

First Corinthians 11:2-16 (part 2)

- 3) Practical application—11:13-16
 - a) A command to make a decision—11:13 ¹³ *Judge for yourselves. Is it appropriate for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered [akatakalyptos]?* (assumed No)
 - b) Leading question—11:14-15
 - i) ¹⁴ *Does not nature* (God's design for creation as revealed in culture) *itself teach you^{pl} that,*
 - (1) *on the one hand, if [3rd class condition] a **man** (emphatic) has long hair, it is a dishonor [atimia] to him,*
 - (a) The Godward man seeks to maintain these God-ordained gender distinctions. He will instinctively and naturally shrink away from anything that appears to be what his culture labels feminine.
 - (2) ¹⁵ *but on the other hand, if [3rd class condition] a **woman** has long hair, it is her glory?* (assumed Yes)
 - (a) *For her hair has been given instead of/for [anti] a covering [peribolaion].*
 - (i) *Peribolaion* describes a cloak or shawl (cf. Hebrews 1:12)
 - c) This teaching is nothing new—11:16 ¹⁶ *But if [1st class condition] anyone wants to be quarrelsome (philoneikos; lit. "love of strife") about it, **we** (emphatic) have no such habit* (of women praying or prophesying with uncovered heads), *nor do the congregations of God.*
 - i) This is the third time Paul appeals to common custom among the congregations (cf. 4:17; 7:17 as well as 14:33)

What should women do today?

- 1) "Perhaps the most defensible application is that a woman should dress modestly to avoid the appearance of questionable morality, and in a feminine way as a demonstration of her deference to the male leadership of the church." (*The Moody Bible Commentary*, p. 1792)
- 2) "Moreover, both men and women today should dress so that they do not look like the opposite sex. Confusion of the sexes is contrary to the God-given sense that the sexes are distinct. ... The point is ... that in every culture there are certain kinds of adornment [and appearance] which become acceptable norms of dress for men and women." (*Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, Schreiner, p. 138)
- 3) Public church gatherings are not to be occasions for women to be distractions nor suggestive in their appearance. Women are not to be considered by themselves or the men as sex objects during worship. No one in attendance at a public church service should be distracted by what anyone wears.
- 4) "Role relations between men and women, generally, and role relations in the church, particularly, are important according to Paul because they are meant to reflect the more ultimate realities of Christ's headship over mankind, and the Father's headship over Christ. Can we not see from this that the current despising of male authority in pastoral leadership positions in the church undercuts and undermines the very design God has intended for the church? Just as marriages are to reflect Christ and the church, so churches are to reflect the Father's relationship to Christ and Christ's authority over mankind." (*Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*, Ware, 148)