to angels. He says: "*For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels,*" The word "*ought*" shows the necessity of it; that it is indeed essential. In verse 7 Paul used the words "*ought not*" in teaching men not to cover their heads. In verse 10 Paul declares that a woman ought to have power on her head because of the angels. He begins by saying, "*For this cause...*". For WHAT cause? Because of a local custom? No! Because some women were exercising *spiritual* gifts? No! Because of the situation that prevailed when and since God created man and woman (as explained in verses 7-9). Paul said that the woman ought to have "*power on her head*" because of the angels. What does "*POWER*" as used here mean? Does it mean "authority from God to speak by inspiration?" There is no evidence in the word itself nor contextually that it has such a meaning. Scholars are generally agreed that the word "POWER" denotes a *veil or a covering for the head*. THAYER'S LEXICON says: "...d. *a sign of the husband's authority over his wife*, i.e., the veil with which propriety required a woman to cover herself, I Cor. 11:10..." (page 225). Vincent says: "...Used here of the *symbol* of power, i.e., the covering upon the head as a *sign* of her husband's authority. So Rev., *a sign of authority.*" WORD STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, Vol.III, page 248. W. E. Vine comments: "In I Corinthians 11:10 it is used of the veil with which a woman is required to cover herself in an assembly or church, as a sign of the Lord's

authority over the church." VINE'S EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS, Vol. I page 89. The AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION says: "...the woman ought to have A SIGN OF AUTHORITY on her head...". The NASV says: "Therefore the woman ought to have A SYMBOL OF AUTHORITY on her head, because of the angels." THE LIVING ORACLES translation says: "...a veil on her head..." and PHILLIP'S translation says: "For this reason a woman ought to bear on her head an outward sign of man's authority."

It is quite obvious that here the word "POWER" or "AUTHORITY" is used to stand for that which is symbolized by or is a token of... a sign. In Genesis 17:10-13 when God gave circumcision to Abraham He spoke of circumcision as "a token" of the covenant. He also spoke of circumcision as being the covenant. Circumcision was not really the covenant that God made with Abraham, but it was a TOKEN or a SIGN of that covenant; yet it was called the covenant. Here in I Corinthians 11:10 the SIGN or the SYMBOL of authority is simply called POWER or AUTHORITY. The *"crown of the king"* is a sign of regal power. Thus, the *crown* may be spoken of as POWER or AUTHORITY.

Let us not disregard "the angels" because Paul said, "...because *of the angels*." He did not say "because of a local custom," or "because spiritual gifts were being exercised." Paul did not tell us what part the angels play in this. God has not seen fit to reveal it in His word. However, I do believe in angels. In Hebrews 1:14 we read, "*Are they* (speaking of angels CRS) *not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be the heirs of salvation?*" Angels are ministering spirits. They do not die. Angels have played a part in God's plan in times past - in prior dispensations. They played a part in God's plan in the early part of the present dispensation. During His personal ministry on earth Jesus Christ said, speaking of "these little ones," "*that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.*" (Matthew 18:10). Various passages of scripture indicate that angels will play a part in God's plan when Jesus Christ comes again. Yes, I do believe in angels and you should too, although we may not understand exactly what part the angels play (or played) as far as this particular point in verse 10 is concerned. Paul simply reasons that "*...for this cause ought the woman to have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels.*"

Let us read now a few other translations of verse 10. GOODSPEED'S translation says: "that is why she ought to wear upon her head something to symbolize her subjection, *on account of the angels, if of nobody else*. The RSV says: "That is why a woman ought to have a veil on her head, *because of the angels.*" MOFFATT'S translation says: "Therefore *in view of the angels*, woman has to wear a symbol of subjection on her head." WILLIAMS says: "This is why woman ought to wear upon her head a symbol of man's authority, *especially out of respect to the angels*," and the TWENTY CENTURY NEW TESTAMENT says: "*because of the presence of the angels.*" Thayer says: "*that she may show reverence for the angels*, invisibly present in the religious assemblies of Christians, and not to *displease them*, I Cor. 11:10." THAYER'S LEXICON, page 5. Whether or not angels are invisibly present in the assemblies I do not know. Neither do I need to know. But one thing is sure; Paul did not mean that a woman ought to wear a head covering because *of the harlots* in Corinth when he said, "*because of the angels.*" Since Paul did not explain the expression, neither should I feel compelled to do so. However, I must believe it and use it as did the Apostle Paul.

