

Knowing God: Formality and Customs (Part 3)

Hair Length and Clothing Reflect The Heart

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The world has its religious catch phrase, asking, "What would Jesus do?" It is a question that we too should be asking ourselves as well as we approach the making of any choice. What we are searching for here is God's point of view, and this is good because God has a point of view in just about everything, and His point of view is always right.

God has a perspective from which He looks at things and judges their value for their potential for right or wrong, success or failure, enjoyment or discouragement, pleasure or pain, abundance or depredation. His perspective is something that we should always seek to find and to do.

The terms that I am using? *point of view* and *perspective*? might also be referred to in something that you might see in a newspaper or a news magazine as *world view*, meaning the way one looks at the world. World view, perspective, or point of view are virtually synonymous. There are subtle points of differences between the three, but in a general sense they define the *point of reference* from which we perceive things. The things perceived might be a geo-political situation. It might be economic, military, medical, marital relations, education, childrearing, clothing, decorum, hair length. You name it.

A Christian's point of reference, his world view, his perspective, should always be from his faith from the pages of the Bible; thus the question, "What would Jesus do?" or "How does God look at this person, thing, or situation?"

II Corinthians 10:3-7 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds,) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ: And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. Do you look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.

The very purpose of the time granted to us following repentance and forgiveness is that we might bring our point of view into exact harmony with God's, and then follow through by doing exactly, actually, as God said He would do. So asking "What would Jesus do?" is literally a step in seeking God. It is this that makes the difference in whether one grows, changes, or overcomes. I am not saying that this is at all easy.

At times growing, changing, or overcoming is sort of like pushing a wet noodle up the street with your nose, and making some choices. It is not like pushing a button on an electrical device, or shifting gears in an automobile. This is because decisions have sources, and Jesus said that the source is the heart, and each one of us carries that source with us everywhere we go. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, our heart moves to dictate its point of view, and conduct follows. Our heart actively resists making changes.

All of our life our heart pretty much has had its way. Its point of view is strongly engraved there. The heart looks, as Paul said, on the outward appearance. The heart's point of view?its approach, its method in reaching and making decisions?is to look on the outward appearance, which means that it has a tendency to look only on the surface of a circumstance, and then react. It reacts then because it is driven by fear, not terror, but the fear of the loss to the self. Fear motivates us to conform, to submit to what we fear.

I John 2:15-17 is a scripture that we are all very familiar with.

I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

We are drawn to things that we love, but here we are commanded to not love the world.

I John 2:15-17 If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides forever.

The human heart naturally respects what, in this case, John calls *the world*, and it fears losing the world's good opinion of it, and so it pulls one to conform to its ways to whatever is fashionable at the moment or traditional to the culture. The human heart *created* this world, and therefore it feels very comfortable with it, and it respects it, and it pulls us in that direction. This is a major reason why the *fear of God*, as David wrote in Psalm 34, must be learned. This *fear of God* does not come naturally, because God cannot be seen, heard, smelled, touched, or tasted.

The human heart walks (lives) by its point of view. Its world view, its perspective, is actuated by what the Bible calls *sight*?meaning the physical senses. They are factors that are only on the surface of thought, and those who fear God must be motivated by faith to conform to Him and His ways, and faith is not something that is on the surface. But the human heart looks upon the surface, and it resists, it makes justifications as to why it should continue the way it always has, despite the truth. Whatever it is considering does not fit God's point of view, and so it justifies in order to convince itself that *its* point of view *is* God's point of view. That is why Paul said we must "cast down imaginations (meaning arguments) and every high thing (meaning pretensions or claims) by which the heart exalts itself against the knowledge of God."

God is reminding us here through Paul that there is a war going on for control of our heart, and

thus our loyalties. The human heart has strongholds of which pride, prejudice, and competitive stubbornness are but a few. The lessons of God are truth, love, righteousness, faith, and vision of God's purpose.

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of *his* might.

Our citizenship *is* in the Kingdom of God, and we are challenged on every side by this world to back away from its standards and remain conformed to this world. The non-Christian beliefs of this world are then supported by our heart by speaking its arguments that have wide appeal to the public. But those arguments almost invariably give little or no place to the morality of their view, and thus God's point of view? His revelation? is ignored by our heart, and so we must face the arguments and pretensions that our heart raises. But at the same time we must understand that others with the same kind of heart are not going to see things the way God does.

