

## GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

To be saved from past sins, God requires the following steps:

- 1) **Belief** in Christ as the only begotten Son of God (Jn. 3:16).
- 2) **Repentance** of sins ("turning away from") (Acts 17:30).
- 3) **Verbal Confession** of faith in Christ (Rom. 10:10).
- 4) **Baptism** (immersion) into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

### Acts 2:38

38 Then Peter said to them, "**Repent**, and let every one of you be **baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

### Acts 22:16

16 'And now why are you waiting? Arise and be **baptized**, and **wash away your sins**, calling on the name of the Lord.'

### Romans 6:3-4

3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were **baptized into Christ Jesus** were **baptized into His death**?

4 Therefore we were **buried with Him through baptism into death**, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Baptism is the "*point in time*" that God applies the blood of Christ to the sinner's life. The sinner is baptized into the death of Christ (Rom. 6:3-4). Sinners were never told to "*pray the sinner's prayer*" as is commonly believed today (see Jn. 9:31). Only Christians have the privilege of praying for forgiveness of sins (1 Jn. 1:9; 2:1 – notice these verses were written to Christians, not sinners). Those who have not been baptized correctly must be rebaptized (see Acts 19:1-5) in order to be saved (1 Pet. 3:20-21).

While it *may* be true that the "thief on the cross" was never baptized (perhaps he may have been—see Mt. 3:5), it must be remembered he was saved while the Old Testament law was still in force (Heb. 9:16-17). After the Lord's death and resurrection a New Testament came into force (Heb. 8:6-13). This new law (Heb. 7:12) requires a "new birth" in water (Jn. 3:5; 1 Pet. 3:20-21). The Lord's requirement of baptism "*for the remission of sins*" came after His death and resurrection (Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38).

After baptism, we must continue in "*all things*" which the Lord "commanded" (Mt. 28:20). We must be careful "*lest we fall*" (1 Cor. 10:12). Even saved Christians can "*fall away*" (Gal. 5:4), have their name removed from the "*book of life*" (Rev. 22:19), and suffer a worse fate than "*death without mercy*" (Heb. 10:26-29). Christians must "*make their calling and election sure*" by "*giving all diligence*" (2 Pet. 1:5-11).

# 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

## (A Very Simple Study)

(by George Battey)

*"Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering."* (1 Corinthians 11:14-15)

- *Do the teachings of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 apply today, or was this passage merely regulating a first century custom ?*
- *How long does a man's hair have to be before it is too long?*
- *How long does a woman's hair have to be in order to please God?*
- *Does a woman have to wear an artificial veil in worship services?*
- *Doesn't verse 1 Corinthians 11:16 teach us to simply "forget it all" if someone is going to argue about things?*
- *What does "because of the angels" mean in verse 10?*
- *Do these instructions apply to just married women, or do they apply to all Christian women?*

These and other questions are explored in this booklet.

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# 1 Cor 11:2-16

## *(A Very Simple Study)*

(by George Battey)

This is a simplified study concerning 1 Cor 11:2-16. There are other studies which are more detailed, but the purpose of this study is to present a short, concise study of this important passage. Unless otherwise indicated, Bible passages are taken from the New King James Version of the Bible.

First, read the passage:

<sup>2</sup> Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you. <sup>3</sup> But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. <sup>4</sup> Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. <sup>5</sup> But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. <sup>6</sup> For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. <sup>7</sup> For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. <sup>8</sup> For man is not from woman, but woman from man. <sup>9</sup> Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. <sup>10</sup> For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.

<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. <sup>12</sup> For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are

from God. <sup>13</sup> Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? <sup>14</sup> Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? <sup>15</sup> But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. <sup>16</sup> But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.

## CONCLUSION

Please think carefully about this passage. Each Christian should try his or her very best to do what the Holy Spirit instructed, because this affects one's prayer life.

