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# BIBLE TALK

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This week the question is: **What does the Bible say about short haired women and long haired men?**

## **1 Corinthians 11:3-5**

<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.

Let's stop here for a moment and notice what this means.

V3 says the *"head of woman is man."* This is unpopular today, but it's what the Bible says and the Bible still says it. If you are concerned about the Bible and what God has said, then man is the head of woman. That means the man has authority over the woman.

V3 also says the *"head of man is Christ."* This means Christ has authority over man, but unlike the woman, there is no other human who has natural authority over a man.

V4 says if a man prays or preaches with his physical head covered, he brings shame and dishonor on his head of authority. Since Christ is the man's head of authority, it means when a man prays or preaches with his head covered, this man is bringing shame on Jesus Christ.

This is a serious matter.

We are not told yet in this verse what the covering is. We will learn this in a moment.

V5 says if a woman prays or teaches with her physical head uncovered, she brings shame and dishonor on her head of authority. Since man is the head of authority over the woman, it means when a woman prays or teaches scripture with her head uncovered, she is bring shame on the man.

This is a serious matter. God holds women responsible for shaming their head of authority.

We are not told yet in this verse what the covering is. Let's keep reading and discover what the covering is.

### **1 Corinthians 11:14-15**

<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.

We learn from these two verses that the covering under consideration is not an artificial veil, but rather the hair of the head.

By taking v4 and v14 together we now learn that if a man has hair long enough to hang down from his head (the meaning of the original Greek), the man is shaming Christ and himself.

By taking v5 and v15 together we also learn that if a woman has long hair, she honors the man and brings glory to herself.

So ... the Bible is teaching that men must have their hair cut short enough that it does not hang down from their heads. Likewise, women must let their hair grow (the meaning of the original Greek).

## **LET THE HAIR GROW**

**Q:** When v15 tells women to "let the hair grow," what does that mean?

To answer this question, look at what the Bible says concerning Nazarites in the OT:

### **Numbers 6:5**

<sup>5</sup> '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.**

Here the Nazarite is told to “let the locks of the hair of his head grow.” This means, “no razor shall come upon his head.” To “let the hair grow” means to not cut the hair at all.

Therefore, when a Christian woman is told to let her hair grow in 1 Cor 11:15, it literally means she is not to cut her hair at all. She may not even trim the dead ends off. She may not trim her bangs. Let’s read vv5-6 again ... now that we know what the covering is and what the woman is suppose to do:

### **1 Corinthians 11:5-6**

<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.

This verse simply means: If a woman does not allow her hair to grow completely uncut, she dishonors herself and her head of authority. If she is going to uncover her head at all by trimming even a little, she might as well shear her hair off to the scalp or shave her head.

For a woman to shave her head in those days was a tremendous shame. To have her hair sheared off close to the scalp was also a great shame. The apostle Paul is here instructing Christian women not to shame themselves nor the man by cutting their hair. Christian women must not cut their hair at all.

## **VERSE 16**

Now let’s look at v16:

### **1 Corinthians 11:16**

<sup>16</sup> But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.

Some people interpret this to mean: If someone is going to argue about what I have just written, then forget it. Don’t worry about anything I said.

This is an absurd interpretation of v16. The apostles never gave commandments to anyone only to say, "If someone gets upset, I didn't mean what I just wrote."

V16 simply means: If someone wants to argue and be contentious about what I have just written, then simply inform that person that God's people and God's churches have no other custom than men with short hair and women with long, uncut hair.

In other words, don't argue with them about the matter.

Simply inform the contentious person: This is simply the way it is. The men are going to have short hair and the women are going to let their hair grow – which biblically means to not touch the hair with a razor (Num 6:5).

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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