

THE DEPARTMENT OF A CHRISTIAN WOMAN

PREFACE

It presses upon my heart to bring before the saints of God certain portions of the Word of the Lord which bear upon a Christian woman's deportment. In taking up such matters I do so with the consciousness of my own shortcomings in seeking to follow the Lord. We ought to be aware, however, that failure is one thing and divine principles are another. No one can rightly justify wrong principles on the basis of the failures of those holding correct principles, and so my desire is to seek grace from our Lord to inquire into His mind concerning those Scriptures which bear most directly on this subject. Is there a reader of these lines that would rather not have the Word of God brought to bear on these matters? If so, why?

Most of us recognize that this subject is not a popular one and that, sad to say, the displeasure of many will be incurred, even though the subject is touched on in many places in the Scripture of truth.

But on the other hand, there are sisters in Christ who have not long been saved, and some who were in the Christian race (1 Cor. 9:24; Heb. 12:1) a long time, who are desirous of pleasing the Lord in their lives; who, when these matters have been brought before them have wondered why it wasn't pointed out clearly to them before. Some sisters have asked why these things are not more ministered in the assembly. There is a recognition of the truth "that they who live should no longer live to themselves, but to him who died for them and has been raised" (2 Cor. 5:15). Such a happy state is true *Christian liberty*, a response from a free and happy heart that desires not only the commands of Christ (John 14:15) but His word (John 14:23), i.e., the tenor of His mind. Christian liberty is freedom from self to serve Christ (Rom. 6:22; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; 1 Pet. 2:16; 2 Pet. 2:18; James 1:25). Please read these verses now. May the following lines be perused in this spirit! The danger of promoting an external conformity without a work of God in the heart we should desire to avoid, just as much as we should desire to avoid promoting external looseness by avoiding the subject.

Many of us thoughtlessly follow the habits and fashions of the world. But as the Word of God is brought to bear on our consciences, we examine our ways and then by God's grace seek to correct those things in our walk which belong merely to a fleshly mode. We know that ". . . the world is passing and its lust, but he that does the will of God abides for eternity" (1 John 2:17). The new nature wants to know God's will and to do it.

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The deportment of a Christian woman is the foundation for, and precedes the subject of, the sphere of service of Christian women, which is properly another subject, although connected with what we shall consider. If the principles considered in this paper are applied with a happy heart of obedience to God, acceptable service to the Lord should follow as the natural fruit of this obedience. *Being* what we should be *precedes* doing something for the Lord. The state of the vessel of service should be right before that vessel is concerned with its own use and sphere of service.

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Scripture quotations are taken from the translation by J. N. Darby.

HEADSHIP

WOMAN'S ASSIGNED PLACE

Let us begin our examination of this subject by considering the place God has assigned to woman. In doing so, let us ever remember that it is not a question of superiority of woman over man or man over woman, but rather a matter of accepting the divinely appointed place in the divinely constituted order of things in the world by virtue of the creation order established by the Creator. The first Scripture for consideration is 1 Cor. 11.

But I wish you to know that the Christ is the head of every man, but woman's head [is] the man, and the Christ's head God. Every man praying or prophesying, having [anything] on his head, puts his head to shame. But every woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered puts her own head to shame; for it is one and the same as a shaved [woman]. For if a woman be not covered, let her hair also be cut off. But if [it be] shameful to a woman to have her hair cut off or to be shaved, let her be covered. For man indeed ought not to have his head covered, being God's image and glory; but woman is man's glory. For man is not of woman, but woman of man. For also man was not created for the sake of the woman, but woman for the sake of the man. Therefore ought the woman to have authority on her head, on account of the angels. However, neither [is] woman without man, nor man without woman, in [the] Lord. For as the woman [is] of the man, so also [is] the man by the woman, but all things of God. Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman should pray to God uncovered? (1 Cor. 11:3-13).

W. Kelly remarked upon the particular matter addressed here by the Apostle:

It would seem that the sisters at Corinth gave them a deal of trouble, and that they had forgotten entirely their due relative place. No doubt the men were at least as much to blame. It is hardly possible that women should put themselves forward in the church unless Christian men have deserted their true, responsible position and public action. It is the man's place to guide; and though women may assuredly be far more useful in certain cases, still, unless the man guides, what an evident departure from the order God has assigned to them both! How complete a desertion of the relative position in which they were placed from the first! Thus it was at Corinth. Among the heathen, women played a most important part, and in no quarter of the world, perhaps, so prominent a one as there. Need it be said that this was to their deep shame? There was no city in which they were so degraded as that in which they attained such conspicuous and unnatural prominence. And how does the Apostle meet this new feature? He brings in Christ. This is what decides all. He affirms the everlasting principles of God, and he adds that which has been so brightly revealed in and by Christ. He points out that Christ is the image and glory of God, and that the man stands in an analogous place as connected with and distinguished from the woman. That is to say, the woman's place is one of unobtrusiveness, and in fact, she is most effective where she is least seen. The man, on the contrary, has a public part -- a rougher and ruder task, no doubt -- one that may not at all bring into play the finer affections, but which demands a calmer and more comprehensive

judgment. The man has the duty of the outward rule and administration.¹

No doubt the Corinthians had a carnal notion of Christian liberty. Such have not practically in their walk a true appreciation for what it is to be *in Christ*, but rather reason erroneously from what they are in Him to the detriment of how He should be displayed in them in practice. The Son, Who created all things (John 1, Col. 1 and Heb. 1), having accomplished redemption, has not by virtue of His work for us set aside the order that He created in the garden of Eden. And though a man and a woman be fellow-heirs together of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7), that is no reason to set aside the creatorial order in which they carry out their practical relationship; but rather reason to be most diligent in carrying out the will of their Creator and Redeemer.

As Christ is the head of man, so is man the head of woman. Scripture indicates at least three reasons why woman has a subordinate (not morally inferior) place assigned to her by God.

1. *The created relationship.* This is mentioned in 1 Cor. 11 and is there emphasized by these facts:

- a. The woman must be covered.
- b. She was created for the sake of the man.
- c. Long hair is given in lieu of a veil, which is thus a continual covering -- if she has it. *Nature*, which we should understand is the *created relationship*, set up by the Creator in the garden of Eden, teaches that long hair is a glory to her (1 Cor. 11:15). It is an outward sign of submission and self-effacement. Take note that I will use the word "natural" and "nature" as designating **created relationship**.

1 Tim. 2:12,13 grounds the matter of subjection in the order of creation also. The grace of our Redeemer does not set aside the order He established as Creator. Note well, also, that this has nothing to do with "cultural norms." If those "norms" contravene God's directions, the Christian may not accept them. This order of creation is in force so long as this world stands. Thus, "women's liberation" must be classed with the other attacks on Gen. 1-11, such as the movement to abolish capital punishment, and the theory of evolution. The ultimate object of Satan in this wide-ranging attack on Gen. 1-11 is to get rid of THE FALL. No fall -- no atonement!

Those fanciful schemes which wrest Scripture to secure for a woman a place not granted to her by God are contradicted by the ORDER OF CREATION. Man's and woman's places in the House of God are perfectly consistent with His ordinance of creation. And let us beware of the idea of running a home on a 50-50 basis, which in practice is mere nonsense anyway. Neither was man created the head with woman created as the neck to turn him as she will. Shame! What is wanted is a happy-hearted bowing to God's will.

Having seen that the places of man and woman are determined by, and grounded in, the order of creation, we next consider their confirmation in the governmental, i.e., disciplinary, dealings of God.

2. *God's Government.*

"To the woman He said, I will greatly increase thy travail and thy pregnancy; with pain thou shalt bear children; and to thy husband shall be thy desire, and

1. *Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Epistles of Paul the Apostle*, London: Broom, 1869, pp. 75,76.

he shall rule over thee" (Gen. 3:16).

Woman was assigned the subject place by God in creation and thus Gen. 3:16 does not indicate any *basic* change of her position but is rather a judicial confirmation of her place with, I believe, the words portending that abuse of woman often characteristic of places or cultures not enlightened by the gospel (though professing Christian men seeking an ungodly power and control over a woman will indulge in this also). That is, woman had the subject place both before and after the fall, but now that sin had come in, the relationship was subject to the corruption of that sin. The increase of pregnancy and travail also was a result of the sin. The fall had emphasized the difference between man and woman and thus the words "and to thy husband shall be thy desire, and he shall rule over thee" indicates a *governmental* confirmation of what had been, and is, *the order of creation*. It was the result of an act done independently of her head. She took the lead and was deceived. Sisters in Christ, beware of taking the lead! If your husband does not take his place as head, prayer, not forwardness, is needed. Forwardness puts you out of your place, casts a slur on God who assigned you your place, casts a slur on your husband, brings disorder in the assembly of God's saints, and will make havoc in your family which constantly sees, and learns from, the disorder. Oh, do beware of this mischievous sin which has been the shame and ruin of many families. And then, whose fault is it that you married a man who won't take his place? Did you really ask the Lord for such a man?

This subject is further developed in 1 Tim. 2:12-14. The woman is not "to teach or exercise authority over man, but to be in quietness, because Adam was not deceived; but the woman having been deceived, was in trans-gression." Next Paul says, "she shall be preserved in childbearing if . . ." Mercy would be shown in God's governmental dealing.

We are considering a fundamental order of God's created intelligences. God has instituted governmental order among His intelligent creatures, whether they be men or angels. There must be rule, authority. Satan lifted self up and then he enticed Eve to do it too; and Adam followed. It has been the history of the race since; and it will end in the Lawless One (2 Thess. 2) setting himself up publicly as God. We need to recognize that rebellion is as the sin of divination (seeking another god besides the true God) and self-will is as iniquity (following the will of the depraved nature that is in revolt against God) and idolatry (the worship of something else instead of God) (1 Sam. 15:23). So rebellion against God-constituted authority is a most serious thing! God has made man the head of woman and this has serious implications not only for a Christian woman but for society as well; and the present casting aside of this order instituted in Eden will also help on the coming of the apostasy (2 Thess. 2).

3. *Marriage, and Christ and the Assembly.*

It may be seen in Eph. 5:22-31 that marriage is a picture of Christ and the church. Christ is head. The church is subject. Yet, even this passage is related to the beautiful type in Gen. 2:21-25.

Man was created as God's image and glory (1 Cor. 11:7). The thought in "image" is that man is the *representative* of God on earth, as its head. The earthly creation was appointed answerable to Adam. Woman is man's glory, his companion and counterpart, the object of his love, and he shares with her what he has. The thought in woman being man's glory is that she is a source of honor and praise to him. Also, she is his complement, making him a complete man, as it were. She was built from man's side and was made a help suitable to him as sharing in his likeness and entering into his thoughts, feelings and love. What a privilege, then, for Christian women to show forth the exaltation and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ by conforming themselves to this model! He is *so* worthy of honor that not only should the church be subject to Him, but also

every Christian woman should be subject to her own husband, thus showing her appreciation of Christ's glory.

Having noted all of this, it might be well at this point to emphasize that man and woman are equal morally. She is his "like", taken from his side, to be loved, nourished and cherished (Eph. 5:25). But though man and woman are morally equal, in the order of creation, and in God's government, and in harmony with the exaltation of Christ as head over His church, man is the positional head in responsibility. God is wiser than we are, and our wisdom is to cheerfully bow to His Word. God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of His saints, and to be had in reverence of all those about Him. See Ps. 89:7.

