Trondheim International Church Bible Study
TIC

Should A Christian Woman Cover Her Head In Church?

A Study of 1 Corinthians Chapter 11
By Pastor Rob (Pastor of TIC)

Trondheim International Church (TIC), Trondheim, Norway

From the left: Richel, Sasha, Pastor Rob, Ellen, Joy and Raiza

Joy is a Wife, Mother, Worship Leader and Cook at TIC

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Background to the Head Covering Controversy
3. Bible Reading: 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 1-16
4. Commentary on 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 1-16
5. The main Objections to Women's Head Covering
6. Questions and Answers concerning the teaching and practice of Women's Head Covering
7. The Early Church Fathers and a Woman's Head Covering; The Practice of Head Covering in the Church for 1,950 years
8. A Lesson in Humility - The Example of Jesus
9. Conclusion
10. Testimonies from the Ladies in TIC who use a Head Covering

Raiza, Claire, Jasmine and Mona Liza at a Bible Study at our Church Fellowship Weekend to Meråker.
Wearing a Head Covering at TIC is completely voluntary.

1. Introduction

In April, 1990, I was invited to preach at the Pentecostal Church at Pitesti in Romania. I spent a week preaching in the mother church and visiting some of the six churches that had been planted by that church since the overthrow of Communism.

The Christianity of these churches was so different from anything I had experienced in the west. There was a sense of holiness, godliness and a desire for the presence of God that I had never seen in so many people.
Teenagers would spend hours on their knees crying out to God for their unsaved classmates and friends. There was worship, without entertainment. The preaching by the Romanians was more serious and challenging than my western "seeker friendly" messages. The sermon lasted at least an hour because the believers actually wanted to hear the Word of God preached and taught.
And one practical issue I noticed: **Every woman covered her head with a simple headscarf.**
The church was not a "Mega Church". The mother church would get about 80 people on a Sunday Morning and Evening. But on Monday Evening 50 would turn up for the prayer meeting (half were under 20 years of age). They knelt for three hours on a hard wooden floor. I declined the kind offer of a cushion to protect my knees, wanting to experience what the Romanians were experiencing.

People were being added to the church on a weekly basis. Seven people were saved during the week I was there; this was not unusual.

The people were not saved because of my preaching; they actually went to the meeting to give their lives to Jesus.
The church, although poor had a vision to provide meals for the desperately poor.

I visited a Pentecostal Gipsy Church where 120 people were packed into a tiny building with no spare seats. The youth choir stood up to sing. **Every young lady wore a headscarf** that had been made by the Gipsy Pastor's wife. Then the children's choir stood to sing. **Every little girl wore an identical headscarf** made by the Pastor's wife.

During a visit to eat lunch at a lady church member's flat, the friends decided to have an impromptu prayer meeting. **The lady went to a drawer and produced a dozen clean and ironed headscarves** which she handed out to the women, including my wife. No one thought this strange. In church, **if a lady forgot her scarf there was always someone with a spare one.**

Because our modern church services in the west are so popular I had long believed that no-one today would want to go to a church where hymns were sung, where sermons demanding true repentance, holiness and total consecration were preached, **and where all the ladies, including young teenagers and Master Degree Students wore headscarves.**
This went against everything I was preaching at our 'cool', Charismatic, seeker friendly, family church where the leadership tried to limit the sermon at the only Sunday meeting to 20 (maximum 30) minutes.

Please don't misunderstand me: **The wearing of a headscarf by each lady** was nowhere near the most important difference between Romanian and Norwegian Christianity. **But it was very much a part of their church life. And I really don't know why, but the discontinuation of ladies wearing a Head Covering is a result of a general decline in standards of holiness and godliness in the church.**
The Pastor's wife in Pitesti said that, the churches that had discarded **Head Covering in Romania** were the ones most influenced by a modern, cultural friendly, Western Christianity that rejected the emphasis on holy living and transformed lives. **Wearing a headscarf does not make a woman more holy,** but there is a connection between the discontinuation of this practice and a turning away from holiness and sanctified lives in general. Maybe it has something to do with cause and effect.

I came back to 'modern' Norway truly blessed but humbled at the lack of holiness and true spiritual reality in my life as a pastor.
But, as so often happens, there was no real change in my life and I soon got back to the job of attracting as many people to my church as possible so that I could feel 'blessed' and 'successful': Because, I reasoned, isn't this what modern church life is all about? Isn't that what is important today? I had the desire to be prosperous, successful and popular and to fill my church with people, whatever the method used. Doesn't the end justify the means?

About two years ago, God began to deal with my life again. This time it was here in Norway. This time it was slowly, rather than sudden. But in the last two years I have led Trondheim International Church (TIC) in a journey back to the roots of Reformation Christianity. We still have contemporary worship. We still have Tambourine Worship Dance. We still have a congregation with an average age of 30-35 years (including many in their 20's). We have kept the very many good things from contemporary Christianity but now have a weekly Bible Study where we are studying Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology and DVD's from John Piper (Desiring God). The Sunday Sermon is between 45 minutes and 90 minutes. **And now we have 6 of our ladies covering their heads in church and** a number of other ladies who are giving the matter serious consideration.

One of the issues we have been looking at recently is whether the Bible in 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 1 to 16 requires a woman to cover her head in church today.

Should a Christian Woman cover her head in Church today?

From the time of the New Testament until the 1950's most women wore a Head Covering in Church. This represents a period of 1,950 years (95% of Christian history).
Women covered their heads in obedience to the teaching in 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 1-16 where Paul writes that a woman is required to cover her head with a Veil (Modern day Headscarf) in Church.
Christian women covered their heads for 1,950 years (95% of Christian Church History) and have uncovered their heads for the past 70 years (5% of Christian Church history).

Purpose of this Bible Study:

The main purpose of this Study is to produce a well-balanced practical Bible-based argument in support of Women's Head Covering. I will let you be the judge as to whether I have succeeded or not.
My purpose is not to try to force any woman in TIC to cover her head. **But I do want to give her the choice.**

In fact, this is the first time I have ever taught Head Covering in any church in my 40 years ministry as a Pastor in England and Norway. In addition, I want to make it clear that I have never asked a single lady if she would cover her head.

Ladies in TIC: The decision as to whether or not you choose to cover your head is yours, and yours alone to make.
No pastor, elder, husband or father has the right to force a woman to cover her head in Church; but neither does any man have the right to force a lady not to cover her head. Let the ladies decide.

If you have never heard a sermon or Bible teaching based upon the subject of Women's Head Covering I would just ask you to please keep an open mind.
I want you to prayerfully consider whether Paul's teaching to the Corinthian Church on Head Covering in 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 2-16 is for today.

If, after hearing me and reading this Study, you decide that it is not necessary to cover your head please show respect for any lady who decides to cover her head and not tease her, criticise her or make negative remarks.
But if you decide to cover your head please be gracious and humble to those who do not cover. Please do not criticise them. They have made a sincere and honest choice not to cover just as you have made the choice to cover.

I will attempt to show that Paul's teaching on Women's Head Covering is a permanent requirement of the Bible for every generation and was not just a cultural requirement of the time.

I will also try to show that it was not just a requirement for the women of Corinth but a command to all the churches of the New Testament

Although many women in Christian Churches in Eastern Europe, Africa, India, Pakistan and the Middle East still cover their heads in church today, very few women in western churches now use a head covering.
Most Christians today claim that it is no longer necessary for a woman to cover her head in church.
I believe people who argue that a woman is not required to cover her head in Church ignore the overwhelming evidence of the Bible, the Apostles, the Early Church Fathers and 1,950 years of Church History which have always taught that a woman ought to cover her head with a veil (Modern day Headscarf).

Women's Head Covering is a **minor** doctrine and not a **major** doctrine. But it is still part of the Canon of Scripture. It is God's Word and God's Will, and it is no less inspired by God than any other part of Scripture.

For the purpose of this study I will often use the term ***"Headscarf"*** to describe the Head Covering because this is the modern day translation of the opaque material that was used to cover the Christian woman's head in the New Testament Church.

Women's Ministry in the Church

Some Christians may think that because I believe a woman should cover her head in Church I am being old-fashioned and discriminating against women. But I believe that I am a great supporter and encourager of women's roles and ministries in the church.

I believe that Paul's teaching that a woman must cover her head when praying and prophesying in the Church also gives her the authority to minister under the Headship of the man (her husband, or her Pastor). I believe that Paul was encouraging a woman to pray and speak in Public Church Worship Meetings. It is difficult to be certain whether or not this allows her to preach and teach in the Church. Wayne Grudem, John Piper, John Macarther and others would never allow a woman to teach a mixed group in Church.

But, even if she is prohibited from the teaching and preaching ministry, I do believe Paul is giving her the authority to pray and prophesy in the meetings under the authority that her Head Covering provides:

1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verse 5, 10, 13, "but every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered (unveiled) dishonours her head...for this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head (her veil)...judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered (unveiled)?" (New King James Version).

I believe that Paul's teaching requires both single and married women to cover their heads in all Public Church Meetings. We shall look at my reasons for this later in this study.

From the left: Richel, Sasha, Ellen, Joy and Raiza at a TIC Sunday Service
Richel, Sasha and Joy are married. Ellen and Raiza are unmarried.

Sasha leading a Sunday Meeting at TIC
The ladies play a very important role in the life of the Church

2. Background to the Head Covering Controversy

Before 1950 the majority of Christian women veiled their heads in church. Even non-Christian women would cover their heads in church as a sign of respect. Whenever my mother (who was not a regular churchgoer) went inside a church she would cover her head. But today in the west very few women cover their heads in Public Worship Services.

Why has the Biblical practice of Women's Head Covering disappeared in Western Churches after 1,950 years?

Since the 1950's Western Churches have practically abandoned the practice of Women's Head Covering in Church.
I believe there are a number of reasons for this, including:

1. **The rise of Christian Feminism in the past 50 years and its' effect on Evangelical Christianity.**
   Christian Feminism seeks to promote complete freedom and equality for both men and women. It is negative to any Biblical teaching which seems to promote men over women, or appears to subjugate women.

Instead of viewing Head Covering as a blessing which gives a woman the authority to minister in Church Services, Christian Feminists see Head Covering as a device to force a woman into obedience, submission and subjection. Christian Feminists view Head Covering as an example of the historical humbling and degrading of women.

2. **Modern Western Christianity and declining standards of holiness and obedience**
   Although there are many good things associated with the modern church, there has been a decline in teaching and preaching on holiness. Many people today confuse holiness with legalism.
   Although a woman is not made holy simply by covering her head with a piece of cloth it is an evidence of her obedience to Scripture.

