

What does Hair have to do with Obedience

In our lesson today, we are going to be studying over a chapter that discusses the hierarchy of obedience, the importance of your covering, and ultimately the need to study the Word of God.

1 Corinthians 11:1-16 Apostle Paul is speaking...

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

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

The first thing we have just been told, is that Apostle Paul has told us to be followers of him as he is also of Christ and then he commends the Church of Corinth for remembering him in all things and keeping the ordinances that he has delivered unto them.

3 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.

Here Apostle Paul is delivering another ordinance that the Church is to keep. The Church being the Body of Christ. The word ordinance means: 1) An authoritative command or order. 2) A custom or practice established by long usage. Definition provided from The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition.

Apostle Paul has identified a new ordinance concerning the body of Christ, the Church, in which case he tells us that the head, or authority, of every man is Christ; and the head, or authority, of the woman is the man; and the head, or authority, of Christ is God.

4 Every man praying or prophesying, **having his head covered**, dishonoureth his head.

Now we are told by Apostle Paul that every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered dishonors his head.

Question one. Who is the head of man? The head of man we were told is Christ. So now we know that the man that prays or prophesies having his head covered, dishonors Christ. Question two. What is the covering so that we are certain not to dishonor Christ? At this moment we have not been told.

5 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.**

Here we are told by Apostle Paul that every woman that prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head. And that this is even as if she were shaven.

Question one. Who is the head of woman? We were told the head of woman was the man. So the woman that does this, brings dishonor or shame to her head, meaning her husband. We also learned that in the eyes of God this uncovering that brings dishonor to her husband is the same as if she were shaved bald.

6 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.**

In this verse we learn that if the woman be not covered, let her be shorn. But if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, then let her be covered.

Many people quickly interject, that it said, “but if it be a shame.” Let me briefly tell you that there are three categories of people who read the scriptures. The truth seeker, the one who is looking to

justify themselves if they don't like what they are told, and the group who does not care enough to ever find out. Let's talk about each group for a moment.

The truth seeker will not be satisfied until he or she knows for sure what the scriptures were meaning. This person will search the scriptures on all topics surrounding the information that they did not understand. They will use a dictionary to make sure they understand the meanings of the words that they are uncertain of. They will also use a Hebrew/Greek translator to look up the original words meaning. This can easily be done online these days.

The second group, those who are looking to justify themselves if they don't like what they are told, will not search the scriptures surrounding all the information that they did not understand. They will only use the dictionary when confident they can find a meaning that will, in their eyes, substantiate their argument. Even though there are other meanings available of the same word that should have been applied in the context of the passage at hand. If they do any research on the subject it will only be to validate their claims. Which means they will look for someone with an article who supports their few point even if it is from someone outside of the faith.

The third group, the group who does not care enough to ever find out, as stated will not bother to do any research. These people will make various excuses as to why they don't understand or tell you it makes sense to them, but yet than can not explain it to you. In some cases they will just say that it isn't that important to them. Which is a sad truth, because what is not important to them, is the very Word of God. Some of these people will be obedient to their pastors, and do what he has told them, because he is the pastor and we are to obey them that have the rule over us, whereas others will conform because everyone else is doing it, or then there are those

who will not conform because they don't see it, and they are not obedient to their pastors either.

Let's turn our focus back to verses 5&6.

5 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.**

6 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.

By the context of this passage we can tell that Apostle Paul is telling us that it is a shame for a woman to be shaven, even as she has caused dishonor and shame to her head, which was her husband for not being covered. The word but being used as an intensifier to introduce an exclamatory expression.

We also know without a doubt from verse 5 there was a comparison given that a woman who prayed or prophesied with her head uncovered dishonored her head, which is the man, and this dishonor, or shame, was compared to a woman who had been shaved bald. If it was not a shame for a woman to be shaven, then there would have not been a comparison made of the dishonor.

Continuing on to verse 7.

7 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.**

8 For the **man is not of the woman**; but the woman of the man.

9 **Neither was the man created for the woman**; but the woman for the man.

Here Apostle Paul is explaining that Adam was made in the image of God and thus the glory of God, whereas the woman was taken

out of the man, thus she is the glory of the man. And that the woman was created to be a help mate for Adam.

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

We will discuss this verse a little later on.