HEADSHIP, COVERING THE HEAD AND LONG HAIR

Covering the Head

The apostle, by the Spirit, develops from the subject of headship, which we have just considered, the subject of head covering. Covering or not covering the head is a means whereby our bowing to God's order is manifested. Among the many disorders at Corinth there seems to have been disorder regarding this matter and so the apostle applied corrective ministry. He says that when a woman prophesies (speaks for God in that way) or prays (speaks to God) she must be covered, but that when man prays or prophesies he must be uncovered (1 Cor. 11). To do otherwise is to disobey and to fail to acknowledge headship.

Man, then, is not the only earthly creature who speaks for God, or who approaches to God: woman can do so also. It is important to note, however, that there is one visible head on earth, not two. That head is MAN. To show that the woman acknowledges the divinely appointed order in creation, she covers her own physical head, thereby declaring that *she* is not in the place of authority, she is not the head, but rather that she owns man as the one visible head (or authority) over the earthly creation. In approaching God in prayer, the woman acknowledges (by covering her own head) His order in creation, wherein another (the man) is placed over her. Does she wish to speak *to* Him? Let her first acknowledge the *place* He gave her. Does she wish to speak *for* Him (not audibly in assembly, of course, 1 Cor. 14:34)? Let her do so in the posture of obedience and subjection.

It is worth noticing that the covering for the woman's head is *not her hair*, which forms part of her head. If the covering required by the Word of God did mean her hair, then the expression, "Every woman praying or prophesying uncovered" would have to mean that she prayed or prophesied without hair. She would be bald or shaven. Further, if such were the meaning, then men would have to have hairless heads, clean shaven, in order to comply with the requirement of praying uncovered. It is evident that the covering required on the woman's head cannot simply be her hair, but rather a covering additional to the hair. This covering is applied by the woman as a sign of her subjection under the required circumstances.

In 1 Cor. 11 mention is made of a shaved or shorn woman. What is the significance of the statement that a woman praying or prophesying uncovered is the same as a shaven or shorn woman? Consider the following interesting comment on this subject:

It has struck me that there is large and peculiar meaning in the ordinance touching the covering of the females in the Church (1 Cor. 11:5,6). It is clearly (on the first reading) to be regarded as signifying that subjection which the woman owes the man, who is her head, or the subjection which the Church owes the Lord. Power or covering on the head was the sign of that, and therefore it was suitable for the female in the congregation.

But there is more than that, for the apostle adds that "if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn"; and he says, that the being uncovered was "even all one as if she were shaven"; and to be either *shorn* or *shaven* would have been a shame to her. But what was the *shame* of which the shorn or shaven head of a woman was the expression? This must be determined, I judge, by a reference to the law, and under that we find two occasions in which the female was shaved or uncovered. First, when she was a *suspected* wife (Num. 5:18), secondly, when she had lately been taken captive, and was bewailing her father's house, not yet united to the Jew who had taken her in battle (Deut. 21:1-13). The shorn state of the woman thus expressed that she was not enjoying either the full *confidence* or full *joy* of a husband. Now the female ought not to appear with

such marks upon her. The Church ought not to be seen as though she were *suspected* by Christ, or still felt herself to be a sorrowing captive; this would be her shame. But the covering on her head shows the Church to be in neither of these conditions; but on the other hand, *happy* in the *confidence* of the Lord; and this is as it should be. Thus the female covered in the assembly shows out the two things touching the Church. First, her *subjection* to the Lord; secondly, her being under His full *protection*, trusted in, and comforted by Him. As the Church both owns the Lordship but enjoys the cherishing presence of Christ, which puts away the sense of captivity, and the shorn or uncovered head would be a denial of both, a *dishonor* to the man, and a *shame* to the woman, and it would bear a false witness, therefore, to the angels, who are learning these deep mysteries of Christ from the Church (Eph. 3:10; 1 Cor. 11:10). Christ was seen of them first (1 Tim. 3:16). They marked and attended His whole progress from the manger to the resurrection; and now they are learning from the Church, and mark her ways, and if the woman in the assembly were to appear uncovered or shorn, the angels would be taught the lesson incorrectly.²

God is a *Creator* as well as a *Saviour*, and the order of things established on earth by God as Creator is not set aside by that which He has brought into being as Saviour. The corrective ministry of the apostle given in 1 Cor. 11 guards against any abuse of Gal. 3:28, which some would use to teach that because all are *one in Christ*, these earthly relationships are set aside. Erroneously supposing for a moment that it was proper for a sister to pray or prophesy in the assembly, 1 Cor. 11 shows us that she should put a covering on her head. This proves that the earthly relationship would not be set aside in assembly *and* it thus proves that such a view of Gal. 3:28 is false. It is worse than false; it is wilfulness against the express statement of 1 Cor. 14:34. If anyone think himself to be a prophet (one who speaks the mind of God in that way) or spiritual (one who discerns the mind of God) let him acknowledge that what Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 14:34 and 1 Cor. 11 are the Lord's commandments (1 Cor. 14:37)!

Authority on Her Head

"Therefore ought the woman to have authority on her head . . . (1 Cor. 11:10). The reason that she ought to have authority on the head is because "For also man was not created for the sake of the woman, but woman for the sake of the man (v. 9). This means that woman is under the authority of man (cp. v. 3). But a woman cannot take "authority" and place it on her head. So she must put something on the head that is understood to represent man's authority. Putting on a covering while praying or prophesying is an act that acknowledges that she is under authority. The covering is "a token of the authority under which she stands." She will thus be under the covering and thereby acknowledges that she is under authority.

On Account of the Angels

"Therefore ought the woman to have authority on her head on account of the angels" (1 Cor. 11:10). Why is the token of authority worn on the head *on account of the angels*?

For we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and men (1 Cor. 4:9).

Bless Jehovah, ye his angels, mighty in strength, that execute his word, hearkening unto the voice of his word (Psa. 103:20).

2. *The Girdle of Truth*, vol. 8.

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out for service on account of those who shall inherit salvation? (Heb. 1:14).

In order that now to the principalities and authorities in the heavenlies might be made known through the assembly the all-various wisdom of God (Eph. 3:10).

They also surround the redeemed in heaven (Rev. 5:11). The angels, who hearken to the voice of His word, behold and learn from God's order amongst His people. They are (sinless) principalities and powers. Angels also come into God's presence and go out to do His bidding. They are creatures under authority and there are ranks among them. Among God's redeemed, the assigned place of man and woman ought to be carried out specially. We need to remember the angels' unwearied and inquiring gaze as they behold the followers of the perfect, obedient One.

Long Hair is a Natural Sign of Owning Headship

Was there nothing that signified the owning of headship in the garden of Eden? Not so. God had "given" woman long hair (1 Cor. 11:15), not with the advent of Christianity, but in the garden. I do believe that this Scripture is reason to think that Eve was created with long hair. When naked in innocence, she had this natural veil. This was, and is, the natural sign of owning headship and the rightly attendant subjection, unobtrusiveness and self-effacement, that comely hiding of one-self, with respect to man that is so beautiful in a woman. It was "given" by the Creator before the fall when he instituted the proper relationship of man to woman.

In 1 Cor. 11 the Spirit of God brings before us the subject of headship and the comely submission by a woman. The matter of long hair is brought in to support and to illuminate what the Spirit says about headship and the covering of the heads of women in acknowledgment of their God-given place.

Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman should pray to God uncovered? Does not even nature itself teach you, that man, if he have long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But woman, if she have long hair, [it is] glory to her; for the long hair is given [to her] in lieu of a veil (1 Cor. 11:13-15).

Nature, says the apostle, teaches us that it is not comely for a woman to pray uncovered. Nature is not propriety. Nature is not how long hair grows of itself. Nature is not "cultural norms." Nature is *created relationship*. The created relationship shows us that woman has been put by God into the subject place (1 Cor. 11:9,11; 1 Tim. 2:13; Eph. 5:24-31 with Gen. 2:21-25). Nature, i.e. the created relationship, teaches that if a woman have long hair it is glory to her. Her "long hair" is given in lieu of a veil. If she does not have the long hair, then she does not have the God-given veil. She has not the natural, continual sign of owning man's headship on her head. It is useless to say that all is well so long as the inner man is right. If the inner man is right it will be proved by the outer man being regulated by the Word of God. You say that man looks on the outward appearance? Where else is he supposed to look? Such an objection is often a subterfuge and rationalization of self-will. Moreover, God looks on the heart and will judge if the motive is false. But, show me thy faith by thy works (see James 2:18)!

God has "given" (1 Cor. 11:15) the "long hair" for constant use as the natural veil. Thus there is a natural covering provided at all times; and in addition, when praying or prophesying, she puts an added token of the authority under which she stands in place upon her head, thereby acknowledging what the "long hair" speaks of constantly.

We have been considering two matters, the connection of which we should observe.

1. God has given to woman long hair as an indication of the created relationship of man and woman;

2. and, that when a woman prays or prophesies she should put on her head a token of the authority under which she stands.

The natural covering of long hair testifies of nature. Her placing an additional covering on her head is an act of owning, acknowledging, that her long hair does indeed mean just that being in subjection when she prays (speaks to God) or prophesies (speaks for God in that way). Each time she puts on that additional covering, by that act she acknowledges (where the heart is in it, of course) the truth of the meaning of the long hair.

Glory to Her

Sometimes we hear the expression that a woman's hair is her glory, as if her hair itself is a glory. Assuming that a woman has long hair in obedience to God's order for man and woman, the Scripture says that "if she have long hair, [it is] glory to her (1 Cor. 11:15). The owning of man's headship, with the attendant taking the place of submission, unobtrusiveness and self-effacement, signified by the long hair, is glory to her. The glory of Christ, when He was here in holy manhood, involved His taking the place given by the Father. It is a glory for a woman to take the place given her by God. In contrast, it is a dishonor to a man if he has long hair (1 Cor. 11:14) because that would be significant of leaving the place that God gave to man. It would mean, in God's sight, taking the place of woman. A woman who does not have long hair is thus taking the place of man. There is no glory in that, but the opposite: dishonor to her, just as in the case of the man who has long hair.

"Every man praying or prophesying, having [anything] on his head, puts his head to shame" (1 Cor. 11:3). He would have shame on his physical head and also dishonor Christ who is the head of every man. "But every woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered puts her own head to shame; for it is one and the same as a shaved [woman] (1 Cor. 11:3). For a woman to pray or prophesy uncovered is to be like a deliberately shaved woman. She has thus put shame on her physical head by refusing to put on a special covering when praying or prophesying. Thus, in God's sight, and in the sight of Christians subject to the teaching, she is either covered or like a deliberately shaved woman. I ask you Christian men; Would you want your wife (or daughter) to be shaved? -- in God's sight, if not in yours? Uncovered, she also is dishonoring to man. "For man indeed ought not to have his head covered, being God's image and glory; but woman is man's glory" (1 Cor. 11:7). She loses her place of being man's glory by acting like a deliberately shaved woman.

So with the natural covering of the long hair goes the special head covering when praying or prophesying.

The Long Hair Functions as a Veil

". . . for the long hair is given [to her] in lieu of a veil" (1 Cor. 11:15). *Vine's expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* says that *peribolaion* "lit. denotes something thrown around (*peri*, around, *ballo*, to throw; hence a veil, covering, 1 Cor. 11:15 (marg.), or a mantle around the body, a vesture, Heb. 1:12." Thus, a woman who has long hair (where the heart is in all this in subjection) is morally veiled. This means that in a moral sense she has put herself out of sight. She is not taking the man's place, one who is not veiled.