   Many Evangelical Churches today encourage us to look and act similar to the world. We are encouraged to live out an Evangelical Christianity that is 'cool' and accepted by the world. Such an attitude will always see Head Coverings as 'un-cool' and old-fashioned.
3. **The recent Western resistance to authority and discipline in the church**
   Many Christians in Western Churches do not want to be disciplined or told what to do.
   This attitude, in part, is a reaction against the wrongful and sinful abuse of power by Christian leaders. This abuse of power must never be a part of TIC. But the New Testament is very clear in its' teaching that the Church is not a democracy and Pastors and Elders are commanded to teach, instruct and discipline the people of God.
   In countries like India, Africa and Eastern Europe there is still a great awe and respect for the Pastor. But it is difficult for any Pastor to show authority in Western Europe and the USA. Most western women will either refuse to cover their heads or cover their heads in such a spirit of rebellion that it would be better for them not to cover.
4. **The failure of Pastors to teach on Women's Head Covering because it is an unpopular subject in our modern, western society**
   The rapid decline in the practice of Women's Head Covering is, in my opinion, sad and unfortunate. **But the blame is not with the Christian woman.**
   The responsibility is with the Church Pastors and the lack (often zero) of teaching on Women's Head Covering in the Church today.
5. **Head Coverings became Church Fashion Statements instead of symbols of obedience to the teachings of 1 Corinthians Chapter11.**
   From New Testament times until about 1850 women in the main covered their heads with veils or headscarves.
   After 1850 the Headscarf (which is the modern day equivalent to the Head Covering described in 1 Corinthians 11) was replaced by Hats.

Hats became more and more popular in Church because they were fashionable in society.
The true meaning of Head Coverings was lost and Head Covering in Church became a fashion statement that dictated the form of a woman's headwear.
When hats fell out of fashion in the 1950's, women stopped covering their heads in Church.

'The Headscarf is the correct Head Covering described in 1 Corinthians Chapter 11. The Greek word used in this Scripture is 'Katakalupto' which means a 'veil' or 'headscarf'.

Many of the Evangelical churches of Romania, Latvia, Russia, the Ukraine, India and Pakistan which still require a woman to cover her head in Church, also hold to strong standards of holiness and discipline. A number of Church leaders from these countries are concerned about the influence of certain streams of American and British Christianity which encourage lower standards of holiness. The gradual decline in Women's Head Covering in these countries is not the most important result, but it is a result that can be seen. Many other results, including declining standards of holiness are not seen until it is too late. Churches that have abandoned the practice of Women's Head Covering in these nations have often abandoned the call to a holy lifestyle that often (but not always) accompanies Head Coverings.
One of India's National Church Leader's, Zac Poonen has stated that wherever Western Christianity influences Indian Churches the women begin to question the need for Head Covering, something that has never happened before in the history of the Christian Church in India.

I believe that after reading 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 and hearing Biblical Teaching on Women's Head Covering, any woman who is sincere and honest in seeking the truth of the Bible will ask, ***"Should I begin to cover my head in church and is there any way I can be sure concerning this truth?"***
I believe she can be sure.
I also believe that all the Christian women who covered their heads for 1,950 years were absolutely correct in believing that Paul teaches that a woman should cover her head in church with a headscarf.

I will attempt to show through this study that the Bible requires a woman to cover her hair in all Public Worship Meetings. I will also try to show that this is a command from God to every woman, in every age, in every generation, in every culture and in every life situation.

In this Study I am not concerned with how important Head Covering is compared to other doctrines. I am not doing a comparative Study seeking to find out whether Head Covering is more or less important than Music in the Church. My purpose is simply to contend for the truth of God's Word. I am not concerned with '**Is it very important?**' I am concerned with '**Is it true?**' I am not concerned with '**Isn't this old-fashioned?**' I am only concerned with '**Is this a requirement of the Bible?**'

The Biblical Teaching on the subject of Women's Head Covering is clear and nowhere in the Bible does the requirement for a woman to cover her head speak of a cultural issue.

We shall look at what the Bible says concerning the subject of a woman covering her head in church and also look at the objections from those who claim it is not necessary today. We will meet these objections and challenge them.

We shall look at the evidence of the Early Church Fathers and show that every Christian Woman covered her head in church from the time of Paul until 500 AD. We shall then see that the practice of a woman covering her head was continued in all churches (Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Reformed and Free Church) until the 20th Century.

Is Head Covering for today?

1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 1 to 16
When the Church assembles for Public Worship
The woman shall worship with her head covered
The man shall worship with his head uncovered

3. Bible Reading 1Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 1-16

Let us now look at the passage of Scripture where God commands that women wear a Head Covering:

1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 1-16 (New King James Version)

1. Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ. 2. Now I praise you brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you. 3. But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man and the head of Christ is God. 4. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonours his head. 5. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered (unveiled) dishonours her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. 6. For if a woman is not covered (veiled), let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered (veiled). 7. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head since he is the image and glory of God; but

woman is the glory of man. 8. For man is not from woman, but woman from man. 9. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. 10. For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority (her Head Covering) on her head, because of the angels. 11. Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. 12. For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God. 13. Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered (unveiled)? 14. Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonour to him? 15. But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. 16. But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such other custom, nor do the churches of God.

4. Bible Commentary on 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 1-16

In 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 Paul teaches the need for proper conduct in Public Worship Services. Paul devotes 15 verses (half a chapter) to explain the importance of Head Coverings for Women. Although the teaching on Women's Head Coverings is not a major doctrine I believe it is still important and is equal in Scriptural Authority to all the other teachings found in this letter.

In verses 2-16, Paul teaches that a woman is required to cover her head in Church and a man is to worship with his head uncovered. Paul gives at least 5 reasons why a woman is required to cover her head in Public Worship Services.
In *verses 17- 22*, Paul then takes up the serious matter of divisions and abuses at the Lord's Supper.
Finally, in *verses 23-34*, Paul gives the classic New Testament Teaching on the Lord's Supper.
Each of these three teaching subjects (Women's Head Covering, Abuse of the Lord's Table and the Correct Use of the Lord's Table) is concerned with worship in the Church and is not addressing a cultural issue.

We shall now look at Paul's teaching on Women's Head Covering in the church.
In *1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 1-16,* Paul teaches about:

- Headship and Submission
- The glory of God
- The glory of Christ
- The glory of the man
- The glory of the woman (Her hair)
- The command that a woman must worship with a Head Covering
- The command that a man must worship with an uncovered head

- The right of a woman to pray and prophesy in Church Worship Meetings with her head covered with a cloth veil
- The divine order of creation
- The presence of angels in Church Worship Meetings

Apart from the Woman's Head Covering, every other item above (including the command for a man to worship with an uncovered head) is considered Biblically relevant today and not Cultural and temporary? Why would we consider everything else in Paul's argument to be relevant today yet dismiss the Woman's Head Covering? This is simply not good Bible Exegesis.

Verses 1-2: Paul is calling upon the Corinthian Church to imitate his way of life, traditions and teaching. These are not the 'traditions of men' but the traditions of the Apostles concerning correct worship in the church; and these traditions were handed down from the Apostles to the churches.

Verse 3: Paul appeals to the creation order regarding submission:
1. Christ is the head of man.
2. The man is the head of the woman.
3. God is the head of Christ.

We may argue today that man and woman are equal, and so they are.
However, Christ and His Father are also equal, but Christ willingly submits to His Father. And this is an eternal submission.
The relationships described here are as unchangeable as God Himself.
They are based on the Word of God, not custom or culture.
Christ is not man's head because custom made it so, but because God created it so.
Man is not the woman's head because custom made it so, but because God created it so.
God the Father is not Christ's Head because custom made it so but because God created it so.
This is the divine order of creation and has nothing to do with custom.
Custom did not drive Paul to write 1 Corinthians Chapter 11: The Bible declares that ***"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness' (2 Timothy Chapter 3 verse 16)***.

Why is Jesus Christ, who is God the Son and equal with God, in submission to God the Father?
For the sake of a very important ministry: Redemption/Salvation.

Why is woman in submission to the man?
For the sake of a ministry: Leadership in marriage and leadership in the Church.
Leadership in the New Testament Church is always male.

Church leadership, Church discipline, Church Doctrine, Teaching and Preaching is to be ministered in the Church by a male leadership.

And woman is in submission. She is in submission to man and she is in submission to God who gives these commands.
Submission is not a popular subject today, but in Jesus Christ we have our perfect example.
The submission of Christ brought us our salvation.
Our Lord willingly submitted Himself to God the Father and endured complete humiliation; He was mocked, spat upon, beaten, tormented, tortured and put to death bleeding and dying on a Cross.

Surely we cannot compare the dreadful sufferings of Christ **in His submission to God** with the simple Scriptural requirement that a woman cover her head with a veil **as part of her submission to God?**

Christ who is God and the Head of the Church voluntarily submits Himself to the Headship of God the Father.
This submission to the Father was part of the Cross that Jesus took up daily, and He now asks us to take up our cross daily and follow Him.
The submission of Christ to His Father is beautiful, glorious, and, as far as possible, should be reproduced in our lives.
As Christ submitted to the Father, so woman is called to submit to the man.
And as a symbol of her submission, both to the man and God, the woman is **required to cover her head in Church**.
The woman covers her head in worship is an act of submission to God who has appointed it in the church.
The only submission of an '**inferior**' to a '**superior**' in this passage is the submission of man to Christ.
Christ is the Head of the man because Christ is infinitely superior to the man.
The man is only the head of the woman because she voluntarily submits herself to him; but she always remains equal to him in value and importance.

The woman must never be forced or pressured into this submission. Her submission to the man is because of her love, obedience and submission to God.
The woman's submission is because it is commanded by God and not by man.

If the submission of the woman was primarily to the man, she would be required to wear the veil all the time (as in Islam where the woman is regarded as inferior to the man).
The woman's primary submission is to God who only requires her to cover her head in Public Worship Meetings. She covers her **glory** (her hair) with her veil so that only **the glory of Christ** is revealed when the Church gathers for worship.
The submission of Christ (God the Son) to God the Father shows that Paul's teaching in these verses is neither cultural nor temporary.

Headship is a permanent ordinance.
It is theological truth clearly taught in the Bible.

Note: Some Bible translations use the words '**Husband**' and '**Wife**' instead of '**Man**' and '**Woman**'. As a result of this a number of churches only require married women to cover their heads but allow single women to remain bare-headed until they marry. I believe also that the context of the whole section of this teaching requires the words **man** and **woman** rather than **husband** and **wife**. In every translation of the Bible until the 1850's the terms **man** and **woman** were used.

Verse 4: *"Every man praying or prophesying having his head covered dishonours his head (Jesus Christ)".*
Although Paul is speaking mainly to the woman (covered head) he is also speaking to the man (uncovered head). There are two commands in this teaching:
1. The woman is to have her head covered.
2. The man is to have his head uncovered.

Now I have two questions:
1. Is a man still required to worship God with an uncovered head?
2. Is a woman still required to worship God with a covered head?

