

Does God Accept Your Worship?

Carrol R. Sutton

Some people say: "It does not matter how we worship. I can worship God any way I want to and God will accept my worship." Friends and brethren, is this what the New Testament of Jesus Christ teaches? Is it? Let us see.

Ignorant Worship

In speaking to the Athenians, the apostle Paul said: ***"Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you"*** (Acts 17:22-23). It is obvious from the reading of this passage that God does not accept this kind of worship! Ignorant worship is vain worship!

Vain Worship

In Matthew 15:7-9 Jesus said to some religionists of the first century: ***"Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."*** It can be clearly seen from this passage that worship is vain when people teach for doctrines the commandments of men, although they may draw nigh unto God with their mouths and may honour God with their lips. Their heart is far from God when they teach and are directed by the doctrines of men. God does not accept this kind of worship!

Will Worship

In Colossians 2:18-23 the apostle Paul mentions some things and then says, ***"Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh."*** Will-worship is worship directed by and is after one's own will. It is self chosen and for this reason it is a departure from God's wisdom and way. However pious and plausible it may seem and regardless of how beautiful it may appear, it is folly and thus it is in vain. God does not accept this kind of worship!

True Worship

In John 4:23-24 our blessed Lord said: ***"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."*** It is quite obvious from this passage that it does matter how one worships God. God said that worship "must" be *"in spirit and in truth!"* We dare not say otherwise. Please examine your worship in the light of these and other Scriptures and see if God accepts it.

TRUE WORSHIP COMES THROUGH STUDY (2 Timothy 2:15).

Why is Truth Important?

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IT MAKES US FREE. In Jno. 8:32 Jesus said: *"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* Truth when known, will liberate us from superstition, the ignorance of sin, the love of sin, the practice of sin, and the wages of sin.

IT SANCTIFIES. Jesus said in his prayer in Jno. 17:17; *"Sanctify them through Thy truth; thy word is truth."* TO SANCTIFY means to dedicate; to set aside for holy uses; to make holy. Our dedication to God's service, or our being made holy and being set aside for holy uses is accomplished by the truth, which is God's Word.

IT PURIFIES. In 1 Pet. 1:22, Peter said: *"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth..."* We learn from Acts 15:9 that our hearts are purified by faith.. since faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17), we must hear the truth, believe the truth, and obey the truth in order for our souls or hearts to be purified. There is no other way.

IT SAVES. We learn from Rom. 1:16, that the gospel (which is the truth) is God's power unto salvation. James says in 1:23; *"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."* The truth must be believed and obeyed in order for us to be saved by it. Jesus said; *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."* (Mk. 16:16).

IT WILL JUDGE US. In Jno. 12:48, Jesus said: *"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my word, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."* The Word of Christ is the TRUTH by which we shall be judged in the last day. Whether we receive or reject the truth, it will stand forever and we must face it in judgment. If we have spurned the Lord's invitation to obey the truth, we will stand condemned and thus lost forever. Our eternal destiny will be the lake of fire and brimstone where the devil and all the wicked will be cast to be tormented.

Yes, truth is indeed the pearl of great price. We should be willing to pay whatever the cost may be that we might buy it, and even then it will be the greatest "bargain" of our lives. As the wise man said; *"BUY THE TRUTH AND SELL IT NOT."*

Are you willing to pay the price in order to receive the truth? Do not be deceived by cunning craftiness and the sleight of men who lie in wait to deceive, but *"try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets have gone out into the world."* (1 Jno. 4:1).

Is the Church of Christ a Denomination?

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There are hundreds of denominations (religious bodies authorized by man's authority and governed by human wisdom) in the United States of America alone. They differ in name, doctrine and practice and yet all of them claim to be of God and that God is with them. Are these denominations authorized by the authority of God? Are they governed by God's wisdom? Is God the author of all this division and confusion? Are they really of God? Is God really with them? (See 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:1-6 and 1 Cor. 14:33.)

Many people say, "the church of Christ is just another denomination." There may be some religious bodies called "the church of Christ" which may be denominations but when people make that statement referring to those who are truly following the teaching of the New Testament, it is merely an assumption. If a person understands the teaching of Christ and is honest, he will not make such a statement. The church of Christ is not a denomination, nor any part of any denomination! Neither is any denomination any part of the body of Christ!"

