

YES, IT REALLY *IS* A SIN FOR A WOMAN TO CUT HER HAIR!

(A Review of Rick Cutter's Article)

By George Battey

On September 4, 2000, an article from Rick Cutter, entitled "*Is it Really a Sin for a Woman to Cut Her Hair?*" was emailed en masse to a great number of Christians. Hundreds of people received this article either directly from Rick, or indirectly as it was passed on from hand to hand. The article is unappreciated for the following reasons:

- **It teaches false doctrine that will lead people into sin.**
- **It was sent out by spamming on the Internet – an unethical, perhaps even illegal practice.**
- **It uses unnecessary, inflammatory language:**
 - 1) “‘Uncut Hair’ proponents also make the *incredulous [sic] claim* that a woman with hair 5 feet long could be considered to have ‘short hair’” (p. 2).
 - 2) “*Because ‘long hair’ is the literal translation for koma, that’s exactly what ‘long hair’ advocates believe [i.e., Rick calls his position the ‘long hair advocate’ position] ... They believe it is sinful to add to God’s Word by inserting added or hidden meanings into this simple verse*” (p. 3) [implying that “uncut hair” people do not believe it is sinful to add to God’s Word].
 - 3) “It is the *dishonesty* of this latter position that many have unfortunately lowered themselves to” (p. 6).
 - 4) “Frankly, I have rarely heard more *nonsense in my entire life*” (p. 6).
 - 5) “‘Uncut Hair’ advocates should at least have the *honesty* to admit they don’t believe the translators” (p. 6).
 - 6) “To suggest that ‘long hair’ actually means ‘uncut hair’ is *dishonest and deceitful*” (p. 6).
 - 7) “*Even children understand ...*” (p. 6).
 - 8) “*When we play these games with God’s Word ...*” (p. 6).
 - 9) “What baffles me is how that many Christians seem to be *so rock-solid sure about ignoring these experts, so confident to oppose them, so cool and self-assured*. Frankly, I fail to see the reason for this unfounded and dangerous *self-assurance*” (p. 7).

The examples of this type of language are too numerous to continue, but enough are presented here to show the inflammatory nature of Rick's article. Yet, after writing in this way, Rick pleads that any response should be done with a proper attitude. He praises some who have "disagreed agreeably" (second en masse letter sent out by Rick, Sept. 9, 2000).

▪ **It raises more questions than it answers.**

- 1) How long is long (the subjective problem)?
- 2) Why must a woman "put forth a sincere effort to grow her hair long rather than substituting an artificial veil indefinitely" as Rick argues on page 18?
- 3) Is "growing" hair part of any lexicographer's definition of the Greek word κομᾶω?
- 4) Does the tense of the verb κομᾶω have any bearing on the issue of whether a woman may cut her hair?
- 5) What part does Numbers 6:5 play in helping us understand what it means to "let the hair grow long"?
- 6) When Samson's hair began to grow (Judges 16:22), was he "keeping on letting his hair grow," even though it was short in length?
- 7) Does the Bible say "LONG hair was given her for a covering" as Rick says, or does it say "her hair was given for a covering" (1 Corinthians 11:15)? What significance might this have on the subject?
- 8) When men look at a rope and say, "That is a long rope," is "a long rope" the same as something that grows?
- 9) If a child is instructed to "keep leaving the rope alone" and then trims off the end of the rope, did he act as he was instructed?
- 10) In the Greek is "have long hair" one word or more than one word? If it is one word, what kind of word – a verb or a noun? If a verb, does that describe something a person does, or does it describe the length of an object?

There are more questions raised than these, but these will suffice to demonstrate that Rick's article falls far short in dealing with the subject at hand. As mentioned already, his article raises more questions than it answers.

▪ **It makes several illogical and irrational statements.**

- 1) "Today, the 'uncut hair' doctrine is unquestionably one of the most emphasized doctrines of the church. It is taught nationally and internationally, and is so embedded in the one-cup ranks that any preacher found to believe otherwise will almost certainly be ostracized and siphoned of financial support. Local teachers who disagree with the 'uncut hair' doctrine are usually sought out and forbidden to teach their

‘false doctrine.’ Many are simply encouraged to leave congregations when their belief is exposed. Other teachers are demoted from their congregational teaching schedules” (preface to the article, second paragraph).

- 2) “... it is impossible for either a man or a woman to keep their hair from growing” (p. 9).
- 3) “Any Man who believes koma means ‘to let the hair grow’ is living in perpetual sin!” (p. 9).
- 4) “Remember, if a woman must let her hair grow, then a man must not let his hair grow at all or he is sinning” (p. 9).