The argument that women should have a sign of authority on their heads "*because of the angels*" may be one of those things that God hath chosen "*to confound the wise*" that no flesh should glory in God's presence. (see I Corinthians 1:26-29). Many people will not accept anything unless they can "reason" all of it out. Unless they can fully understand all the "whys" and "wherefores" of it, they will not accept it. Some people have said, "The reason I don't accept your view of this passage is because there are some questions about it that I cannot answer." However, there are some questions about their position (view) that they cannot answer, but they have accepted and continue to hold to it. There are a lot of questions about many subjects that I cannot answer. I cannot answer many questions about angels, but I accept what I can read about them. I do not know WHY God chose baptism to be essential to salvation, but He did. I do not know WHY God commanded Christians to eat bread and drink the cup in memory of Jesus Christ to show His death till He comes again, but He did. There are many things and principles that God set forth in the spiritual realm which I accept although I do not know WHY God chose them. Neither do I know why God chose and set forth many things in the physical realm. For example, I do not know why God ordained that large watermelons grow on small vines, and small acorns grow on large trees, but He did. I do not have to explain it, but just believe it. It is not necessary for me to explain something that God's word does not explain, but it is absolutely essential that I believe it! I urge you to believe, although you may not understand all the details about WHY, that "for this cause ought the woman to have power on her head *because of the angels.*"

In verses 11-12 Paul says: *"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 women; but all things of God."* Although the man is the image and glory of God, is not of the woman and was not created for the woman, the man is not without the woman. Although the woman is the glory of the man, is of the man and was created for the man, the woman is not without the man. Neither one is independent of the other. They need each other. The existence of each depends upon the other. They complement each other. What one lacks, the other can supply. Although the first woman came from man, ever since that time the man has his birth through the woman. This is God's order of things and His arrangements. God has designed it in such a way that neither the man or the woman can be independent of the other. Neither should be exalted with pride and arrogance because of their status, but both should be humble.

Paul appeals now to what I am going to call human judgment. Let us read verse 13. It says: *"Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray to God uncovered?"* Judge, i.e., decide, determine, or consider *in yourselves* in view of all the facts in the case. Is it *comely*, i.e., is it proper, is it seemly, is it becoming, is it fitting, is it suitable, is it decent, is it right for a woman to pray unto God uncovered? Instead of the word *"uncovered"* various translations use the word *"bareheaded."* For the woman to be *"unveiled"* or *"uncovered"* is for her to be "BARE-HEADED." It is interesting to me that Paul makes no reference at all to "PROPHESYING" in this verse, but simply to her "PRAYING". So is it comely, fitting, becoming, seemly, decent, suitable, proper or right that a woman pray to God bareheaded? Someone may say, "Well, I think it is." However, that would not mean that it is proper. Paul was not saying that it is simply a matter of your own personal judgment. He was not saying that whatever you may think about the matter will be God's will. This rhetorical question is asked after Paul has set forth the *principles* of HEADSHIP, CREATION AND THE ANGELS. His question was not to be answered out of religious ignorance or personal preference. Obviously, Paul expected an enlightened negative answer. Friends, when you consider the PRINCIPLE OF HEADSHIP, CREATION AND THE ANGELS as set forth by the Apostle Paul, what do you think? Is it proper that a woman pray to God bareheaded? If your answer is "yes, it is proper," you are in complete disagreement with the teaching of the inspired Apostle. Our "judgment" in these matters should be governed by God's instructions.

Verses 14-15 say: *"Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a women have long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given her for a covering."* To further strengthen the case for the men appearing bareheaded and the women having their heads covered while praying or prophesying, Paul now appeals to "NATURE." Paul contends that *"nature"* teaches that it is a shame for a man to have long hair, but that it is a glory to a woman to have long hair because her hair is given to her to serve as a (natural) covering. In view of this, we should be able to learn that women should have long hair, (as well as wear a head covering when praying), and that men should have short hair, (as well as being bareheaded while praying or prophesying).