11 Nevertheless **neither** is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.

12 For as the woman is of the man, **even so** is the man also by the woman; but **all things of God**.

Here Apostle Paul has instructed us that even though the woman was of the man originally, now man comes by the birth of a woman, but all things of God.

13 **Judge in yourselves**: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

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

Here Apostle Paul has identified the covering as the hair. And posed two questions. The first was judge yourselves if it is comely for a woman to pray unto God uncovered? And the Second question was does not nature itself teach you that it is a shame for a man to have long hair. This is a great time to remind us that if a man has long hair, then he dishonors his head, which we were told was Christ.

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

Here again Apostle Paul identifies the covering as the hair, and tells us it is a glory to a woman that her head be covered because her hair was given to her for a covering.

Before we continue on to verse 16, which is a verse that those who are looking to justify themselves if they don't like what they are told, let's first take our new found knowledge of what the covering is, and now go back and look at what this means to us in the context of what we have been told.

To do this, we need to recap what we have learned from this new ordinance given to us by Apostle Paul. This new ordinance was given to us as a hierarchy of obedience. Recall verse 3 which read:

3 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.

Here an order of obedience was given to us. Which was: God - Christ - Man - Woman.

Let's quickly read **Hebrews 5:7-9** speaking of Jesus.

7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

8 Though he were a Son, **yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;**

9 And being made perfect, he became **the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;**

Obedience is what God has always wanted from mankind. Here we also learn that Jesus Christ was obedient to God unto death.

With this understanding of the order of obedience that was given to us by God, it is important to realize that this obedience to the Head, or authoritative position, directly relates to being covered or not being covered. And we found out this covering was the hair.

We also learned from verse 15 above, that if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her. What woman of God would not want to have something, that God has revealed to us is a glory to her??

Before I continue explaining this any further, this is another time when the group that is looking to justify themselves if they don't like what they are told, will interject that this is not from God but from Apostle Paul. These people apparently do not study the scriptures. But this is a great opportunity to help them see other scriptures to help enlighten them.

Ephesians 2:19-21

19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

1 Thessalonians 2:4-6

4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

5 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness:

6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

2 Timothy 3:16

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

With this establishment that all scripture is given by God and profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in

righteousness, and that the Apostles were entrusted with the Gospel, we know that this ordinance came by God, through the messenger Apostle Paul.

To continue on from where we were, the question I had posed was, **What woman of God would not want to have something, that God has revealed to us is a glory to her??**

Since we now know the covering is the hair and is in direct relationship with obedience to the authority that is over each of us, the question becomes what is considered long hair and what is considered short hair.

There are a couple of clues that are relayed to us, that gives us this answer. When looking at this passage of scriptures as a whole, notice that Apostle Paul did not give us a length chart to go by, such as, men's hair must be no longer than the base of their neck, and women's hair must be no shorter than the midpoint of their back. The reason why, was because the people at Corinth understood what Apostle Paul meant.

The answer lies in verse 6 which read:

6 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.

Let's break this verse down with our new found knowledge from above. If the woman be not covered, let her be shorn and since it is a shame for her to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

Notice Apostle Paul made a distinction between shorn and shaven. That tells us, they do not mean the same thing. Let's examine the definition of shorn, shear, and shaven from www.dictionary.com.

Shave: 1. to remove a growth of beard with a razor. 2. to remove hair from (the face, legs, etc.) by cutting it off close to the skin with a razor.

Shorn: Past Participle of Shear.

Shear: 1. to cut (something). 2. to remove by or as if by cutting or clipping with a sharp instrument: to shear wool from sheep. 3. to cut or clip the hair, fleece, wool, etc., from: to shear sheep.

Now that we understand what these two words mean, let's re-examine verse 6 with the definitions inserted into the verse.

6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also remove her hair by or as if by cutting or clipping with a sharp instrument: but if it be a shame for a woman to remove her hair by or as if by cutting or clipping with a sharp instrument or to remove her hair by cutting it off close to the skin with a razor, let her be covered.

Thus meaning Let her be covered with **uncut hair**. This is the reason why there was not an identifying length system to go by, the Church of Corinth understood that he was speaking of “cut” and “uncut” hair. In which case we learned that this cutting or not cutting of hair, was an act of obedience and submission to our authoritative positions, or headship given by God to each of us.