

PLAIN SPEECH

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“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)

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THE COVERING & THE AGE OF MIRACULOUS GIFTS

Some in their efforts to “get around” the force of **1 Cor. 11:2-16**, get really innovative and come up with what they deem a reasonable and sound argument. Their thought process usually runs something like this: *“The covering was a garment that women in Corinth placed on their heads while exercising miraculous gifts given by the Holy Ghost; thus, since the age of miraculous gifts given by the Holy Ghost has past, the practice of wearing the covering has long been over with.”*

I disagree with this line of argumentation, for I find it contrary to scripture. I hope by the end of this article you, too, will see that the covering did not cease to be bound with the cessation of miraculous gifts being exercised. Having laid the foundation for the article, let’s now scripturally think through this issue for a few moments.

Those who would have the covering cease with the age of the miraculous are quick to point out **vs. 5 of 1 Cor. 11**. It reads this way: *“But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head....”* From this point, the one who holds to what we will henceforth call the “Miraculous Gifts View” (MGV) usually points out that prophesy has ended (**1 Cor. 13:8-10**), thus the covering, also, must be no longer binding. What to do with this argument?

- I know some who argue that prophecy has a broader meaning than personally and miraculously receiving and transmitting information from Deity (**cf. Ex. 7:1**). This idea is interesting, but I do not believe it is the best or easiest way to deal with the issue.
- Here is the route I take: let’s say I’m discussing the issue with some BNP (big name preacher) who spouts the MGV. I’d ask the BNP if he understands what “or” means. If he does, I’d let him know that he ought to see that his argument is all wet. You see, **vs. 5** states that the covering is to be worn at two times, not just one; i.e. when a woman prays and when a woman prophesies. Two different things are under consideration in **vs. 5**, not just one. Having established this fact, I would then tell the BNP that I agree the prophesying noted in the text is miraculous (for that’s what I believe the context demands). However, I would then ask the BNP if his wife prays today. The BNP will have to say yes (**1 Thess. 5:17**). Thus, according to the word of God, the wife of the BNP sins when she prays if she has discarded her covering. That seems easy enough for the honest truth seeker to get. I would also ask the BNP how he plans to “explain away” **vs. 13**, which mentions prayer, but not prophesying.

Here’s how those who hold to the MGV reconcile prayer with the covering. They usually say something like: *“The prayer mentioned in 1 Cor. 11:5 is a miraculous prayer because of its close proximity to prophesying. The text is dealing with inspired things – prayer and prophecy.”* What to do with this line of reasoning? Below is how I handle the matter (I assume I’m still debating with the same BNP).

- First of all, I’d underscore the fact to the BNP that whether or not the prayer noted in **vs. 5** was miraculous is a moot point in that prayer continues on until this very day. Thus, still today – yes still today – when a woman discards her covering and prays, she has transgressed God’s will (**vs. 5, 13**). That is just what the text teaches!
- Secondly, I’d deal with the BNP’s “close proximity argument” and show the folly of such. I’d take the BNP to **Amos 7:12**. That text reads this way: *“Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there.”* Having read the text, I’d ask the BNP, if eating bread becomes miraculous simply because of its “close proximity” to prophesying. I’d also ask the BNP if assembling ceased to be bound because of its “close proximity” to a miraculous healing (**Acts 20:7-11**). I’d ask the BNP if he will stand by while his reasoning takes away the necessity of baptism for the remission of sins, because of its “close proximity” to the miraculous (**Acts 2:1-41**). I’d also ask the BNP if every passage in the New Testament that’s in “close proximity” to something miraculous must be discarded and deemed as no longer binding. To each question, the BNP would have to answer, “No.” Why then is it different with regard to the covering in **1 Cor. 11:2-16**? It’s not! That’s the point.

There’s more that can be said in this regard, but that which is above should suffice to show how ridiculous the MGV is. As I stated in last week’s article, we still do not yet speak the same thing regarding the covering. I am hopeful that we all will one day. As we continue to move toward that end, let’s never give into the faulty premise that the covering ceased to be bound with the cessation of spiritual gifts. That cannot be proven by the scriptures – not one whit.