Concerning the word "cover," *Vine's* says of *katakalypto*, "to cover up (*kata*, intensive), in the Middle Voice, to cover oneself, is used in 1 Cor. 11:6,7."

Several points should be noted here.

1. **Only God's glory should be displayed.** Man is "God's image and glory" (1 Cor.

11:7). Hence man must not be veiled by long hair nor should he be covered when he prays or prophesies because he would thereby be veiling God's glory. Moreover, man's glory ought not to be displayed. Observe that "woman is man's glory" (1 Cor. 11:7). So if woman is not veiled, then man's glory is on display. This is contrary to God's will, hence woman has been "given" (1 Cor. 11:15) long hair in lieu of a veil so that she is not displayed; and so, in a *moral* way, she is indeed veiled even though her head and/or face is not physically veiled with cloth.

2. Man has no *visible* head over him and thus is not veiled with long hair, as if he had a visible head; nor is he covered when praying or prophesying. The woman's case is just the opposite.

3. The coverings in the Apostle's time were veils. From the fact that the long hair serves as a woman's veil without her head and/or face being veiled with cloth, a hat (or handkerchief, etc.) will serve as a covering when praying or prophesying. The woman with long hair is always naturally veiled, but on certain occasions the token of the authority under which she stands is placed on her head, a token which acknowledges the meaning of the continuous, natural veil.

4. The fact that a woman was to put on a covering when she prayed or prophesied indicates that she need not be covered at all times with the token of the acknowledgement of what the long hair denotes. Thus it is not essential that a woman has to be veiled with cloth in public, though care is always in order to appear as 1 Tim 2:9-11 and 1 Pet. 3:1-7 say. However, note that if a Christian woman is in a culture where it is customary to wear a cloth veil in public, that does not conflict with Scripture and I suggest that the above two Scriptures indicate that it would be proper to do so in such a case.

5. And though it has already been shown that the covering spoken of in 1 Cor. 11:6,7 is not the hair, observe that these two different Greek words also show that the long hair is not the covering noted in vv. 5-7.

Long Hair and the Nazarite

God has selected the woman's hair as a definite sign of subjection and *it has this meaning all through Scripture*. The full grown hair of the Nazarite spoke of either having a permanent place of separation, dependence and subjection or a special place of separation, dependence and subjection for a time (Num. 6), but such, in any case, is the settled state of a woman now. 1 Cor. 11 certainly makes this clear.

It is well for us to remind our hearts that what was written aforetime was "written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come" (1 Cor. 10:11), and there is something for us to learn about long hair from the Nazarite in Num. 6:5. Before considering that, we might note the following. While all Israel was in the place of subjection to the law, the law made nothing perfect (Heb. 7:19). The Nazarite typifies that there is something better and higher than the law. While our Lord Jesus was not a literal Nazarite, morally He was one, perfectly so. His walk was far, far above what the law required; so much so that He could rightly say that one who had seen Him had seen the Father also. And how precious it is that by His grace, we being *in Christ*, it is true of the Christian also. In Him, in His resurrection-life, we answer to it also. May more of what we are *in Him* be shown out in His being in us in practical ways in this same scene of moral death which envelopes the whole world.

Briefly, we may observe that:

1. Num. 6:3-4 indicates separation from the world's joys:
2. Num. 6:4 specifies the mark of seeking no place here. Thus there would be no insistence on one's rights, but yet on God's rights.
3. and Num. 6:6 indicates separation from all characterized by this scene of moral death which envelopes the whole world.

The type taught in connection with the Nazarite's vow is that the Nazarite separates from that which ministers to self and he specially takes the place of subjection and devotedness to the will of God, giving up all that would naturally be man's, as signified in the woman's long hair, with the attendant shame that such a position entails in this world. "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him"? (1 Cor. 11:14). Speaking typically, in being so devoted to God's will there will be shame attaching to such from the world. Such a walk, of course, also applies to a woman.

The one external mark of the literal Nazarite was on his head. The Nazarite's long hair was, typically speaking, the sign of weakness, dependence and submission; but though there is outward weakness, dependence, submission, self-effacement and shame seen in the long hair, there is spiritual strength (typified in Samson), and discernment and judgment (typified in Samuel) and power in testimony (not results as men speak, but power, -- typified in John the Baptist). These result from truly taking the separated place.

From the following comments on the Nazarite by some who have spoken unto us the Word of God (Heb. 13:7) in the past, it is quite evident that what we have been considering about headship, covering and long hair was once generally taught from Scripture by helpful writers.

"All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, that he hath consecrated himself unto Jehovah, he shall be holy, he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow" (Num. 6:5). It is plain that this was not the ordinary condition of a man. Long hair did not become him, though it is in character with the woman. Long hair is the sign of subjection to another; ³ subjection is not God's order for the man, who is meant to be the image and glory of God. But in the Nazarite the rule was altogether special. There was a giving up of man's natural right, of the place of dignity which God had given him in nature. ⁴

Secondly, the Nazarite let his hair grow: it was neglecting self in yielding oneself to the will of God, in renouncing one's dignity and rights as a man, for a head of long hair was marked, on the one hand, in a man, the neglect of his person; and on the other, -- "power on the head" (1 Cor. 11:10). ⁵

The hair is the sign of neglect of self for the Lord, and dependence on Him -- power on the head, hence a sign of subjection in him that wears it, but subjection in devoted abstraction from self. ⁶

The long hair of the Nazarite proclaimed openly that he had abandoned his

3. "The long hair is a sign indicating her place of subjection to man as the head of this creation" *Help and Food* 46:83.

4. Wm. Kelly, *Lectures Introductory to the Study of the . . . Pentateuch*, (London: W. H. Broom, 1871), p. 336.

5. J. N. Darby, *Synopsis . . .*, Kingston-on-Thames: Stow Hill, 1948, vol. 1, p. 185.

6. J. N. Darby, *Notes and Comments*, vol. 2, article "Numbers" (ch. 6).

dignity and personal rights as a man, in order to devote himself to the service of God. That which was glory for the woman was shame for him. ⁷

"Thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Mount Gilead." "Long hair" the apostle tells us is the covering and glory of the woman (1 Cor. 11:15). But may there not also be a reference, in this comparison, to the long hair of the Nazarite, which was the type of power in the Spirit? Samson's great strength lay in his seven locks. ⁸

The Syrian goats are black, with long hair . . . hence this figurative language, as portraying the beauty and luxuriance of what is a woman's glory (1 Cor. 11:15). She possessed it in full measure. ⁹

Her hair "as a flock of goats which recline from the mount Gilead." Woman's hair was given her for a covering (literally "in lieu of a veil"). It is glory to her, a token of subjection to authority, hence a pledge of the power of the one to whom she owns subjection being hers . . . the weak with the strong, and the woman's hair is a lovely witness to this principle. When Samson lost his long hair, token of his Nazarite subjection to another, his strength (that is the Lord) departed from him (Judg. 16:19-20). ¹⁰

There might have seemed little connection between long or uncut hair and all-overcoming strength; but God was in it (re: Samson); and an obeyed, honored God is a God of strength to us. ¹¹

It is the lesson of strength for deliverance from Philistinism we want to learn: it lies in the long "woman's hair" of the Nazarite, the sign of subjection and dependence upon God. . . . ¹²

We believe these quotations clearly express that the long hair of the Nazarite indicated the special position of "subjection in devoted abstraction of self" taken by the Nazarite; that the hair was meant to grow full length; and that this is the way God expects women to have their hair normally. We learn this particularly from the instruction given to the woman Nazarite in Judg. 13:4,13,14. She is instructed to abstain from the vine, strong drink and what is unclean. She is not told, however, that "no razor shall come upon her head." The absence of such a statement in connection with the woman Nazarite is striking for in the case of the male Nazarite in Num. 6 this statement is specifically given. Why is it omitted in the case of the woman Nazarite? Simply because Scripture regards full-grown hair as the proper and normal condition of the woman's hair. And a male Nazarite denoted outwardly that he took the subject place by allowing his hair to grow full length as was the woman's. There is, then, this lesson to be learned from the teaching of the Nazarite: Scripture regards long hair, that is, full-grown hair, as the proper and normal condition of a woman's hair.

Application of the teaching of the Nazarite has presented difficulties in the minds of some. We shall try briefly to answer some of these difficulties.

(a) *The shaving of the Nazarite at the completion of the vow.*

7. H. Rossier, *Meditations on the Book of Judges*, p. 112.

8. Andrew Miller, *Meditations on the Song of Solomon*, p. 141 (old edition).

9. H. Friend, *Meditations on the Song of Songs*, p.42.

10. J. B. Jackson, *The Song of Songs*, pp. 50,51.

11. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby*, London: Morrish, vol. 16, p. 19.

12. *Helps By the Way*, New Series, vol. 2, p. 82 (1880).

When the Nazarite's vow was completed the head was shaven (Num. 6:18).¹³ The shaving of a female Nazarite's head in no wise sets aside the thought that long hair is the settled state of the godly woman now as it *normally* always was (1 Cor. 11:14,15), any more than the long hair of the male Nazarite sets aside the teaching of 1 Cor. 11 regarding short hair as the settled state of the godly man. The special injunction of Num. 6 regarding shaving the head, therefore, forms no valid objection to the fact that long hair means full-grown hair; because, if it was a valid objection it follows that a similar objection is valid against the normal state of the man. In the man's case, however, the objection is met by an explicit statement of Scripture. His normal mode is cut hair; the exceptional case was that no razor was to come on his head. The woman's normal mode is full-grown hair and the exceptional case was a shaved head under this special circumstance.

(b) *Perpetual Nazariteship.*

In the case of perpetual Nazariteship no razor ever came on the head and hence there would be no application of Num. 6:18. This does not mean, however, that Num. 6 has no lesson for us just because in Christ we are spiritually perpetual Nazarites. The literal Nazarite in all particulars finds its fulfillment in spiritual things.

(c) *Numbers 6 signifies separation rather than subjection.*

The objection, that in Num. 6 the hair signified separation but in 1 Cor. 11 it signified subjection and that, therefore, there is no connection, will not stand the test of comparing Scripture with Scripture. Numbers six signifies both. It is true that the meaning in 1 Cor. 11 is that long hair is the sign that woman is subject and is under authority. It is the acknowledgment of the acceptance of the place that the will of God has assigned. But this is the thought in the Nazarite vow. The Nazarite separates from that which ministers to self and specially takes the place of subjection to the will of God beyond what the law required.

(d) *Relative length.*

Some might say, "But 'long hair' does not mean hair regulated only by the limit of maximum growth, and wisely so else the newly converted soul would be robbed of exercise as to what is long or short and so pleasing to the Lord." The reasoning then follows that "long hair" simply means relatively long with respect to the man. We have already seen that it means full-grown as in connection with the Nazarite. Scripture, having shown us the mind of the Lord clearly enough, should settle it. In regard to the idea of leaving room for exercise in this matter; we would state that the Lord has not left us to be exercised in the manner desired. Take an example. "Let him that stole steal no more," says Scripture. Do we find fault because no exercise remains for a newly converted soul to find out what pleases the Lord in the matter? Of course exercise remains. We are thieves at heart. Most of the sisters with whom we have spoken on the subject of long hair, and who have it, have exercise: exercise to continue in the will of the Lord, and there is sometimes a measure of inconvenience, a daily reminder of its significance. So, the Lord does not leave everything a matter of relativity, which should hardly need stating.