Jesus said, "*Upon this rock I will build my church*" (Matt. 16:18). The pronoun "my" indicates that the church would be "of" or "belong to" Christ. The church that Christ built is "of" and "belongs to" him! Did Jesus have any denomination in mind when he said, "*I will build my church*"? Obviously not. Jesus did not promise to build a denomination! There is no evidence that Jesus ever built a single, solitary denomination!

To what denomination did the apostles, the three thousand Jews on Pentecost, the Samaritans, the eunuch, the jailor and the Corinthians belong (or were a part of) after they obeyed the Lord's will? (See Acts 2:1-47; 8; 16:25-34; 18:8; 1 Cor. 12:13.) Were they not Christians? Were they not citizens in the kingdom (Col. 1:13-14), and members of the body of Christ which is the church? (See Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Cor. 12.) But they were not "of" and did not "belong to" any denomination! To be a member of a denomination a person must meet the requirements set forth by that denomination. To be a Christian, to be in the body of Christ which is the church, one must meet the requirements set forth by the Lord.

In the first century, the Lord added the saved to the church which was purchased with his blood. (See Acts 2:47; 20:28 and Eph. 5:25.) What about now? If a sinner hears and believes the gospel (Rom. 10:17; Mk. 16:15-16), repents of sins (Acts 2:38), confesses faith in Christ (Rom. 10:9-10), and is baptized for remission of sins in order to get into Christ (Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26-27) just like the 3,000 on Pentecost in Acts 2, the Samaritans in Acts 8:5-13, the eunuch in Acts 8:26-39, the jailor in Acts 16:22-34 and the Corinthians in Acts 18:8, will that make him a member of any denomination on earth? If so, why does it and which one? Please tell us to which denomination did the early Christians belong? Since Acts 2:47 tells us that the Lord added the saved to the church, do you think that God has changed his plan and today he adds the saved to various denominations?

All denominations exist without the authority of Christ. No denomination that exists today is the church of Christ or, in other words, the church of or that belongs to Christ. The church of Christ, i.e., the church that Jesus built, is not a denomination!

Since it is obvious from a study of the Scriptures that a person can be a Christian, live, work, worship and die in the Lord and be saved eternally without joining or even hearing of a human denomination, every denomination on earth is a non-essential, useless, and worthless institution as far as man's salvation is concerned! So why should any person who is interested in going to heaven be in one? In Matthew 15:13 Jesus said, *"Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."*

Why not put your faith in Jesus Christ? Why not obey his gospel (2 Thess. 1:7-9) that you may be saved and added to his church? (See Acts 2:47.) If you are not in the church, Christ is not your eternal Savior? (See Eph. 5:23.)

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Does the New Testament Authorize Deaconesses?

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The question under consideration in this study is one about which scholars are divided. Some do not hesitate to say that deaconesses are authorized in the New Testament. Others say that it is questionable and still others suggest that there is no authority in the New Testament for deaconesses. We cannot answer this question by appealing to scholars since scholars do not constitute New Testament authority. They are divided as to what the New Testament teaches on this subject.

We cannot settle this question by appealing to "historical evidence" because it does not constitute New Testament authority. Neither is it conclusive as to what existed in the first century relative to deaconesses.

The practice of present day churches does not constitute divine authority on this or any other subject. Neither should our preferences, likes or dislikes be considered authoritative.

In an effort to determine what is God's will relative to deaconesses, our appeal must be to the Word of God. The Scriptures are sufficient to instruct us in righteousness that we might be "*furnished completely unto every good work*" (2 Tim. 3:16-17, ASV). In the Scriptures we have "*all things that pertain unto life and godliness*" (2 Pet. 1:3). The law of liberty is "*perfect*" and by it we shall be judged in the last day (Jas. 1:25; 2:12). Only God's revelation as given in the Scriptures can produce "*faith*" in our hearts (Rom. 10:17).

The primary passage used by those who advocate deaconesses is Romans 16:1. It reads as follows:

- "*I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea*" (KJV).
- "*I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea*" (RSV).

In this passage the word diakonos appears in the Greek text and is translated "servant" in the King James Version and "deaconess" in the Revised Standard Version. It is also translated "servant" in the American Standard Version, New American Standard Version, New King James Version, New International Version and Diaglott as well as some others. Among those that translate diakonos to mean "deaconess" are the following translations: Williams, Moffatt, Macknight and Living Oracles. It also appears in the margin of the ASV as "deaconess."