As a closing thought, every woman should be careful about not "transgressing the word of God by your tradition" (Mt 15:3). Some sisters claim they never use scissors to cut their hair, yet their hair is perfectly even across the bottom. They have bangs hanging across their foreheads that appear perfectly trimmed. Yet, these sisters say they have never "cut" their hair. And they are technically correct. They did not cut their hair; they burned it off with curling irons and hot rollers and chemicals. Each one guilty needs to think carefully about whether they wish to stand before God in judgment and make the argument, "I have never cut my hair just like You said." The word of God cannot be set aside without penalty (Mt 15:9).

Consider three important questions relative to this passage:

### **QUESTION #1: Does this passage apply today?**

Many feel this passage is discussing first century customs that no longer apply. However, the arguments presented in this passage are not based on first century customs nor customs which apply only to the Corinthian congregation. The apostle Paul uses timeless arguments that apply to all churches throughout all ages. Verse 3 begins with the divine order of authority. Verses 7-9 discuss the divine order of creation. Verse 10 brings up an argument based on the angels in heaven. Verses 13-15 appeal to the natural sense of what is right and wrong. Nothing in the context indicates local, first century customs are being discussed.

Furthermore, Paul had previously written, "I have sent Timothy to you ... who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church" (1 Cor 4:17). What Paul taught to the Corinthians, he taught "everywhere in every church." Verse 16 has caused some to disagree with this conclusion, but that verse will be noticed in due time. (It actually does not disagree.)

### **QUESTION #2: Is this text discussing an artificial veil that women must wear when attending a worship service?**

It is an inference that a worship service is under consideration, but there is a difference between an *inference* and a *necessary inference*. An inference is a mere conclusion that a person draws. It may be true; it may not be true. A necessary inference is an

## VERSE 16

**But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.**

Some mistakenly think verse 16 means: "If anyone is going to argue about this, then forget everything I just wrote ... we do not want to have an argument about any of this." If this is the meaning of the verse, then this is the only time in the entire Bible where God told people what to do and then backed off if it ended up causing an argument. Obviously there is another meaning to verse 16. Other translations help with the meaning. Notice the following three translations:

### NIV

16 If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have **no other practice** – nor do the churches of God.

### NASV

16 But if one is inclined to be contentious, we have **no other practice**, nor have the churches of God.

### RSV

16 If any one is disposed to be contentious, we recognize **no other practice**, nor do the churches of God.

These are common translations. Paul, inspired by the Spirit of God, said to simply tell the contentious person that the church has *no other custom* than men with short, cut hair and women covered with uncut hair. There will be no argument. There will be no further discussion. This is the practice of God's people and the case is closed.

Notice again, this is not some local custom, but something "all the churches of God" observed. If we today claim to be the "church of God," this is what we will practice.

inescapable conclusion which one is forced to draw. The idea that 1 Cor 11:2-16 is dealing with a worship service is a mere inference. It is not a necessary inference. In fact, there is good reason to believe this does not deal exclusively with a worship service.

Notice verse 5: "Every woman who *prays* or *prophesies* with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved." A woman can and should pray silently during a worship service, but a woman is strictly forbidden from prophesying (teaching) in a worship service. "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church" (1 Cor 14:34-35).

The answer to Question #2 is: No, 1 Cor 11:2-16 is not speaking about an artificial veil which women must wear when attending worship services. The woman must wear a covering whenever she prays or whenever she prophesies (teaches). The woman can pray in worship services or in private, but she can teach only privately, outside the worship services of the church. Therefore, this passage envisions both worship and non-worship occasions. Whenever and wherever a woman prays or teaches, she must be covered. Simply put, the woman must be covered at all times in order to be constantly prepared to pray or teach.

**QUESTION #3: If the covering is not an artificial veil worn during worship services, then what is the covering under consideration?**

Determining the answer to this question will help explain the entire chapter. The answer is so plain, direct and simple that it is truly amazing anyone could draw the wrong conclusion. Notice carefully: "Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for **her hair is given to her for a covering**" (verses 14-15). Verse 15 has the key to understanding the passage. The covering is not an artificial veil. It is the

woman's hair. Since the hair is the covering, the woman cannot remove her hair. If she removed her hair, she would actually be removing her covering. It is that simple.