(e) *"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."*

Romans 14:5 is frequently presented as a basis for circumventing any ministry which

13. The vow of the Nazarite was connected with a *voluntary* commitment to Jehovah that went beyond the requirements of the law. The duration was, therefore, not specified as a legal requirement. It points to the devotedness to God's will of the One Who, when here, not merely kept the law, but in devotedness went immensely, yea infinitely beyond the law. A Nazarite might lose his Nazariteship; but our Lord, Who was *morally* a Nazarite, never failed, though we can, and do.

seeks to reach the conscience, Shame! The matter of long hair is excluded from the subject matter of Rom. 14:5 because the Lord has given *His* mind on it elsewhere. The term "long hair" is explicit enough, *even without the teaching of Num. 6*, yet it requires the submissive heart to search out and discover the will of God in the matter of the sign of dependence, submission and self-effacement. And, I suggest the notes on Romans 14 by Wm. Kelly as a corrective to this kind of use of Rom. 14.

Let us note from the above quotations that at one time there was no difficulty with this subject. As the rebellion of Christians has increased, we have developed difficulty about the sign of "subjection in devoted abstraction of self." The issue concerns the headship and authority to which the God-given veil points.

LONG HAIR AND SEVERAL SCRIPTURES

There remain three passages which bear on the subject we are examining.

Luke 7:38,39,44

And standing at his feet behind [him] weeping, began to wash his feet with tears; and she wiped them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet and anointed them with myrrh. And the Pharisee who had invited him, seeing it spoke with himself saying, this person if he were a prophet would have known who and what the woman is who touches him, for she is a sinner . . . and turning to the woman he said to Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thy house; thou gavest me not water on my feet, but she has washed my feet with tears and wiped them with her hair.

We see how our Lord Jesus blessedly rebuked Simon with the beautiful ways of this woman. There it stands in all its beauty in that Word that shall never pass away. God has enshrined it in the Word of the Lord that endureth forever. "But woman, if she have long hair, it is glory to her." What a feast for the heart of the Lord Jesus in the scene of His rejection! The day will declare it.

John 12:3:

It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair" (John 11:2). Mary therefore having taken a pound of ointment of pure nard, of great price, anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair, and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

Again we find the feet of the Lord Jesus wiped by a woman's hair. Surely this has a word for us! Twice we find such a matter mentioned. It is a testimony to the beauty that the Lord Jesus finds in it.

Rev. 9:7-8:

And the likeness of the locusts were like to horses prepared for war; and upon their heads as crowns like gold, and their faces as faces of men; and they had hair as women's hair.

These locusts had faces of men, which speak of boldness and independence; but they also had women's hair which depicts real weakness and subjection (not separation as claimed in the objection above). These locusts are under Satan's domination, yet "hair as women's hair," the sign of subjection, signifies that they are under God's ultimate control, regardless of what they may appear to be when one faces them from the front. But in relation to the subject we are looking at, consider the significant expression in this verse: "hair as women's hair." What does that expression mean? Bobbed hair? or, shoulder length hair? or, mannish cut? or, longer than man's hair? Hair as women's hair is meant to convey something very definite. The Word assumes that the reader has

read the Word of God up to this point and will understand the significance of this expression in light of the consistency through the entire Word of God as to normal character of women's hair. It is the hair of woman which, we have seen, the Nazarite wore. There is one length of hair that will satisfy this passage; it is the full-grown hair of the Nazarite, and it is the long hair of 1 Cor. 11. No razor came upon the Nazarite. Little girls who should be trained up in the way that they should go are often taught to use the "razor" when their hair is cut to produce "bangs."

The reader may wonder why so much space is given to the subject of long hair. What man, in his thoughts of his own self-importance, would relegate to being a small matter, what is, after all, bound up with truths of great moment and bearing. Moreover, if one will cheerfully bow to the will of God about it, then a bowing to the Word of God concerning headship and our next subject, adornment, usually follows without much difficulty. The more the matter is considered, the more it may be felt that the battle fought by a Christian woman concerning godly deportment is often won or lost at this point of whether or not she begins to cut her hair.

Scripture says more about headship and its acknowledgment than many think it does. A proper, heartfelt, and happy acknowledgment in joyful obedience to the Lord (this true Christian liberty) tends to blessing in the home life, assembly life, and society in general. Where there is wilful disobedience to these things, there is a corresponding ill effect upon these relationships. Where the heart enters into these things in joyful obedience to the Lord, there is also a corresponding good effect upon these relationships. For example, in a home where headship is exercised according to God's Word and where the subjection of the wife is rendered according to the Word of God, the happy result is that the children learn the principle of authority and obedience and see a daily, godly example of these things.

ADORNMENT

1 TIM. 2:8-12 and 1 PET. 3:3-4

An exercise, wrought by the Spirit, concerning the true acknowledgment of headship should then lead on to a concern to appear in this world as the Word of God indicates that a woman should appear.

There are two Scriptures that speak very plainly about the adornment of Christian women:

I will therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up pious hands, without wrath or reasoning. In like manner also that the women in decent deportment and dress adorn themselves with modesty and discretion, not with plaited [hair] and gold, or pearls, or costly clothing, but, what becomes women making profession of the fear of God, by good works (1 Tim. 2:8-10).

Whose adorning let it not be that outward one of tressing the hair, and wearing gold, or putting on apparel; but the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible [ornament] of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price (1 Pet. 3:3-4).

The men should pray having pious hands, -- and should do so without wrath or reasoning, which is natural to them. "In like manner also" means that dependence upon God of Christian women is to be demonstrated, not by public prayer without wrath or reasoning as in the case of men, but by *these* marks: decent deportment (decorum, well-

ordered); and dress (footnote by J. N. D. -- "The whole deportment; the way in which the woman presents herself, of which dress is a sign"); adorned with modesty (a sense of shame); and discretion (sobriety, soundmindedness). This is not only when God's holy ones are assembled but elsewhere also -- "in every place." These things have to do with prayer, with expressed dependence upon God. Why come to Him as dependent ones if we are not willing to be regulated by His Word? Why do we call Him Lord, Lord, and do not the things that He says?

1 Peter 3 speaks of these matters with reference to God's subject people in their various day-to-day relationships; and so the enjoined modesty is in view of rendering testimony to the sanctifying and effectual power of God working in the soul. These matters have, therefore, both a Godward and a manward aspect. In the statements of the Holy Spirit regarding women professing the fear of God, He notes the negative first (as He often does).

"Plaiting", in 1 Tim. 2:8-10, means to weave, to twist together, to entwine, as in a net, basket, or wicker work. "Tressing", in 1 Pet. 3:3, means intertwining, or interweaving the hair. Peter makes reference to the practice of using the hair to set off one's person. It is important to note that Scripture does not say that women should not wear plaited hair and gold or pearls or costly clothing. It says that --

plaited hair)
 gold) should not be worn *as an adornment*.
 pearls)
 costly clothing)

We may take these items as examples and not as an exhaustive list. We thus have general guidance whereby we may please Him who gave Himself for us that we might no longer live unto ourselves but to Him that died for us (2 Cor. 5:15).

The deliberate setting off of one's person is VAIN SELF at work!

Sometimes substitutes for pearls are worn and it may be done in order to obey the Scripture not to ornament with pearls. It may, on the other hand, be an attempt to circumvent the Word of God. We might well wonder about the spirituality of such a course or a demand to have an exhaustive list. Such an attitude is one that desires to give the Lord no more than expressly required. That is coupling STINGY SELF with VAIN SELF.

One can understand braided hair as a utility, a convenience, with sobriety and modesty. This is not what 1 Tim. 2:8-10 and 1 Pet. 3:3,4 are about. No doubt, too, a plain gold ring to indicate that one is married may be in order without it being used to set off self. Whether pearls, or their imitation, or substitutes can be put on for any other reason than adornment, the reader must judge -- IN THE SANCTUARY!

The matter of clothing requires discernment and weighing before the Lord. It seems that we have two snares: FRILLS and SCARCITY. First consider some timely remarks concerning frills.

FRILLS

C. H. M. remarked:

We are often thoroughly amazed to witness the things which some Christian women put upon their persons; for example, the gaudy bunches of artificial flowers on their heads and round their faces, pieces of painted glass and sham jewelry. How can any woman of good taste or common sense, to say nothing of spirituality, spend money, time and thought on such things! surely, if they only considered the matter in the presence of God they would act differently. We are

sorry to have to write in this strain; but we earnestly beseech all Christian women who may read these lines to give this subject their solemn consideration. Let each one look to herself. And let us be faithful to one another.¹⁴

"A Lover of Justice," "I. P. S.," London. You both deem us one-sided in our remarks on dress in our November issue; and you consider that we ought to have dealt faithfully with our brethren, as well as our sisters. We accept your reproof, and thank you for your candor. But we must say we have not met with many cases such as you name of "brethren," and "even teachers," wearing "gold rings and chains," "gold headed walking canes," "white waistcoats," and "peculiarly fashionable hats." We can hardly conceive such things in connection with any measure of spirituality of mind. Indeed, we have rarely met with them where there was even sound sense and a vigorous intellect, to say nothing of Christianity and the work of grace in the soul. The most distant approach to foppishness should be sedulously avoided by a Christian man, but more especially by any one who takes part in the service of God. However, as we have said, we have not met with much of this sort of thing, and, besides, we must remember that the exhortations of the Holy Ghost on the subject of dress are all addressed to women.¹⁵

Ed. Dennett remarked,

Now, it is sometimes said that these matters of ornaments and dress are left to individual consciences; but it is difficult to understand such language in the light of these precise directions. It is quite true that where the heart is satisfied with Christ, there may be no need for their application; but if this be the case, the slightest acquaintance with God's assemblies reveals the humbling fact that they are composed of immense numbers whose hearts are not thus satisfied. Nothing can be more sad than the scene which is oftentimes presented at the table of the Lord. When we are thus gathered by the Spirit of God, it is to show the Lord's death until He come (1 Cor. 11:26). And surely, as we remember Him in death, we are reminded also that by His cross the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world (Gal. 6:14). What a contradiction therefore, if any, forgetful of the judged character of the scene through which we are passing, appear there with evident traces of Egypt upon them. And how grieving to the Lord Himself to see those who are professedly outside the camp bearing His reproach, with so many outward signs of worldliness in dress and ornaments -- evidences of being practically "alive in the world," whatever may be true for them before God.

Neglect of dress, or even of adornment, is not directed; on the other hand, attention is to be paid to it, but according to the word of God. Thus St. Paul says that women should adorn themselves in modest apparel; i.e., as the word might otherwise be given, "moderate," "well-ordered" dress. It is to be of the kind befitting the "meek and quiet spirit," so that there may be congruity between the dress and the character. Ornaments likewise are permitted; but they are to be made, not of gold or pearls, but of good works, "as becometh women professing godliness." All the Scriptures bearing upon this subject demand the prayerful consideration of all Christian wives;¹⁶ and the results would surely be to the Lord's glory in a more distinct outward testimony to the place of rejection (in fellowship with the sufferings of Christ), and of separation into which we have

14. C. H. M., *Answers to Correspondents* (Oak Park; Bible Truth Publishers, n.d.) p. 130.

15. C. H. M., *Answers to Correspondents*, p. 108.

16. [I doubt he intended to limit this to only wives. Scripture does not so limit it. R. A. H.]

been called by the grace of our God.¹⁷

Concerning Jezebel we read, "and she put paint to her eyes, and decked her head, and looked out at the window" (2 Kings 9:30).

