

## **PAUL'S ARGUMENT FOR THE HEADCOVERING.**

The argument Paul gives for the covering of women's heads in the assembly is persuasive and is one that cannot be summarily dismissed. His argument is both logical and easy to follow provided we get rid of our "blinkers" and prejudices that surround it with emotional thinking. Regardless of the issues brought up that seem to surround it; it is my belief that to assert that Paul is commanding the women to cover their heads in the worship assembly whilst praying is indeed a defensible position.

His argument begins in verse 3 where he states that the head of every man is Christ and the head of every woman is the man. Now this is a situation that *never ceases to be true*. This being the case, then, Paul says that therefore certain things follow from this state of being and these are.

- (1) Every man who prays having anything covering his head shames his head [Christ] Verse 4. He then goes on in verse 5.
- (2) "But" in Greek he uses δε this is to make a strong contrast between the man and the woman which in this case is to say that what he has just said about the man will be the complete opposite regarding the woman. "Every woman who prays with her head uncovered disgraces her head [man]. This speaks of *external coverings not of the hair verse (5a)*.
- (3) In verse (5b) Paul gives the reason for what he has just said. In Greek it is γαρ if she does not cover her head then it is the same as if she had her hair shorn or shaved off.
- (4) Then in (verse 6a) again using γαρ [the reason he said what he just stated] Paul strengthens his thought by saying that if a woman will not cover her head then she must be shorn or shaved.
- (5) Then carrying on this line of thought Paul then states "But if it is a shameful thing for a woman to be shorn or shaved [and it is] then let her cover her head."
- (6) Paul then turns to the man and says that he ought not to cover his head as he is the image and glory of God. But the woman is the glory of the man. Paul then

again uses γὰρ giving the reason for his statement (verses 8 and 9). “For the man is not of the woman but woman is from the man; indeed man was not created because of woman but woman because of man.”

- (7) Paul then gives a tentative conclusion by saying that a woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither the woman is without the man nor man without the woman *in the Lord*. This of course means in the church or as Christians (verses 10 and 11). In (verse 12) for as woman was created from man even so man is born from the woman but all things are of God. Thus in all cases the woman is to be covered in the assembly.
- (8) Paul now in (verse 13) asks a rhetorical question. “Judge among yourselves; is it fitting for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? The answer of course is NO! In light of his argument.
- (9) Now in (verse 14) Paul turns to nature to further distinguish between the sexes. If a man has long hair as does a woman then it is a shame to him. But δε [for contrast (verse 15)] the woman has long hair and it is her glory given to her for a covering. Now the question is; is this covering the same covering that Paul speaks of in (verse 5 on)? The answer is NO! We can see this from the argument Paul has clearly laid out up to this point. Yes woman has been given long hair for her glory but this glory is to be covered in the worship assembly. The man is to have his head uncovered as this shows the glory of God, the woman is to have her head or hair (glory) covered if it is not it is then out of the created order, Christ, man, woman.
- (10)** Finally in (verse 16) Paul gives the final conclusion to his argument it is in the form of an if/then argument which simply means that if one thing is the case then the other thing is the case. ***If any wish to contend with me on this then there is no other practice or no such custom [other than] a covered woman and an uncovered man in the worship assembly and this is the practice of all the congregations of the church of God.***

The “other than” is to be supplied as an ellipsis Paul left it silent as he assumed that his readers would understand it in light of the argument he has presented to them. We are to understand today also.