The word "NATURE" has been given different meanings by various people - even among scholars. THAYER'S LEXICON defines the word translated *"nature"* as follows: "...*nature*, i.e. a. *the nature of things, the force, laws, order, of nature*; as opp. to what is monstrous, abnormal, perverse:...*nature*, i.e. *natural sense, native conviction or knowledge*, as opp. to what is learned by instruction and accomplished by training or prescribed by law:... (i.e. *the native sense of propriety*)...I Cor. 11:14; *guided by their natural sense of what is right and proper*, Rom. 2:14." (page 660). THE PULPIT COMMENTARY says: *"Nature* here has much the same sense as *instinct*." (F. W. Farrar). *Adam Clarke* says: "Nature certainly teaches us, by bestowing it, that it is proper for women to have long hair; and it is not so with the men. The hair of the male rarely grows like that of the female, unless *art* is used, and even then it bears but a scanty proportion to the former. Hence it is truly *womanish* to have long hair, and it is a shame to the man who affects it... Hear *nature*, common sense, reason, and they will inform you, *that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him*. . . *Nature* and the *apostle* speak the same language; we may account for it as we please." CLARKE'S COMMENTARY, Vol. VI, page 253. *Albert Barnes* says: "The word *nature* (φύσις) denotes evidently that sense of propriety which all men have, and which is expressed in any prevailing or universal custom. That which is universal we say is according to nature. It is such as is demanded by the natural sense of fitness among men...and if any reason is asked for numerous habits that exist in society, no better answer can be given than that *nature*, as arranged by God, has demanded it. The word in this place, therefore, does not mean the constitution of the sexes, as Locke, Whitby, and Pierce maintain; nor reason and experience, as Macknight sup-

poses; nor simple use and custom, as Grotius, Rosenmuller, and most recent expositors suppose; but it refers to a deep internal sense of what is proper and right; a sense which is expressed extensively in all nations, showing what that sense is. No reason can be given, in the nature of things, why the woman should wear long hair and the man not; but the custom prevails extensively everywhere, and nature, in all nations, has prompted to the same course..." NOTES ~ THE NEW TESTAMENT by Albert Barnes, I Corinthians, page 207-208. David Lipscomb says: "While in all nations in the world, women wear long hair, and men wear short hair, it is nature that suggests it? It does not mean custom. The fact so universal and the declaration of the apostle, seems to settle this. Sometimes nature suggests a custom. A practice prompted by nature becomes a custom, and is said to be from or by nature. How came the custom to be universal among all nations and in all parts of the world, if there is not something in nature to suggest it?" A COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLES by David Lipscomb, Vol. II, First Corinthians, page 168. There are a number of preachers with whom I am acquainted who believe that "*nature*" as used in this passage means "*custom*."

As we can readily see, the meaning of the word "NATURE" as used here has been given a variety of "meanings." Of course, each of us should give "diligence" to determine, if possible, the correct meaning. However, regardless of what the word "NATURE" means in this passage, the Apostle Paul suggests that it teaches the propriety of women covering their heads and men not covering theirs at certain times. Suppose, however, that the word "*nature*" means mere "CUSTOM" that existed only at Corinth. This would not invalidate the teaching of this passage because Paul had already set forth a number of other reasons why that women should cover their heads and men should not cover theirs. In order for the teaching to be made void, it would be necessary for every argument that Paul made to be shown incorrect or not applicable today. As long as there is ONE sound, Scriptural argument made by the Apostle Paul, his proposition stands! Suppose "NATURE" as used here means mere *custom* or *practice*, or what have you, that has nothing whatsoever to do with whether or not men and women should pray today with uncovered or covered heads, necessarily. As long as other principles set forth by Paul stand true, his conclusion follows! In order for the regulations not to apply, it would be necessary to throw out *all of these principles* on which Paul based his arguments and drew his conclusions! Of course, you can see from the evidence already given that a person would be hard pressed indeed to prove that "*nature*" means "*custom*". The fact that "nature" teaches that long hair is A covering given to woman ought to convince her that *she ought to cover her head* while praying. Can you make the same argument today? If not, why not?

NATURE teaches it is a SHAME for a man to have long hair. The word "SHAME" means "*dishonor, ignominy, disgrace, ...* I Cor. 11:14..." according to THAYER'S LEXICON, page 83. NATURE teaches it is A GLORY for a woman to have long hair. The word "GLORY" means "*magnificence, excellence, pre-eminence, dignity, grace: ... to be a glory, ornament, to one* I Cor. 11:15." according to THAYER'S LEXICON, page 156. The word translated "GLORY" in the A.V. is also translated *pride, credit to her, an added grace to her, honour, glorious beauty and a praise* in other translations.