The anti-church, Babylon the great, the great whore, is in process of formation. She will, and in a sense does now, live to attract attention to herself. Rev. 17:4 says, "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls . . ."

Meanwhile, let us dress for our wedding day (Rev. 19). Let us gather up the threads that will compose the wedding dress. Let us dress ourselves with deeds of righteousness. The garments will be composed of the righteousnesses of saints. The grand day of display will soon be here. If we are decking self with nose-rings and earrings, bracelets and beads, pearls and jewels, or imitations thereof, will it not be LOSS in that day?

And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright [and] pure; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints (Rev. 19:8).

The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which IN THE SIGHT OF GOD is of great price (1 Pet. 3:4).

SCARCITY OF CLOTHING

The day in which we live is characterized by great boldness in so-called "Christian lands" in calling attention, by one means or another, to the female body. Advertising media capitalize on the attention-getting character of a suggestive or seductive picture, usually entirely unrelated to the product being advertised. Advertising men know well how to play on man's nature by displaying that which excites lust. Such are the ways of the world and we should hardly expect anything different *as far as the world is concerned*.

The Christian woman, on the other hand, is exhorted in Scripture to dress with shamefacedness. Since we live in an environment in which lust governs, we must ever be on our guard against the danger of allowing the spirit of the world to govern our walk and ways. Shamefacedness is the very opposite of that which calls attention to the body in a seductive or suggestive manner with certain styles, clinging and semi-transparent material. However, even with sufficient cloth, women can dress in a suggestive way and this must be avoided also.

But in our day it seems that bold styles of dress often use the omission technique especially. Ten years from now the other may be the case, but the principles we are considering apply equally.

We do not advocate looking "odd" simply for its own sake, but if dressing to conform to scriptural standards of modesty results in one's looking odd, then so be it. The statement that a Christian should never look odd is false! It is argued by some that standards of modesty have changed from one generation to the next, and that fifty years ago, for example, it would have been considered immodest to wear the skirt above the ankle. We reply to this that the Christian should desire to avoid giving cause for offence, and if society sets the standard of acceptable modesty at a level beyond what Scripture *requires*, i.e., shamefacedness, then the Christian may so dress, though even so a Christian woman ornamented by a meek and quiet spirit would hardly be a fashion

17. The Christian Household, (1888), pp. 42-44.

leader. Fashionable people are greatly in love with themselves! Why plead a false "liberty" for being fashionable when its true name is VAIN SELF? When on the other hand, society accepts a standard of modesty (perhaps we should say immodesty) which does not measure up to the scriptural standard of modesty, the Christian man or woman must bow to the claims of Scripture and bear the reproach of appearing "odd." An illustration of these things lies in the fact that, although styles differ from one country to another, the Christian *could dress* with shamefacedness in many of them, but on the other hand, the Christian could hardly go to a nudist colony. Does not the very extremity of the illustration point out the fallacy of the argument that a Christian should not appear odd? There are other places besides the nudist colonies where the female form is brazenly displayed though not in entire nudity, and some of these are frequented by Christians.

The Christian should recognize that man is casting off all restraint in all spheres, preparing for the time when Satan will be openly worshipped (Rev. 13), and lawlessness will be at its zenith. The breakdown in dress is but one of the forms of lawlessness the world is guilty of today. In the garden of Eden God covered man, but in the closing days of this dispensation, as man casts off restraint in all spheres, he overthrows this also. The time may come, perhaps is here already, that the Christian woman will appear noticeable (but not by choice but of necessity to be faithful to the Lord). A characteristic difference between the Christian woman's dress and pagan dress may be forced by the bounds of modesty and sobriety. The exposure of a Christian woman's form (whether by omission of clothing or by clothing which accentuates) to the eyes of men cannot be construed as being modest merely because the world's views have shifted that far. Are the dictates of a few men in Paris and the demands of godless women trained in exposing themselves, or the Word of God, going to be the guide for a Christian woman?

In writing thus we recognize the problem Christian women, particularly the young ones, have in finding suitable attire in the stores. Our heart goes out to them in this, and we can only encourage them to seek the Lord's help and guidance when shopping. Serious thought should be given concerning learning to sew and those who can sew clothing and are exercised about these things, might find an avenue of service to the Lord Jesus in sewing for others. Besides, one can buy material and a pattern that may be modified by a seamstress and often save money in addition.

Some, sad to say, resist instruction on these matters, and would make their opinions felt even to the point of trying to suppress ministry on what God has seen fit to speak of in His Word. The enemy has been quite successful in seeing to it that those who minister the Word avoid almost all mention of such subjects by the delusion that speaking of them would be promoting legalism. Shame on us that we should be so naive and ignorant of Satan's devices, or worse still, just plain self-willed! Servants of Christ spoke on these things in the past, as has been adequately shown in the various quotations referred to. Would any call J. N. D., or W. K., or C. H. M., etc., legal because they wrote plainly on these things? Yes, some have even emboldened themselves to say so!¹⁸ It is a sign of decline that what was once preached and written is currently shunned and resisted because it strikes close to home, so to speak, concerning our walk, and particularly so when we do so in the guise of avoiding "legality." Should we not rather admit that we love self and would like to silence the voice of the conscience? Thus some thought to treat Jeremiah this way, when he said things that they didn't want to

¹⁸ I have heard it was suggested that much reading of J. N. D. could make one legal. Such show themselves unable to recognize a spiritual Nazarite (J. N. D.) and do not have spiritual discernment to recognize the difference between spiritual Nazaritship and legalism. They impugn their own judgment (1 Cor. 2:15) and ought to be quiet in shame.

hear: "Come and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words: (Jer. 18:18).

It would not be right for us or anyone else to attempt to establish a standard for Christian women to use as a guide for the length of their skirts. Some skirts may come well below the knee *while the person is standing*, but because of the straight lines, etc., come far above the knees when sitting. What we must seek to cultivate rather is the spirit of dressing in the fear of the Lord, to please Him, and if we do so we will not be quibbling about inches above or inches below the knee. One dressing to please Him will take into consideration not only the appearance when standing but when sitting as well, and choose such styles as will permit sitting before the Lord, in the presence of His assembled worshippers and priests without causing distraction or embarrassment to them. If our attire displays us or causes embarrassment and distraction to our brethren, AND IT HAS BEEN KNOWN TO DO SO, how it must displease the Lord Who is in our midst, for "God is greatly to be feared in the council of the saints, and terrible for all that are around about Him" (Ps. 89:7).

I recall a practical case that bears on this matter. A brother in his sixties was at a general gathering of Christians and he told me that when there he sat opposite a woman so ill-covered that he felt it necessary to move his seat ninety degrees. Persons reply to this, perhaps, that he had an evil eye. Firstly, the Lord will judge if it be so. Secondly, he moved his seat! Thirdly, perhaps the retort indicates a spirit of indifference that loves its own will. The Lord will judge if it be so. It is a day as sad as it is careless when men can see in public the thighs and even the intimate undergarments of women.

We ought to confess that we have lost the sense of the presence of the Lord Jesus in our midst. Could anyone who has an active conscience instructed by the Scriptures we have been considering sit in the very presence of the Lord with her nakedness exposed to His gaze? God forbids nakedness being discovered (Ex. 20:26). The very thought ought to make us shudder and repent.

May God help us as husbands and fathers to impress upon our households the nature of man. God has been pleased to speak very candidly upon these things in His Word. He knows our frame, that we are dust. How blessed it is to turn from the lust-exciting dress and ways of this present evil world, though there is often, alas, a response in us to it, to the company of God's saints ("holy ones") to find the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price! May the Lord give us grace to consider these things with candor, IN THE SANCTUARY.

OSTRICHES

The following is by A. C. Brown:

Have you ever thought of how much like the ostriches modern women have become? Sixty years ago we visited the Cawston Ostrich Farm in South Pasadena, where we saw fine specimens that had been captured from the Nubian desert in N. E. Africa, 12,000 miles away. We still have the snapshot which was taken on that occasion, showing the keeper on an elevated platform feeding a tall ostrich oranges. A little rooster at its feet makes quite a contrast. Two women standing by watching the performance, wearing dresses reaching within four inches from the ground make another noticeable contrast to the naked-legged ostrich. It was amusing to watch it swallowing a whole orange as it travelled down its long thin neck. They will swallow most anything that is bright, such as jewelry and even watches. They are especially fond of dates. Their Latin name is "strut-hio" apropos to their long legs and neck. they "walk with stretched forth neck and wanton eyes" (Isa. 3:16). Their plumes are indeed their pride, which they love to display, especially at courting time. It is then that "the

wing of the ostrich beats joyously" (Job 39:13 J. N. D. trans.). Little wonder the translators of the 1611 A. V. mistook "ostrich" for "peacock", whose mate God created not at all glamorous. But their wings do not enable them to fly, or soar heavenward. It cannot be said of them "in vain the net is spread in the sight of anything that hath wings" (Prov. 1:17 J. N. D. trans.). Although wild, they are easily ensnared. "God hath deprived her of wisdom" (Job 39:17), and classed them among the unclean and the abominable (Lev. 11:13,16 J. N. D. trans.). They are native to the borders of the "holy land" in the Syrian and Arabian deserts, and are sometimes found within the limits of Palestine. "As birds of a feather flock together" so do these in groups inhabit waste places for their lairs. When pursued they run in circles as often do people that are lost. They do not mind associating with Zebras. It is embarrassing to look upon their most conspicuous flesh-colored naked thighs. It was said to lewd Babylon, "Bare the leg, uncover the thigh . . . thy shame shall be seen" (Isa. 47:2,3).

Because God is holy, the sons of Aaron, when coming into the presence of God, were to wear "linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even to the thighs" (Ex. 28:41-43). Now, in this Christian age, the priesthood of all believers includes women as well as men. Should Christian women be less clothed? "Aged women . . . admonish the young women to be . . . discreet, chaste" (Titus 2:3-5 J. N. D. trans.). "Hear the word of the Lord, O ye women, and let your ear receive the word of His mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and . . . lamentation" (Jer. 9:20).

Speaking to the most privileged people on earth who were gathered at God's center, Jeremiah writes, "The daughter of my people is become . . . like the ostriches (Lam. 4:3).

"Not conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2). "Not follow a multitude to do evil" (Ex. 23:2). "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man" (Deut. 22:5).

Revolting wigs, painted eyes and nails like birds' claws. All such worldly vanity, glamour and earthly-mindedness is a denial of our heavenly calling and most dishonoring to the Lord.

Some "sigh and cry for all the abominations" (Ezek. 9:4). Lot's soul was vexed by the filthy things which he saw (2 Pet. 2:7,8). such lamentable things should be rebuked, but too many say "Speak unto us smooth things" (Isa. 30:10).

Godliness is rare but beautiful in those who "adorn the doctrine" (Titus 2:10), by overcoming these worldly tendencies. "They receive not the grace of God in vain" (2 Cor. 6:1).

"Because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth . . . *be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.* As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent" (Rev, 3:16-19).

Because it seems futile to say anything to those who are "all legs and no conscience", who glory in their shame, a brother wrote, "It is like a bantam rooster trying to fight an ostrich"! Another brother wrote suggesting we write a word on "Ostriches." Still another gracious brother wrote, "It is sad to see some of our young folks so eager to take on the vulgar fashions of this world in direct disobedience to God's Word"! What a shameful witness is all this to our faces of our lamentable low state! The truth does not hurt unless it should.

