

Now Paul continues his lesson for the “deep thinkers” among the Corinthian believers who were questioning the distinguishing gender roles God has ordained from the beginning. Instead of human tradition or custom, all of his instruction is founded upon the **created order** revealed in Genesis (“so says the Law”) or from commonly known “facts of life.” Two provoking attention getting thoughts he introduces just add credence to his argument. One, the angels are watching! Two, even nature teaches a discerning heart what hair length suits each gender. The Corinthians in their natural reasoning and self exaltation had drifted away from these two basic realities. Even today we easily think our own thoughts and reason that hair length is not only not important but it is a person’s own business. Even as believers we tend to lose touch with our own God created human nature and lose touch with the Creator’s revealed mind for us. He uses Paul to gently remind us of what we ought to know instinctively regarding gender appropriate hair length and head covering.

Paul reminds us of the proximity of the invisible angelic host, onlookers. They not only are rejoicing in the salvation of one sinner but are delighting to see the **return** of that one to the God given gender role. These angels are those who remained faithful to God when Satan rebelled. Other angels, now known as demons, fell with him. When man sinned in the garden through disobedience Eve ignored her God given role and preempted Adam. Adam acquiesced in her having usurped his place as head and accepted her offer leading him to sin as well. BUT Christ’s death on the cross has conquered Satan and the dominion of sin and redeemed us to Him to obey and serve Him. He has regained for us the position Adam and Eve lost in their disobedience. Now we return to God to learn and carry forward the order He created originally. We gladly array ourselves in our gender specific order of headship, cover and uncover our heads in a gender specific way when praying or prophesying, and wear our hair an appropriate length suited to our gender. These are signs of the delivering victory of the His cross.

The **angels** see and rejoice while the **demons** see and fume. (Remember the demons, referred to in chapter 10, behind the idols to which the pagans sacrifice.) The **people** that see us behaving this way have a witness of how things should really be. They should see how well the assembly, our marriages and our households function in a loving atmosphere because we have adopted God’s created order. Best of all, **God sees and is glorified and refreshed.** Seeing this order, alive today, is a token for **Him**, a wonderful foretaste of the glorious order that will

be established in the thousand year reign of Christ. And after that, this same created order will be seen perfectly, voluntarily, eternally in the New Earth. But **we** have been given the privilege of carrying it out even **now**, in the midst of the selfish and rebellious age we live in. Let’s **LIVE** to glorify God! And **LIVE** to bless others. **LIVE** the best way possible, **in God’s given order!**

In verses 9-11, Paul reviews the created order of the man and the woman. Note:

- the reason God gives for the creation of the woman (for the man);
- the source of the first woman (man, Adam’s rib);
- the source of every man and woman since then (the woman);
- the inherent difference in the male and female roles in reproduction (of the man, by the woman);
- their mutual interdependence for existence and continuation of the race and specifically of themselves in their progeny.

So we are all equal but are blessed with differing roles and responsibilities. Learn them eagerly, accept them gladly, and live them joyously.

But why does he have to devote space in scripture tell us all this? Shouldn’t we just know this? He tells us because, sadly, we otherwise would ignore the obvious both from nature and God’s word. Man’s history has adequately demonstrated that we cannot be relied upon to see and know God’s will and order simply from the Creation, much less keep it. That is clear from the record in Genesis of the first 1600 years of history, from the fall to the flood. Consider that man then was far more intelligent than we because the degeneration due to sin had not yet reached it’s full extent. They were much more experienced and wiser than we because they were much longer lived. (Read Job and interactions recorded in Genesis for examples of early man’s sophistication in reasoning and dignity in expressing themselves, even after the flood.) They were responsible to see Creation’s order and to pass on God’s pronouncements to later generations, yet only eight were preserved in the ark through the flood. Man is proven incapable of retaining the knowledge of the Creator in the culture. Therefore God has given His written word to us to go by now. And He has given His indwelling Spirit to move and empower us to love Him and to do His will and carry out His mind and purposes. **We can now be after His own heart.** Do we dare to be contentious about these revelations given from God through Paul? He grants no latitude to ignore them.

Does God hate women? That is the charge that is implied when people today say Paul was demeaning to women and was a woman hater. How dare they! Was

God picking on the Corinthians? No. He gives the same truths to all of the churches (assemblies). Is it for today? Amen brother. Amen sister.

Who says a woman's hair is her glory? God does. And the care and concern most every woman has about her hair is witness enough that He is correct. Not to mention universal marketing and sales of woman's hair care and hair care products in the world today.

Isn't a woman's lovely, long hair enough covering when she is praying or prophesying? Why is a head covering sometimes needed over the hair? God gives the answer here. Because she is to cover her glory, her hair, because she herself is the glory of mankind. Mankind's glory is to be, at least symbolically, covered in the presence of God. The Greek word for her covering in verse 15 likens her long hair to a mantle, shawl or wrap. A different word is used in vv 4-6 for head coverings. There it denotes a something that "covers up." So her long hair is sufficient for an everyday **covering, or wrap**, and a "**covering up**" of her head is needed only when praying or prophesying.

Finally, note the strong statement to us guys. God says it is a **shame** for us to have **long hair**. It is a shame, even if it is the style in our country. Apparently, despite 1Corinthians 10:32, hair length is an exception to Paul's practice of conforming to those about us, in order that some might be saved. Long hair is clearly out of keeping with the position God has chosen to give men in His creation. There are several Biblical examples of men with long hair that are of interest.

- The **Nazarite vow** required a man who wished to dedicate himself to God to avoid cutting his hair, avoid partaking of any wine or grapes, and avoid touching a dead person, Numbers 6.
- **Samson**, a Nazarite dedicated from birth at God's direct command, (and in Hebrews 11 named a man of faith) lost his prodigious strength when he divulged the secret of it to Delilah who cut his hair, Judges ch 13 - 16.
- **Absalom**, David's rebellious son, was noted for his long and beautiful hair, but it was caught by a tree he when riding through a forest and he was mercilessly killed by Joab defending David's throne, 2Samuel 14:26; 18:9.
- Watch for others.

• On the other hand, consider the Lord Jesus, whom many artists have portrayed as having long hair, often long and flowing locks. This is a mistake. Jesus was NOT a Nazarite. He was simply a Nazarene, a native resident of the village of Nazareth. There is not a word in scripture of Him being a Nazarite, much less having long hair. Would He, being God the Son incarnate, have long hair? He states only a couple of decades after His resurrection, it is a shame to a man to have long hair! **He didn't!** And we shouldn't! Was He a shameful representation of God? Preposterous! Then we shouldn't be either.

Nevertheless, Jesus is often pictured as a long haired, somewhat effeminate man. But wasn't He a strong (carpenter), masculine, shorthaired, bearded man? Satan desires to corrupt our ideas of Jesus' masculinity and of what Jesus may have looked like. He tirelessly works to deceive us about Jesus, the Man he so hates. If we develop a distorted image of the Man Christ Jesus in our minds and before our eyes, are we not in danger of worshiping an "idol" rather than the real Jesus?

10:14 Wherefore my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

1John 5:21 Little children keep yourselves from idols.

And brothers, keep your hair short, like Jesus.

Meanwhile sisters note, value, encourage and rejoice in the masculinity of your husband, father, brothers, and sons. (We saw masculinity re-emerge as a favorable attribute on 9-11.) Guard against attempts of the world to promote unisex. Brothers, note, cherish, encourage and rejoice in the femininity of your wife, mother, sisters and daughters. But be sure our ideas of what masculinity and femininity are correspond with scripture.

6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [which is] in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

By Ron Canner July 23, 2003