The word diakonos appears in the New Testament about twenty-nine other times. It is translated "minister" twenty times, "servant" six times and "deacon" three times. Of the twenty-two translations I checked, Romans 16:1 is the only passage in which some of the translations rendered diakonos to mean "deaconess." In some other translations diakonos is translated "minister," "helper," "worker," etc. in Romans 16:1. It is obvious from this (and other evidence that could be given) that a word may have different meanings as used in different texts and contexts.

If (and this is a big if) diakonos should be translated "deaconess" in Romans 16:1, it would not necessarily follow that "deaconess" means a female "deacon" in the sense of a "deacon" as used in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Philippians 1:1. It could (and probably would) mean nothing more than a female

servant or helper. Please keep in mind that the "servants" at the marriage feast in John 2:5,9, the "ministers" (Paul and Apollos) of 1 Corinthians 3:5, the "minister" (Tychicus) of Ephesians 6:21 and Colossians 1:7, the "minister" (Timotheus) of 1 Thessalonians 3:2, the "minister" (civil ruler or rulers) of Romans 13:4, the "ministers" (false apostles) of 2 Corinthians 11:15 and the "minister" (Jesus Christ) of Romans 15:8 are translations of diakonos. Question: Would any scholar or serious student conclude that all these were "deacons" as mentioned in Philippians 1:1 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13? Surely not! Note: It is obvious that diakonos does not ordinarily mean "deacon" as used in 1 Timothy 3:9-13 and Philippians 1:1. The context (as well as the word) determines its meaning.

The fact that there is "historical evidence" that "deaconesses" in an official sense may have existed by the second or third century is not evidence from the New Testament that such are authorized.

Why I Reject Deaconesses

There are several reasons why I reject the idea that the New Testament authorizes deaconesses in an official sense. Here are some of those reasons:

1. The word diakonos that is translated "deaconess" in Romans 16:1 in the RSV (and some others?) does not usually mean "deaconess" (or "deacon"). Ordinarily it simply means a "servant" or "minister." In the case of diakonos being translated "deacon" in Philippians 1:1 and 1 Timothy 3:8-11, the context demands (or at least justifies) that such be done. Note: The context of Romans 16:1 does not demand (nor justify) that diakonos be translated "deaconess."
2. There are no specific qualifications given for deaconesses. If the New Testament does authorize deaconesses, we do not know which women should be selected and appointed to be deaconesses. Question: What "qualifications" would a woman have to meet in order to be a deaconess? Note: If someone replies by saying that deaconesses must meet the "qualifications" of 1 Timothy 3:11 and/or 1 Timothy 5:9-10, let it be observed that neither of those passages mentions nor necessarily implies deaconesses. To say these passages refer to deaconesses would be presumption. 1 Timothy 3:11 says "their wives" (ASV says "women"), and 1 Timothy 5:9-10 says "a widow." Not a word is said in either passage about deaconesses!
3. There is no mention of "deaconesses" as a class or as a group although "the bishops and deacons" are mentioned with the saints at Philippi (Phil. 1:1).
4. The feminine form of the word diakonos does not authorize an official class or order of "deaconesses" any more than the feminine form of the word presbuteros (translated elders) authorizes female elders. We have the feminine form in 1 Timothy 5:2 where it says the "elder women." One might also consider the "aged women" of Titus 2:3. Note: Women would violate the principles stated in 1 Corinthians 11:3, 1 Timothy 2:11-12, 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, etc. if they endeavored to serve as "elders" (i.e. "bishops") in view of 1 Peter 5:1-4, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 20:17,28, Hebrews 13:17, etc.

How Did Women Serve In New Testament Times?