How can we say **yes** to the first question and **no** to the second? Who gave us the right to decide for ourselves what to change in Scripture when the Bible clearly calls for us to be honest and consistent when handling the Word of God? I suggest that **neither** is required today or **both** are required today!

Even today it is totally unacceptable for a man to wear a hat in church.
He is required to remove his hat before entering the church. This is not culture. It is respect for the house of God and respect for 1 Corinthians 11 verse 4. And it is universal. A man may cover his head at other times but not in Public Worship

A few years ago a good friend came into our meeting at TIC wearing a hat. He was immediately asked to remove his hat and was told that a man is not supposed to wear a hat in church. **Why do we firmly insist on men continuing to be bare headed in church while saying that it is no longer necessary for a woman to veil herself?**

Zac Poonen, one of India's leading Evangelical Pastors, writes about a personal experience concerning Women's Head Covering. He writes: 'I know of a man from India who was travelling in the United States and had an interesting encounter at a church. As he walked in, an older woman gestured to his head and said, 'You are going into the Worship Service; you need to take that thing off your head.' He had forgotten to take off his hat! Of course, he took it off immediately, knowing that the Bible says men should not wear a Head

Covering during a spiritual gathering. But when he went inside, he was surprised to find that none of the women wore a Head Covering even though the Bible teaches this truth in the same passage.
Isn't it interesting how easily we can see one thing and be totally blind to another? The woman outside the church clearly knew the Scripture in 1 Corinthians 11 – otherwise she would not have known that men were not supposed to cover their heads – yet she seemed oblivious to the rest of the teaching about a woman wearing a head covering'.

Why should we only keep half of Paul's teaching (that it is disgraceful for a man to have his head covered in church), whilst ignoring the other half of his teaching (commanding a woman to cover her head in church)?

Verse 5: ***"But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered (unveiled) dishonours her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved".***

Paul instructs women to cover their heads whenever they pray or prophesy. A woman should have her head covered when the Church meets publicly for Prayer, Preaching, Teaching, Worship, Baptism and Communion (The Lord's Table).
We need to emphasise that Paul is elevating (lifting up) the woman to a place of great respect and honour. Two of the greatest spiritual activities in the New Testament Church were prayer and prophecy.
Far from degrading (bringing down) the woman, Paul is lifting her up to the highest place of honour by encouraging her to pray and prophesy with her veil (head covering) of authority on her head.

We know from New Testament history that women had a very low status in society. But Paul is elevating women by encouraging them to partake equally with men in prayer and prophesy, two of the most important Corporate Worship activities.
The only requirement was that she needed to cover her head with a veil.
It is simply amazing that this passage has been so wrongly interpreted by some as prejudice against women, when Paul was doing the exact opposite.
The permission for a woman to pray or prophesy with her head covered is given extra Biblical support in 1 Corinthians Chapter 14 verses 29-32.

Here are some pictures from Women in ministry at TIC:

Sasha Leading the Sunday Meeting at Trondheim International Church

Ellen Leading Tambourine Worship Dance

Sasha speaking to the church at our Church Fellowship Weekend

Raiza and Ellen cooking at our very popular monthly International Dinner (a 3 Course Restaurant Quality Meal which is free to everyone). The Head Covering is for Food Hygiene Reasons.

Annady (on the right) is our Kitchen Leader at TIC

Mona Liza (Worship Ministry)

Mona Liza is our Website Manager and Technical Chief

Many opponents of Head Covering believe that churches who teach this command are opponents of women's ministries and discriminate against women, even believing them to be inferior to men.

Do the above pictures really show that we discriminate against women in TIC? Perhaps I am giving the impression that only the ladies who cover their heads in TIC are allowed a platform ministry. Although this is a Study supporting Head Covering I show below that ministry is open to all women at TIC:

Claire, Joyce, Richel, Annady and Annalyn all ministering at TIC Sunday Meetings without wearing a Head Covering (Richel now wears a Head Covering)

All our ladies are treated the same and are given the same opportunity to minister, whether they wear a Head Covering or not.

Verse 6:

"For if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or to be shaved, she should wear a veil"

A modern argument (since 1850) is that the covering referred to in this passage is the woman's **long hair.**

The assumption is that she doesn't need to wear a Headscarf in church because her long hair is her covering.

But the original Greek word for ***'veil'*** in the phrase ***'will not veil herself',*** is ***'katakalupto'*** which means **'to cover fully with a cloth veil' (Headscarf).**

The Greek ***Kalupto'*** means **a cloth veil.**

Kalupto is derived from another Greek word ***'kalumma'*** which simply means **'veil'.**

The literal meaning of 'katakalupto' means a cloth covering hanging down.

In addition, the fact that Paul teaches that the woman is only required to wear a Head Covering during times of Prayer and Prophesy in the church surely means that he is speaking of a removable covering such as a veil or Headscarf.

It is physically impossible for a woman to cover her scalp with her long hair while in church and then to remove her long hair after the service. But it would be very natural for a woman to cover her head with a scarf and remove it after the meeting.

Verses 7-9:

"For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man".

Paul is reminding us of the timeless order of creation. Once again the passage of Scripture is theological and permanent; not cultural and temporary. Please note the God-given reason for a man not to cover his head: ***"He is the image and glory of God".***

Paul does not say nor even hint that "a man indeed ought not to cover his head" because of some custom of the time of writing.

Verse 10:

"For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority (her veil) on her head, because of the angels".

The woman's head covering, her symbol of authority, enables her to pray and prophesy in Church in exactly the same way as a man. She is free to pray and prophesy, but always under the authority of, and in submission to, the male leadership of the church.

A man is always to minister in the meetings with his head uncovered and the woman is always to minister with her head covered.

Women are commanded to have a veil on their heads ***because of the angels.*** The New Testament calls Angels ***'ministering spirits'.*** Angels are sent by God to help us and minister to our needs. And the angels are watching in attendance at every church worship service and meeting.

Paul requires a woman to cover her head because angels are present in Christian Church Services. We cannot be sure of God's own reasons for this but that is no reason for a woman to ignore the teaching. **We are never told that we shall only obey God's Word when we understand His commands.**

Paul reminds us that angels are present at the Church's public meetings where women are worshipping, praying and prophesying.
Angels are not part of our sin spoiled world and have unchanging standards, which are not subject to weakness or change. Angels desire that God's requirement that a woman uses a Head Covering is observed by the church that Christ died for.
Paul therefore commands that a woman should be veiled in public worship (church services) ***"because of the angels".***
When a woman veils herself in public worship in the presence of angels she is showing respect, honour and obedience to Christ concerning worship and conduct in His church.

Many Christians know very little about the work and ministry of God's Angels. The Bible tells us that ***"Angels...are all ministering spirits sent out (by God) to serve for the sake of those who are to 'inherit salvation (the church)'" (Hebrews Chapter 1 verse 14).***
In the New Testament angels released believers from prison, were involved in salvation, brought comfort and reassurance to believers and revealed God's Will to the church. The New Testament tells us that angels are sent to minister to us today and are concerned for our well being; the angels help and assist us throughout our lives and bring God's providence and grace to the church.
Paul says that a Christian woman should cover her head with her scarf when she prays or prophesies ***"because of the angels".***

Verses 11 and 12 teach us that man and woman are equal. Man and woman are dependent on each other; but both are created by God and dependant on God. These verses show that neither man nor woman should think too highly of themselves. God has created man and woman as of equal importance and they are mutually dependent on each other for existence. There is neither male nor female in Christ, even though we have different gifts and roles in our earthly lives.

Verse 13

"Judge for yourselves; is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head unveiled".

Paul continues and says, 'Judge for yourselves, is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered (Without a Headscarf covering her hair and head)?' If the covering of a woman's head with a veil (headscarf) was only cultural, Paul would be speaking here about the church. He would be saying something like ***"Judge for yourselves; is it proper for a woman <u>to pray in church</u> with her head unveiled"*** or ***"Judge for yourselves; is it proper for a woman <u>to pray in front of men</u> with her head unveiled?"*** **But Paul says,** ***"Is it proper for a woman <u>to pray to God</u> with her head unveiled".***

A woman is required to cover her head for God, and God never changes, nor do His commandments. Paul has presented his evidence which calls for a woman to cover her head with a veil in Church. He now challenges his readers to make a decision: **To cover or not to cover her head.** But God gave the Head Covering as **a command**, not as a request or a suggestion.

Verses 14-15: ***"Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her as a (glorious) covering."***

The woman's long hair is her glory but a man's long hair is his disgrace. So men are to have short, uncovered hair and women are to have long hair covered by a Headscarf in the meeting. This requirement by God for a woman to cover her head is only while she is in the Church meeting. She is not required to cover her hair on any other occasion, though many women cover their head in private prayer and Bible Study at home.

Paul is declaring that nature itself teaches us that it is a disgrace for a man to have long hair; but a woman's long hair is her glory and is not only approved by God but commanded by God. So the woman is to glory in her long hair. A woman with long hair is proud of her hair. Outside of a Christian Worship Service it is not a sin for her to focus on her long hair.

She washes her hair; she may colour her hair; her hair shines; her hair is kept immaculate and she wants people to admire her hair. Her husband finds her hair attractive.

The only time and place that she is required to cover her long hair is when she is in a Christian meeting. And the only reason she is to cover her hair is because it is her glory and it is necessary for her to cover her glory (her long hair) in order to avoid her glory (her long hair) competing with the glory of God. **The only glory ever to be seen in the House of God is the glory of God.** Paul teaches that it is not proper for a man to have long hair; but if a woman has long hair it is her glory.

But in Christian worship meetings the central focus must not be on the woman's hair; it must be on Christ. And anything that distracts from Christ and Him only must be removed (or in the case of a woman's beautiful hair, **covered**).

"Because of the angels" (verse 10) shows us that the angels are offended when a woman's uncovered hair (her glory) hinders the glory of Christ. Therefore the woman's hair, the glory of the woman, must be completely veiled, so that her glory is not on show and the glory of Christ can be experienced without any distractions.

There is also the danger that a woman's beautiful hair will attract admirers who would be distracted from worshipping God. Young men in church often look at and admire the young ladies. It helps to avoid distractions if the woman covers her hair with a headscarf. It is important for the woman to cover her head before the meeting begins and keep her head covered until the meeting is over. Because the long hair of a woman is very attractive, the Early Church Fathers insisted that she wore a large opaque (not transparent) scarf that covered and hid all her hair.

We do well to understand the grave seriousness of the glory of the LORD. God is passionate about His glory. The following Bible verses underline this: **Isaiah 42 verse 8; 2 Chronicles 5 v 11-14; 2 Chronicles 7 v 1-3; 1 Kings 8 v 10-11; Exodus 40 v 34-35; Revelation Chapter 4; Revelation 21 v 22-27).** In the light of these Scriptures, is it right for us to question that the glory of the woman's hair should be hidden (covered) so that only the glory of God and the Christ should fill our church?

