

A Sister's Place in the Family of God



A SISTER'S PLACE IN THE FAMILY OF GOD

Introduction

Before we focus on our first consideration, we would like to convey this personal message:

Although society, morals, permissiveness, woman's rights, etc. have changed; God's Word has not changed. Our "Bill of Rights" and "Constitution" is the Bible. In the book of Revelation 22:19, we are warned not to add or subtract from the words of the Scripture. We have been admonished to live in the world but not of the world!

This work is a sincere effort to remind us all that, as sisters in Christ, we do have certain obligations. Sisters in Christ have accepted a responsibility that cannot be overlooked or changed. We have to be careful not to let the changes that other religious groups make influence our adherence to God's laws.

We have tried to draw a logical word-picture of a sister's life in Christ. We speak as sisters with a desire to share with others the findings of our study.

We thank all the Brethren and Sisters from whose writings we have gleaned much needed help and information. We have taken the liberty of using some of what they have said in order to firm up our position.

Sister Dorrie Dillingham
Sister Lois Riley

WHAT IS A SISTER'S PLACE IN RELATION TO CHRIST TODAY?

At our baptism, we made the choice to obey the commandments of Christ, to give all our allegiance to Him, and to strive to be as perfect as He is. Christ gave His life for us. What is expected in return?...
...A Faithful Continuance in Well Doing! (Rom. 2:5-7)

In order to continue in "doing well" we must consider our place within the divine hierarchy which God has established. We can do this by looking at 1 Cor. 11:3, "But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man and the head of Christ is God." This reference clearly brings out the proper order of relationship:

GOD

Christ

Man

Woman

God created man in His image and for His glory. Woman was created for the glory of man. (1 Cor.11:7)

She was made secondly; she was made from the man; she was created for the man; she was created as a help-meet--a mate designed for and suitable for the man. The woman was not created from man's head to be ruled over; not from his foot to be stepped on, but from that place closest to his heart to be loved, cherished, to be a part of him.¹

Yahweh's plan has not changed, and our place in His plan has not changed. We, by the grace of Yahweh, will have our place changed when we serve His dear Son

in the kingdom; for then, and only then, will there literally be neither male nor female, neither Jew nor Greek; for we shall all be as one.

If a Sister is an intelligent, active, useful, noble servant of Christ; her being a Sister is no disqualification or barrier; it only precludes her from the act of public speaking and involves subjection to her husband. It does not shut her up to babies, pots, and pans though these will dutifully receive the right share of attention at her hands. She is a partner, a helper, a fellow heir in all things pertaining to Christ and the man who would degrade her from this position is not fit for a place in the body of Christ.

For both men and women, there is a place in the Kingdom of God. Though they neither marry nor are given in marriage, we may depend upon it that God, who never makes mistakes, has a place in the higher state for the companionship arising between man and women as constituted in this preliminary state. This is one of the sweet secrets we wait to see disclosed. Meanwhile, they stand related to the same rules of admission. Each must be faithful to Christ in their several spheres. The man must be enlightened, believing, courageous; trustful, prayerful, and obedient; and the woman must be no less in her more contracted circle. She must aim particularly

at those active, multiplied, repeated and untiring good works in the Lord which obtained for sisters of old the approbation of the Lord and the praise of His apostles. Thus may both earn for themselves a good degree which will shine forth with glorious lustre in the blessed ages that are to succeed the present evil world.²

SISTERS AS HELPMEEETS

That old cliché "behind every good man there's a good woman" can be true in the family of God. Where marriage is involved, "behind every good brother should be a good sister".

By her loving submission and gentle cooperation in the home as a service to God, a woman can help guide her husband and create unity of mind that will weld them more completely in a marriage that will make of them "one". It gives her far greater satisfaction than that which so-called "woman's liberation" will do.

How refreshing it is for a man to arrive home after a pressuring and troublesome day to be greeted with warm affection and a well-prepared and tasty meal; to be welcomed to a home that radiates a relaxing cheerfulness in contrast to the bleak existence apart from it.

On the other hand, how warming it is for a wife and mother to receive due appreciation for all that she does in the home for the family. Love is of greater compelling power than law; it is easier to get a person to do a thing because he or she delights to do it than to compel them to do so against their wishes. And if one loves another, there is a desire to please, even though it involves self-sacrifice.