We learn from Philippians 4:3 that certain women "labored" with Paul and others "in the gospel." It is not specifically stated what they did in such labors. Mary "bestowed much labor" on some. She worked hard (see Rom. 16:6). We are not told specifically what Mary did in such work. Mary, the mother of John Mark, provided her house "where many were gathered together praying" (Acts 12:12). Lydia provided

lodging for Paul and his companions (Acts 16:14-15). Priscilla and her husband Aquila were Paul's "*helpers in Christ Jesus*," provided their house as a meeting place and took Apollos unto them, "*and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly*" (Rom. 16:3-5; Acts 18:26). We learn from Acts 9:36-39 that Dorcas "*was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did.*" We are also told that she made "*coats and garments.*" Phebe was a servant of the church at Cenchrea. She was a succourer (helper) of Paul and many others. We do not know exactly what she did in serving and helping many (see Rom. 16:1-2). It was prophesied that some women in the last days would prophesy (Acts 2:16-21). We learn from Acts 21:9 that Philip "*had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.*"

In the first century women were taught to place emphasis on inward, rather than outward, adorning although outwardly they were to adorn themselves "*in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety*" and "*with good works.*" Their works were to be such as "*becometh women professing godliness*" (1 Pet. 3:1-6; 1 Tim. 2:9-10). They were to engage in such good works as rearing children, lodging strangers, washing the saints' feet and relieving the afflicted (1 Tim. 5:10). The aged women were to be proper examples and "*teachers of good things.*" Along with other things they were to teach young women to be sober-minded, pure, keepers (workers) at home, etc. (Tit. 2:3-5).

As women served in the first century they were to recognize man as the head of woman generally and specifically the husband was to be the head over his wife (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-25). In giving some instructions for women the apostle Paul said: "*Let the woman team in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*" The ASV says "quietness" instead of "silence" and "have doninion over" instead of "usurp authority over." In 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 in addressing the church at Corinth and all saints everywhere Paul said: "*Let your women (the women - ASV) keep silence in the churches. for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women (a woman - ASV) to speak in the church.*" Women were to learn and apply these restrictions and limitations as they endeavored to serve God.

How May Women Serve Today?

Today, women may and should worship God in the public assemblies along with men. Such passages as 1 Corinthians 14:23-35; 11:20-34; 16:2; Colossians 3:16; Acts 20:7; etc. indicate that women could be and were in the assemblies. The fact that regulations were given specifically to restrict or regulate women in the public assemblies is proof that they had a right to be in those assemblies.

Not only do women have the right (and responsibility) to worship God in the public assemblies but they may and should serve God outside the assemblies in various ways and activities.

As far as I can determine, women today may serve God in the same ways and activities (in principle) that characterized women in the New Testament times. When women prophesied as in Acts 21:9, if they did so by inspiration, although they may and should teach the inspired word of God, they can not do so now by direct inspiration. Of course, today, as back then, women must apply the restrictions and limitations that Paul gave in 1 Timothy 2:11-12 and 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 as they endeavor to teach and serve God in other ways.

Some Good Works Women May Do

Here is a list of some things that women may do without violating the restrictions imposed upon her in such passages as 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12.

1. Along with her husband (if married) she may privately expound the way of God more perfectly to preachers who know "*only the baptism of John*" (Acts 18:26).
2. Teach others one on one and teach classes of women and children in the home or in a room at the church building (Tit. 2:3-5).
3. Visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction (Jas. 1:27).
4. Provide lodging for those who preach the gospel.
5. Bake bread for the Lord's Supper and assist in caring for the communion set.
6. Write letters to teach and encourage friends, youth and others.
7. Transport the sick and elderly to the grocery store, worship assemblies and various other appointments.
8. Provide a meeting place for the church.
9. Visit and encourage and exhort other Christians.
10. Distribute tracts and other literature that teach the truth.
11. Visit and help hospital patients and shut-ins.
12. Help in bulletin preparation, printing and mailing.
13. Invite people to attend meetings of Christians. They may visit, call or write.
14. Prepare food and arrange for flowers in times of sickness and death.
15. Make contacts for others to visit and teach.

This list is by no means exhaustive, but I trust that it may at least be suggestive of some specific ways that women may serve in the Lord's church. Women certainly have the right to engage in any authorized work so long as they do not violate some scriptural principle in so doing.

I have no objection to women serving as women served in the church in New Testament times. If there is a special work to be done for which women are more suitable than men, then no one should object to women doing it. Of course, all of us should make sure that we do not encourage women to go beyond the limits God has placed upon them. Let us also be sure that we are not guilty of binding restrictions upon women that God has not bound.

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How the Holy Spirit Confirmed the Word

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When God sent Moses to Egypt to deliver the Israelites from bondage, he gave him power to perform miracles and signs. The purpose of these signs and miracles was to confirm to the Israelites and to Pharaoh that God had sent Moses on this mission (see Exod. 4:1-8,17,21,28-31). Moses spoke God's message to Pharaoh and confirmed it with signs which he did.