Ellen's hair (right) is her Glory according to 1 Corinthians Chapter 11

But Ellen's Glory (her long hair) should be covered in Church so that only God's Glory is seen

Verse 16

"But if anyone is disposed to be contentious-we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God".

There will always be arguments concerning this teaching. Paul, therefore, states in verse 16 that if any person wishes to be contentious (arguing and protesting) let them understand that this practice of Women's Head Covering is the rule in all the New Testament Churches, without exception.

Important point:
The religion of Islam did not begin until 550 years later (around 600 A.D.). Christian women had been covering their heads in worship for nearly 600 years before Islam began as a religion. Another important point is that Christianity only commands a woman to cover her head in church. The rest of the time she is free to show her long hair (her glory) everywhere she goes. Islam normally requires a woman to cover her hair all the time.

Head Covering as a Symbol
One of the reasons why a woman is required to cover her head in 1 Corinthians 11 is that it is a Symbol of all the teaching contained in this portion of Scripture. So what is the importance of a Symbol and why does God, through Paul make such a big deal out of it. Simply put, Symbols are important to God, even if we do not see the importance or significance of them.
On the night of the Passover, the Jewish people in Egypt were told to put a symbol on their door post, marking it with the blood of the slain lamb. When the Angel of Death saw it, he passed over the house, leaving it in peace.
Now suppose a family had said, 'Who cares? It's not important. It's just a symbol. Besides we are God's people and He knows our hearts and our status as His people.'
Even though they were God's people, He would have killed them if they failed to obey His command to use a symbol.

Symbols are important to God:

The Blood on the door posts
The Bread and Wine at Communion
The Symbol of Baptism by Full Immersion
The New Testament Woman's Head Covering

Every one of these Symbols is important to God.
Baptism by full immersion, Holy Communion and the Woman's Head Covering are all symbolic of very important Biblical truths. Baptism symbolises the work of salvation that has been accomplished in our lives.
Holy Communion symbolises the atoning death of Christ on the Cross for the forgiveness of our sins. The bread represents Christ's body and the wine symbolises Christ's blood.

A woman displays her willing submission to Headship by wearing a Head Covering in the presence of God (in Church). The Head Covering then becomes a symbol for all to see, recognised, welcomed and understood by the Angels in heaven and the believers here on earth.

Wearing a simple Headscarf in Church in obedience to God does not change a woman's status, worth, importance, independence or her valuable Ministry in the Church.

Think about it objectively: How difficult is it to place a piece of cloth on your head? People do it all the time, especially in a Norwegian Winter.
We often see Western Women who never use a Headscarf, wearing one in a hot climate while on holiday. Many women wear a Bandana on the beach to keep the salt and sand out of their hair.
Women often wear one on a bad hair day or whilst painting and decorating.

Head Coverings are often a legal requirement for food workers.
No one is allowed in the kitchen at our church without wearing a white Headscarf. All Kitchen workers at TIC wholeheartedly agree that wearing a Headscarf is an essential part of our Church Food Hygiene Regulations.
I have never heard a single woman object or even question the TIC Kitchen Rule that requires them to cover their heads with our regulation white headscarf.
As every kitchen worker is required to wear a Headscarf at every TIC International Dinner, why should it be so difficult for a woman to wear a similar head covering in the worship meetings?

Wearing a Headscarf at a TIC Dinner

Joy Wearing a headscarf at the meeting

Head Coverings for TIC Kitchen Staff

Head Covering when Leading a Meeting

The Headscarf is already being regularly worn in TIC by all our Church Kitchen Staff (Cooks, Kitchen Assistants, Dishwashers and Waitresses). My question to all the ladies in TIC is this: **As you are very happy to obey the rules and wear a Head Covering whilst cooking and serving food for the church, why is it so difficult to wear a head covering in worship in obedience to God and His Word?**

5. The Main Objections to Women's Head Covering

The Subject of Women's Head Covering in Church always produces many questions and objections.
It is important to consider these questions and objections and I will try to answer them as honestly and fairly as I can.

Objection 1:
It is "Anti Woman", "Sexist" and a relic of the past.
It is a sign of prejudice against women.

God, through Paul, addresses this objection in 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 11 and 12. *God teaches us through His Word that men and women are of equal importance*.

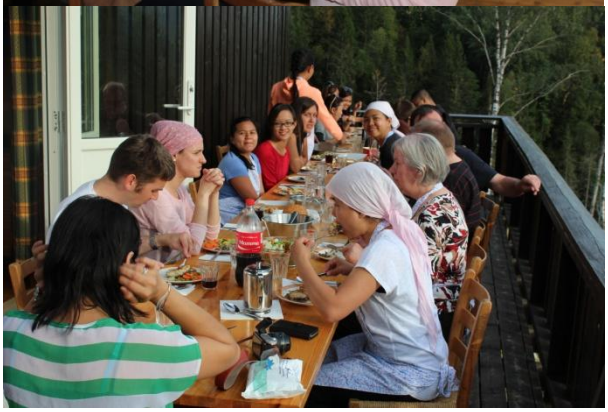
Far from being 'Anti Woman' and 'Sexist', Paul is actually liberating women and giving them the same importance as men with regard to some of the spiritual ministries and gifts in the church.

At the time of the New Testament women were regarded as second class citizens and had almost no role to play in any religious activity. Women had little or no role in society.

Prophecy and prayer were very important ministries in the early church and Paul is elevating and exalting the woman by encouraging her to partake in two of the most important and coveted ministries in the church: Prayer and Prophecy. And her veil (Headscarf), far from discriminating against her, is her '**authority**' for engaging in these ministries.

Paul is encouraging all women to pray and prophesy in Church Services.
The only condition is that she is required to cover her head.
But this freedom to pray and prophesy is a major breakthrough for the woman and her role in the church.

A time of prayer and worship at our TIC Church Fellowship Weekend



Are these ladies from TIC 'victims' of an anti-woman male Prejudice?
Do they really look like relics of the past?
Do they look as if they are being told to 'Keep silent in the Church'?

I reject the fallacy that a scarf on my head makes me oppressed.
My Covering is MY CHOICE.

I love this quote (Pastor Rob)

Objection 2:
If some of the ladies in TIC cover their heads in the meetings new people would not want to come to church because they would consider us to be old-fashioned and even strange.

This is a very important objection because none of us want to see people hindered or put off coming to church. But this would only be a valid objection if the church required **all** the ladies to wear a Head Covering in the meetings. Head Covering must be completely voluntary giving a woman the choice whether or not to cover her head. I do not believe people will react negatively just because a few ladies cover their heads in church.

But we need to allow any woman to voluntarily cover her head if she believes that this is the clear teaching of the Bible.
So the answer to this objection is that no one is going to be put off coming to church when we allow a woman to *choose* whether to cover her head or not. We are supposed to be different from the world and it is always important that we obey God rather than man.

I do not believe that people will be put off coming to TIC just because we encourage the ladies who want to wear a head covering to do so

Objection 3:
Wearing a Head Covering in church is old fashioned, unnecessary and outdated.

This is a very common objection today but we need to remember that the Bible is eternal and God's commandments are timeless and relevant for all generations.
Just as the Bible can never be old-fashioned so His commands (including the command for a woman to cover her head) can never be old-fashioned.

It is also true that Christians are called to be different from the world.
People who are seeking God are not looking for a religious copy of the world.
Obeying the commands of God concerning holiness and obedience contained in the Bible will always make us different from the world, and sometimes will make us different from many Christians.
Dare to be different!

R C Sproul writes: "The wearing of fabric head coverings in worship was universally the practice of Christian women until the twentieth century. What happened? Did we suddenly find some biblical truth to which the saints for thousands of years were blind? Or were our biblical views of women gradually eroded by the modern feminist movement that has infiltrated the church?"

As I have fully explained above, all our Kitchen Staff and Waitresses are required to wear a Headscarf when working so the Headscarf is already being used albeit for a very different reason (Hygiene).

If the ladies of TIC can wear a Headscarf when cooking and serving a meal it should not be difficult for any woman to wear a Headscarf in the Sunday Worship Meeting and Friday Bible Study and Prayer Meeting.

Ena and her sister, Annalyn, on Waitress Ministry at a TIC International Dinner

Fun in the Kitchen from the 'Best Restaurant in Trondheim' (and it's free)

Objection 4:

A woman's long hair is her covering so she does not need to cover her head in church

We have looked at this objection in our Commentary on 1 Corinthians Chapter 11. I will also deal with it here because it is often used as an argument that a women is not required to wear the Headscarf in addition to her long hair.
I agree that a woman's long hair is both her covering and her glory but Paul is teaching about two different coverings in 1 Corinthians Chapter 11.
One of these coverings is the woman's long hair (v. 14-15), which is natural, permanent and a glory to her (v. 15).
The other covering is her Headscarf, a temporary cloth covering which is removable (v. 5) when she is not in Church and is the symbol of her authority to pray and prophesy (minister) in the Public Meetings in her Church.
The fact that Paul only commands her to cover her head at certain times (v. 4-5) shows that he is speaking about a removable covering (her Headscarf) in mind.

The Greek word for Head Covering in 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 is 'KATAKALUPTO' which refers to a cloth Veil, or Scarf, which covers both the head and the hair.

The argument that the woman's Head Covering described in verses 5 and 6 is her long hair is completely false as the original Greek language clearly shows us. 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 uses two different Greek words for **"cover".**
The first Greek word is **"Katakalupto"** (verses 5, 6 and 13), a verb which means **"to cover with a piece of cloth" or "veil".** It also means **"to veil or cover oneself with a cloth"** or **"to wrap a cloth over".**
The second Greek word is **"Peribolaion"** (verse 15), a noun which means a **"covering"** or a **"wrapper"** which in this case is the woman's long hair. These two words have different meanings and cannot be used interchangeably.
It is clear from the context of Paul's teaching and the original Greek that **"Peribolaion"** refers to the woman's hair as a covering, and **"Katakalupto"** is the cloth veil that she is required to use to cover her hair in Public Church Meetings.

The original churches completely understood Paul's teaching on Women's Head Covering. Tertullian (160-215 AD), writing only 150 years after Paul wrote the Letter to the Corinthians said that the women in the Church in Corinth had continued covering their hair with a Headscarf from the beginning until his (Tertullian's) time. Tertullian's said, **"So, too, did the Corinthians themselves understand Paul. In fact, at this day the Corinthian (married) women do veil themselves with a cloth covering and their virgins (unmarried young women). What the Apostles taught (Paul), their disciples approve".**

Hyppolytus (170-236 AD) writing about the Corinthian Church at the same time said, **"...let all the women have their heads fully covered with an opaque cloth".**
An opaque veil means that you cannot see the hair through the veil.