Never go to sleep at night without saying "I love you" to your mate. Never put children to bed without expressing your love to them, regardless of

what the day has been like. Thoughtfulness and the surrender of self are the constant and sure ingredients of a good marriage.

Marriage is a process of constant adjustment brought about by a fervent desire to assist one's partner to attain unto the Kingdom of God. Thus each must learn to surrender those habits, desires, and aims which are not conducive to the spiritual well-being of the marriage and of the other partner.

A man and his wife must be altogether frank with one another at all times. There should never be anything about which they cannot talk openly and there should be no hidden parts of our lives. Remember that Christ knows everything instantly and in full.

WE ARE HELPMETS. We must do our best to create a spiritual atmosphere in our home that is supportive of the work done by our husbands for the benefit of our spiritual well-being and that of the ecclesia. If our brother-husband does not have public speaking ability we can help him to develop his talents in other areas. Every ecclesial responsibility is equally as important as the other! Don't discourage him, encourage him--empathy not sympathy.

Should he possess the ability to exhort and/or lecture, make the time to help him with research and typing, as well as constructive criticism. Take an interest in what he is doing. Be sure the children have things (quiet things) to occupy their time while he is laboring in the Lord's service so that he is not being constantly interrupted. Be sure to make the children aware of the importance of his work

and of it's spiritual value.

In order to be a useful tool in the Master's hands, we as sisters must be properly educated in His Word. We must know how to use the aids available to us such as the concordances, Bible dictionaries and the beautiful, helpful and readable works of our Brethren throughout the world! We must make the time to read and study by ourselves.

HOSPITALITY plays a big part in being a helpmeet. We must always be ready to welcome any prospective candidate into our home. A warm smile can generate a relaxed atmosphere and express your delight in having them there. Be prepared for such occasions. Be intelligent and well-informed. Be a good "back-up" with your Bible marked and the concordance on hand so you can be ready and willing, should your husband request your assistance.

Our doors must always be open to our brothers and sisters (even to those to whom we're not so inclined). Hospitality is very important. We should not be so engrossed in the providing of material things that we forget the spiritual. It is necessary to provide food for our guests, but to spend so much time in preparing a variety of dishes that we have no time for anything else means that we are getting our priorities wrong. A simple meal served in a calm atmosphere must be more relaxing and helpful to a visiting speaker than a big spread served by a hot and harrassed hostess, who has no time to sit and rest or quietly talk of more important things.

Sometimes our hospitality seems to be extended to people who are able to reciprocate or recompense. We are apt to invite brothers and sisters to our homes and have a happy time together. Later they invite us back. All of this is very enjoyable, of course; but we must always remember "the loner"! Fellowship is a vital part of our spiritual lives.

The actual meaning of the word translated "hospitality" is 'love of strangers'. Jesus emphasizes this in Luke, chapter 14:

When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

As proper helpmeets, we must not forget to be good friends, companions, and "pals" to our husbands. Attend ecclesial functions as a "couple" or a "family".

A SINGLE SISTER could be a "help-er" rather than a "helpmeet". Some sister-wives can't type. Others need babysitters and all need friendship and sisterly love. Remember we are all one family in Christ. The single sister often has more time to give and a little less responsibility at home. Single sisters should make every effort to attend all ecclesial activities and services. They should get into the habit of reaching out to make new friends in the Truth.

SISTERS' ROLES WITHIN THE ECCLESIA

In 1 Cor. 11:3 we have the divine hierarchy set before us. This is the way it has always been since creation. It takes us back to Genesis and points out that there are distinctions to be made. As mentioned before: GOD--Christ--Man--Woman.

1 Timothy 2:8-15 brings forward some of these distinctions. Note that verses 13 and 14 have nothing whatsoever to do with the customs in Greece. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression". The reason isn't open for question--if so, we question divinely inspired Scripture. Because the woman was utterly deceived when tempted by the serpent, she had better not teach in the ecclesia.

There seems to be two reasons here:

1. Priority in Creation
2. Deception

In verse 11, the word silence (*hesuchia*, Grk) means total silence. We might also note that the most frequent characteristic that God attaches to the woman throughout Scripture is submissiveness. When Paul admonishes the women to learn in silence he also forbids them to teach. He says that their teaching role is to show the other sisters through example and behavior (Titus 2:3-5).