In the form of a logical argument, the reasoning looks like this:

- If the woman's hair is her covering, then in order to be covered in the sight of God, the woman must not remove her hair.
- The woman's hair is her covering (v15).
- Therefore, to be covered in the sight of God, the woman must not remove her hair.

This is a valid and logically formed argument. It explains why, according to scripture, a woman must not cut her hair – because "her hair is given to her for a covering."

The answers to the three important questions reveal the following important conclusions:

- This passage is not limited to the first century nor to Corinth only.
- This passage is not speaking of just a worship service; it speaks to the every-day Christian life.
- Because this passage speaks to every-day-life, it is not speaking about an artificial veil worn only during a worship service.
- The hair is specifically mentioned as the covering.
- Since the hair is the covering and since the woman must constantly be ready to pray or teach, she must not ever remove her hair. Simply put, a Christian woman must never remove (cut) her hair.

This is a very practical and needed study. This explains what sisters must do if they want God to hear their prayers. If a sister does not follow the instructions given, she is not permitted to pray and ask forgiveness. Nor is the woman permitted to pray for any

"kept not their proper domain." The bad angels rebelled and attempted to gain a place of authority that did not belong to them. They were cast out of heaven and "reserved for judgment." Christian women must not rebel against the authority placed over them. They must have a symbol upon their head showing they respect their head of authority that God has placed over them.

### VERSES 13-15

**Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering.**

First, verse 13 appeals to the Christians' natural sense of right and wrong. "Natural law" means law that does not require special revelation. The contrast is "positive law." Positive law means law that does require special revelation. Christians do not need special revelation from God in order to know that men should have their hair cut off short so that it does not hang off their head (verse 4) and women should allow their hair to keep on growing.

Second, the covering itself is actually and finally named. Until verses 14 and 15 hair has been implied in such words as "shave" and "shear." The average reader should be able to know before reaching verses 14 and 15 that the covering under consideration is not some artificial veil, but rather hair. However, if the reader missed the point, verses 14 and 15 clarify beyond all doubt what the covering is. The covering is the hair. That covering must not be removed.

Question: How can one know for sure that it is shameful for a woman to uncover her head? (After all, it does not appear to be shameful today.) The answer is: It is shameful because God said it is shameful. This alone should settle the matter for Christians.

### VERSE 7-12

**For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God.**

None of these verses have first century customs mentioned. All of the reasoning is built upon timeless truths – truths that hold true for all Christians in all ages.

Verse 10 appeals to the angels – the woman should "have a symbol of authority on her head because of the angels." The Holy Spirit indicated that long ago there was a rebellion in heaven. Some good angels turned bad. They "did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode" (Jude 6) and were "cast down to hell and delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment" (2 Pet 2:4). The Holy Spirit appeals to these events to instruct women about showing respect for authority.

On the one hand, women can learn from the good angels who "kept their proper domain." The good angels kept their place of submission. Christian women, likewise, ought to have long hair to demonstrate their willingness to stay in a place of submission (like the good angels).

On the other hand, women can learn from the bad angels who

other reason – for help during times of trouble, for health during times of sickness, etc.

This passage also explains what brethren must do if they want God to hear their prayers. If a brother does not follow the instructions given, he is not permitted to pray and ask forgiveness any more than a sister who would disregard these instructions.

Should a brother or sister be guilty of violating the instructions given, the same steps must be taken as when any sin is committed: (a) repent (stop committing the sin), (b) confess (admit having done wrong), (c) pray for forgiveness. These steps may seem like a contradiction: If the Christian does not follow the instructions of 1 Cor 11 they cannot pray; but to receive forgiveness they must pray. Yet this is not contradictory. The key ingredients are (a) repent and (b) confess. Without those important ingredients, it is useless to pray. Repentance for the woman means she stops cutting her hair. Repentance for the man means he gets his hair cut off.

### VERSE-BY-VERSE STUDY

Having examined the three preliminary questions, look closely at the passage verse by verse. Consider what each verse in context is saying.

### VERSE 2

**Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.**

Here are "traditions." There are human traditions that are bad (Mt 15:9) and there are divine traditions which are good and which Christians are expected to keep. Divine traditions were handed down by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Christians are commanded to keep divine traditions: "Therefore, brethren, stand

fast and *hold the traditions* which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle" (2 Th 2:15). Paul compliments the Corinthians in verse 2 because they were keeping the divine traditions given to them.