Finally, if a woman's hair was her covering then men need to remove their hair before praying and prophesying, because just as a woman is not allowed to pray or prophesy with an uncovered head (her hair???) so the man is forbidden to pray with a covered head (his hair). Therefore he would need to remove his hair. The claim that the Head Covering referred to by Paul is the woman's long hair becomes more and more ridiculous.

These ladies at TIC have covered their long hair ("Peribolaion") with a Headscarf ("Katakalupto") as required in 1 Corinthians chapter 11.

Objection 5:
Head Covering in the New Testament was a cultural issue.

Women's Head Covering was never considered a temporary, cultural practice until the middle of the 20th Century.

Paul was not speaking just to the Corinthian Church. He was speaking to every church in every age. He wrote in 1 Corinthians Chapter 1 verse 2 to those who ***"all and in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord".***
The command for a woman to cover her head with a veil has nothing to do with culture. This was a completely ***new command*** for women.
The veiling of the Christian woman was exclusive to the Christian Church.
W. E. Vine writes: **"The command for a Christian woman to veil herself was neither Jewish, which required both the woman and the man to be veiled, nor Roman or Greek, which commanded both men and woman *not* to be veiled."**

In 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 Paul doesn't mention a single cultural argument. He argues from a theological position based on headship, Biblical submission, creation ordinances and angelology. Paul also writes, ***"If anyone is disposed to be contentious, we recognise no other practice, nor do the [other] churches of God" (verse 16).***

Objection 6:

Many people believe that it doesn't really matter? It is simply not important. It is a minor Doctrine.

Women's Head Covering is a **minor** and not a **major** doctrine.
This is not the most important command in the Bible but it is important because Paul devotes 16 verses (half a chapter) stressing its importance for all women in all the churches in every age. Paul is teaching Head Covering, not as a cultural issue or a local custom but as part of his wider teaching on how the church is to function in its Public Worship Meetings. Paul teaches on the correct way to worship and glorify God in Church Services. Paul teaches on the correct way to dress, the correct way to conduct the Communion Service and the correct way to use Spiritual Gifts in the meetings.

It matters because it is God Himself who gives this command. It matters because God is sovereign and commands us to obey Him whether or not we understand or agree with His commands.

I do not always know what is important to God. In the Book of Numbers God demanded that the Israelites stone a man to death for collecting sticks for firewood on the Sabbath (Numbers 15 v 32-36). If this were not part of God's sovereign Word (the Bible) I would say that the punishment was very unfair and severe, especially when I think of how Christians misuse the Lord's Day in our times. But God is sovereign and knows better than we do.

In 1 Chronicles Chapter 13 the Ark of the Covenant was being taken to Jerusalem when the oxen stumbled. We read in verses 9 and 10, ***"Uzzah put out his hand to take hold of the Ark, for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah, and He struck him down because he put out his hand to the ark, and he died there before God"***

In 1 Chronicles Chapter 21 David took a census of the people which displeased God. As a result God sent a sickness which killed 70,000 men of Israel (verse 14).

If God considers the above events to be so serious that he takes the lives of men, isn't it possible that He also takes a Woman's Head Covering serious, especially as it is part of our Worship Service and is concerned with His glory?

Some people believe that Head Covering for women is not important because the subject is only mentioned once in the New Testament. But Paul spends 15 verses (half a Chapter) to carefully explain the meaning and purpose of Head Covering. He uses as much space teaching the necessity of Head Coverings as he uses to teach on Holy Communion and Baptism. Both Holy Communion and Head Coverings are only mentioned once in the Bible; but both are given half a chapter of careful teaching and practical instructions.

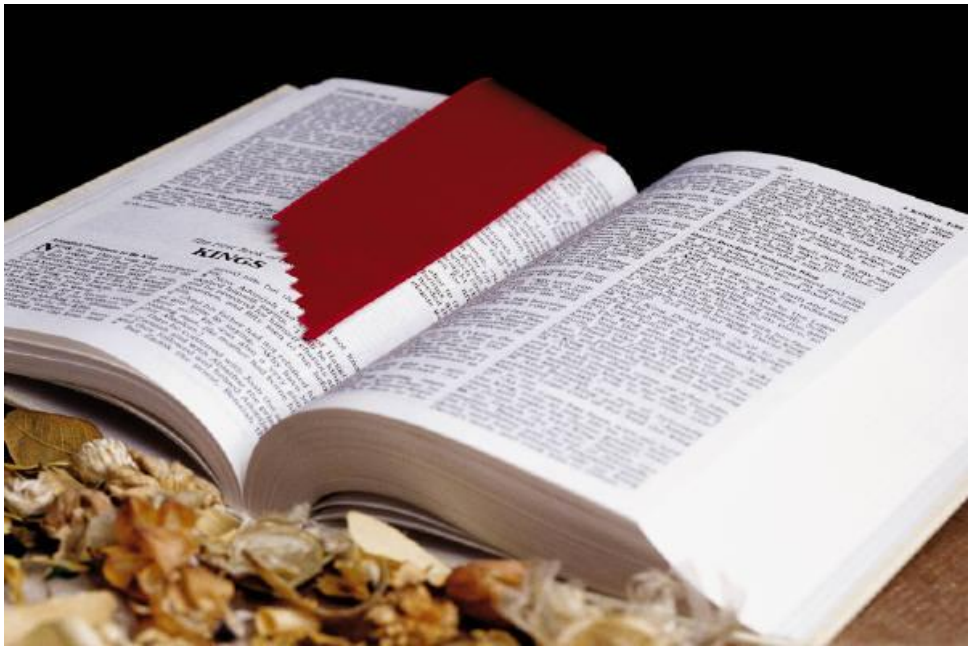
And today we consider Holy Communion to be important to the Christian Church in just the same way that we used to consider Women's Head Covering to be important.

Finally:
The Bible says that "to obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Samuel Chapter 15 v 22)

Objection 7:
This is a command given by Paul and not by God.

This objection strikes at the very Authority and Inspiration of Scripture. 1 Corinthians is God's divinely revealed Word written down by Paul for all churches in all the ages until Christ returns. The Holy Spirit told Paul what to write and God is the author and Paul is just the Secretary. Paul always makes it clear which are his words and which are the words of God. And 1 Corinthians is the pure Word of God. ***Paul wrote in the same letter to the Corinthians: "Anyone who claims to be a prophet, or to have spiritual powers, must acknowledge that what I am writing to you (the whole of the first letter to the Corinthians) is a command of the Lord" (1 Corinthians Chapter 14 verse 37).***

Paul leaves us in no doubt that the command for a woman to cover her head in Church is a command from God and not from any man. Paul also writes that ***"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness" (1 Timothy Chapter 3 Verse 16).***



Is the Holy Bible God's Word to be obeyed or man's word to be altered and changed according to our cultural practices and customs?

Objection 8:

I haven't been Convicted About This Yet

2 Timothy Chapter 3 verse 16 states that "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness". Jesus said, "If you love me you will keep my commandments" (John Chapter 14 verse 15).

The Bible from Genesis to Revelation is concerned with **obedience** far more than **conviction**. God never says in the Bible, that we are to obey His commands when **we feel convicted by them**. God expects us to **obey His commands because He is God**.
Mona Liza and Joy began to cover their head as soon as they realised it was a command from God that, quite frankly, is very clear in God's Word. Jesus wants us to obey His commands whether or not He gives us a special conviction about them.

The Bible also tells us:
"Anyone, then, who knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, commits sin" (James Chapter 4 verse 17).
God wants us to obey Him whether He has convicted us about it or not.
It is always wrong when we don't do what He has told us to do.
If it is in God's Word we should not need to wait for God to convict us about Head Covering.
We must not allow our prejudiced feelings to hinder God from convicting us about a direct command from His Word.

Objection 9:

I don't see how covering my head with a scarf is going to make me more holy.

This command from God is not a call to greater holiness. A woman does not become any more (or less) holy just because she covers her head.
Head Covering is about obedience and submission to God, and giving glory to Christ our Lord. The woman doesn't cover her hair because she wants to be more holy; she covers her hair because she **is** holy, washed clean by the blood of Christ. She covers her head to please God.

Ellen's greatest desire is to obey God in everything

Objection 10

The women of Corinth covered their heads because they did not want to be mistaken for prostitutes. The city of Corinth had a Temple Prostitute Cult where all the prostitutes went about bare-headed. By covering their head the Christian women would not be mistaken for prostitutes.

No doubt there were prostitutes in Corinth as there were in Ephesus, Philippi, Galatia and all the Cities of the New Testament. But Corinth did not have a special problem with prostitutes at the time of Paul's letter to the Corinthians. The belief that there was a Temple for prostitutes in Corinth at the time of the writing of 1 Corinthians is false. Historical evidence shows that the Romans destroyed the Prostitute Temple of Aphrodite in 146 BC, over 200 years before Paul wrote his letter to the Corinthian Church. There was no Prostitute Temple at the time of Paul's letter. Corinth's reputation as a very immoral city was long gone by the time of Paul's Letter to the Corinthians.

In addition, the argument that women covered their heads to avoid looking like prostitutes does not account for why Paul commanded men **not** to wear a Head Covering.

Paul required the Christian women to cover their heads with a veil in church. The Christian Church was a Holy Place where they could not be mistaken for bare-headed prostitutes. Why on earth would he then allow them to take off their veils as they leave church and go about the streets of Corinth without their heads covered where they could possibly be mistaken for bare-headed prostitutes (because of their lack of head coverings)?

Remember Paul's teaching is that a woman must cover her head in Church, not on the streets of Corinth!

It is very weak Bible Exegesis and ***"it is totally inappropriate to assign to Paul a reason for his saying something that is different from the one he himself gives. Paul does not leave us without a rationale or for a defence of covering the head. And the thing that is most astonishing here is that he appeals to creation not to Corinth. He appeals to man and woman as man and woman and, if anything, transcends local custom. It is those things that are rooted and ordered in creation. That is why I am very frightened to be loose with this passage" (R C Sproul on Head Coverings, 'To Cover or not to Cover').***

If Paul's instructions requiring the women to wear Head Coverings were to protect them from being mistaken for prostitutes, he would certainly have made that clear in his letter to the Corinthian Church.

Paul makes no mention of prostitution in his teaching, something he would definitely have done had it been a problem for the Corinthian women. The argument concerning prostitutes does not take into consideration the fact that women covered their heads in all the New Testament Churches, not just the Church in Corinth.

Paul shows that Head Covering was not only for the city of Corinth because he concludes his teaching by stating that the practice of Women's Head Coverings was for all the churches (verse 16).

Objection 11

Women don't wear Headscarves today. Young women would never submit to wearing a Headscarf in Church
This is similar to objection 3 above.