In 1 Cor. 14:34 the word for silence is *sigao* (Bullinger e.g. to be silent; to cease to speak). "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." Paul is dealing with the whole foundation of the divine plan of Yahweh.

Chapter 11 of 1 Corinthians applies to more than the Memorial Service. They all met to eat, and it was a shared community meal. In verse 33 they are admonished to wait for each other and eat as a group. It was an extended meeting throughout the day. There could easily have been some unbelievers there to listen. (note 1 Cor. 14:23). So the instructions are not merely to the Memorial meeting.

The role of a sister is not a public one. In 1 Peter 3:1-4 and v. 6, we find the attitude for sisters that Yahweh finds commendable: Verse 4 tells the sister that she should have the Lord locked in her heart and that she exemplify the "imperishable jewel" of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price! The true meaning of many of the words in these verses really brings out a lesson to sisters.

The words of Titus 2:3-5 and 1 Timothy 5:1-10 speak for themselves. The words of verse 10 of 1 Tim. 5 show what the good deeds of a sister should be. Certainly if a sister was supposed to be teaching brethren (other than by example) Paul would have taken a little time to exhort them as to the proper fashion just as he did the brethren.

Dare we question Paul's authority? In Titus 1:1-3, we are told that he is a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, manifesting His word through preaching which is committed unto him according to the commandment of God and our Saviour. In 1 Cor. 14:37, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord," shows us that if anyone does not recognize this, he is not to be recognized.

One last note from 1 Cor. 14:35. The word for "shame" here means 'disgraceful in the divine state'.

A woman's wisdom is to be quiet and make her influence felt by her excellent qualities! But, oh what a sister can accomplish in silence!!! For example:

SERVING AS A TABLE SISTER: Your loving efforts are displayed in silence and beauty as the ecclesia looks upon the pure white linen neatly pressed; shining silver goblets and bread plate. The bread and the wine, symbolic of the life given for us.

ORGANIST: The gentle and majestic tones that exude from the organ are the result of hours of devoted practice and create the proper atmosphere for the Memorial Service, Baptismal Service, Lecture or a good Hymn Sing.

LIBRARIAN: An up-to-date workable library is essential for every ecclesia and without a good librarian this is impossible! Every member should be encouraged to avail themselves of the opportunity for study that a library presents. And, wouldn't it be nice to have a "children's section", Sister Librarian?

Ordering magazines for ecclesial members and collecting stamps for Bible Mission work are two very important roles. One might have the Recording Brother announce newly acquired books and pamphlets to keep the ecclesia aware of their availability as well as the need for cancelled stamps to help with the missionary work.

VISITING SISTER: Here is where our "open-voiced" opportunities begin! How much a visit means to the sick (whether spiritually or physically). Phone calls with a nice "hello, how are you?", "I care" can be just the necessary medicine. Encourage other members to send cards and call the sick. A visiting sister must be a "confidante" and cultivate the keen quality of receiving and keeping confidential information to shed sympathy and inject sweetness.

Why not accompany a brother to the home of a sick

member for a Memorial Service and do the readings together? Should a member be absent from the ecclesia three consecutive times, why not pay them a visit or invite them to dinner?

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER: Scripture shows us that most of the children's teaching was done on the "mother's knee". Now we are most fortunate to be able to extend that preparation time and share the talents of other sisters to teach the young. Though the role of a sister is not to teach her "head", this does not eliminate her opportunity to teach the children. In view of restrictions, the real opportunity of sisters is the teaching of children in the Lord.

HOSPITALITY SISTER: Ecclesias vary in their requirements for a hospitality sister, but it in no way lessens the importance of the job. Welcome the Visitor! If your job is to arrange for suitable accommodations, share the "visiting rights" among many so more can benefit from the experience of entertaining and the talents of the visitor.

KITCHEN COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMAN: Get those sisters working! Involve them in your plans for serving and let them know well in advance what you expect of them.

ASSISTANTS: If you are going to be a helper, be a good one! We are not all leaders, but we are all needed.

CLEANING THE ECCLESIA: This is one more way to do your part and it's so important. Take pride in the cleanliness of the House of the Lord.