Since we have learned that "long hair" is a *shame* on a man, but it is a *glory* for a woman to have "long hair," let us consider the question of "long hair." The verb translated "*have long hair*" means "to let *the hair grow, have long hair,* .1 Cor. 11:14 sq. " according to THAYER'S LEXICON, page 354 and "*to let the hair grow long, to wear long hair,*..." according to VINE'S EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS, Vol. II, page 189.

A number of times I have been asked the question: "Does the Bible teach that a woman will go to hell if she cuts her hair?" I have not always appreciated this question because it seems that most people who ask it are not sincerely seeking God's truth on the matter. However, I do not mind answering it. The answer is simple: I DO NOT KNOW! If you DO KNOW that it is right for a woman to cut her hair, please tell me how you KNOW it is. If the expression, "have long hair" means "to let the hair grow, have long hair, to let the hair grow long, to wear long hair," are you absolutely sure that it is right for a woman to cut her hair? What passage or principle do you base your conclusion on? If you say a woman has the right to cut one inch of her hair off, I will ask you about her cutting off two inches. What about four inches? Six inches? Do you see where I am headed? So it is not as simple as some people think it is. Some people contend that a woman has the right to cut her hair just as long as there remains a distinction between her and men. Friends, you do not read that here in God's book! If that principle is true, we will have to reach that conclusion from some kind of reasoning because it is not stated in plain, simple terms, - is it? I do not know whether a woman who

cuts her hair off will go to hell or not, But if I tell a woman to start cutting her hair I do not know at what point I should tell her to stop. If you tell a woman to cut her hair, you better know when to tell her to stop cutting. If you know when to tell her to stop, please tell me so I will know when to tell women who start cutting their hair to stop. I do not tell women to start cutting their hair. It is a safe course for women to let their hair grow long. Scissors never made long hair. Someone may take some scissors and cut their hair and they may have - I am not saying that they will have - long hair in spite of the fact that they cut some of it off. But if they do still have long hair it will not be because they cut their hair because scissors do not make long hair. Some women who cut their hair say they trim the ends so the hair will grow longer. However, the end that is trimmed is not the end of the hair that grows. It is the end that is coming out of the head that is growing. The end that is hanging down does not grow. You can be assured of that fact. It grows from the other end. Cutting the end that is hanging down will not make the other end grow. Cutting it might just keep you from having long hair though. That is why I do not recommend that women cut their hair at all.

Let me emphasize also the fact that Paul says that NATURE teaches *that it is a shame for a man to have long hair*. What man? Paul says "a man" hence *any man!* How long may a man allow his hair to grow and not be in violation of this passage? I am not sure that I can always be specific in answering that question. It may be possible for a man to have a few inches long and not have "long hair" as condemned in I Corinthians 11:14. However, I heartily recommend that a man cut his hair as often as is necessary for him to be absolutely SURE (at least in his own mind), that he has short hair. This is the only SAFE COURSE for a man to follow.

Let us now consider verse 16. It reads as follows: *"But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God."* What had Paul set forth in the preceding verses? He set forth the fact that men should *not* cover their heads while praying or prophesying but that women *should* (in fact he said they "ought") *cover their* heads while praying or prophesying. I think no informed, sincere person will deny that. Paul then suggested that NATURE teaches that *it is a shame for a man to have long hair, but it is a glory for a woman to have long hair*. As we consider verse 16, let us keep in mind what Paul had set forth in the first fifteen verses. There are some people who will read verse 16 and then say something like this: "Now that shows what is taught in those verses does not apply now because it says if anyone seems to be contentious, we do not have anything like that now." Others will place other interpretations on verse 16 that nullify the teaching of Paul in the first 15 verses. First, let me emphasize this statement: *to place an interpretation on verse 16 that nullifies the inspired teaching of the first fifteen verses is to pervert the word of God!* Can you believe that it would be right to place an interpretation on verse 16 that would nullify the import of the first fifteen verses? I would be afraid to attempt to do such a thing! I would be afraid to put an interpretation on this verse that would nullify something that Paul had based on **HEADSHIP, CREATION, ANGELS**, and he stated that **NATURE** teaches the propriety of it. He also suggested that if they would **JUDGE IN THEMSELVES** they could certainly recognize that what Paul taught was so. Yet there are some "preachers" who will put an interpretation on verse 16 that completely nullifies the first fifteen verses.