It is true that most women today do not wear Headscarves in their daily life, but the command in 1 Corinthians 11 has nothing to do with culture or daily living. It is simply a spiritual requirement clearly taught in the New Testament for a woman to cover her hair with a Headscarf while she is in Church. She is not required to cover her head at any other time.
I wear a suit, formal shirt and tie on Sundays but I do not wear these clothes during the rest of the week.
Most men in Norway today dress casually and wear jeans and a tee shirt for Church and I am not going to argue about it.
But I myself would never come to Church dressed in jeans and a tee shirt.
The reason is simple: I would never wear casual clothes like jeans at my wedding or if I was invited to visit dignitaries or Royalty, and I would certainly not wear anything less formal in the House of God. I feel that it is my way of showing respect for God in the House of God. But this is my own personal choice and is not based on any requirement found in the Bible.
Ladies, I wouldn't care if I was the only man in the whole world who wore formal smart clothes in the House of God. I will not lower my standards because my respect for God is greater than my respect for man.
Would you be willing to be the only woman in Trondheim International Church with your head covered if you believed that it was pleasing to God even if it was displeasing to man?

We must obey God rather than man (Acts 5 verse 29)

6. Questions and Answers Concerning the Teaching and Practice of Women's Head Covering

If you are considering covering your head in Church you may have some questions regarding where and when to cover your head, what type of Head Covering to use and how much hair should be covered.
You may also have some remaining doubts about whether covering your head is really necessary today.

Question 1: When and Where Should I Cover My Head?

Answer: A Woman should cover her Head whenever she is in Church or any Christian Gathering, including a House Group Bible Study and Prayer Meeting.

Paul teaches that a woman is to cover her head when she prays or prophesies. Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 11 is concerned with the Public Meetings of the Church. In our culture today this would include the Sunday Service, Bible Study, Prayer Meeting and Youth Meeting.
In our Church Services we may not all pray publicly, but when someone is leading in Prayer everyone is praying, whether audibly or silently. In essence, everyone is in prayer, men and women alike.
So even if a woman is not praying aloud, she is still joining in with her brothers and sisters who are gathered.
Because of the regular use of prayer and prophecy in the meetings and because of the angels, a woman should have her head covered during the entire Church Meeting, from the very beginning until the final Blessing. In addition, it is very distracting for other worshippers if a woman is constantly removing and putting on her Head Covering.
In addition, some of the ladies from TIC who wear a Head Covering in church also wear a headscarf during their private prayer and Bible reading at home. They testify to the beneficial result of wearing a headscarf in home devotions.

Head Covering for the Sunday Meeting

Head Covering in Prayer Meeting

Head Covering for Communion Service

Head Covering at Baptism

Head Covering during TIC Worship

Question 2:

What type of Head Covering should I use and how much of my head should be covered?

The original Greek Bible words describe exactly what the woman's head covering is to be. Paul's descriptive word for "**Headscarf**" in 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 is 'KATAKALUPTO' (from the root KALUMMA: Veil) which means in English ***"to cover the head with a cloth head covering".***

We know from history that from the New Testament onwards every woman used a Veil or Headscarf in Church. The Early Church Fathers required the women to wear a simple opaque Headscarf. They would not allow women to wear hats or headdresses insisting on the simplicity and plainness of a veil.

The Catacombs in Rome were used by persecuted Christians as an assembly place for worship and refuge from about 100-300 AD. This would date from the end of the period covered by the New Testament onwards, so we have a historical record of the way women dressed for worship. The Catacombs were carved in the substrata rock beneath the city of Rome. The Catacombs are often six levels deep and apart from being places of refuge and worship during Roman persecution, they were used as Cemeteries and Burial Places for the dead.
Catacombs are also found in Naples, Malta, Sicily, Alexandra, Paris and other cities. The Christian Community was very rarely disturbed or pursued in these silent retreats. In these Catacombs we find the first Christian art in the form of paintings and statues. The many paintings on the walls of the Catacombs reveal that in every case the women had the head and hair covered (but not the face). In fact there is not a single painting or statue in the Catacombs that show a woman with an uncovered head. And the head and hair is always covered with a simple cloth Veil or Headscarf.

How much of my hair should be covered?

Both the head and the hair should be adequately covered.
There are no rules in the Bible regarding the size or colour of the Head Covering.
A simple Headscarf large enough to cover both the hair and head is all that is required. The Headscarf should be large enough to cover your head but there is no need to be too concerned that every single hair is covered.

Joy has become an expert at tying on a Headscarf. She likes to have her hair well-covered

Question 3:

I may feel awkward if I am the only woman in my church that covers her head with a scarf?

As your Pastor I completely understand this question. We now have six ladies who use a headscarf at all of our meetings. At least four of them were concerned about the reactions they would get and were worried they might be teased by their friends; but none of them have regretted their decision to cover.

Two of the ladies who have chosen to cover have really surprised me, because I never expected them to. As I have previously stated, I have never, ever asked a lady to cover her head; and I never will. So every lady who makes the decision to cover her head is doing it willingly, of her own free will and without any pressure from me or anyone else in the church.

Read Raiza's testimony (below, under the Testimonies Section)!
It is a great example of how someone was led into covering. Raiza has gone from complete scepticism over Head Covering to great joy and blessing.

Raiza (left, in the pink top) was very sceptical to Head Covering. Now she loves to cover her head in Church, at home and even at train stations, airports and public places, when she has an opportunity of praying and reading her Bible

God will always honour a woman who cares more about pleasing Him than pleasing her church, friends or family. If you believe it is right to cover your head in Church let the words of Peter give you strength and encouragement: ***"But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than men'" (Acts Chapter 5 verse 29).***

You may be surprised to find that people will respect you for your decision to cover your head.

Question 4:

I am struggling to understand the following: Why would God want me to cover my hair?

There are some things in the Bible that I don't understand. It is then that I need to trust God and obey the Word of God instead of rejecting what I don't understand. ***God says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah Chapter 55 verses 8-9).***

There are many things in the Bible that I did not understand 20 years ago but understand better today. I do think, however, that God has explained to us clearly in 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 why a woman is commanded to cover her head.

Question 5:

I am afraid people will think I am a Moslem if I cover my hair with a headscarf.

Most Moslem women are required to keep their heads covered all the time. God's command to a Christian woman is to cover her head in church only and in the privacy of her own home for private prayer and Bible Study if she so wishes. God does not command a Christian woman to cover her head at any other time.

Christian women in all the churches were covering their hair at the time of Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians (probably written in the winter of A.D. 55). The Moslem religion did not come into existence until about 600 AD, at least 550 years after Christian women had started to cover their heads. As stated above, a Christian woman is only required to cover her head in Church (and perhaps in the privacy of her own home) where she will never be mistaken for a Moslem.

Question 6:

I would like to cover my head but my husband does not want me to. What should I do?

This is a tough question. The Bible says that we are to obey God rather than men; but the wife is also to be submissive to her husband.

I do believe that if the husband is sincerely following his own responsibility to his wife, **"husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians Chapter 5 verse 25),** he will allow his wife to cover even if he doesn't quite understand her reasons.

He will do this simply because he loves his wife sacrificially and wants to honour her.
He will ask himself the simple question: 'Is it a sin for my wife to cover her head?' And the answer of course is that she is not sinning, she is just obeying the Word of God. A godly husband will allow his wife to cover her head if she believes this is a Biblical requirement for her.

If a husband refuses to allow his wife to cover her head I believe she should initially obey him.
The wife should ask the husband why he doesn't want her to cover her head.

If he is afraid that other people might think it strange that you are wearing a head covering find a smart and practical Cotton Headscarf that will both cover the head and look presentable.
Study together: The husband and wife should study 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 1-16 together. She should explain to her husband that the instruction for a woman to cover her head is not only about submission to her husband; it is also about obedience to God.
Pray together: Pray to God that the husband and wife will be brought to unity in the matter of Head Covering.
Request the freedom to cover: After studying and praying together the wife should ask her husband for the freedom to cover. A God-fearing husband will be sympathetic to anything that troubles his wife's conscience.
Seek Counsel: If the husband and wife cannot come to agreement they may seek counsel from a Pastor who believes that a woman is required to cover her head in Church but is also balanced and has a good understanding of the Scriptures.

Every woman should think very carefully before wearing a Head Covering. I always give the advice that it is better to wait until you are certain, than to begin covering without true conviction, only to abandon the practice soon after. This may sound strange advice from someone who is convinced that Head Covering is a requirement of God's Word, but every woman should cover because she wants to and not because of outside pressure.

7. The Early Church Fathers and a woman's head covering; and the practice of head covering in the church for 1,950 years

Who were the Early Church Fathers?
Why are they so important?
What was their teaching about a woman covering her head?

The Early Church Fathers were the Church Leaders and Teachers who led the churches after the original New Testament Apostles died. They were responsible for defending the Christian beliefs and practice of the church, for holding to sound doctrine and traditions and exposing false teachings and heresy. The Early Church Fathers ensured that the churches kept to the original teaching and truth as handed down by the Apostles (including Paul, Peter, James and John).

The believers at Corinth did choose to submit to the teaching of the Bible, for Tertullian, an Early Church Father, writes more than 200 years later that the Corinthian women were wearing Head Coverings. History shows that women in

all churches throughout the world continued to wear Head Coverings until the middle of the 20th Century. But the debate on whether a woman is required by Scripture to wear a Head Covering did not resurface again until the 1950's.

The writings of Irenaeus (AD 120-202) are extremely important to Christianity because he was a disciple of Polycarp, who had been a disciple of the Apostle John (the writer of John's Gospel, Revelation and the Letters of John). Therefore we have a direct link going back to John, the Disciple of Jesus. It is, therefore, important to know what Irenaeus (and Polycarp and John, the disciple of Jesus) taught about a woman's Head Covering in church. Irenaeus translated 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verse 10 as follows: ***"A woman must wear a veil of cloth (Greek: Kalumma) upon her head because of the angels",*** (Quoted directly from Irenaeus writings, 'Against Heresies Book 1'). His precise choice of words leave us in no doubt whatsoever that Irenaeus taught that a woman was to cover her head with a scarf in all church meetings.

Clement of Alexandria (AD 153-217) was the most important teacher in Alexandria.
He wrote from Egypt in 190 AD that ***"It has also been commanded that the head should be veiled..."*** *(Ante Nicene Fathers volume 2 page 266).* ***"It is becoming for her to pray veiled"*** *(Ante Nicene Fathers volume 2 page 290)*

St John Chrysostom (AD 340-407) was an important Early Church Father. He was Archbishop of Constantinople and wrote a Letter (Sermon) to all the Churches containing this command to women: ***"Hear the apostle teaching this, when he bids the women to cover their heads with a veil because of the presence of angels"*** *(Sermon at the Feast of the Ascension).*

Tertullian (AD 160-225) was a great theologian and Early Church Father. He wrote brilliantly in Greek and was the first great writer of Latin Christianity. ***He wrote, "If any" he says, "is contentious, we have no such custom, nor (has) the church of God." So, too, did the Corinthians themselves understand him. In fact, at this day the Corinthians do veil their virgins.*** Tertullian (AD 198) Ante-Nicene Fathers vol. 4 pages 32-33.