SUPPORTING ECCLESIAL FUNCTIONS: Be there! Have a warm smiling face for all and a special welcome for visitors. Remember that the speaking

brother at lectures or classes has put in hours and hours of preparation time. All he asks is one hour of your time. Show your appreciation by concentrating on what is being said. If it's necessary to bring the children, keep them quiet. Consider others that are trying to listen.

A SISTER'S CONDUCT

A sister's conduct is a living exhortation. Good works are our true charm. They shine out from within. Man is for strength, judgement, and achievement; Woman is for grace, sympathy, and ministrations. Between them they form a beautiful unit: heirs together in unity of purpose.

Eve was not simply to be the mother of all living. She was to reflect the glory of man as he reflected the glory of God. Gracefulness is capable of shining more eminently in the female character than anywhere else.

We must always be aware of the seven things that are an abomination unto the Lord so that we will conduct ourselves accordingly. Proverbs 6: 16-19 needs no explanation for it speaks for itself:

These are six things that the Lord doth hate; yea seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imagination, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

COSMETICS: Now that we have developed our inward qualities, let's consider our outward appearance. Use your spiritual common sense! The word modest means "orderly and decent". "Dress, jewelry and cosmetics rightly used might very well add charm, but there is a point where they overstep their bounds and become almost ugly."⁴

Bible Cosmetics:

EYES = compassion

LIPS = praise

HANDS = kindness

FIGURE= uprightness

EARS = truth

BOSOM = a meek and quiet spirit

We note in Proverbs 31 the virtuous woman referred to was nicely dressed (purple, fine linen). She exhibited strength and dignity (v.25).

We must be very careful as fashion-keeping and ostentatious clothing usually means extravagance. Should we spend that much on ourselves when others are in need? We should have a balanced judgement based on the Word of God and our ecclesial decisions.

Will your dress harm, provoke, or distract the fellow members of the ecclesia? A thought provoking example follows:

Girl - More Girl - Much Girl....I like girls. I always have. God never made anything more beautiful than a beautiful girl. I like to look at beautiful girls. But there's something that bothers me a great deal these days. It's the fact that everywhere I look I'm seeing too much girl. I would hate like everything to be a Christian teenage boy just now. Such a young man knows that if he looks at a girl to lust after her he is guilty of adultery. At the same time, everywhere he turns he sees more girl and less clothes. He gets girl rubbed all over him every way he turns. If he gives in to

temptation and reaches out to touch some of this girl that is so openly displayed, he is thought to be some kind of a sex fiend. He is in a terrible position.

The same Bible that warns young men about the sin of mental adultery tells us that if we make young Christians to stumble, it is better for us that a millstone be hanged about our necks and we were drowned in the sea. This is a very serious matter. God is going to hold some young ladies and some parents responsible. It is rather to be expected that young girls will wish to follow the trend of fashion. On the other hand, I cannot understand the thinking of a Christian mother who would rather have her daughter dress like a prostitute than to be unpopular. Nor can I understand a Christian father, himself a man of normal sexual appetites, who will allow his daughter to be the agent of temptation in the life of a young man.

This was put in writing so there can be no mistake in what I have meant to say.

Let me suggest that you ask the Lord what he would have you to do about⁵ this matter in your house.

The lack of rules printed in black and white does not mean there are no restrictions. All things are lawful, but not expedient. A sister's proper appearance, proper manner, and proper conversation can help create the proper atmosphere at a Bible class, Memorial Service, or public meeting.

It is with that thought in mind that we now consider the wearing of a Head Covering.

WEARING OF A HEAD COVERING: Do you happen to be one of those sisters who stopped wearing a head covering? If you are, did you ever stop to consider the reason why? If Christ asked you to put it back on, would you? If your husband asked you to, would you?

We have noticed a steady slipping away of some from the responsibilities we have in Christ. For example, a few years ago the Pope decreed that it was no longer necessary for the women to cover their heads at church. And it wasn't long before sister members of the Christadelphian ecclesias could be noticed without a head covering.

Are we listening to apostasy rather than the Apostles? Peter warns us to beware of the apostasy (2 Peter 3:17). We know that the Apostles spoke through the power of the Holy Spirit. So what is the logical and life-saving choice that we should make?

What it all boils down to is EGO, or the fleshly desire to boost one's image. What is fleshly desire? It is sin! If you felt you were offending another sister or brother by not wearing a head covering, would

you cover your head? Do you fully realize the meaning behind a head covering?

