

## **Evidence That The “Covering” Involved Local Custom**

(Inductive method: ALL facts must HARMONIZE.)

We are looking at evidence this was a “customary practice” in the Corinthian society, not universally, nor by Divine law.

1. A “covering” did not always signify authority (v10).  
Gen 38:14,15; Ex 34:33-35 while prophesying?...Dt 18:15). Yet, the principles, 1Co 11:3, ALWAYS true.
2. In ALL the passages about woman’s subjection in ALL the Bible, 1Co 11 is the ONLY place anything is said about a “covering” signifying authority.  
Gen 3:16; Eph 5:22-33; Col. 3:18; 1Tim 2:9-15; Tit 2:3-5; 1Pt 3:3-6. And note that they had “praying” and “prophesying” women: Miriam, Ex 15:20-21; Deborah, Jud 4:4-5; Huldah, 2Ki 22:14f; Anna, Lk 2:36.
3. Shame of the “uncovered” state is paralleled with the shame of being “shorn or shaven,” vv5-6. Question: What IS the shame of the shorn or shaven state? That it is understood to be a shame is implied, but *how did one come to such an understanding?*  
In the O.T. it signified *mourning*: Dt 21:10-13; Job 1:20; Jer 7:29; 16:6; Amos 8:10; Mic 1:16. So, it seems the *scriptures* is not what taught it to be a “shame” to be shorn or shaven.
4. In vv. 13-15 it is said that “*nature*” taught them three things:
  - 1) that for a man to have long hair was a shame to him;
  - 2) that for a woman to have long hair was her glory;
  - 3) that the woman’s hair was given her for a covering.**The Scriptures do not seem to teach this as either law or as universally recognized: Jud 13:5; 16:19; Num 6:1-6, 1Sam 1:11; 2Sam 14:25,26**
5. “Such custom,” v16. Three positions: a) “Custom” = being contentious; b) “Custom” = women being uncovered; c) “Custom” = women being covered.

**“Custom” = women being covered.**

- **This is the practice he has been discussing for fifteen verses.** It is the natural, easiest reference.
- **It accords with the Corinthian situation.**
- **No need to go out of the Bible** to secular, questionable, and sometimes conflicting sources to establish what the custom was. The Corinthians knew!

## **Distinguishing between Divine law and custom**

**Law:** Holy greeting – Rom 16:16; 1Pt 5:14

**Custom:** Kiss, Rom 16:16; 1Pt 5:14; Letter – 1Co 16:21; Handshake (today)

Kissing as a means of greeting was an old and common custom. **Gen 45:15; 2Sam 15:5,6; 20:9; Mt 26:48-50.**

**Law:** Hospitality – Rom 12:13; Heb 13:2

**Custom:** Water to wash feet – Gen 18:4; 19:2; 1Tim 5:10; Coffee (today)

Note: Washing *another's* feet, *even if they are capable of washing their own feet*, was also a custom, not necessarily of hospitality, but of *humble service*. **1Sam 25:41; Lk 7:38; Jn 13:1f.** In this cases, it was *not* “because it was needed.” The recipients were perfectly capable of washing their own feet. So, it is not like washing the feet of sick person because it is needed. It was a *custom* with special significance.

**Law:** Order of subjection – 1Co 11:3 (*and this is the point of this section*)

**Custom:** Covering – 1Co 11:4f...16.

Some say that the covering is “a matter of divine revelation” and therefore “binding” today. If we had no other sources but the Bible, would we know about kissing as greeting and foot washing as hospitality? Would that make them binding today? We know they met in an upper room “by divine revelation” (**Ac 20:7**). Does that make meeting in an upper room binding today? We know they baptized out of doors (**Ac 8**). Does that mean we must baptize out of doors?

Follow customs as long as spiritually advantageous and in harmony with divine law. **1Co 8:8-13; 9:19-23; 10:23-33; Rom 14:1-15:3**

Customs are never to be followed in violation of Divine law – **Gal 2:3-5; Mt 15:1-9; 1Co 6:9-11,13; 2Co 6:14-7:1**

Practical applications today..

- “Sir” and “ma’am”
- Suits, ties, and shoes to preach