Origen of Alexandria (AD 185-254) was an Early Church Father and Theologian. He was a brilliant Bible Teacher and Scholar.
He wrote in his Bible Commentary ***"There are angels in the midst of our assembly ...we have here a twofold church, one of men, the other of angels ...and since there are angels present ...women, when they pray, are ordered to have a covering upon their heads because of those angels. They assist the saints and rejoice in the church...St Paul has given the will if the Lord and the Command of Christ by commanding women to cover their head with a veil".***

St Hippolytus of Rome (AD 170-236) wrote His "Instructions to Holy Women" in a Publication called 'The Apostolic Tradition'.

He wrote, *"Let all the women have their heads veiled (covered) with an opaque cloth (a scarf), not with a veil of thin linen, for this is not a true covering worthy of her holiness".*

Saint Augustine (AD 354-430) was a great Philosopher and Theologian
Augustine is one of the most important figures in the development of Western Christianity. His great writings are still in print and read all over the world. In his writings entitled, On Holy Women, St Augustine writes, *"Women must wear the veil in church and must not uncover their hair. This is God's command to all women. There is a disturbing behaviour with regard to Christian women wearing the veil. There is a serious lack of modesty and sin of pride. The veils are so thin that the hair can be seen through the cloth. Some of the veils fail to conceal all the hair which violates the original idea of modesty and submission."* St Augustine had very strong views on the strict importance of wearing the veil and would not allow any compromise. St Augustine also wrote that it is a command from God that a woman cover her head in church at all times.

Jerome (AD 345- 429) wrote:
"All Christian women wear the veil in Egypt, Syria, and the whole world".

"The wearing of fabric head coverings in worship was universally the practice of Christian women until the twentieth century. What happened? Did we suddenly find some biblical truth to which the saints for thousands of years were blind? Or were our biblical views of women gradually eroded by the modern feminist movement that has infiltrated the church? – R. C. Sproul

The oral and written history handed down to us from the Early Church confirms the belief that women covered their heads without debate or argument because the truth of the Bible Text was never questioned by the true Church, only its opponents.

John Calvin and Matthew Henry both taught and instructed women to cover their heads, and the protestant reformer Martin Luther's wife always wore a Headscarf in Church. John Wesley taught Head Coverings.

From the earliest pictures of the Church, the women covered their heads and the men did not, in accordance with the teaching of the Bible. This is how the church continued for centuries

We have many documents and written evidence clearly showing that these Early Church Fathers taught that all Christian Women in all the Churches were required to wear a Headscarf in all Public Worship Meetings.

For nearly 2000 years Christian women everywhere covered their hair in church.

We have many pictures and statues from the Catacombs in the 2nd and 3rd Centuries that show all women covered their heads with a Headscarf.
It was a universal practice and we cannot find one picture or statue of a Christian woman with her head uncovered. From the first century to the middle of the twentieth century (about the 1950's) virtually all Christian women throughout the world wore a head covering.

In the middle of the 20th Century, J.C. Wenger, writing about Swiss Churches in the 17th, 18th, and 19th Centuries recorded that, ***"The white opaque headscarf was worn by all women in Switzerland, Germany, Holland, England and all of Europe and America".***

Today many Christian women in Africa, India, Pakistan, the Middle East, Russia, the Ukraine, Romania, Moldova, Italy, Spain and many other countries cover their heads with a simple Headscarf.

In the Western churches of Europe and America the practice of a woman covering her head has virtually been abandoned. But even in Western Europe some Reformed, Baptist, Pentecostal, Presbyterian and Brethren women wear a Headscarf in church.

One problem is that many Western Christians are totally ignorant of the overwhelming evidence that clearly shows Women's Head Covering is a command of God, Biblically correct, and was practiced throughout history until the twentieth century.

At the time of the apostles every church, whether it was in Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Syria, Egypt or Carthage, taught that women were required to cover their hair in all Christian Public Worship Meetings.

There was only one unanimous understanding of the passage. And this understanding was practised in all churches and denominations until the middle of the twentieth century.

8. A Lesson in Humility - The Example of Jesus

Every single Christian is called to a life of submission, humility and obedience to God. The man is to be submissive to God in the same way as the woman.
But the greatest lesson in humility is shown by Jesus. He is the supreme example of Humility and Servanthood.

According to ***1 Corinthians Chapter 15 verse 28, after all Christ's enemies have been subdued, "the Son Himself will be made subject to Him (God the Father) who put everything under Him (the Son), so that God may be all in all."***
Jesus is equal to the Father in essence. He and the Father are "one" (John

Chapter 10 verse 30).
Yet during His earthly life Jesus voluntarily submitted to the Father in His role as our (human) representative. He obeyed God's law on our behalf and died as our substitute. During this period Jesus learned obedience from what He suffered (Hebrews Chapter 5 verse 8).
Voluntary submission did not diminish the Saviour's status as God's Son. Jesus was equal with the Father during His earthly life. The submission of Christ shows a difference in function, not in essence. This helps us to see the dignity of our own submission to God. The Bible's requirement to submit does not imply superiority or inferiority. It merely reflects a difference in function.

The following are some examples from the Bible showing the submission of Christ:

Matthew Chapter 26 verse 39: "He went a little further and fell on His face, and prayed, saying "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."

John Chapter 6 verse 38: "For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me."

Hebrews Chapter 5 verse 8: "Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered."

Philippians Chapter 2 verses 5-9: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the Cross."

When we look at the submission, obedience and humiliation of our Saviour, who suffered and died on the Cross, surely the command for a woman to cover her head with a simple Headscarf is small in comparison.

And as we look upon our Saviour hanging on a Cross in our place, loving and forgiving us, isn't the requirement that a woman cover her head with a headscarf something to be done with gratitude and joy?

Submission in the Trinity
In the teachings on subordination found in the Bible, woman is subordinate to man because of the *roles* that God has given them, not because of value or worth.

There is a spiritual equality between man and woman, an equality that will continue after the Church Age has come to an end.

Looking to the Godhead we see that all three persons in the Holy Trinity are equal. Yet there is a divinely ordained order of headship and submission. The Son willingly submits Himself to the Headship of His Father and the Holy Spirit willingly submits to the Headship of His Father and the Son.

9. Conclusion

Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians chapter 11 verses 1-16 still applies today. Christ is still the head of every man and man is still considered by the church to be the head of the woman.
Neither has the fact of creation changed. Woman was created from and for man.
And the phrase "because of the angels" also applies today because the angels have not changed. Women still wear their hair longer than men. And for 1,950 years women went to church with their heads covered and men went to church with their heads uncovered.

I have attempted to show that the Command of God that requires a woman to cover her head in Christian Public Worship Meetings is a Command for all the churches in every land in every age.
I believe that it is a permanent ordinance and should be obeyed today. I have attempted to argue the case for Head Coverings by explaining the difference between the two Greek words used in the passage, and have shown that KATAKALUPTO can only mean "a cloth veil covering the head". The other word PERIBOLAION means "a covering" or "a wrapper" and refers to the woman's natural long hair.
This covering of long hair is the woman's glory. It is something for her to be proud of. It is attractive and beautiful. But it must be covered in church because the only glory that should be seen in church is the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. The woman is to be submissive to Christ by covering her glory in order for the glory of Christ to be revealed.
I also wrote a short Bible Commentary to show the importance of this teaching in the context of the whole passage of verses 1-16. Paul devotes half a chapter (16 verses) to the subject of Head Covering for women (1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 1-16). Paul gives no indication that this command is only temporary for the Corinthian church.
He uses such words as "disgrace "and "degrading". These words denote a moral issue of abiding significance, not some mere local custom. I then mentioned a number of objections that are commonly used against the command that a woman should cover her hair with a Headscarf.
I have attempted to answer them fairly and honestly. I also answered questions that are often asked by women who are considering covering their heads in Christian Meetings.

We looked at the instructions of the Early Church Fathers that a woman wear a cloth veil on her head. We looked at the history of the church to show that women covered their heads with a veil or scarf from the time of Paul until the middle of the twentieth century. The command to women to wear a Head Covering is the Word of God revealed through Paul to every woman in every church through the ages until Christ returns.
There is not a single occasion in Scripture where we are given permission to ignore and set aside a command of God in the Bible. The reason why so many Christian women have set aside this command is that they do not understand what God's Word is saying or they simply dislike the idea of covering their heads.
Christian Feminism has caused great harm to the teaching of Scripture and the Commands of God.

No woman is made submissive or obedient simply by wearing a Headscarf in church. Submission and obedience are matters of the heart and motives need to be pure. It is also important that no woman begins to cover her hair simply because I believe it is the command of God. On the other hand I hope that any woman reading this teaching will give the matter serious thought and consideration.

There is an interesting situation developing in Evangelical Christianity. There are women in many countries who are beginning to cover their heads with a simple Headscarf in churches that ceased this practice many years ago. Often there are just a handful of ladies (sometimes only one) with heads covered.

This is surely a healthy sign when women without any outside pressure decide of their own free will that it is a lovely command of God their Heavenly Father that they cover their heads.
I have included (below) a few testimonies of the women in Trondheim International Church who have started to cover their heads in church.

Things to be considered:

1. It is the Will of God
2. It is the command of God
3. It is clearly taught in the Bible (1 Corinthians Chapter 11 verses 1-16
4. In Psalm 1 the righteous man and woman delights in the law of God
5. The Bible also says of the righteous man and woman, "I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart" (Psalm 40 verse 8).
6. This command for a woman to cover her head with a Headscarf is a main subject in 1 Corinthians (taking up 16 verses or half a chapter) of the book. In addition, history shows us that every woman in every New Testament Church kept this command and the ladies in Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, Jerusalem, Antioch, Pisidia, Antioch Syria, Thessalonica, Galatia, Athens, Babylon, Berea, Caesarea, Crete, Cyrene,

Damascus, Derbe, Hierapolis, Iconium, Joppa, Laodicea, Lydda, Lystra, Pergamum, Philadelphia, Puteoli, Sardis, Sharon, Smyrna, Tarsus, Thyatira and Troas all covered their heads with a simple opaque headscarf.

7. When the Gospel spread to Europe, Africa, India and all the Middle East this command for a Christian woman to cover her head in church was obeyed, without exception.
8. We can read the whole of the New Testament and we will not find one single verse that cancels or discontinues the command for a woman to cover her head with a scarf in church. There isn't one verse to even give a hint that a woman can ever remove her head covering in a Christian Church.
9. No point of the Bible, however small or trivial in our eyes, ought to be neglected. It should also be noted that the apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, thinks this subject important enough to devote fifteen verses (half a chapter) to this subject. We believe many things in the Bible that only have three or four verses to support those beliefs.
10. This is an apostolic command from God to Paul and cannot be set aside by culture or fashion changes. The doctrine commanding a woman to cover her head may be considered a minor doctrine by many today but it is an apostolic command and cannot be ignored.
11. Note Paul says ***"every woman."*** This is important, because it shows the universality of this command by God.
    Paul is introducing a new Christian command to be obeyed by all women throughout the ages.
    In verse 16 Paul states that the command that a woman cover her hair is a universal command for all the churches and is not to be dictated to by cultural issues.
12. There was one practice (the practice of head covering) for all the churches in spite of the fact that the churches were found in many different countries with many different cultures. Paul clearly teaches that a woman is to cover her head in church no matter what culture she is living in. Today many Christian women in Russia, the Ukraine, Italy, Spain, Africa, the Middle East, India and Pakistan cover their heads in church. But in many other countries, Norway, England, America etc the practice of a woman covering her head in church is much rarer (although some women in these countries do cover their heads in church because they see the universal truth of 1 Corinthians 11 verses 1-16). Paul is saying that the command of Head Covering is not something he introduced; it was given to him by God through the Holy Spirit.

10. Testimonies from the Ladies in TIC who Use a Head Covering

Much of the renewed interest and support for Head Covering is coming from the ladies themselves and not from the men. I believe this is a very healthy sign. The vast majority of the testimonies come from ladies who have discovered this Biblical command from themselves, without any pressure from men.

The following Testimonies are from Ladies who have recently begun to cover their heads in Trondheim International Church (TIC). They explain how and why they began to cover their heads.

Sasha

My name is Sasha and I am originally from the Ukraine. I am married to Eivind, a wonderful Norwegian man, who is originally from Sandnes in South West Norway. Eivind is a National Radio Presenter with the Norwegian State Radio Company (NRK).

In the Ukraine, from my youth, I was totally against Head Covering for women. I did not understand the women who covered their heads and I even ridiculed them.

It is ironic that now I am the one wearing a Head Covering and it is my friends who do not understand.

One of my best friends is very sceptical about me wearing a headscarf in church.

Others simply say that it isn't important and doesn't really matter whether a woman wears a head covering or not. None of my friends really support head covering, but that is perfectly okay with me.

When Pastor Rob began to teach on women's head covering I began to study 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 for myself. I read and re-read the Scriptures in 4 different languages in an attempt to understand what is really true. But all the translations said the same thing: **A woman must cover her head in public worship meetings. She must wear a head covering.** This was a big surprise for me – how did I not see that before?
It was now so obvious: A woman must wear a head covering in church. As soon as I realised this was not a cultural tradition I decided to wear a head covering. I just did the right thing. The first time I wore my head covering (a pink headscarf) was fine. My headscarf really helped me to concentrate on the service better than before and I immediately felt that it was the right thing to do.
On the funny side, I did not know that it can feel so hot wearing a headscarf in church. I also didn't realise that it takes special skills to tie the scarf and keep it in place.

I often lead the meetings in TIC and, in addition, I am involved with the ministry at our Church Fellowship Weekend at Meråker, a ski resort near the Swedish border.
Lately, I have been concerned that a woman should not teach men in the church. I have adjusted my ministry so that I can open up discussions, testify ask questions for group discussion and bring glory to the Lord without taking a leadership, teaching or governing role.

Raiza

I pray to God to help me to be very honest in giving my testimony.

My name is Raiza Anastacio. I am originally from the Philippines. I am 25 years of age, single and I have been working as an Au Pair in Europe for four years. I come from a small, peaceful, stress-free family in the Philippines. There is no screaming and fighting between my sister and me, now that we have both grown up, or between my parents. But my family are very devoted Catholics.

I came to know the Lord Jesus Christ last year in a Church in Bergen, in the South West of Norway, while working for a Muslim family.

I can remember that, from the time I started school in the first grade in my home town (Zamboanga City), I always followed the school rules.
I always wore the proper uniform, I was always on time for school and I was always present. I always did my homework and made sure that I got the best possible mark.
Since becoming a Christian I always ensure that I keep the laws such as paying my taxes. I even obey the smallest laws like not crossing a street when the lights are on red. The reason for this is because how will I be able to obey God's laws and God's Word if I cannot obey the laws made by a mere human being?

I go to Trondheim International Church (TIC) and it's really a blessing from God. I am so grateful that God has brought me here. There's unity and happiness in all the members of TIC. I have met people from different countries (Ukraine, Malaysia, and Vietnam etc) and become friends with them and they really helped me to know their culture and to know more about God.
Our Pastor is patient and committed in protecting and helping his "flock" as he calls us, to grow more in faith.

I first got my headscarf from my Pastor (Robin Bassam) on the night I was baptised. I was baptised on 9th March, 2014. But before I recently started wearing my headscarf, it had been lying in my closet for 5 months. My Pastor is very kind by providing a very nice headscarf for me and the other ladies.

My Pastor (Pastor Robin Bassam) loves to give copies of almost anything, like his teachings and so much more. One of these is the teaching about head covering. I did read it but I was not very interested. But I did think of wearing a scarf for a worship dance that my friends and I were thinking of doing at an International Dinner. But my intention was to wear it just the one time...only during the dance. The headscarf was just meant to be worn like a costume. But my friends didn't like the idea so I dropped it.

The first time I heard my Pastor preach about Head Covering, I still didn't find it very interesting, because I was expecting something more, like Jesus' commands or God's Word.

Here I am (on the right) at a Friday Bible Study and Prayer Meeting before I started wearing a headscarf to all the meetings

Then, the second Sunday, Pastor Robin was preaching about it again, and I was like "mmmmm...okay". But still I wasn't convicted. I still found it to be not very important, and I was like one of those who believe that "our hair is already our covering" (1 Corinthians 11 verse 15). And I never imagined myself wearing a scarf/head covering.

But on the third Sunday, Pastor Robin preached on head covering again and my reaction was: "Oh no, not again". But I got so convicted when Pastor Robin told us about the man who was stoned to death for picking up sticks on the Sabbath Day; and he spoke about Uzzah who had good intentions of protecting the ark from falling, but God struck him dead also. And when David took a census of the people, God killed seventy thousand of the Israelites. Upon hearing that, the Holy Spirit convicted me and He opened my eyes to the fact that it's God's command. Whether or not it's in the 10 commandments, it is still God's Word. While listening to my Pastor preaching, I just couldn't wait to wear a headscarf. When I went home I was so happy and I just couldn't wait to go to church again to wear a headscarf. In fact, I started covering in my private devotions at home before the next Sunday.

The first Sunday I went to church with my head covered, I felt a bit uncomfortable. I felt especially uncomfortable because I was the only girl of my age at that time, who was wearing a head covering. The other girls were married. My friends were looking at me but they really didn't say or ask me anything.

From that day I always cover my head every time I read the Bible or when I pray, even at home. It feels so good praying and reading my Bible with my head covered. I feel so incomplete if I pray or read the Bible with my head uncovered.

I am so happy and blessed that God is really helping me with the decision I have made. Because He has given me courage to cover my head in public places when I pray or read my Bible in the train station, in the train or at the airport. Maybe people look at me and wonder what I am doing, but it doesn't bother me as much as I thought it would. AND I THANK GOD FOR THAT!

Raiza

Richel

Richel is standing furthest left wearing a black dress and blue Headscarf

Introduction by Pastor Rob

Richel is a young lady from the Philippines who has made her home in Norway. She is married to a wonderful Norwegian man called Pål and they have a beautiful daughter, Ella Andrea.

Pål and Richel

Ella with Anna Lyn: Where's my mum?

Richel is our Deaconess at TIC and has excellent organisational skills. She takes much of the responsibility for organising our Social Events. Richel does tireless work ensuring the smooth running of our Annual Christmas Dinner and Party. In addition, Richel organises our Games Evenings.

She takes the responsibility for finding someone to lead our meetings every Sunday and will always help with anything going on at TIC. She has an infectious enthusiasm and cheerfulness.

Richel leading worship before her decision to wear a Head Covering

Richel is the TIC Worship Leader. Apart from leading worship herself, she takes the responsibility to organise the complete worship side of the church. This includes finding new worship leaders, musicians and back-up singers and ensuring that there is someone to lead the worship each week.

Richel has only recently begun to cover her head in church. She has given her testimony (below) describing how this very experienced Christian with a lot of confidence and zest for life came to wear a Head Covering in our meetings.

Anyone who thinks women wear head coverings in church because they are weak and fearful and simply submit meekly to male dominance, control and authority has never met Richel Gerebise Wik.
I don't think Richel would cover her head for Barack Obama or the Queen of England unless she was convinced it was the right thing to do.
Pastor Rob

Here is Richel's testimony:

Hello Everyone. My name is Richel and here is my testimony about how I came to wear a head covering in church:

I never heard any preaching or teaching on Women's Head Covering in the Sunday Morning Service in the church where I grew up. I had seen women from different denominations wearing a head covering but I never paid any

attention to them and never thought to question why they wore a head covering.

In fact I never even thought about head coverings until I saw that two ladies in our church, TIC, had started covering their hair with a headscarf. At first it was kind of strange looking at them. It didn't make any sense to me.
And then, shortly afterwards, our Pastor Rob began a series about Head Coverings and we began to study head covering from the Bible and looking at the symbol of submission that it represents.

I had a lot of questions as to why it was necessary for a woman to cover her head. Why had I not been informed about this before? Why now? I was thinking that I have been a Christian almost all my life and know that I have a good relationship with my Saviour. I thought, "I don't need this!" It struck me that this was much more a cultural thing, rather than Biblical thinking.

But God has been so kind, loving and gracious that He has revealed to me the truth about Head Covering. I asked Pastor Rob for a copy of his Bible Study Manual on Head Covering. As I began to study the Bible Study Notes, God really spoke to me and it is very clear that my Lord wants me to cover my head with a proper Head Covering. God has revealed to me that Women's Head Covering is a Biblical truth that cannot be opposed. I will cover my head in church for His Name and His Glory.

I cover my head with Headscarves that Pastor Rob gets from a Christian Head Covering Company in the United Kingdom.

Ellen

My name is Ellen and I am originally from the Philippines. I am a Student at the University in Trondheim. I attend Trondheim International Church which we affectionately refer to as TIC.
I have been attending TIC for a few years and am involved in Tambourine Dance Ministry.

I am also involved in the TIC International Dinner Ministry Team.
Once a month we cook a three course meal (Starter, Main Course and Dessert)

and serve it to about thirty people after the Sunday Service. It is a very popular ministry in the church.

Here is a photo of Raiza and me on Kitchen Duty

I was baptised by Pastor Rob in March of this year.

As my baptism approached I realised I wanted to be obedient to God in everything, even in the small details.

I began to cover my head in church a few weeks ago. I realised that in this way I would be pleasing God. God sacrificed so much to save a sinner like me; so there is no reason for me not to obey and submit to Him.
Covering my head in church is a way of honouring Him so that only His glory alone will be shown in the church.