The reason we see things differently is because of God's miraculous intervention in our life by making us aware of, and concerned about His point of view. God, by His spirit, has impressed Himself and His way on us in a way, and to an extent, that He has not done to those people who are in the world.

Satan's main weapons to destroy our loyalties and to keep us from growing are first, deception; and then if that does not work, brutal, cruel force. One of his more successful ploys has been to convince many people that God does not care what we look like, that He only cares about what is in our heart.

Are you familiar with what it says in the context of Ezekiel 16? We will read a small part of it. In this chapter God is personifying Himself, and He is personifying Israel as a girl.

Ezekiel 16:6 And when I passed by you, and saw you polluted in your own blood, I said unto you, when you were in your blood, Live; yes, I said unto you when you were in your blood, Live.

Get a picture of this young woman bloody, filthy dirty. Maybe the blood is decaying. There is a stench there. Everybody else would pass her by as a hopeless thing, fleeing in horror. But God did not pass by.

Ezekiel 16:7-14 I have *caused* you to multiply as the bud of the field, and you have increased and grown great, and you are come to excellent ornaments: your breasts are fashioned, and your hair is grown, whereas you were naked and bare. Now when I passed by you, and looked upon you, behold, your time was the time of love, and I spread my skirt over you, and covered your nakedness: yes, I swore unto you, and entered into a covenant with you, says the LORD GOD, and you became mine. [God is now picturing a marriage.] Then washed I you with water; yes, I thoroughly washed away your blood from you,

and I anointed you with oil. I clothed you also with embroidered work, and shod you with badgers' skin, and I girded you about with fine lines, and I covered you with silk. I decked you also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon your hands, and a chain on your neck. And I put a jewel on your forehead, and earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown upon your head. Thus were you decked with gold and silver: and your raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and embroidered work: you did eat fine flour, and honey, and oil and you were exceeding beautiful, and you did prosper into a kingdom. And your renown went forth among the heathen for your beauty: for it was perfect through ~~My~~ *My* comeliness, which *I* had put upon you, says the LORD GOD.

If God is only concerned about the heart, why did He go to all this trouble to adorn her externally? He cleaned her up, put beautiful clothing and jewelry on her, fixed her hair, and you name it. It would seem to me that in order for her to be a reflection of *Him* she had to begin, in a sense, to look like Him as well. God has standards, and His point of view is reflected in those standards.

Does not the creation, which is visible to us and that we can see with our own eyes, testify of the beauty of His holiness? Does not His word testify that He wants us to be in His image? And does not virtually every description of Him in His word testify of the beauty of His outward appearance? The beauty of character in the heart *and* the external beauty, according to His standard, *is* the standard.

I believe that the most significant thing that I said in my previous sermon revolved around this concept that people think that God does not care what we look like or what we wear. That is *amajor* deception, because what is in our heart is *revealed* by what we do on the *outside*.

Mark 7:20-23 And he [Jesus] said, That which comes out of the man [that which is on the *outside*] defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

What is in the heart is seen on the *outside*. We very truly cannot see the evil thought that is in the heart, but we do see on the outside what the evil heart motivates, and that includes the way we look and the way we dress. What we do on the outside includes the way we look, which in turn includes personal cleanliness, our hair, our clothing, whether one is all painted up, or overweight.

The world practices the *throwing out the baby with the bath water* principle in relation to God's standards by saying that God is only concerned about what is in one's heart, and so they ignore God's laws and examples that He shows in the book that sets the standards. The irony is that all the while their heart is dictating to them to *break* God's standards. If their heart were truly in

harmony with the Word of God, they would *do* what Jesus did. They would walk as Jesus walked. This is why they are so sloppily informal in their worship service. They are oblivious to the fact that the sloppy spiritual state of their heart is being betrayed by the sloppy informal manner of their dress. You can be sure that Jesus was neither sloppy nor immodest, nor was He worshipping the dictates of this world's fashion industry.

John 8:29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father has not left me alone: *for I do always those things that please him.*

God is pleased when we dress, keep, and adorn ourselves in a manner that pleases Him. Now would Jesus live in a filthy disorderly dump? Circumstances might force Him to do so for a period of time, but I can assure you that in very short order He would have the cleanest most orderly dump you ever saw. That thing would begin to change. The way of God is *always* to upgrade to *His* standards as He provides, and as He makes possible. That is important. This is because upgrading according to His standard is good for us, and it glorifies Him along the way as well.

Let us begin looking at some specific items of our appearance by going back to Ezekiel 44. My Bible has a paragraph break right at this point with a little title over the top of it, and it says "Instructions for the Priests." Pay attention, priests.