"I cried in the congregation. I am become . . . a companion of ostriches" (Job 30:28,29 J. N. D. trans.).

THE FUNCTION OF THE MIRROR

We are now ready to learn the proper use of the mirror. Its use is to ascertain whether or not we reflect the directions given in the Word of God regarding the outer man. We see this matter expressed exactly so in Ex. 38:8, where the women gave their mirrors (made of polished copper) for the making of the laver. The laver held the water, figure of the Word of God, with which the priests washed their hands and feet before entering the holy place. The women's mirrors served the Word of God. Let us then recognize that the function of the mirror is to show us if we are obeying the Word.

One of the things that impressed the queen of Sheba was the apparel of Solomon's servants (1 Kings 10:5). No doubt such dress would not be suitable now -- but the point is that the apparel was ordered by, and suitable to, Solomon; and it was a reflection on him. A greater than Solomon has come and has given us what is suitable to Him. Rather than using the mirror for primping of VAIN SELF, let us use it to serve the Word of God. We should remember also to train up our daughters in the way that they should go. Indulgent parents often do not check the natural display of VAIN SELF in their (small) daughters as they turn every way in front of the mirror admiring VAIN SELF and primping their time away. The vanity of grown-ups often started as the vanity of little ones. Let us teach the little ones that the mirror should serve the Word of God.

MAN'S CLOTHING ON WOMEN

In Deut. 22:5 we read, "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on woman's garment: for all that do so are an abomination unto the Lord thy God." God has divided humanity into two: male and female. The Christian, acting as such, recognizes and maintains this distinction. May we not expect an increased blurring of this distinction as evil progresses? Man is casting off all restraint and undermining all divine institutions. Even today, many men seem to have become woman-like and many women seem to have become masculine in their appearance. We have a word from the Lord in Deut. 22:5. The type of clothing worn should correspond to the deportment which we have been considering in this paper. Dress is part of one's deportment. So we ought to be what God has made us, both in our behavior and in our appearance. Maintaining a comely distinction between men and women is not merely a matter of the law of Moses, but a recognition of the order of creation: male and female made He them!

THE "WOMEN'S LIBERATION" MOVEMENT

It should not surprise a Christian woman who really wants to honor *all* that the Word of God says about the relationship of man and woman that professed Christian women have taken part in the "women's liberation" movement. Nor should it be any surprise if women in Christendom have been abused. Have not Christian men abused each other also? But the subject of abuses could fill libraries.

Consider the abuse mentioned in James 5:1-6. What is the divinely given solution to this? Labor and professional unions, as some Christians think? No. But have not labor unions corrected management abuses? Yes, indeed. And have not management revenged labor union abuses? Yes, indeed. And what does this all say to the Christian? Why, that man is corrupted and violent. *We* are the salt of the earth, the preservative. Our presence is the reason that judgment has not yet fallen. The world (and its unions) owe us more than it will ever know.

It is true that there are abuses, grievous abuses of all kinds in this evil world, abuses to make one weep. Over 100 years ago G. V. Wigram said, if it were not for the incarnation of the Son of God, he would be ashamed to be a man! Amen! The answer, beloved follower of the abused Lord Jesus, Who when He was reviled, reviled not again, and when suffering He threatened not, but gave Himself over to the hands of Him who judges righteously (1 Pet. 1:23), is to have patience to the coming of the Lord (Jas. 5:7,8). Perhaps even a righteous feeling in us would like to lash out against injustice. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe" (Prov. 18:10). Stay your soul, dear tried one, on the sovereignty of our Saviour-God and remember that you are a vessel of mercy afore prepared unto glory (Rom. 9:23) but left in this world to show forth the excellencies and perfections of Christ (2 Pet. 2:9). The world will mock; and Christians too may despise, but God sets a high value on a meek and quiet spirit.

I do not enter into the question of whether or not the "women's liberation" movement has removed some inequities. there is no need to deny it. Our subject is the bearing of the Word of God concerning woman's deportment; and we will now consider some attempts to set the Word of Truth aside.

Concerning the Corinthians, W. Kelly remarked:

They seem to have reasoned in a petty way at Corinth, that because a woman has a gift no less than a man, she is free to use the gift just as a man might. This is in principle wrong; for after all a woman is not a man, nor like one officially, say what you please. The apostle sets aside the whole basis of the argument as false; and we must never hear reasoning which overthrows what God has ordained. Nature ought to have taught them better. But he does not dwell on this; it was a withering rebuke even to hint their forgetfulness of natural propriety.¹⁹

There are many who apparently have a conscience so hardened that they cannot detect the Apostle's withering rebuke. In the Feb. 2, 1973 issue of *Christianity Today*, pp. 10-15, we are told by a woman what principles might be learned from the earlier feminists. They did not want their lights smothered by a "bushel" called "Woman's Place" (p. 15). Does not that sound pious? They were resentful at being told that woman's influence should be unobtrusive and private (p. 15). It is well that insubjection of will to God's

¹⁹ *Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Epistles of Paul the Apostle*, London: Broom, 1869, pp. 77,78.

Christ	Christ
man	man woman
woman	

God says the woman ought to have the sign of authority on her head. It is the Lord's commandment for every Christian (1 Cor. 14:37).

The "Christian feminist" position, as far as it misuses Scripture, may be tested by Gal. 3:28, which is treated as a stronghold of this position. "Christian feminists" speak of *human* rights in contrast to man's or woman's rights, pleading that "in Christ there is neither male nor female." However, in so doing they force it against Gen. 2:18; 1 Cor. 11:2-16; Eph. 5:22,23,33; 1 Tim. 2:12-14; and 1 Pet. 3:4,5. Moreover, since there is neither male nor female in Christ, why speak of human rights at all in connection with this Scripture? But to observe the real misuse of this Scripture, notice that, following this false reasoning in divine things, since natural relationships are set aside for those who are in Christ Jesus, a Christian child may similarly deduce that he may set aside "Children, obey your parents in [the] Lord" (Eph. 6:1), using Gal. 3:28 to assert, "I know no such thing as parental rights, only *human* rights, since there is neither parent nor child in Christ." Would not such a child rightly be called rebellious and insubordinate? Does not 1 Sam. 15:22,23 apply here?

The sophisticated arguments that give such disobedience an appearance of piety only make the sin more heinous. It all contributes to the pattern of increasing lawlessness that is leading on to the manifestation of the Lawless One (2 Thess. 2). The attempt to use what God has constituted us in the new creation, in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17), against God's constituted order in the world is an abuse of the grace of God. It would be Christian to be occupied with God's right to have His Word obeyed! My beloved sisters in Christ, obedience to the will of God was the food and pathway of our Beloved, the Lord Jesus, and it is the only happy path for His followers (John 4:34; Heb. 12:2).

The reader should note that the direct tendency of this movement is to undermine the inspiration of the Scripture and to make man's (and woman's) mind the judge of what ought to be. This is usually what underlies the use of such phrases as "Paul was a bachelor", "Paul disliked women", and those objections based on "cultural norms" and the "cultural-historical approach."

3. The third principle put forth uses the "cultural-historical" approach. Head coverings and silence in the church were meant to avoid offending certain cultural norms, it is alleged. Isolated texts were not intended to be binding in the modern world! Perhaps, then, the apostles should not have insisted on abstaining from fornication so as not to offend the devotees of the cult of Diana of the Ephesians or the sensibilities of the Corinthians! The cultural norm into which Christianity was put is described in Romans 1 and 2. Christianity offends that norm on every front. *The cultural-historical approach* is often a euphemistic sophism for *insubjection to the Word of God*. 1 Cor. 1:1,2 is enough for every subject heart that calls on the name of the Lord. See 1 Cor. 14:37 which shows that everyone who pleads the cultural-historical approach to get around these Scriptures is not a spiritual person.

A husband is head of the wife as also Christ is head of the assembly (Eph. 5:23). Is that a cultural norm merely? "But even as the assembly is subjected to the Christ, so also wives to their own husbands in everything" (Eph. 5:24). When the inspired apostle said women are to be in subjection, he said that the law also said this (1 Cor. 11:14). Her place has nothing to do with cultural norms, nor does change in dispensation change this relationship to man. The head covering is the outward acknowledgment of this.

Paul said that a man who prays or prophesies with his head covered puts his head to

shame (1 Cor. 11:4). Was this a mere cultural thing? "Among the Greeks, the priests officiated bareheaded; the Romans with the head veiled; the Jews (at least soon after the apostolic age) also wore the Tallis or covering for the head in their public services."²⁰ (It is said that in the apostle's day it was optional among the Jewish men.) Do you think he taught believers differently according to where they lived? See 1 Cor. 1:2; 4:17; 11:16. He taught the same everywhere regardless of culture. His teaching was not culturally conditioned so that we can get rid of what we do not want based on this plea. It is merely an attempt to rationalize self-will in divine matters.

4. The fourth argument states that women had public ministries and duties in the church and state. Stating the matter in this way would lead one to assume what needs first to be proved; namely, that the forward place "Christian feminists" want is also found in Scripture. So some say this is found in Scripture and others, acknowledging the prohibitions against it, claim that the prohibitions are culturally conditioned.

There are those who want women to speak "in church." Scripture says, "Let your women be silent in the assemblies, for it is not permitted to them to speak; but to be in subjection,²¹ as the law also says" (1 Cor. 14:34). Human ingenuity has sought out many means to circumvent this Scripture. One such method involves that 1 Cor. 11:5 speaks of the assembly. Then, to circumvent 1 Cor. 14:34, it is alleged that "not permitted to speak" means "not to teach" (1 Tim. 2:11); and so a woman may prophesy in the assembly. 1 Cor. 11:1-16 addresses the relative place of man and woman, as such. It does not take up the matter of whether or not a woman should prophesy in the assembly -- **though, of course, the relative place of man and woman does indeed have a bearing on assembly matters as upon all else.** Thus, the directions of 1 Cor. 11 concerning headship and covering has a direct bearing upon the way a woman appears in the assembly, as it bears upon everywhere a woman goes.

The Word says, "I will therefore that the men pray in every place . . ." (1 Tim. 2:8). "Every place" does not apply to women in praying (and prophesying) in every place (particularly the public sphere): but to the female deportment about which 1 Tim 2 speaks. They are to appear with those features of modesty in every place.

Prophesying is only audible; prayer may or may not be silent. 1 Cor. 11 says that when a woman prays or prophesies, she is to be covered. In the assembly she also prays, but silently, and is to be covered. In 1 Cor. 14, which speaks especially of the assembly, the Spirit of God adds that she is to be silent there; she is not to speak there, and so she must not prophesy there. Thus she is to be covered on all these occasions, both in private and in public assemblies, with the addition that she is not to speak in the assembly.