### VERSE 3

**But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.**

The word "head" in this verse means "spiritual leader." This verse gives the order of authority recognized by heaven since the beginning of time. Here is the divine chain-of-command.

**God**  
**Christ**  
**Man**  
**Woman**

Paul is going to build his case upon this divine order of authority. It is a serious mistake, then, to assume that Paul is teaching simply about local customs.

First, God is the head (spiritual leader) of Christ. Notice that no one is the head of God. He answers to no one. "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, 'What have You done?'" (Dan 4:35)

Second, Christ is the head (spiritual leader) of man. "Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.'" (Mt 28:18). If Christ has been given authority over all men, where did He get this authority? Who gave it to Him? "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father." (Mt 11:27).

Third, Man is the head (spiritual leader) of woman. As unpopular as this idea is, it is nonetheless the Biblical view.

### A PERSONAL ILLUSTRATION

My oldest daughter, Jodie, frequently went to the library growing up. One afternoon, when she was checking out some books, a group of women and girls gathered around Jodie admiring her long hair. They stood there in awe. They were amazed. Jodie's hair was long enough to sit on. Her hair reached to the back of her knees. This group of admirers began to ask, "How did you get your hair so long?" Jodie told them, "I have never cut it." Suddenly the most amazing thing happened. These onlookers, who were amazed at Jodie's long hair, who did not know how her hair was so long, who had to ask, "How did you get your hair so long?" suddenly they became experts giving out free advice. They began to tell Jodie, "If you will trim the ends a little, it will grow longer."

This amazed me. These women and girls, who have hair as short as space aliens, are now telling my daughter, who can sit on her hair, how to have long hair. Furthermore, they were trying to tell my daughter that the secret to long hair was a pair of scissors! That defies logic. The secret to short hair is scissors and razors. The secret of long hair is, "let the hair grow."

### VERSE 6

**For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered.**

A woman who is not covered might as well be "shorn" or "shaved." To "shear" means to cut the hair with an instrument that has two cutting blades. (Look up "shears" in a dictionary.) To "shave" means to cut the hair with an instrument that has one cutting edge.

The Holy Spirit said, "If it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered." The point is: It is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved. Therefore, she must be covered; she must let her hair grow.

### Ezekiel 44:20

[The priests] shall neither **shave** their heads nor **let their hair grow long**; but they shall keep their hair **well trimmed**.

Here are three possibilities:

- Shave the head.
- Trim the hair.
- Let the hair grow long.

These priests could not "let their hair grow long." What did they have to do to keep it from growing long? They were specifically told not to shave their hair off. This left only one option: They trimmed their hair.

Christian women, likewise, have three options:

- They could shave their heads.
- They could trim their hair.
- They could let their hair grow long.

The Holy Spirit gave specific instructions as to which option the woman should choose:

### 1 Corinthians 11:6

If a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be **shorn** or **shaved**, let her be **covered**.

Notice the three possibilities: shorn, shaved, covered. The woman is specifically told not to shear or shave her hair. She is to be covered. Covered with what? Covered with hair that "keeps on growing" – hair that is not cut with shears or a razor.

"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything." (Eph 5:22-24). "Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression." (1 Tim 2:11-14).

### VERSES 4-5

**Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved.**

When the word "prophesy" is used, many immediately think of "foretelling the future." Actually "prophesy" can mean either (a) foretell or (b) forthtell. Very often OT prophets were merely forth-telling the word of God – reminding the people of their duties which had already been revealed in the Law of Moses. In Bible days prophesying was done miraculously by inspired prophets because the Bible was not completed. It was in the process of being written, but was not completely finished in those days. Today, uninspired teachers of the word do the same thing the prophets do: they forth-tell the word of God – reminding people of their duties which have already been revealed in written scripture.

