

The subject of headship is one which is central to our relationships not just towards God but between ourselves. Such attitudes should set us apart from the world in general. The words contained in 1 Corinthians are given to help us; they speak of aspects in terms of attitude and these are reflected by certain outward observations/actions. This is done to emphasise the motivation behind choices and subsequent appearance. Verse 3 states the head of man is Christ, the head of the woman is man and the head of Christ is GOD. As God is the prime head.

The words of Jesus when asked what is the greatest commandment - *Thou shalt Love the Lord God with all your heart, mind and being/life* was his reply then he added the second *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*. The list of headship with God at the top is made to allow understanding of certain key points of how relationships should be applied. An obvious danger is they can be misused. In modern society the rights of male/ female have been tweaked. God's divine declaration regarding gender roles are therefore manipulated. We have to ask what is the purpose behind the headship spoken of in verse 3 by Paul. To do this let us consider the position of mankind, male and female. Firstly all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. That point establishes a common base line.

Eve, the first woman, was beguiled by the serpent and ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Adam, the first man, also ate of the fruit and thereby came under the condemnation. To put both genders in their places the man was given the responsibility of governing the family unit, the woman the role of strengthening that governorship. The reason for this was both Adam and Eve failed in these tasks. A pattern oft repeated by both genders across the passing of time. However this male and female relationship was to be directed or constructed on God's ways not the ways of self which is ever the way of the flesh and ultimately failure. Honour/dishonour, glory and shame are also linked or associated with the pattern of headship.

We are also given the element of a covering. A clear connection to the saving work of Jesus who, as the book of Revelation declares is worthy/The Lamb of God (Rev 4). Further he was tempted yet did not sin. However it is linked to the physical characteristic of hair and how it is to be worn, Short for male Long for female. Of note is the example of a woman who washed the feet of Jesus and then wiped them with the hair of her head. But we may ask why hair? It is a mark of compliance to God's arrangements. After all we can let it grow or cut it

short as we personally want/choose. However what does God recommend? Of a personal observation are my parents. Dad, when young, had a ring worm infection on his head and doctors gave him a drastic treatment which left him without hair on the top of his head. A condition he found difficulty with. He grew his hair long at the back and combed it forward in an attempt to change his appearance. A manifestation of vanity yet also a hint of the divine protocol of short hair for the male. My mother met my Dad and they were married. She was at this time possessed of short hair as per the wedding photos and early pictures. However, as their knowledge of the scriptures increased, she resolved to grow her hair long. Additionally she adopted a scarf as scripture also states a woman who prophesieth or prays with her head uncovered dishonoureth her husband.

Examples of male role model behaviour recommendations are given in 1 Tim 3 and Titus. An extra example for woman is illustrated in Proverbs 31, described as qualities of a virtuous woman.

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