

Is the Woman's Covering Her Hair??

Some still teach that the woman's covering in 1 Cor. 11:1-16 is her hair, and fewer yet her *long* hair (as the context specifies). And yet, is this what Paul is teaching? Why is it that women in the Lord's church, indeed those of all backgrounds, covered their heads with opaque cloth veils until the 20th century? Could it be that we have it wrong, and that Paul is commanding that women wear an opaque cloth covering on their heads as a sign that they are under headship? Let us examine the New Testament and apply a little logic:

False Doctrine	Scripture
<p>The woman's covering referenced in 1 Cor. 11.5-6 is her hair</p>	<p>If this be so then it would be sinful for the Christian woman to have short hair while praying or prophesying but not the rest of the time (see 1 Cor. 11.6). This cannot be right because, not only is it impossible, but it would cause a contradiction with verse 15, which states that <i>if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her</i>. God did give hair to the woman for a covering, and Paul uses this as an illustration in verses 14 & 15. Yet the words <i>uncovered</i> and <i>covered</i> in verses 5 & 6 are translated from a different Greek word than the word <i>covering</i> in verse 15. In 1 Cor. 11.5-6 Paul is referring to an opaque cloth veil that flows down from the woman's head, and the Lord's people practiced this until the 20th century.</p> <p>Also, to be consistent: if a woman's covering is her hair, then the man's uncovering is his lack of hair. Five questions: (1) since women are considered covered by their hair, and many of the women's hair is as short as the men's, why do the men not shave their heads so that they can be uncovered? (2) Why do the men refuse to pray with a hat (or other cloth covering) on their head? By removing the hat, the men are acknowledging that the woman's covering is an artificial (cloth) veil, and not the hair; (3) Why does the literature of even those churches that don't teach or practice the head covering show early Christian women (1st century) praying with a sizeable cloth veil on their heads? (4) It is often observed that the women pray with various types of hats on their heads – if the covering required by God is the hair, would not women who wear a hat be going beyond what is written, and hence in violation of God's word? (5) The men are only allowed to pray with short hair and no hat on, but the women are allowed to pray with long hair, short hair, no hair, and/or a hat? Can they all be right when Scripture only gives one way?</p>

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