Notice what Peter wrote: "There were also *false prophets* among the people, even as there will be *false teachers* among you," (2 Pet 2:1). Peter is equating false prophets with false teachers. Both do the same thing. One (the false prophet) claims to be delivering a message directly from God; the other (the false teacher) claims to be delivering a message from the written instructions of God. A true prophet actually did what the false prophet was claiming to do. A true teacher actually does what the

false teacher claims to do. Also, the true teacher accomplishes the same thing the true prophet does. The true teacher teaches the same doctrine the true prophet does. The true teacher reveals the same future events that the true prophet reveals (the second coming of Christ, the end of the world, Judgment Day, etc.). The only difference between the true prophet and the true teacher is: The true teacher must study first (1 Tim 4:13-14); the true prophet did not have to study first (Mk 13:11).

Even though the miraculous gift of prophecy ended at the close of the apostolic era (1 Cor 13:8-10), true teachers of God continue. Every man praying or prophesying (teaching) with his (physical) head covered dishonors his head of authority (Christ). Every woman praying or prophesying (teaching) with her (physical) head uncovered dishonors her head of authority (man).

These verses speak to every man – young, old, married, unmarried. These verses speak to every man praying, even if he never prophesies. These verses also speak to every woman – young, old, married, unmarried. These verses speak to every woman praying, even if she never prophesies.

This is very important! God is the avenger of those who refuse to show respect to the head of authority over them. Aaron and Miriam spoke against Moses after God put Moses in authority. They were punished for not respecting this authority (Num. 12:10). Korah, Dathan, and Abiram dishonored Moses and were punished (Num. 16:24-33).

Christians need to learn a lesson from these stories. It is a serious thing to dishonor a head of authority. God does not let disrespect pass unpunished. Whether one thinks it is disrespectful or not, the Holy Spirit said it is a dishonor for a Christian man to pray or teach with his physical head covered. This shows disrespect for his head of authority (Christ). The Holy Spirit also said it is a dishonor for a Christian woman to pray or teach with her physical head uncovered. This shows disrespect for her head of authority (man).

### COVERED WITH WHAT?

For clarification and emphasis, recall what has already been

Samson was supposed to "let his hair grow" (Num 6:5). Judges 13:5 confirms what Num 6:5 said: "let the hair grow" means "no razor shall come upon his head." Just like a Christian woman who is not supposed to cut her hair, Samson was not supposed to cut his hair.

Eventually Samson fell in love with Delilah and she betrayed him. "Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him." (Judges 16:19). Now watch what happens:

### Judges 16:21-22

Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison. However, **the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven.**

God was more concerned with what Samson was doing (verb) than with what he was possessing (noun). In other words, God was not so concerned about how many inches long Samson's hair was. What mattered to God was that Samson began to "let his hair grow" after it was cut off.

When women "keep on letting their hair grow," that is something they do. When God uses verbs, He is showing that what women do is more important than what they possess (nouns). In other words, as in the case of Samson, God is not so concerned about how many inches long a woman's hair is. What matters to God is what the woman does with the hair she has. "Her hair is given to her for a covering" (1 Cor 11:15). Now she must do something with that hair: "let it grow"; "keep on growing the hair"; "do not touch it with a razor."

### OT PRIESTS

There is one more significant passage pertaining to the subject of hair. The OT gave specific instructions to priests about how to wear their hair:

### Numbers 6:5

5 'All the days of the vow of his separation **no razor shall come upon his head**; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the LORD, he shall be holy. Then **he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow**.

The significant words of this verse are in bold print to show that "let the hair grow" means "no razor shall come upon his head." Therefore, when the Holy Spirit wrote 1 Cor 11:15, He was telling the Christian woman to not cut her hair because her hair has been given to her to serve as a covering when she prays or when she teaches. She shows submission to her head of authority by having her head covered with uncut hair.

### SAMSON

Consider the case of Samson. His story is told in the OT book of Judges.