In the book we call the New Testament Scriptures we have God's revealed and confirmed word to produce faith in our hearts and to instruct us in righteousness (see Rom. 10:17; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). A study of how God, through (or by), the Holy Spirit revealed and confirmed his word should be of interest and concern to all of us.

Although the coming of the Messiah had been foretold by the prophets, when the Messiah (Jesus of Nazareth) came, even *"his own received him not"* (cf. Jn. 1:11). Jesus performed miracles to prove that he is indeed the Son of God. In Mark 2:1-12 Jesus forgave a man (who was sick of the palsy) of his sins when he saw the faith of those who brought the sick man to him. When some scribes (in their hearts) accused Jesus of blasphemy, he miraculously healed the palsied man that they might know that he (the Son of man) had power on earth to forgive sins. After Jesus turned water into wine in John 2 *"his disciples believed on him"* (v.11). For other miracles which Jesus did, see Matthew 4:23-24; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 13:11-17; John 11:41-46, etc. We learn from John 20:30-31 that the signs which Jesus did that are recorded are written that people *"might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing" they "might have life through his name."*

When Jesus (during his personal ministry on earth) sent the twelve disciples and later the seventy out to preach to the Israelites *"the kingdom of God"* and that *"men should repent"* (see Matt. 10:1-23; Mk. 6:7-13; Lk. 9:1-6; 10:1-20), he gave them power to perform miracles (such as healing the sick and casting out devils). The miracles which they performed could serve as "credentials" to prove that they indeed were messengers of God's Word!

Apostles Were Promised Holy Spirit Baptism

In addressing his apostles (a short time before his death) Jesus said: *"But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you,"* and *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak not of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come"* (Jn. 14:26; 16:13). Speaking to his apostles after his resurrection, Jesus said, *"But ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. . . "* and *". . . Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"* (Acts 1:5-8). Here are some of the facts we gather from the statements made by Jesus.

(1) The apostles would be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

(2) The Holy Spirit would teach the apostles *"all things."*

(3) The Holy Spirit would bring "*all things*" that Jesus had said unto them to the remembrance of the apostles.

(4) The Holy Spirit would "*guide*" the apostles "*into all truth*."

(5) The Holy Spirit would "*show*" the apostles "*things to come*."

(6) The apostles would "*receive power*" after the Holy Spirit came upon them (also cf. Lk. 24:48-49).

(7) The apostles would be "*witnesses*" of Jesus.

We learn from Mark 16:15-18 that the apostles were to go into all the world and preach the gospel and that certain "*signs*" would follow believers.

The Apostles Received Holy Spirit Baptism

In keeping with the promise that was made to the apostles in Acts 1:8 ("*Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence*"), we learn from Acts 2:4 that "*they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*." This occurred on Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2. A close study of Acts 1 and 2 will reveal that only the apostles received Holy Spirit baptism on Pentecost. Although we have no record as to when Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit as the apostles were on Pentecost, the evidence points to the face that he was so filled (see 2 Cor. 11:5; 12:12; Gal. 1:1,11-12). We learn from Acts 10 and 11 that Cornelius (and "*his kinsmen and near friends*") also received Holy Spirit baptism. This was evidence that God had also to the Gentiles "*granted repentance unto life*."

Laying On of the Apostles' Hands

After the apostles laid their hands on the seven men in Acts 6 it is specifically stated in verse 8 that "*Stephen, (one of the seven -CRS) full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people*." We learn from Acts 8:5-13 that Philip (another one of the seven) preached Christ and did "*miracles and signs*" in Samaria. The people believed the preaching and were baptized. The apostles at Jerusalem sent Peter and John to Samaria and they (Peter and John) laid their hands on the Samaritans and "*they received the Holy Ghost*." Acts 8:18-19 says, "*And when Simon saw that through the laying on the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money saying, Give me also this power that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost*." Obviously, the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit in a miraculous way. In Acts 19:6 Paul (an apostle) "*laid his hands upon them*" (12 men at Ephesus) and "*they spake with tongues and prophesied*."