Ezekiel 44:9-12 Thus says the Lord God: No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel. And the Levites that are gone away far from me when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols: they shall even bear their iniquity: Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the house; and ministering to the house: they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them. Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; therefore have I lifted up my hand against them, says the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their iniquity.

Do you know what that phrase "lifted up my hand against them" means? If you go to spank your child, what do you do? You lift up your hand. That is what He did. He lifted up His hand, and He spanked them.

Ezekiel 44:13-20 And they shall not come near unto me to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, in the most holy place: but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed. But I will make them keepers of the charge of the house, ?[He is going to bring about changes], ?for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done

therein. But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, says the Lord GOD: They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge. And it shall come to pass that when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments; and no wool shall come upon them while they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within. [He is beginning to talk about clothing here.] They shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, and shall have linen breeches upon their loins; they shall not gird themselves with anything that causes sweat. And when they go forth into the utter court, even into the utter court to the people, they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments; and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments. Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long; they shall only poll [or cut] their heads.

I read that context because I wanted you to see it in a wider sense. The context involves instructions to the priests and Levites, and concerns correcting them because they did not serve Him righteously earlier in time. The very first issues specifically addressed regarding their iniquity of serving their idols are *clothing* and *hair length*.

Throughout man's history rituals and symbolic overtones surround hair. It has always been important and controversial. Even in most of our lifetimes hair, along with drugs, grungy clothes, and obnoxious lazy argumentative behavior, became the symbols of the rebellions of the sixties and seventies.

The Bible has its share of hair history as well, because, believe it or not, there are over one hundred references to it within it.

Leviticus 13:3-4 And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and when the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight be deeper than the skin of his flesh, it is a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and pronounce him unclean. If the bright spot be white in the skin of his flesh, and in sight be not deeper than the skin, and the hair thereof be not turned white; then the priest shall shut up him that has the plague seven days.

Leviticus 13:32 And in the seventh day the priest shall look on the plague: and, behold, if the scall spread not, and there be in it no yellow hair, and the scall be not in sight deeper than the skin.

And then further directions are given. I gave those verses to give you just a little overview to

the introduction to hair in the Bible. Hair is referred to thirteen times in this chapter, and in chapter 14 three more times. It is being used here as a sign, a general signal of one's health. In this particular case in these chapters, hair—all bodily hair as well as head hair—is taken into account, and a priest served the community as its health inspector. Pay attention to this, because I think that you understand that these things have spiritual overtones.

We are being prepared to be kings and priests. Kings and priests both perform what the Bible calls "judging." The only major difference between the two is that the king judges *civil* matters, and the priests judge *spiritual, moral, and ethical* matters. This does not mean that the king does not judge any of those things, but those are the dominant areas that they judge in. As we are seeing here in chapters 13 and 14, it was the priest's job to judge as the city's health inspector. He judged things involving cleanliness.

Now, converted parents. Take a look at your hair, and while you are at it, judge your children's hair. In these chapters the issue primarily is one's physical health, but the chapter is teaching us that hair can be an external indicator of one's *internal* physical health. If you understand the intent of the law, you will understand that hair (as we are going to see, and specifically hair *length*) is often an external symbol of one's *spiritual* state. Thus it once again can be an external reflection of what is in a person's heart.

II Samuel 14:25-26 But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. And when he polled [or cut] his head [or hair], (for it was at every year's end that he polled it: because the hair was heavy on him, therefore he polled it), he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels after the king's weight.

In Absalom's case, his full head of long hair was a symbol of his vanity. He had a handsome appearance. He had a winsome personality, but it hid a cunning viciousness in his heart. You know what he did to his father. He subverted practically the whole nation of Israel against his father [who was] a godly man. This young fellow's heart was full of vicious cunning, and he was going to go so far as to kill his own father if he had to in order to get hold of the throne. The hair on the outside served as an external visual reference point of what was in his heart. He was really proud of his long hair. That man was spiritually sick.

You might also recall another kind of interesting situation that involved Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 4:28-33 All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of Babylon. The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of *my* power, and for the honour of *my* majesty? [What vanity!] While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom is departed from you. And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field:

they shall make you to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over you until you *know* the most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

He was cursed, and his hair became long like an eagle's feathers, and thus it symbolized a vain wildness of heart that was in him. His heart deceived him. Jeremiah 17: 9 says: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and is desperately wicked." It is incurably sick, and that is the way Nebuchadnezzar was. He took all the glory upon himself. In this case he merely symbolizes what is in all of men until God humbles them. God humbled Nebuchadnezzar in this manner, and showed what was in Nebuchadnezzar's heart by what happened to him.

