

Headship and Head-Coverings

1 Corinthians 11:2-16

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Cultural relativity = a principle contained in Scripture can be absolute, while the application of that principle may be relative

Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you. ³But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. ⁴Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, ⁵but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, since it is the same as if her head were shaven. ⁶For if a wife will not cover her head, then she should cut her hair short. But since it is disgraceful for a wife to cut off her hair or shave her head, let her cover her head. ⁷For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. ⁸For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. ⁹Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. ¹⁰That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. ¹¹Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; ¹²for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God. ¹³Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered? ¹⁴Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him, ¹⁵but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. ¹⁶If anyone is inclined to be contentious, we have no such practice, nor do the churches of God.

1 Corinthians 11:2-16 (English Standard Version)

PROBLEM #1

Problem: By their appearance and demeanor, the Corinthian women were blurring the lines between male and female and the result was to appear unfaithful to God and to their husbands' headship.

Solution: Stop sending the wrong signals and use head-coverings!

Absolute Principle: Women honor God in worship and show respect for authority by not blurring the distinctions between men and women.

... for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. Galatians 3:26-29 (ESV)

PROBLEM #2

Problem: The Corinthian women were undermining headship.

Solution: Deference to a husband's headship, demonstrated in worship through head-coverings.

Absolute Principle: Marriage is lived out as an equal partnership with a designated head.