Regarding the places where the directions of 1 Cor. 11:1-13 apply, it has been said,

There is no real difficulty in this Scripture if it be borne in mind that these directions are given, not for the assembly, not for sisters when gathered together with the saints, but for their private guidance and instruction. This is certain on two grounds; first, that it is not till the 17th verse that the apostle begins to deal

20. C. Hodge, *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976 reprint, p. 207.

21. In view of what we have seen from 1 Cor. 11, the word "subjection" in 1 Cor. 14:34 also indicates that it is proper for a woman to be covered in the assembly. This subjection should be marked there; and I think that spiritual discernment would find it fitting on all those occasions where we have the Word of God before us.

with order and conduct in the assembly;²² and, secondly, that in this very epistle he enjoins silence on women "in the churches" (compare 1 Tim. 2:12). It is clear therefore that the reference is to praying or prophesying in private, or in their homes, or in places other than in the public assemblies.²³

The reason that some 'Christian feminist' writers, and their male supporters, claim that 1 Cor. 11:5 speaks of what goes on in the assembly is because they insist upon importing the notion that a woman may rightly prophesy in the assembly. This passage thus is their (alleged) proof. They then circumvent the prohibition against speaking in the assembly (1 Cor. 14:34) by claiming that this prohibition refers to teaching (1 Tim. 2:12), not prophesying.²⁴

The daughters of Philip did prophesy (Acts 21:9), but certainly not in the assembly (1 Cor. 14:34); and we have confidence that they covered their heads when doing so (1 Cor. 11), owning their subject place. Priscilla was associated with her husband (Acts 18:26; Rom. 16:3). The nature of Phoebe's service (Rom. 16:1) is not specified and there is no reason to suppose it was out of keeping with the Scriptures we have been considering. Anna's service *is* specified; it was "fastings and prayers night and day" (Luke 2:37). The woman at Sychar's well was not "sent forth to tell" as the song claims, though she went and called attention to a Man Who told her all that she ever did. We do not find justification for "public" duties in church and state, for Christian women, in these cases!

Turning to the Old Testament, we should note that Miriam became leprous when she got out of her place (Num. 12:10). When women were very prominent in Israel, it denoted a low spiritual state; and so Deborah chided Barak that the honor of victory would go to a woman. She felt that this was unseemly, whereas it appears that "Christian feminists" do not. It does not appear that Huldah went around as Samuel did, but persons came and consulted her (2 Kings 22:14).

These women were hardly candidates for the "women's liberation" movement. On the contrary, Scripture tells of their ". . . meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price. For thus also the holy women who have hoped in God heretofore adorned themselves, being subject to their own husbands; as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord . . ." (1 Pet. 3:4,5). This is the inspired commendation of these women. Is it the opinion of "Christian feminists"?

Besides these women who were subject to their husbands we think of several other godly ones that were omitted from the above list. Think of that most estimable of women, Mary of Bethany. How one's heart delights in, and is encouraged by, this one who found her joy to be at the feet of the Lord Jesus! Would to God every man and woman followed her in this. The secret of the Lord was thus with her. This was the moral consequence of the place she took. Who else anointed Him for His burial? Who else understood His sayings in connection with death and resurrection? She did not look for Him in the sepulchre! I cannot conceive that her position at the feet of the Lord Jesus has any attraction for "Christian feminists" who, as we have seen above, despise those portions of Scripture which do not suit them. No doubt Mary of Bethany is one of those "last" who shall be "first" when God reverses the order of man's thoughts.

22. J. N. Darby remarked, "We are not as yet come to the order in the assembly. That commences with verse 17" *Synopsis* on 1 Cor. 11.

23. *The Christian Friend*, 1888, p. 277. This comment is part of notes that often appeared in this periodical edited by Ed. Dennett and most likely were written by him.

24. There are many varieties of methods to circumvent this prohibition. For others, see the exposition of 1 Cor. 14 in my *The Word of God Versus the "Charismatic Movement."*

There is unalterable moral truth and order in the ways of God that transcend all dispensations. Everyone who humbles himself shall be exalted and all who exalt themselves shall be abased. Our Lord Jesus is the great Exemplar of the humbling and exaltation and it is morally right that it should be so.

Dorcas is another woman of honorable service to God (Acts 9:36). Persons concerned about finding "fulfillment" generally end fulfilling the desires of the mind (Eph. 2:3). It seems all right to them, it pleases them, they enjoy it, and they attach the Name of Christ to the thing when it is contrary to the Word of God. Such "do *their* thing", i.e., their own will.

There is one woman who ought to serve as a godly example, a woman of blessed memory. It is Hannah. She bowed to the will of God as to her place in God's order. She saw, too, the evil going on at Shiloh by the very sons of Eli. She knew it was not for her to attempt action about it, but she felt deeply the insult of it all to Jehovah. What could she do? She poured forth the desire of her soul to Jehovah for a man-child and then as soon as possible gave him to Jehovah right where the evil was. And God mightily used Samuel. There is a coming day when all of this will be found to be to her praise. *Many* first shall be last and *many* last shall be first!

5. The fifth point puts forth the idea that our Lord treated men and women followers equally. This is patently false. Men and women are equal morally before God, of course, but not positionally. Our Lord did not send out women preachers (Mary Magdalene's message notwithstanding), nor did He choose a woman apostle. This, of course, is consistent with His directions by the Spirit given in 1 Cor. 11; 1 Cor. 14; and 1 Tim. 2. etc., and His directions by the Spirit through Paul excluded women from oversight in God's assembly (1 Tim. 3 and Titus 1). Preaching, teaching and rule are not part of woman's God-given sphere.

6. Item six concerns the shared humanity of men and women. Feminists have difficulty believing that "a loving God" had created separate spheres, the domestic for women and the world at large for men. Some people also wonder how "a loving God" could put people in hell for ever. Perhaps some may wonder why "a loving God" confines pregnancies to women only or multiplied woman's travail and pregnancies (Gen. 3:16).

Of course, the two categories do exist. The truth is that men and women have some share in both spheres, but God's Word shows that man has a predominant role in the world at large and that he is head in the domestic sphere also.

Speaking now in a general way about developing one's capabilities fully for the glory of God, let us beware of fulfilling what the mind desires to do (Eph. 2:3) "sanctified" under the guise of Christianity. Developing "talents" is foisted on Christianity. The "potential" of the Lord Jesus was enormous, yet He was a carpenter (Mark 6:3). If the "developing capabilities" ideas were part of Christianity instead of humanism, it would infer that our Lord did not set a good example in that. Yet, He always did those things that pleased the Father (John 8:29). There are Christians who cast a slur on Him in another way. They implicitly or explicitly believe that it is a higher calling to work with people rather than to work with things. Yet the Son of God never was more or less pleasing to the Father when preaching the Word than during the time that He was a carpenter until about 30 years of age. Christ, not "fulfillment"; Christ, not "development of talents"; Christ, not "flesh sanctified" by calling it Christian service, should be our motive. I have no objection to ability and knowledge as such, used in a holy way for God's glory, merely to the ideas noted above. Let us rather learn about the beauty of holiness and the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.

When once we submit ourselves to the Word of God; when once we use the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16) instead of *our* thoughts, which God regards as vanity (Psa. 94:11; Isa. 65:2); we find that things in Scripture, which were inexplicable to us, harmonize.

Let us consider two examples.

1. Mary of Magdala was the first to see the risen Christ and she is given a message to Christ's brethren (John 20:17). But there is no mention of her in the list of witnesses to the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15. This is so because woman's place is not the public sphere and the public proof of the resurrection put forth by Paul does not take account of her seeing the Lord.
2. Eve sinned before Adam, but Scripture says that sin entered the world through one *man*. This is so because Adam was the head of all, including Eve. Had Eve been the head, sin would have entered the world by one woman. But she is neither the head or positionally equal to Adam. It is in connection with the sin of the head (even if Eve sinned first) that sin entered the world over which he was appointed the head.

This is not to say that God does not sovereignly make use of a woman in a public way even though she is disorderly in acting in a public way. What does such use *prove*? God used Balaam's ass to reprove Balaam. What does that prove as to a Christian's conduct in reproving someone? We are creatures and our place is to obey.

God is sovereign and may save souls through a woman preacher (who is out of her divinely appointed place) and save very few through a man who labors in the gospel. Let us remember Mark 10:32. Many first shall be last and many last first. There may be a man who labors in the gospel and links with those condemned by 2 John 9 and 10, and many might be saved. A sister may quietly commend Christ to others and few be saved. Let us remember Mark 10:32. Obedience is better than sacrifice (1 Sam. 15:22). God said, "Those that honor Me I will honor" (1 Sam. 2:30). The root of all this wilful disobedience and twisting of Scripture is the desire to have a place and honor *now*. There is a spirit of infidelity and insubjection to God in it.

* * * * *

But if any one think to be contentious, *we* have no such custom, nor the assemblies of God (1 Cor. 11:16).

Paul, by the Spirit, says that he and those ministers of Christ associated with him, have no such custom as did the Corinthians in undermining God's order for man and woman. He also stated that the assemblies did not have the Corinthian custom. That is, assemblies in every country and culture did not allow the Corinthian custom. It is evident the Apostle taught the true order every where. Indeed, he addressed the epistle to the Corinthians along "with all that in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:2). Thus, not only had he at the very beginning told them that what he was writing was of universal application, but he had also written that he taught everywhere ("according as I teach everywhere in every assembly") -- not in accordance with culture. His teaching was not culturally conditioned. We learn from v. 16 that it is the contentious that want the Corinthian custom.

THE PRACTICAL CHARACTER OF A CHRISTIAN WOMAN'S OBEDIENCE

SUBJECTION AND REVERENCE

We have considered the meaning of 1 Pet. 3:3-4 and now we shall look at 1 Pet. 3:1-6. Verse 1 says, "Wives, [be] subject to your own husbands." This does not mean on occasion, or when a wife's pleasure or judgment happens to coincide with the husband's; it is meant to be an habitual state. "But even as the assembly is subjected to the Christ, so also wives to their own husbands in everything" (Eph. 5:24). See also 1 Cor. 14:34 and 1 Tim. 2:11.

Then after Peter, by the Holy Spirit, tells us the character of a Christian woman's adornment, (verses 3 and 4) he tells us in verse 5 that "*thus* also the holy women who have hoped in God heretofore adorned themselves" and not only that, -- but they were "subject to their own husbands as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord." *Lord* is a strong word and one worthy of reflection, especially in a day when even professed Christians "despise lordship" (Jude 8, see also 2 Pet. 2:10). Let us not be swayed by the prophets of a false liberty, which is mere license, and despise God's commandment (2 Pet. 2:18-19). The law (i.e., the Pentateuch) says that woman is to be in subjection (1 Cor. 14:34). We have seen this stated in Gen. 3, whether in creation or in the fall, and now we may consider the example of Sarah, also given in the law.

It is instructive to note the occasion when Sarah called Abraham *lord*, at least the only time Scripture notes it. "And Sarah laughed *within herself*, saying, After I am become old, shall I have pleasure, and my *lord* old"? (Gen. 18:12). She did not make a fine public speech but it was *in her heart!* It was not mere outward show, but a living reality in her soul. Eph. 5 presents two things which are especially meant to characterize a woman: subjection (v. 24) and reverence (v. 33; compare 1 Pet. 3:2). Sarah's happy and heartfelt considering Abraham as lord embraces both subjection and reverence. It is a blessed and solemn consideration that the subjection and reverence due to Christ as the Head of the Church should be present in every marriage.

The posture of subjection and reverence that characterized Sarah is one of the fundamental foundations for spiritual blessing in the home. Let us not deceive ourselves by specious arguments to think otherwise. To cite only one of the grave consequences of insubjection -- the children will have an object lesson on how to be insubordinate and they will carry the attitude learned at home into many spheres. And how can such a mother expect to be used of the Lord to instill into her children a spirit of full obedience to God when she withholds obedience to God herself? This is something that makes us tremble -- giving up obedience in one point is to give up the principle of obedience, period!