Peter here is talking about converted wives:

I Peter 3:3-4 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel: But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price.

Turn now to I Timothy 2 and we will let Paul speak on this.

I Timothy 2:9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.

Neither Paul nor Peter is condemning well-set hair. They are not contradicting what God wrote in Ezekiel 16. They are drawing attention to *extreme* hair styles and ostentatious clothing that are a display of the vanity that resides in the heart, as contrasted to what *really* should be there: modesty, meekness, sobriety (meaning level-headedness), common sense, and good works. Thus the wrong kind of clothing and hair style?the kinds that overtly draw attention to sexuality?become a clear external signal of what is in the heart. What the hair and clothing signal is that in the heart of that person is a worldly-minded preoccupation with what is on the outside rather than what should be in the heart. These same principles are true for men just as surely as they are for women, but because men have the power, they exploit women for their *own* sexual titillation.

Let us go back to Isaiah 3: 24. God willing, in the next sermon we will spend a good deal of time in Isaiah 3, but right now I only want one verse.

Isaiah 3:24 And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell [of the fragrance of a perfume] there shall be stink: and instead of a girdle

a rent: and instead of well set hair baldness: and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth: and burning instead of beauty.

What I am getting at here of course touches on the subject of hair, and what God is inferring here is an imposed baldness is a symbol of shame. The key word here is *imposed*. An imposed baldness is a symbol of shame. Now together with the sackcloth that appears in the verse, it is signaling a forced, abject, extremely unpleasant change of circumstance. In many countries a woman having her head shaved of all of its hair is the punishment for an arrested prostitute.

Leviticus 19:27-28 You shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shall you mar the corners of your beard. You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD.

Here He speaks against the hairstyle deliberately designed to attract attention. In this case it was a certain hairstyle used by the pagans to draw attention through an external sign that they were mourning. You might recall there in Leviticus 10 when God killed Nadab and Abihu, that Moses very quickly told Aaron, "Do not *dare* show any sign at all of disagreement with God's judgment here, or the same thing might happen to you!" God is speaking here against a hairstyle deliberately designed to attract attention, and in this case to the state of the heart. "*My heart is mourning!*" "*Look at me.*" "*Take pity on me.*" That is what the outside is saying because the person's heart is so low.

The pagans felt that the hairstyle and the cuttings, or the tattoos, influenced the will of their deity to be favorably disposed toward them. I want you to understand this, because that is not as weird as it might sound. Brethren, exactly the same principle is at work in regard to the true God. The only difference is that He *is* the *true God*, and His standards are correct, and doing them is a blessing for all. The pagans were off the mark only in the direction that they were doing these things. Their direction was to a pagan god. But just as surely as they were doing it to the pagan god, our God wants us to pay attention to what His standards are in regard to hairstyle. Not so much to the hairstyle, but to pay attention very much to hair length and the type of clothing. If we do those things in regard to Him and meet His standards, He is very pleased, because that brings glory upon Him, and it is good for us to be in the image of Him.

Our God is saying that we should be clean, that we should be pleasantly dressed so that nothing in the overall appearance draws overt attention to any part of the body. One of our major goals should be to never be a stumbling block nor an obvious cause of offense to others.

I Corinthians 11:4-5 Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman that prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

I Corinthians 11:13-15 Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Does 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.

The overall subjects in this chapter are government, gender roles, and hair length. They are all generalities, but they are nonetheless all linked within the context of this chapter. I might say that the context of this chapter eventually zeros in on hair length. The subject here is a general statement on hair length, not hair style. I am not going to go into detail explaining each verse, but Paul's approach is to give proofs from a variety of sources. His contention is that a woman's hair length must be long, and a man's hair length short.

In his argument, Paul shows that God has created an order, an arrangement?rules for life to be conducted within. In practical application, He has assigned somewhat different roles for male and female.

I want you to recall again the definition of the word "formal." It means "in accordance with rules." I am going to give you a definition of another word. This is the definition of the word "casual." You hear an awful lot these days about being "*casual*." Do you have any idea what "casual" means? It is very interesting. I am going to give you the definition of the word "casual" from the *Reader's Digest Oxford Complete Word Finder*. It says "Casual means: made or done without care or thought, accidental, due to chance; not regular, not permanent, temporary; unconcerned, acting carelessly."