Perhaps it's best to begin with 1 Cor. 11. In verse 3 we note as previously stated, the proper order of relationship. GOD--Christ--Man--Woman.

Verse 4: Covered here means "to have on the head" (Gk. Katakephalasechon). We must remember that the "head" referred to here is the same "head" mentioned in the preceding verse which is Christ, the Head of man. (If we consider the head covering here to be the hair, then man should be shorn). Covering a man's head scripturally signifies mourning and humiliation: See 2 Sam. 15:30, ESTHER 6:12, and Jer. 14:3-4. Verse 4 obviously tells us how wrong it is for a man to cover his head.

Verse 5: "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head; for that is even all one as if she were shaven." This verse tells us how wrong it is for a woman not to cover her head. If she doesn't cover her head she might as well be shaven. The issue here is not whether the sisters should exercise their gifts in the assembly of believers. Paul deals with that problem later in this letter (1 Cor. 14:34-35) and also in his letter to Timothy (1 Tim. 2:11-14).

There are Biblical examples of prophetesses who were usually prominent when the males did not provide leadership:

Miriam	Exodus 15:20
Deborah	Judges 4:4
Huldah	2 Kings 22:14
Anna	Luke 2:36

Joel prophesied that the Holy Spirit would be given to women (Acts 2:16-18); as, for example the four daughters of Phillip testify (Acts 21:9).

The question now to be resolved was this: Did such a privilege of being a prophetess nullify the requirement of a veil to cover the head as a sign of subordination to the males? Let's examine Paul's answer:

"With her head uncovered" - "uncovered" in the Greek is Akatakaluptos, e.g. uncovered, unveiled. Youngs: unveiled, also RSV, RV, Nestle.

"Dishonoureth her head" - i.e. her husband (man) verse 3. To appear in the assembly with an unveiled head was to disregard the divine hierarchy and the subordinate role of the woman in relation to the man. This was a serious offence as the oft repeated instruction that a wife ought to be subject to her husband in everything would indicate. See Eph. 5:22,24; 1 Tim. 2:11; Col. 3:18; 1 Pet. 3:1,5.

"For that is even all one as if she were shaven" - To abandon the head covering on the grounds of privilege was to remove the sign of her subordinate position and to be regarded as shamefully as if shaven or shorn.

Verse 6: A definite distinction can be noticed here between hair and a covering. For Paul states: "if a woman be not covered, let her also be shorn." If a woman didn't cover her hair she might as well shave it off and be shamed.

Verse 7: Again we are reminded that man must not cover his head as he is the image and glory of God, but woman must cover her head as she is the glory of the man.

Verse 15: A totally different word for covering is

used here. Here the word for covering is Perivolaion, e.g. something cast around. The long hair of a woman is her natural veil or mantle. And what is appropriate naturally ought to have a spiritual parallel: That woman's head should be veiled.

An interesting article written by a sister follows:

When people ask why Christadelphian women wear hats or scarves to meeting, do we know how to explain our reasons? If all we can say is "Paul says so in 1 Cor. 11", they answer that Paul was advocating compliance with a local custom and that his argument "must be applied today against the background of the different sociological situation. Otherwise we must revert to the clothes, and slavery of those times."

Too many of us, also, explain Paul's argument as primarily advocating male supremacy as illustrated by the figure of the church as the Bride of Christ; which is putting it backwards, besides instantly, and unnecessarily, shutting some minds against us. Surely what Paul is arguing for is a public demonstration in symbol of the glorification of the risen Christ and the church's betrothal to him, illustrated by a wife's relationship to her husband.

Let us look at Paul's argument verse by verse.

Verse 2: "the ordinances" (traditions" in the A.V. and R.S.V. margins) e.g. not local traditions but the oral teaching of Paul and the other apostles. What we have in the New Testament is only the spirit-inspired writings God chose to preserve for us. There was a great deal more spoken than was written. Consider for instance 1 Cor. 15:6-7 and 2 Thess. 2:15. If Paul had been advising a diplomatic compliance with local tradition, he would have disposed of the matter as briefly as v.16 and

Acts 15:20,21.