It is a pitiable thing to see a man that is subject to his wife. No doubt there may be causes on both sides why this has come about. But usurpation of authority has a built-in tendency to expand and it may, and does, make itself felt in the assembly. A woman who has meddled with God's order in the home is likely to attempt to meddle with God's order in the assembly also. She may attempt to do this directly, but more likely it will be done by working through the husband. None live and die to themselves and thus our conduct has influence in many spheres.

Ed. Dennett remarked,

Nor are the Scriptures silent as to the blessing connected with the faithful acceptance of the wife's true position. The apostle Peter, when writing on this

subject, specifies the most difficult case of all -- that of a Christian wife who has an unbelieving husband. It must not be supposed that he sanctions the marriage of a believer with an unbeliever. That is prohibited, both expressly and by implication (see 1 Cor. 8:39); but in the early church it must have continually happened that converted wives -- i.e., wives converted after marriage -- found themselves linked with unbelieving and idolatrous husbands. (See 1 Cor. 7:10-16) It is of this class the apostle speaks when he says, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear" (1 Pet. 3:1,2). This amounts almost to a promise that loving obedience, and consistent Christian walk and purity of life, shall be blessed to the conversion of ungodly husbands; or, if not so much as this, it is at least an assertion that such is God's appointed means to bring the truth before their minds and consciences. And what indeed could be more effectual than the constant silent presentation of Christ in walk and life to an unbeliever? It is worthy of distinct remark that the apostle does not urge upon the wife *to exhort* her husband to receive the truth. It is "without the word" that the husband is to be won -- by the conversation (walk, deportment, demeanor, whole manner of life) of the wife. The reason is obvious. Exhortation would be the assumption of a superior position, in forgetfulness that the husband is head of the wife, and therefore incompatible with the wife's position. But the calm beauty of a life reflecting in the power of the Spirit the gentleness, meekness, and humility of Christ, would constitute, in the order and blessing of God, a far mightier appeal than her words, and prove the efficacious means, it might be, of his being brought out of darkness into God's marvelous light.²⁵

There are conditions which are conducive to such an attitude as was found in Sarah, which attitude is the will of God for a Christian woman. Studying to be adorned as described in 1 Tim. 2:8-12 and 1 Pet. 3:3-4 is one such condition. But there is something else yet. Where was Sarah when she said that most commendable thing within herself? "And they said to him, WHERE is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, IN THE TENT" (Gen. 18:9).

Ed. Dennett observed,

Another direction especially to young wives, is that they should be "keepers at home" (Titus 2:5), or, according to another reading, "workers at home." The meaning in either case is much the same; for wives are reminded that their sphere of service is home, and that no work or pleasure should be suffered to interfere with their domestic position. It is God who has given them the home as their field of labor; and hence it is a matter of faithfulness to Him that they diligently occupy it.²⁶

The wife is exhorted to attachment to husband and children, not to a "career." Coupled with this is exhortation to be discreet and chaste. There is a moral connection among these things. They suit one another. They go together. And diligence in domestic duties with attachment to husband and children may help one to be discreet and chaste. Pursuing a "career" may have quite an opposite tendency as domestic responsibilities become resented and a spirit of independency develops. Observers with discernment are becoming aware that day care centers are producing a generation that is more aggressive yet insecure, less cooperative and tolerant, etc. The home is the proper day care center

25. *The Christian Household*, pp. 40,41.

26. *The Christian Household*, p. 44.

for a child's development in an atmosphere of love and firmness that a mother that fears the Lord will have regarding those God has committed to her care. She is exhorted to be "good in the sense of kindness" (W. Kelly). She is not a mere house keeper, but a wife and mother. She has the Lord always before her, even when patience is tried, as indeed it will be.

Coupled with this is subjection to the husband. A home will be managed in accordance with the desires of the husband. In 1 Tim. 5:14 Paul, speaking of younger widows, wills that they marry, bear children, and "rule the house"; and these things have a general application to young women, of course. Here we see the woman ordering the running of the household, managing it within the framework expressed by the husband.

It is lovely to see that when Abraham was asked where Sarah was, he said she was in the tent (Gen. 18:9). Christians sometimes wonder what a woman characterized as one diligent in home work can do for the Lord. The things that Sarah prepared spoke of Christ as the food of God (Gen. 18:6). Then there was the blessed Jael who smote the captain of the enemy's host through with a tent-pin, that which spoke of the pilgrim character of God's people (Judg. 4:22; 5:24). Victory comes by our homes being characterized by the pilgrim character, homes where Christ is brought before God for His pleasure.

There was the great woman of Shunem also, who asked her husband that they make a room for Elisha. Hospitality is commended in the Word of God (Heb. 13:1). Her husband consented to her exercise and blessing happily resulted. It is always right to act in communion with the mind of the husband, within the scope of God's Word, obedience to Him being above all. Unhappily, Eve acted quite otherwise, and no doubt her attraction for Adam led him to follow her disobedience to God. Thus through Adam's disobedience a world of sin, misery and death resulted. A woman's actions necessarily have moral consequences upon others, especially her household.

The whole of Prov. 31:10-31 is worthy of close examination. Does a woman desire of the Lord a husband who is known in the gates (Prov. 31:23)? Then study to have the characteristics of the wife of such a man, as is found in this chapter.

The woman of worth in Prov. 31 (Ruth was a woman of worth -- Ruth 3:11, J. N. D.) was diligent in home work as the chapter shows. We wish to point out several things that indicate activities that may occasionally carry one away from home, for to be diligent at home work does not mean that one is confined there. Indeed, that would restrict a woman from engaging in those good works that ought to characterize the Lord's people (1 Tim. 5:10,25; 6:18; Titus 2:14; 3:8; Heb. 10:24; 1 Pet. 2:12).

It was not inconsistent for the woman of worth as a subject wife and devoted mother, and as diligent in domestic responsibilities, to bring in some income in some way (Prov. 31:24). Nor was it out of place for her to even consider a field and buy it (Prov. 31:16). No doubt there are spiritual lessons in this, but there are the temporal facts stated also. However, she made no career out of real estate, and did all within the scope of the order for the household as required by the husband.

She helped the needy too, a most important thing (Prov. 31:20; James 1:27).

"Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates" (Prov. 31:31). A woman that fears the Lord shall be praised; if not now, Christ will know how to do it. "Them that honor me, I will honor."

The marks of the woman of worth are not her family back-ground, fortune, looks or intelligence, but virtue. Weigh this in the sanctuary!

Finally, the subjection and reverence due the husband is not because of his character, education, money, work or looks, but simply because God says it is due him. How

blessed for the soul that all is grounded upon the will of God! Our Lord Jesus came to do the will of God (Heb. 10:7). The will of God was motivation for His every, perfect step. His delight was in Jehovah's law (Psa. 1:2). Christ is the blessed man of Psalm 1. None was ever like Him.

The mention of Thy name shall bow
Our hearts to worship Thee;
The chiefest of ten thousand Thou,
Whose love has set us free.

The Son has made us free indeed, free in Christian liberty to walk in His steps as empowered by the Spirit. Christian liberty is not freedom to do as I please. It is freedom from self to serve Him (Rom. 6:22; 2 Cor. 5:14,15; 1 Pet. 2:16; 2 Pet. 2:18; James 1:22-25). Let us fix our gaze upon the perfect law, that of liberty (James 1:25). This is the liberty of the new nature energized, exhorted, and encouraged by the implanted Word urging the new nature to do those very things that it is the very delight of that new nature to do, that it might please God in all things.

EXTENT OF SUBJECTION

In Eph. 5:24 we read, "But even as the assembly is subjected to the Christ, so also wives to their own husbands *in everything*." Col. 3:18 says, "Wives, be subject to [your] own husbands, *as is fitting in [the] Lord*."

These Scriptures do not tell us that a wife must not have a differing judgment from her husband; or that she may not express it while in the attitude of subjection. One in authority may not always take the wisest course, but that is not a basis for rebellion, else, all earthly authority is immediately at an end. No, there is another course with respect to differences of judgment. It is called subjection. A husband's mind might be changed by facts and considerations brought before him by his dear wife, who ought to do so in a manner consistent with what we have learned, but if his mind is not changed, she must remember that the one in authority will be held responsible by God Who has given that authority.

On the other hand, to take a plain case, if a husband tells his wife to steal something, "We ought to obey God rather than man" (Acts 5:29). Obedience to God is still her course. Where the man contravenes the commandments of the Lord, the Lord must be obeyed. The wife is subject as is fitting in the Lord. But let not a woman turn a judgment of hers into a command of the Lord. Love and consideration by the husband and subjection by the wife will resolve the difficulties one may feel. We are entitled to count upon God in these things.

The wife therefore occupies the same place relatively to her husband as the church to Christ; and hence her position, as before said, is one of subjection. And it may be needful to remark that her place is in no way affected by the character of the husband. It is quite true that her position may in many cases be rendered extremely difficult. For example, a Christian wife, converted after her marriage, may have an ungodly husband, and one who renders her life as wretched as it is possible for his evil heart to make it; still her place remains untouched by this or any other circumstance; and the more difficult it may be rendered, even by absence of affection on the part of the husband, or of features of character which would command her respect, the more careful she must be to occupy her place in faithfulness to the Lord. Just indeed as our duties to kings, etc., "the powers that be", are altogether irrespective of their personal character, so the duty of a wife to her husband is never altered by his character.

It may seem to some as if the duty of the wife, as so explained, were one of the hard sayings difficult to receive. And to nature, no doubt, it would be often

impossible. But mark the provision made for this in the Word: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, *as unto the Lord*." Thus the Lord Himself is brought before the mind of the wife; and we all know that things which in themselves are irksome and indeed intolerable are rendered light and joyous when done unto the Lord. So in the case supposed, if the wife keep the Lord before her -- sees the Lord as it were behind her husband -- she will find obedience easy to his most unreasonable commands, because she will then receive all from the Lord.²⁷

ACTING WITHOUT THE HUSBAND

We briefly call attention to the solemn consequences of Eve's acting apart from her head. There is a lesson in this which it is well for us to ponder. A world full of grief has been the consequence.

27. *The Christian Household*, p. 37 (1888).

***A SINGLE, CHRISTIAN WOMAN MAY
EXPECT FROM THE LORD A MAN
THAT SHE FINDS
EASY TO OBEY AND REVERENCE***

Is it too much to ask from the Lord a man who will seek to carry out the Lord's will for husbands, as well as the Word of God in general, a man who will have respect for a woman's conscience? "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask evilly, that ye may consume [it] in your pleasures" (James 4:3).

It would be well for a woman who desires a husband from the Lord to read 1 Tim. 3 and Titus 1 to see what God requires in an overseer and a servant. Not all of these qualifications are found in a young unmarried man, but some could be, namely: irreproachable, sober, discreet, decorous, not given to excesses from wine, not a striker, but mild, not addicted to contention, not fond of money . . . grave, not double-tongued, not seeking gain by base means, not headstrong, not passionate, a lover of goodness, just, pious, temperate, clinging to the faithful word according to the doctrine taught. There are other Scriptures also which apply to the case. If she desires to practice what we have had in the previous pages, she will want a husband who is looking for a woman in whom is found those marks we have been considering. She may then ask for, and expect to receive, a man who desires to obey the Word of God, if it is the will of God for her to marry.

But if you want trinkets, or if you wear them and expose yourself to "catch a husband", then you will get what you deserve, a man who is persuaded by that. It is part of his character and there are other things which accompany this. Weigh it in the sanctuary.