Paul contends in verses 4 and 5 that in God's formal arrangement, for a man to have long hair is disrespectful of his head, and his governmental Head is Christ. For a woman to have short hair is for her to be disrespectful *to her* head, and her governmental head is a man. Hair length is a symbol of a gender role in life. Remember, as we showed in the last sermon, these principles reverberate all the way to God, and so for her to have short hair is to be uncovered, and is disrespectful to the Father and the Son just as surely as it is to her husband.

One commentator made an interesting observation concerning this subject when he connected the Genesis 1 and 2 account of the creation to I Corinthians 11. He stated that when God created the animals, the implication is that He made male and female simultaneously?both at once?and maybe many of them all at the same time. I do not know. The key word here is "simultaneously"?all at once. But when He created mankind, He created male and female *separately*, thus showing that they were equal before Him in terms of judgment, but at the same time *distinct* from each other because each was assigned different roles involving governmental factors. Because He assigned each separate roles involving governmental factors, the fulfilling of these factors is the preparation for the Kingdom of God.

We are seeing God's point of view here on hair length. Animals play no distinct significant roles as male and female. In their operation the gender difference is merely sexual, and sex is only a matter of reproduction. But with a man and a woman the difference is of far greater magnitude, impacting greatly on the quality of life depending upon how well they fulfill their assigned roles in life. A man and a woman's judgment is largely based on how well they fulfill their roles. One assignment is that man is the head, and woman is the helper. Thus Paul is saying that God

created both male and female, and that God wants this distinction to be clearly visible.

I want you to consider this: Circumcision was the sign under the Old Covenant of one who had made the Old Covenant with God. However, a woman was not circumcised, and the man's circumcision was hidden from view because it was covered by clothing; thus the sign of the covenant was for all intent and purposes *hidden* from outside view. Now with hair length, both the sign of the covenant and the distinctiveness of the roles are brought together. Hair length is the sign used to make the distinction between the roles clear, and at the same time to give one an example?an *external* thing someone could look at and say, "This person is circumcised."

Now can you see the circumcision in one's heart? It is just as hidden as the circumcision in the flesh, but the distinctiveness (the gender difference) of man and woman is intended by God to be shown not only in hair length, but also the fact that they have made the covenant with God as well, and that they are circumcised in heart. Do you think hair length is not important to God? Oh yes it is, because it shows whether you are submissive to His government or not. It shows whether you have made the covenant and are carrying through with your part. Hair length is a matter of respect of the *fear of God* just as surely as keeping the Sabbath is a sign and matter of respect. It is not as important as keeping the Sabbath, but it is still nonetheless a sign. It is a means of silently witnessing that your God *is* God. So for a woman to be either shorn (cut short) or shaved is not acceptable. For a man, long hair is unacceptable. Now how long?

One of the keys to this subject in this chapter is the Greek word *katakalupto*. It appears twice in verse 6 as "covered," (once positively and once negatively) in reference to a woman. It appears again in verse 7 negatively in reference to a man. *Katakalupto* literally means "down falling." The prefix *kata* means "down," and *kalupto* means "falling," and so it designates something that is hanging down.

In the I Corinthians 11 context, a woman's long hair hangs down, but a man's short hair does not hang down. There is nothing difficult about this, but the world has largely twisted *hair* in this chapter into a *veil*. There is a reason why they did this, and it is a legitimate reason, but they should not have carried it this far.

Strong's Concordance # 2619 begins this way: "Cover wholly."

In I Corinthians 11: 4, *having his head covered* is literally *having something down the head*, signifying that hair that hangs down is too long for a man; and consequently, hair that does not hang down on a woman is too short.

Strong's then goes on and references from *Thayer's Dictionary*, from *Brown's, Art Gingrich Dictionary*, and from *The Theology Dictionary of the New Testament*. Just a little bit of caution here. If you look up this word in Strong's, it might not say all that I quoted. The reason for that is because I have the latest edition of Strong's that contains a very greatly expanded lexicon over previous editions.

Let me give you what Zodhiates says regarding this same word. It appears on Page 830. This is

a rather long quote.

Quoting Zodhiates:

To cover with a veil or something which hangs down; hence, *to veil*.

We know what the Bible's answer to this is. A woman's hair is her covering.