Verse 3: "the Head of every man is Christ, and the Head of the woman is man and the Head of Christ is God." Christ had ended the law of Moses and Christian women rejoiced that now they could worship beside men, not left behind in the court of the women. Apparently they, or some of them also thought that "in Christ there is neither male nor female" meant they were also released from submission to their husbands. They had to learn that, like Isaiah and Ezekiel (Isa. 20:2,3 and Ezek. 4:1-12) Christians are living symbols. The new system has its own symbols; baptism as the symbol of death and burial and resurrection to a new life; bread and wine as symbols of Christ's sacrificial life and death; and the uncovered heads of the brethren as the symbol of Christ's present glory with the Father.

Verse 4: "every man praying or prophesying having his head covered dishonoreth his Head." Covering on a man's head, scripturally, signifies mourning and humiliation. (2 Sam. 15:30, Esther 6:12; Jer. 14:3,4) In meeting, man represents Christ who passed beyond the mourning and humiliation of earthly life. For man to wear a head covering in meeting is to deny the glorification of Christ, to dishonor him by implying that he is still sinful flesh.

Verse 5: "every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her Head....as if she were shaven". Shaven here is "xurao" from "xuron" a razor, the same word used in Acts 21:24. "Shorn" in verse 6 is "keiro" most commonly used of sheep left naked by the total removal of their wool, so it's not just bobbed hair Paul is talking about, but the public humiliation of a shaved head.

Verse 6: "if the women be not covered"; There may be a double significance to "covered" here. For a man to cover a woman with his own clothing meant he accepted her as his betrothed wife. Ruth 3:9, Ezek. 16:8. The veil on a woman's head was the sign that she was married

and accepted her husband's authority (as in v. 10). If, in symbol, the Bride of Christ symbolized by the sisters rejects the head-covering she is in symbol rejecting the bridegroom, and following in the steps of natural Israel, who became an adulterous woman. So, "if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn". Either the Bride of Christ accepts his authority or she is an adulterous wife spiritually.

Verse 7: "Man....is the image and glory of God but woman is the glory of the man" in the sense of "this is my body...this is my blood" as in verses 24 and 25. That is, in meeting, man represents the image and glory of God in Christ (Jn. 1:14 and 14:9) and woman represents the glory of mankind. All the glory of mankind is not enough to make them acceptable to God. The only way the Bride can approach God is as part of Christ, in oneness with Christ.

Verse 10: "because of the angels". When we are at meeting surely our angels are there also (Psa. 34:7). Since there was one particular angel (besides the angels of the true believers) with "the ecclesia in the wilderness" which was Israel, one angel who especially represented the presence of God (Isa. 63:9) may there not be likewise at our meetings one angel, besides our individual angels, who represents the present of Christ? These Angels of the Presence would surely be especially offended by the presence of bare-headed sisters and grieved by their lack of understanding.

Verse 13: "is it proper for a woman to pray uncovered". In verse 4, the word "prophecy" is, in Greek "propheteus" defined as "to tell forth" the Divine counsel; to publicly expound", so it is a fair inference that the prayer referred to is public prayer. Certainly it is public worship, the conduct of the meetings, that Paul is considering here. So this should not be taken to mean that sisters must not pray in private with uncovered heads, any more than a brother at work in a cap (or safety hat, for

instance) and with both hands busy should not offer a prayer because his head is covered.*

Verse 15: "her hair is given her for a covering"... Some are disposed to argue from this that a sister with long hair is thereby sufficiently covered. By that argument, a brother with 'any' hair is too much covered. And isn't Paul saying that a woman's long hair is (represents?) a human glory? No natural endowment can make us acceptable in the sight of God. No matter how magnificently endowed by nature we still cannot approach God without the sin-covering provided by Christ.

The head covering on sisters at meeting symbolized the ecclesia's humble submission to God and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Godly sisters will act out of an appreciation for the principles espoused. Their demeanour will surely evidence a desire to extend the application, not to seek a minimum which will satisfy themselves. In the true spirit of Christ we ask this be given thoughtful consideration that we may fulfill to the best of our ability all the commands of our Heavenly Father. May our sisters see this as a contribution to ecclesial life necessary for an acceptable approach unto the Lord. We suggest that it would be a good thing, if all brothers and sisters would take time to become familiar with these principles to the end that we may be strengthened in the one faith.