In verse 16 the inspired writer says: *"But if any man"* - not just some particular person, not only an apostle, not only an elder, not only a preacher "but if ANY MAN," any individual, any person *"seem to be contentious..."*. There is no indication in this verse that Paul is defending himself against an anticipated charge of SEEMING to be contentious by setting forth by inspiration God's will, as some would contend. Let us consider various translations of the expression that is translated, *"seem to be contentious."* GOODSPEED says: *"is disposed to be contentious about it."* THE DOUAY-CONFRATERNITY Version, THE EMPHATIC DIAGLOTT and several others say: *"is disposed to be contentious."* THE MYLES COVERDALE TRANSLATION OF 1535, THOMAS CRAMMER'S TRANSLATION OF 1539 and THE GENEVE NEW TESTAMENT of 1557 say: *"lust to strife."* JOHN PURVEY'S VERSION OF 1388 says: *"is seen to be full of strife."* JOHN WYCLIFFE'S TRANSLATION OF 1380 says exactly the same thing. THE LIVING ORACLES say: *"resolve to be contentious"* and MACKNIGHT'S TRANSLATION says: *"resolves to be contentious."* THE NASV says: *"is inclined to be contentious."* In view of the above evidence, how can one consistently contend that the verse says "if any man SEEM to be contentious," and "if any man IS contentious," and therefore Paul was defending himself as some contend, the expression "ANY man" has no significance at all that I can see. It would not (and could not) mean ANY MAN, but it would mean the Apostle Paul only! Believe it, who can? Let us compare *"seem to be contentious"* with the expression *"seem to be religious"* in James 1:26. James says: *"If any man among you seem* **14**

to be religious,..." Question: Is he religious? James continues: "*and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.*" Yes, he IS religious because James says "this man's religion is vain." He is religious, but wrong. Just because James says, "if any man among you *seem to be religious...*" does not mean that the man is not religious. He not only SEEMS TO BE RELIGIOUS, he IS religious, but his religion is wrong! The fact that Paul said in I Corinthians 11:16: "But if any man *seem to be contentious, ...*" certainly does not indicate that no one was or could be contentious, or that Paul was only defending himself against a charge of SEEMING to be contentious. The man that Paul has under consideration in verse 16 IS contentious. He is *disposed* to be contentious, *inclined* to be contentious, *resolves* to be contentious, *lusts* to strive, and *is seen to be full of strife*.

Who is a contentious man? Is he one who believes, accepts and teaches what inspired men (like Paul) taught? Obviously not. If a man agrees with what Paul taught and fully intends to practice it, he is NOT a contentious man. A contentious man is one who does not accept what Paul set forth. A contentious man would reject Paul's teaching and argue with him. A contentious man argues for the opposite of Paul's teaching. Instead of agreeing with what Paul set forth, *the contentious man contends that men may cover their heads while praying or prophesying and that women may pray or prophesy with their heads uncovered. The contentious man contends that it is not a shame for a man to have long hair and that short hair is a glory to a woman.* Paul says "we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." Paul and others elsewhere who were following God's will in the matter did not have *such a custom* (usage or practice) as the man was contending for and insisting on i.e., men appearing *with uncovered heads* when praying or prophesying, and men *having long hair and women having short hair!* Paul had already set forth what he and others and "the churches of God" had. Thus, Paul, others and "the churches of God" did NOT have what the contentious man was arguing for and setting forth! The assemblies of God nowhere had any such custom (or practice) as that which was set forth by the contentious man. They chose to follow God's will in the matter. Paul and the churches of God recognized and thus taught others to believe and practice God's will in these matters as Paul had set forth in the first fifteen verses. He had appealed to **HEADSHIP, CREATION, ANGELS, HUMAN JUDGMENT AND NATURE** as well, to convince the saints that *men should have uncovered heads when they prayed or prophesied and that women should have covered heads.* God's will which was based upon some divine principles had been clearly set forth. If a person is going to be contentious or argumentative about what Paul taught and set himself up as a defender of such points as *a man praying or prophesying with his head covered and a woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered*, Paul wanted the saints to know that *Christians nowhere had any such custom* (usage or practice) *as that*, but to the contrary Christians elsewhere held to the practice of *men praying or prophesying with UNCOVERED heads and women with COVERED heads.*