Continuing Zodhiates quote:

In the passive, *kataluptomi* means *to be covered, to be veiled, or to wear a veil*. The covering here involves either the hair of a woman hanging down, or in the case that it may not be possible, *the veil*.

In my experience in the church I have seen this happen sometimes where a woman went to the barber, and the barber/hairdresser cut her hair too short. The woman was ashamed to come to services, and so she put a veil on her head. That was the right thing for her to do in that case. See, *in the case that it may not be possible, the veil.*" But you do not need a veil if your hair is long enough. God is satisfied with that.

Continuing Zodhiates quote:

It must be remembered in this connection that women of loose morals, especially the prostitute priestesses of the temple of Aphrodite at Corinth, kept their hair very short in order to be distinguished for what they were.

You see what hair does. It is telling the world *what you are!* That is why I gave you all that about the circumcision. Hair is important to God. Hair length is important to God. He wants your hair length to portray the fact before the world that you are *circumcised* of heart, and so a man's hair has to be short, and a woman's hair has to be long.

Continuing Zodhiates quote:

This was strictly forbidden for Christian women in order that no one would mistake them as women of loose morals. What happened however when one of these prostitute priestesses was 'saved' in Corinth, she could not grow her hair long immediately, [and so] she used a veil to cover her head to show that she no longer belonged to the prostitute class.

That is why I say a veil is legitimate in this sense in I Corinthians 11, but only if you understands *why* they used the word *veil*. The use of a veil is totally unnecessary if the hair is long enough.

Continuing Zodhiates quote:

See also *katakaluptos*, which means "uncovered," which is the equivalent of being shaved.

I Corinthians 2:15-16 But he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Every once in a while I used to hear (and maybe you did too) Herbert Armstrong say "Brethren, I think that I have the mind of Christ" when some issue was involved, and he was making a judgment. He did that in this case. He set a standard which I think is correct in light of comparing the two hair lengths and showing the distinction that God wants?the distinction being that we are circumcised of heart, and showing the gender distinction as well.

Herbert Armstrong judged that a woman's *wet* hair length should be long enough to fall down toward her shoulders to cover entirely the back of her neck. There are some people who understand this long-hair principle, but at the same time extend it to say that a woman's hair should never be cut. That is not true. God never said any such thing. It is just another example of human nature's proclivity to take things to an extreme.

An extremism (again as I was taught under Mr. Armstrong) is evidence of demon influence; not possession, just influence. Now a man's wet hair length should *not* cover the back of his neck. It is that simple. Long hair will clearly distinguish a woman as a woman. A man's hair length is to be short, not covering the neck, but not deliberately bald either. That is what the pagans did.

Can you name a movie where you saw all kinds of bald-headed pagans running around? It is that one that had Charlton Heston in it. The Egyptians were all bald! Deliberately so! They took it to an extreme. The Egyptians not only shaved their heads, they also shaved all the hair off all the other parts of their body as well. To them it was a matter of purification. But they revealed their paganism, because God gives no such instruction like that. If you remember the movie, all the Israelites had full heads of hair. So neither shaved bald, nor long hair like a woman's was acceptable for a priest.

I am going to reflect back now to Ezekiel 44 where God said to the priests, "You shall cut your hair." The Jews, in their commentaries, insist that a priest's hair length was to be comparable to what one would see in pictures, on coins, and in statuary of Roman dignitaries, primarily the Caesars. Why did the Jews refer to the Caesars? Because the Jews at the time of Christ would not draw pictures of themselves or other people, or stamp their figures on a coin. And so the only reference they have is the *written* history of the Jews, and then the pictures that reflect that written history as shown on Roman statuary and Roman coins. The Caesars' hair was short.

I do not know whether you are aware of this, but drawings with the earliest dating found of representations of Christ portray Him with short hair (and this may surprise you), clean shaven. This does not mean that He never had a beard. That is what those early drawings show. He had short hair, and He was clean-shaven. That was probably something that was passed by word of mouth from one generation to another. One thing is sure, and that is He did not have long hair.

He was qualifying to be High Priest for all of mankind, and He set the standard by following the formal arrangements established by God.

I might add one more thing, because you might be thinking of the Nazarites. Their long hair was an outward sign that they were under submission, like a woman. They were under submission similar to a woman, but in this case to God, because they had voluntarily set themselves apart through a vow. However, (and this is surprising. In case you did not know) a Nazarite, with his long hair, was not allowed to approach the Temple until his vow was completed and his hair cut.

I think that is enough for today. God willing, we will continue this subject next week, but not on hair.