Those on whom the apostles laid hands could perform signs and wonders. Some could speak "*with tongues and prophesy*" (Acts 19:6). Stephen could speak the truth "*with wisdom*" and could do "*great wonders and signs*" (Acts 6:1-10). Philip could preach Christ and do "*miracles and signs*" (Acts 8:5-13). Not all could do the same things (cf. 1 Cor. 12:28-31).

Although those on whom the apostles laid their hands and those to whom a miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit was given could speak in tongues and prophesy, speak the truth with wisdom and could do great wonders, signs and miracles, there is no evidence that any of them could impart a miraculous gift to others.

Spiritual Gifts of 1 Corinthians 12

There are nine spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians. They are: (1) The word of wisdom, (2) The word of knowledge, (3) Faith, (4) The gifts of healing, (5) The working of miracles, (6) Prophecy, (7) Discerning of spirits, (8) Kinds of tongues, and (9) The interpretation of tongues.

All who received miraculous gifts of the Spirit did not receive the same gifts. For example, all were not "*workers of miracles*." Neither did all "*speak with tongues*," nor "*interpret*" (cf. 1 Cor. 12:28-31).

The apostles (and those who received spiritual gifts) received by revelation of the Holy Spirit the truth and they confirmed the truth of the message they taught by doing wonders, miracles and signs.

In Galatians 1:11-12 and Ephesians 3:2-6 the apostle Paul stated that the gospel that he preached was revealed unto him by Jesus Christ. He stated that God's message was "*revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit*." Paul declared that he had written the message revealed to him that others might read and understand what he knew. Here are some of the wonders, miracles and signs performed in confirmation of the revelation received by inspired men. (1) The apostles and some others spoke in tongues (i.e., languages) they had not learned (cf. Mk. 16:17-20; Acts 2:4; 1 Cor. 12:6-3 1; 13; 14). (2) The sick and afflicted were healed (cf. Acts 3:1-16; 5:12-16; 8:5-7; 9:32-35; 14:8-11). (3) Elymas, an enemy of righteousness, was stricken blind (cf. Acts 13:6-12). (4) Unclean spirits were cast out (cf. Acts 5:16; 8:7). (5) The dead were raised (cf. Acts 9:36-42; 20:7-12). (6) Wonders, miracles and signs. (No doubt some of the above are included in these [cf. Acts 2:43; 5:12; 6:8; 14:3; 15:12,15-21; 2 Cor. 12:12]).

Men could not have known the things of God unless the Spirit of God had revealed them to men. The Spirit revealed the things of God to men in the first century and they preached the gospel (cf. 1 Cor. 2:9-13; 1 Pet. 1:12). The wonders, miracles and signs that were done confirmed the truth of the message. Mark 16:20 says, "*And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following*." We learn from Hebrews 2:3-4 that the "*great salvation*" first began to be spoken by the Lord "*and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will*."

The Duration of Miraculous Gifts

In 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 we have the nine spiritual gifts listed. In 1 Corinthians 14 we have regulations given to govern the use of spiritual gifts as long as they were in operation. In 1 Corinthians 13 we have the duration of spiritual gifts stated. In 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 Paul declared: "*Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease: whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away*." Please consider the following facts:

- (1) Spiritual "gifts" (prophecy, tongues and knowledge are specifically mentioned but may stand for all) were to be done away (i.e., "fall", "cease" and "vanish away").
- (2) Obviously, some inspired men knew only a part of all truth for it was not all revealed through one man or all at one time. Some of the truth was given (i.e., revealed) through some men and the rest was given through others until finally all the truth (i.e., the perfect and complete revelation) would come from God to men.