*Editors' Note: Upon further study, we have concluded that any time we pray it is considered true worship. Does it matter "where we are" or "when we are" in prayer? Does the building we are in change our prayer in any way? Does God look upon one prayer as different from another if we are speaking in sincerity? If we think upon these things with an open mind, the questions answer themselves. Since the head-veiling points not only to the specifically redemptive aspect of our life relationships, but also speaks of God's order for society, it is a witness needed beyond the intimate fellowship of our Ecclesial assembly. Also we have found that because the "angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him...", we are always in the presence of the angels. Therefore, we should cover our heads whenever we pray (Matt. 18:10; Psa. 34:7).

OUR NAZARITE-LIKE VOW

Jesus is our High Priest and as laymen and women, we can copy him by our Nazarite-like vow to total consecration in the service of God. In our Ecclesias the brethren represent our Lord Jesus Christ, 'the image and glory of God', while the sisters represent 'the glory of the man' which must be covered in His presence.

Paul was careful to avoid using the same word for 'covering' in 1 Cor. 11:6-7 (katakalupto) as he does in verse 15 (peribolaion). The idea behind the former word is 'complete' covering (of the hair, not the fact of 2 Cor. 3:18) where as the latter word (only found here and in Heb. 1:12) means 'something cast around'. Obviously long hair can only conveniently be covered by first winding or braiding it round the head in some way.

Without diverting attention from the primary teaching, Paul has, nevertheless, pointed the way to an understanding of the principle underlying his command that, in official meetings of the ecclesia, the symbolism of head covering should be used to show that we 'all' accept the divine authority of Christ as the Head of the Body. The brethren uncover their heads as representing Christ in His

glory--the unsullied image of God. The sisters cover their hair in the presence of the One who has authority over the ecclesia they represent. Head covering is not a symbol of the intellectual, moral, or spiritual inferiority of sisters for 'there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus' (Gal. 3:28)

Paul made it clear in the phrase 'power on her head' that the sisters had authority on and over their heads to see that they were properly covered. They will be held responsible by their Lord for what they do by way of obeying this ordinance of Head Covering given to us through the Apostle Paul.

SO WHY GRUMBLE?.....

Grumbling is very contagious, and its effects are deadly. It is a common complaint, and one which is not escaped by Christadelphians. It should be the earnest endeavor of everyone of us to overcome this evil. Grumblers are not friends of God. They are classed by Jude among the ungodly. It was persistent grumbling that brought the vengeance of God upon thousands in Israel in the time of Moses. In Paul's letters (1 Cor. 10:10; Phil. 2:14) grumbling is expressly forbidden. Particularly painful is the habit when directed towards ecclesial affairs.

Those who indulge in grumbling
check and hinder where they
should offer warmth and
encouragement.

It may be just thoughtlessness,
but it is, nevertheless unkind.
It hampers the strivings of
those who are laboring for the
Truth. It should not be for-
gotten that Christ is at the
head of all ecclesial affairs.
If there are troubles or things
unsatisfactory it is possible
that He may have thus wisely
arranged them. This thought
alone would quiet the murmuring
tongue.

CONCLUSION

Yahweh has laid out in scripture for us a clear picture of a virtuous daughter. We can adorn it or abuse it. Ask yourself these questions:

1. Would I knowingly offend a Brother or Sister?
2. Do I responsibly recognize my position as a Sister in Christ to be different from the world?
3. Am I anxious to join in fellowship with members of the household of faith or would I prefer an evening "out"?
4. When people ask me why Christadelphian women cover their heads at ecclesial functions, do I know how to explain my reasons?
5. Do I "dress" to "impress"?
6. Am I spending enough time each day for my personal study of God's Word?
7. Am I prepared for Christ to come TODAY?

We are all aware that Christ's return is just around the corner. Let's get our "Spiritual House" in order and work towards presenting ourselves "a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God which is our reasonable service". (Rom. 12:1)

EVEN SO - COME LORD JESUS!

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Brother Maurice Stewart
2. Brother Robert Roberts
3. Brother Harry Tennant
4. Brother Dennis Gillette
5. Newspaper article
6. Christadelphian Tidings,
Vol. 40, Sept.-Oct. 1977.
Sister Pixie McLeod.
7. Christadelphian Magazine, Jan 1979,
Brother Stuart Cowlishaw.
8. A.T.J. (1886)