Since there are some people who think that the "CUSTOM" (i.e., usage or practice) that Paul said he and the churches of God did not have (if anyone was inclined to be argumentative) was the practice of *men having uncovered heads and women having covered* (as he had set forth), let us now consider some comments of some scholars. F. W. Farrar says: "SUCH CUSTOM. Not referring to 'contentiousness,' but to the women appearing with uncovered heads. NEITHER THE CHURCHES OF GOD. If you Corinthians prefer these abnormal practices in spite of reason, common sense, and my *arguments*, you must stand alone in your innovations upon universal Christian practice. But catholic custom is against your, 'self-opinionated particularism.'" THE PULPIT COMMENTARY, I Corinthians, page 363. The COMMENTARY ON THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS by Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown says: "...*no such custom* - as that of women praying uncovered..." (pages 283-284). C. H. Irwin says: "*But if any man seem to be contentious*, etc. As if he said, 'I have given the reasons why women should remain covered, but if anyone is not convinced, at any rate it is not our custom for women to uncover the head in worship.'" IRWIN'S BIBLE COMMENTARY, page 495. Marvin R. Vincent says: "*Custom.* Nor 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-fitting headdress, while the men have the short hair." WORD STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, Vol.III, page 248. THE WYCLIFFE BIBLE COMMENTARY says: "*No such custom*, i.e., no custom of women worshipping without coverings..." (page 624). James Macknight says: "*Now if the false teacher resolves to be contentious*, and maintains that it is allowable for women to pray and teach publicly in the church unveiled, *we in Judea have no such custom, neither any of the churches of God.*" MACKNIGHT ON THE EPISTLES, Vol. I page 177. David Lipscomb says: "The custom referred to must be women wearing short hair and approaching God in prayer with uncovered heads. He reasoned on the subject

to show the impropriety, but adds in an authoritative manner, if any are disposed to be contentious over it, neither we nor the churches of God have any such custom..." A COMMENTARY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLES by David Lipscomb, Vol. II First Corinthians, page 169. Adam Clarke says: "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 the *Jews* or the *Gentiles*." CLARKE'S COMMENTARY, Vol. VI, page 253-254. It is quite evident that the aforementioned scholars believe that the "CUSTOM" that Paul and the churches of God had was not that for which the contentious person would argue which was the opposite of what had been set forth by Paul in the first fifteen verses.

Let us now read a number of various translations of verse 16 and give serious thought to the wording of them.

"If any one is disposed to be contentious, we recognize no other practice, nor do the churches of God."
REVISED STANDARD VERSION

"If any one presumes to raise objections on this point - well, I acknowledge no other mode of worship, and neither do the churches of God."
JAMES MOFFATT'S TRANSLATION

"But if anyone is disposed to be contentious about it, I for my part recognize no other practice in worship than this, and neither do the churches of God."
THE NEW TESTAMENT BY EDGAR J. GOODSPEED

"But if anyone is inclined to be contentious about it, I for my part prescribe no other practice than this, and neither do the churches of God."
CHARLES B. WILLIAMS' TRANSLATION

"However, if any man seems to dispute for some other custom, we have no other, neither do the congregations of God."
THE NEW WORLD TRANSLATION

"But if any one wants to be argumentative about it, I can only say that we and the Churches of God generally hold this ruling on the matter."
J.B. PHILLIPS' TRANSLATION IN MODERN ENGLISH

"If any one wants to oppose my view of this question, my reply is: Neither I nor the churches follow any other custom."
FRANK C. LAUBACH'S TRANSLATION

"But if one is inclined to be contentious, we have no other practice, nor have the churches of God."
NEW AMERICAN STANDARD

It seems to me that the evidence is ample; that the proof is sufficient. Without question, these various translations are saying in substance that Paul is simply stating that regardless of what any contentious person might say to offset the truth as set forth by Paul, that neither he nor the churches of God anywhere would recognize that for which the contentious man was arguing. *He and the churches of God generally would continue to respect, believe and practice God's will in these matters.*

My plea to each one of you is this: *Give diligence to learn God's Will in these and all other matters.* Examine yourself. Hunger and thirst after what is right. Sincerely search God's word and calmly and candidly examine all the evidence available to you. Do not allow some "preacher" to prejudice your mind against the truth just because you may respect him. His word will not judge you in the last day. You will be judged by God's *word*. Have a "love for the truth" and search the scriptures daily. The day is spent. Night is drawing nigh.

"Therefore, let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober." (I Thessalonians 5:6)