- (3) The words "when" and "then" are particles of time and point out a certain time for spiritual gifts to "be done away." Paul said it was "when" that which is perfect or complete (in contrast with the parts or fragments that they then had) is come that the miracles would cease. Some translations say "partial" or "incomplete" or "imperfect" instead of "in part" and "complete" instead of "perfect" in verse 10.
- (4) Logically, "that which is perfect" (i.e., "the complete, ") is in the same realm or is of the same nature as "that which is in part." Since "that which is in part" refers to the transmission of divine truth by revelation, the expression "that which is perfect" must also refer to the revelation of divine truth, but not in part but in whole. Therefore, "that which is perfect" refers to God's complete revelation of truth, "all truth," the entire New Testament. The thing which is "in part" is of the same nature as the whole. The truth being revealed was "in part" as a result of the spiritual gifts which were given for revelation, inspiration and confirmation. The truth being revealed in part was being contrasted with the truth in all of its parts. The partial, the incomplete, the fragmentary, the imperfect was being contrasted with the complete, the whole, the perfect!
- When all the parts were finally revealed, "that which is perfect" - the whole, the complete truth was in existence (i.e., was made known to man)! This was accomplished by the time inspired men had written the last word of the New Testament. Note: The word "perfect" is used in the New Testament to refer to God's revelation and surely it could be so used here in 1 Corinthians 13:10 to describe it (see Jas. 1:25; Rom. 12:2).
- (5) When "that which is perfect" came, then that which was "in part" no longer existed! The partial or incomplete became the whole, the complete, the perfect! Neither would the spiritual gifts which revealed and confirmed the truth continue to exist. Their purpose had been fulfilled. In fact, at that time, they ceased as the apostle said they would!

No Holy Spirit Baptism and Spiritual Gifts Today

Since the purposes of Holy Spirit baptism and spiritual gifts have been fulfilled, the need for such no longer exists. Although there had been other baptisms, when Paul penned Ephesians 4:5 he said there is "*one baptism*." By this time Holy Spirit baptism was no longer being received by anyone although water baptism continued to be in effect and would continue as long as men are lost and thus need to be saved (see Mk. 16:15-16; Matt. 28:18-20).

Today, we have a complete revelation that was confirmed by miracles and signs that were done in the first century (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Jas. 1:25; 2:12; Gal. 3:15). There is no need for nor is there any evidence that anyone today is being baptized with the Holy Spirit or receiving any spiritual gifts. Those things ceased by the time the last apostle and those upon whom the apostles laid their hands died.

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What is Our Standard of Authority?

Carrol R. Sutton

In every phase of human activity, we constantly see the need for recognizing a standard of authority. In time, weights, and measures, we accept certain standards. Otherwise, there would be confusion. Our honesty and sincerity is not sufficient when it comes to determining the time of day or how much we should pay or receive for an undetermined amount of merchandise. We do not insist on our watches being the standard, but instead, we set our watches by that which is recognized as the standard. When our watches show a variation in time, we do not argue that "one watch is as good as another." Neither do we insist that our watches are right because we are sincere. The difference in the time shown by our watches can easily be solved by each one of us accepting a common authoritative standard. This same principle, when applied, will certainly solve our differences in the realm of religious activity. If we are ever united religiously, it will be because we have accepted and obeyed the same rule or standard as being authoritative.

What About the Law of Moses?

God gave a law to Israel by Moses. (Jno. 1:17; Deut. 5:1-15). It was provisional and temporary. (See Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:6-13; Gal. 3:19). It was to serve as a schoolmaster to bring the Israelites to Christ (Gal. 3:24), but it was not intended to be the criterion for people in this last dispensation. Jesus came to fulfill the law. (Matt. 5:17, 18). The law was nailed to the cross, and the Israelites thus became dead to the law by the body of Christ. (See, Col. 2:14-17; Rom. 7:4-7). God gave the sabbath command because Israel was a servant in the land of Egypt and was delivered by God's hand. (Deut. 5:15). We are not Israelites who were in Egyptian bondage. Therefore God never gave the law of Moses to us. I believe every word found in the Old Testament, but I do not accept it as being our standard to govern us today. We are to use it for learning and admonition, but not as law. (See Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10: 11).

What About Human Wisdom and Reasoning?

Many people idolize human wisdom and reason. They accept nothing in spiritual matters unless to them, it is rational. Thus in many instances, they set aside divine revelation. Each person becomes a standard within himself. Hence, no common standard or ground of agreement is possible. Isaiah 55:8,9 says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." The thoughts of these verses should make us afraid to enthrone human reason and wisdom. In 1 Corinthians 1:18-21, the apostle Paul said, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the

power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." We cannot accept human wisdom and divine revelation at the same time. Paul said, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." (Rom. 1:22). Solomon stated, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. 14:12). Human wisdom cannot be accepted as a standard of authority if we truly desire eternal salvation.

What About the Majority?

What the majority of people say in some matters should be accepted, but such is not the case in spiritual matters. Even under the law of Moses, God said, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." (Exo. 23:2). In Matthew 7:13,14 Jesus said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." The idea that "since everybody is doing it, therefore it is right" is certainly foreign to the teaching of the New Testament. The majority is not the standard in spiritual matters.

