

1 Corinthians 11:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God—Paul grounds his argument in Genesis 1:26-27. Εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα θεοῦ (eikōn kai doxa theou, image and glory of God) echoes the creation account. Man directly images God and displays His glory. Covering the head symbolically obscures this glory-bearing function. The ὀφείλει (opheilei, ought) indicates moral obligation rooted in creation order, not cultural preference.

But the woman is the glory of the man—This is not ontological inferiority but relational derivative. Woman is equally image-bearer (Genesis 1:27) but uniquely displays man's glory as his helper and complement (Genesis 2:18-23). Just as man's glory derives from God, woman's derives from man (her source, vv. 8-9). The covered head acknowledges this derivative glory—not hiding shame but honoring the chain of glory: God → Christ → man → woman. Far from denigrating women, Paul places them in a creation-ordered relationship that honors both sexes' distinct roles.

Historical Context

Genesis 1-2 was foundational for Jewish and Christian theology of gender. Paul interprets creation narratives typologically: Adam's formation from dust (direct creation) versus Eve's formation from Adam's side (derivative creation) grounds their respective relationships to divine glory. In a culture obsessed with honor and

glory (Romans valued public reputation above life itself), Paul reframes glory Christianly: true glory comes from reflecting God's image, not self-promotion. The head covering visibly enacts this theology during worship.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does being 'image and glory of God' shape your understanding of human dignity and purpose?
2. In what ways can derivative glory (woman from man) coexist with equal dignity and worth (both image-bearers)?
3. How might modern culture's obsession with autonomous self-expression clash with Paul's vision of derivative, God-honoring glory?

Interlinear Text

ἀνδρός μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ὁφείλει κατακαλύπτεσθαι τὴν
a man indeed For not ought to cover G3588
G435 G3303 G1063 G3756 G3784 G2619

κεφαλήν εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα θεοῦ ὑπάρχων· γυνὴ[·]
his head the image and glory of God forasmuch as he is the woman
G2776 G1504 G2532 G1391 G2316 G5225 G1135

δὲ δόξα ἀνδρός ἐστιν
but glory a man is
G1161 G1391 G435 G2076

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 11:3 (References God): 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.

Genesis 5:1 (References God): This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;

Genesis 9:6 (References God): Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

Psalms 8:6 (Parallel theme): Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

Genesis 3:16 (Parallel theme): Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

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