### Judges 13:1-5

Again the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

Now there was a certain man from Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and had no children. And the Angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Indeed now, you are barren and have borne no children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. Now therefore, please be careful not to drink wine or similar drink, and not to eat anything unclean. For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And **no razor shall come upon his head**, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines."

learned from preliminary Question #3: **If the covering is not an artificial veil worn during worship services, then what is the covering under consideration?** Suppose the answer to this question was not known. Suppose a Christian has started reading 1 Cor 11 and has read through the first five verses and is beginning to wonder: What is the covering that a woman must have, but the man must not have? Whatever it is, verses 4 and 5 indicate it has to do with the hair, because those verses speak of cutting the hair or shaving off the hair. So the reader has some indication at this point that hair is involved. Furthermore, whatever the covering is, if a man has it on his physical head, he brings shame and dishonor upon himself. On the other hand, if a woman has this covering on her physical head, she brings glory to herself. Is there any thing mentioned in this entire passage that brings shame to the man if he has it, but glory to the woman if she has it? The answer is found in verses 14-15: "Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering."

- Question: What shames and dishonors a man if he has it on his physical head?

Answer: "If a man has long hair it is a dishonor to him" (verse 14).

- Question: What gives glory to a woman if she has it on her physical head?

Answer: "If a woman has long hair it is a glory to her" (verse 15).

### GRAMMAR

(Yuck!)

Now comes the hardest and most boring part of this study: Grammar. Grammar is dull and boring. No one seems to remember any grammar from school. Yet grammar is important and has a place in a study like this. Hopefully this short section

on grammar will be easy to understand and helpful.

The three words "have long hair" are found in verse 14 and they are found again in verse 15. Believe it or not, those three words are translated from the single Greek word **κομῶ**. This Greek word is a verb. Verbs describe action. Here are four Greek dictionaries defining this verb:

- Thayer: "to let the hair **grow**, have long hair" (p. 354).
- Arndt & Gingrich: "to let one's hair **grow** long" (p. 443).
- W. E. Vine: "to let the hair **grow** long, to wear long hair" (p. 189).
- Louw & Nida: "to wear long hair as part of one's attire – 'to have long hair, to appear with long hair, to wear long hair,' ... **In a number of languages it may be necessary to translate κομῶ as 'to let one's hair grow long' or 'not to cut one's hair.'**" (p. 527).

Notice the action words: "grow," "wear," "have," "not to cut." These are things people either do or do not do. God is not so much concerned about something a woman possesses. He is more concerned about what women do. This is why He used a verb to tell the woman what to do.

The Greek verb **κομῶ** is in the present tense and subjunctive mood. That is technical, but it simply means the verb is stressing continuous action. Literally translated, verse 15 is saying: "If a woman *keeps on growing* her hair long, it is a glory to her."

To illustrate continuous action, consider the following two passages. In Mt 5:28 Jesus said, "Whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery." Jesus was not discussing a fleeting thought that pops into a man's head when he is driving down the road and sees a pretty woman. The verb "looks" is present tense and is stressing continuous action. Jesus was literally saying, "Whoever keeps on looking at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery." Jesus is discussing staring and continuous fantasizing. In Lk 6:31 Jesus said, "Just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them." The verb here

is "do." This verb is also present tense and also stresses continuous action. What Jesus means is, "Just as you want men to do to you, you also must keep on doing to them." A Christian has not done his duty by once in his lifetime treating someone nice. He must "keep on doing" nice things.

The application is this: 1 Cor 11:15 is literally saying, "If a woman keeps on growing her hair long, it is a glory to her." She must "keep on" doing this. She may not momentarily stop and get some of her hair cut off.

Men are not to "have long hair." They must not "let their hair grow." They must get their hair cut. In fact, men must have their hair cut so short that it does not "hang down from the head" (the literal translation of verse 4). Women are to "have long hair." They must "let their hair grow."

## THE BIBLE AND "LET THE HAIR GROW"

It is time to review. Here are six important points covered thus far:

- The three words "have long hair" are translated from the single Greek word **κομῶ**.
- This Greek word is a verb.
- Verbs describe action.
- This action word is defined by Greek dictionaries as "let the hair grow."
- The present tense of this word means, "let the hair *keep on growing*."
- One dictionary (Louw & Nida) says this present tense verb means, "not to cut one's hair."

In order to verify that "let the hair grow" means to "not cut one's hair," consider the following scripture: