

LEADER DISCUSSION GUIDE

citygroups

Summer 2022

Week of June 19

1 Corinthians 11:2–16

DISCUSSION FOCUS

Read (Primary Text): 1 Corinthians 11:2–16

Supporting Texts: Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18; 2:10; 1 Timothy 2:8–10.

MAIN IDEA: Believers are to conduct themselves in public worship in a manner that recognizes proper authority and is reverent through modesty and gender distinction.

OBSERVE

What does Paul mean by the word “head” in v. 3? *In Eph 5:23, there is somewhat of a parallel to our present passage since it also talks about husband and wife. It is clear from both passages that “head” means authority. See also Eph 1:22; 5:23; Col 1:18; 2:10.*

What is the basis for Paul’s arguments regarding women wearing head coverings in public worship (vv. 8–16)?

- *Woman was created from man (v. 8)*
- *Woman was created as a helper for man (v. 9)*
- *The angels desire to see proper worship (v. 10)*
- *A woman’s hair is her glory (v. 15). (In order to deflect that glory to God, she should wear a head covering).*
- *All of the churches in the 1st Century practice head coverings (v. 16).*

What are the arguments from nature all about (vv. 13–15)? *In a culture where men wore short hair and women wore long hair, Paul is making the observation that men who wear long hair can look like women, blurring gender distinctions. Thus, this brings dishonor upon himself. At the same time, however, women who wear long hair bring honor upon themselves because it highlights that gender distinction.*

INTERPRET

What is the main point of Paul’s argument in vv. 2–16? What is he getting at? *By wearing what they were wearing (men and women) in public worship gatherings, they were bringing dishonor on their “head” (authority).*

- *The covering for men was either something that covered their literal head or an external clothing such as a toga or tunic, which often gave one the external appearance of importance. Thus, men dishonored Christ by bringing glory to themselves.*
- *The uncovering for women was the opposite in that they were showing off their hair, a significant mark of physical beauty. Although the long hair honors themselves as it*

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highlights gender distinction, it also draws attention to themselves and sends a message that they were “available” in that culture. Therefore, they should wear a covering.

APPLY

What do we learn about the value and role of men and women from this passage? *They are both valued equally before God (Galatians 3:28). Although vv. 7–10 concentrate on an authoritative structure in roles, vv. 11–12 balance this with equal value and interdependence. In the same way that the Son is equal in value to the Father but voluntarily submits His role to the Father, this is how women and men are to understand their value and roles in marriage and in the church.*

Should women be required to wear head coverings in worship? *Remember the principle...gender distinctions and bringing honor to the “head” during worship. In 21st century American culture, head coverings do not have the same meanings or implications that they had in 1st Century Corinth. We need to apply the principle rather than the specific instructions: 1) Avoid anything that confuses gender; 2) Avoid anything that brings attention or honor to self rather than God; 3) Avoid anything that would distract from God in worship.*