

ML205 Tokens of Authority

God's chain of Command is God, Christ, man and woman [1Co. 11:3]. God bears the burden for Christ. Christ bears the burden for man; man bears the burden for the woman. "The buck stops" with the man; then with Christ, and then with God.

Paul's teaching [1Co. 11:4-16] concerns submission to authorities, evidenced by one symbol and by one token. First, however, we must correct a misconception. Genesis 1:26 reads: "God said, 'Let us make man in our image...'" If you don't read V27 too, you may think God made the woman in His image: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Images are visible, only the male bears the visible image of God. Paul confirms the woman does not bear God's image in 1Co. 11:7: "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man."

Now, because God made the man in His image, and because Christ is this image [Col. 1:15], the male body resembles the physical body of Jesus. So then, the male body is God's visible image.

There's a biblical teaching [not addressed in this lesson] that neither man nor woman can approach God [in prayer] without a symbol or token of Christ's image. The image of man is the symbol, long hair is the token. These are the aforementioned symbol and token.

To approach God in prayer, the man only needs to ensure that he doesn't cover his image [with long hair]; the woman only needs to ensure that she doesn't remove her token. Long hair is her token.

The man uncovers his image by letting his hair grow too long; the woman uncovers her token by cutting her hair too short. Paul teaches that it's a shame for either the man or the woman to approach God in prayer without the proper covering. Yet even this statute is spiritual. So, let's go through this again.

The man should not cover his image with hair; the woman should wear hair long enough for it to be her token [1Co. 11:15]. So, the man should come before the Lord

bearing God's image, and the woman should come before the Lord bearing her token.

The man's uncovered image shows his submission to Christ, and the woman's token shows her submission to her husband [who has Christ's image].

Again, men shouldn't wear long hair and women shouldn't wear short hair. But how long is long, and how short is short? Paul answers this in 1Co. 11:14-15: "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering."

How does nature teach people how long to wear their hair? Men feel shame when their hair is too long; women feel shame when their hair is too short. Thus, whether women or men, shame is the measure for hair length.

First Corinthians 11:16 contain a word that diversifies this measure. This word is "custom" and it means "mutual habituation." It's derived from a preposition that denotes union and from a noun that denotes moral habits or manners. Thus, the common hair lengths in a society affect how long men's hair grows before they feel shame, and how short women's hair may be before they feel shame.

Another point in 1Co. 11:16: "... WE have no such custom, NEITHER the churches of God." In that first phrase, WE refer to the general society; in that second phrase, NEITHER refers to believers in the Church.

The distinctions Paul made by WE and NEITHER confirm that social customs influence natural feelings of shame. Although not of the world but being in the world, worldly customs affect the saints' feelings of shame, and thus the standard for hair length in the Church.

God gave men and women these natural senses to help them maintain their positions of authority in His chain of command. Short hair is masculine and long hair is feminine. Thus, God gave the man a natural sense to help manifest his image, and He gave the woman a natural sense to help manifest her token.

However, in these last days, the NEITHER'S are losing their natural senses because the WE'S are turning the world upside down.