What About Conscience?

The conscience does not constitute an authoritative standard because a person may have a good conscience while engaging in sin. Paul said in Acts 23:1, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." He further states in Acts 26:9 that he "verily thought" within himself that he "ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." We learn from other passages that during the time that he had a good conscience, he was guilty of being exceedingly mad against Christians, and of being a blasphemer, and a persecutor and injurious. (See Acts 26:10,11; 1 Tim. 1:13). Let us not think that the conscience is the standard!

What Is Our Standard?

We learn from Hebrews. 1:1,2 that in these last days, God hath spoken unto us by His Son. The words of Jesus Christ are spirit and life (Jno. 6:63). His gospel is God's power to save us. (Rom. 1:16). He took away the first testament that He might establish the second. (Heb. 10:9,10). Since Jesus Christ is the head of the church and has all authority but in heaven and earth, (Matt. 28:18), obviously, His Word must be accepted as the rule or standard. His teaching constitutes a "perfect law of liberty" (Jas. 1:25).

Are you willing to accept it? Do you believe what it says about how to be saved? (Consider Mk. 16:15,16; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26,27). Have you obeyed the Lord's Will? Do

you believe what Christ's Testament says about the church? (Consider Acts 20: 18; 2:47; Eph. 5:23-27). Do you believe what it says about what name we are to wear? (See Acts 4:12; 11:26; 1 Pet. 4:16). Do you believe what it says about how to worship? (Jno. 4:24; Acts 2:42; 20:7; Eph. 5:19; 1 Cor. 16:2). Do you believe what it says about how to live? (Titus 2:11,12; Rom. 12:1,2). There can be unity if we all accept the same thing as our standard and follow it! Otherwise, there will be confusion and division!

Whether we accept Christ's Word as authoritative or not, it will judge us in the last day! (Jno. 12:48).

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To Whom Were They Speaking?

Carrol R. Sutton

In Acts 16:31 when Paul and Silas said: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house, they were speaking to an unbeliever, the jailor at Philippi. (Acts 16:12). In Acts 2:38 when Peter said: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, ... "he was speaking to believers in Jerusalem. (Acts 2:36-37).

In Acts 22:16 when Ananias said: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," he was talking to a penitent believer, Saul of Tarsus. (Acts 9:4-18; 22:3-16).

In each of the above cases, each person was told what he needed to know at that particular time. To have the proper concept, we must accept the sum of God's Word.

What is Sin?
Carrol R. Sutton

There are four passages in the New Testament that state specifically what sin is. Let us Consider them.

1. **ROMANS 14:23** says: "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

2. **JAMES 4:17** says: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

3. **1 JOHN 3:4** says: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

4. **1 JOHN 5:17** says: "All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."

Concerning sin, CRUDEN'S CONCORDANCE says, "*Sin is any thought, word, action, omission, or desire, contrary to the law of God. Sin is any want of conformity to or transgression of the law, 1 John 3:4.*"

God is Unchangeable

Carrol R. Sutton

Daily we witness changes around us in both the plant and animal kingdoms. We also witness weather changes, which in turn produce changes in temperatures, As these changes take place, it becomes necessary for us to make changes in our eating, sleeping, working and playing habits as well as in our dress. Changes in styles and fashions and models are occurring frequently. It is interesting to note that most people are fickle. Certainly, men should change from sin to righteousness, but very often men change from right to wrong; from truth to error. Changes are often produced by gossip, lies, and false doctrines.

In Malachi 3:6, we read: "For I am the Lord, I change not. . . ." Although man is subject to change, we are assured that God is unchangeable. This does not mean that God's will for man is the same today that it was under the Mosaic age. In fact, we learn from Hebrews 7:12 that the priesthood was changed, and "there is made also of necessity a change of the law." We are now under the New Testament. (See 1 Cor. 9:21; Heb. 9:16- 17; 10:9-10; Jno. 12:48),

God is unchangeable in Character. He cannot be tempted with evil. He is holy. The Psalmist said: "Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy."

A VERSE BY VERSE

ARTICLE 10 OF 10 **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 delivered 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 *προφητευσεν*, *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, "*having his head covered*,"

" <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-CONFRATERNITY 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 strive."* 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 bridled 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)