The list could go on and on. All of these statements are illogical and irrational. The statement about preachers being “ostracized and siphoned of financial support” is unfounded. Let Rick give names and specific incidences of when any these actions have happened.

- **It misrepresents what the lexicographers said about the verb κομάω.**

The injustice to Thayer is the most obvious example here. First, Rick leads us to believe that Thayer did not say κομάω means “let the hair grow” when that is exactly what he did say. Second, Rick accuses brethren of never quoting all of what Thayer wrote. However, our brethren have published tracts on this subject which do give Thayer’s full definition (cf. “*Honor and Glory, Shame and Dishonor*,” Richard Bunner, p. 7; “*Let Her Be Covered*,” Don King, p. 9). No one is trying to deceive or be dishonest here. As Brother Richard Bunner pointed out, brethren may be wrong, or they may be ignorant, but to charge them with dishonesty and deceitfulness is unfair.

- **It continuously treats a verb as though it were a noun.**

That is, throughout Rick’s article he speaks of a woman’s covering as being “long hair” (adjective + noun), whereas the New Testament speaks of “wearing” or “growing” long hair (verb – describing action).

- **It completely ignores the significance of the present tense of the Greek language.**

If any sister in the church is looking for justification to trim or cut her hair, this article by Rick provides comfort in knowing that she is not alone in her thoughts and desires, but it provides absolutely no proof that trimming and cutting are acceptable with God!

We now enter upon a critical examination of what Rick Cutter wrote, in order to demonstrate its fallacy and its danger.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GREEK PRESENT TENSE

[Credit should be given to Greg Jordan for having brought to my attention the significance of the present tense in the subjunctive mood (1999).]

We are about to discuss technicalities of the Greek language. Many complain that “all this technical Greek stuff is confusing.” They argue, “If we have to know Greek to understand the Bible, then there is no hope of any of us being saved.” The problem with this reasoning is that it fails to understand that somebody has to know Greek or we *would* all be lost! The New Testament was not written in English, but Greek. Somebody has to know about Greek to translate it so the rest of mankind can understand and be saved. This is where those educated in the Greek language come into play. Not everyone in the church needs to learn Greek, but someone does, or else we will indeed be lost! The following information is essential if one really wants to know why “uncut hair advocates” take the position that it is sinful for women to trim the hair even a little.

There are three verbs in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 that are of importance in this study.

- 1) κατακαλυπτέσθω (“*let her be covered*” – v6) – **present tense**, passive voice, imperative mood, 3rd person, singular of κατακάλυπτω.
- 2) ὀφείλει (“*ought she*” – v10) – **present tense**, active voice, indicative mood, 3rd person, singular of ὀφείλω.
- 3) κομᾷ (“*s/he may have long hair*” – vv14-15) – **present tense**, active voice, subjunctive mood, 3rd person, singular of κομάω.

Notice that each of these verbs is in the present tense. The significance of this cannot be overemphasized in this study. The primary significance of the present tense is that it stresses continuous action. Dana and Mantey write, “The progressive force of the present tense should always be considered as primary, especially with reference to the potential moods ...” (p. 181). Notice “especially with reference to the potential moods.” This refers to the imperative and subjunctive moods above.

By way of explanation, verbs have “mood.” There are several “moods” in the Greek language that indicate the relation of the verb to reality.

- 1) **The “indicative mood”** - means the action is actually taking place. For example: “Jack sees Spot.” This is action that is actually occurring. In 1 Corinthians 11:10,

“she ought to have a symbol of authority on her head,” the word “ought” is indicative. This means that right now the woman is actually in need of a symbol of authority.

- 2) **The “subjunctive mood”** - means the action is not actually taking place, but is potential. For example: “If Jack sees Spot, he will kill him.” The action of “seeing Spot” is not actually occurring but is potential. This is why the Greek grammars call the “subjunctive mood” a “potential mood.” In 1 Corinthians 11:15, “if she has long hair,” the verb is subjunctive. The action is not actually occurring at the time of writing, but is potential. Whether the action ever will be performed will depend upon what the woman does - hence the word “if.”
- 3) **The “imperative mood”** - means the action is not actually taking place but is potential. This mood is used for commands, hence the name “imperative” - it is “imperative” or necessary that the action be performed. For example: “Kill Spot.” The action of “killing Spot” is not actually happening, but it is potential and is given in the form of a command. In 1 Corinthians 11:6, “let her be covered,” the action is not actually occurring but is potential. This is a command. Whether this action will ever occur depends upon whether the woman chooses to obey or not.

So, because the Greek words κατακαλυπτέσθω (“*let her be covered*”) and κομᾷ (“*s/he may have long hair*”) are in potential moods and in the present tense, the “progressive force” is being emphasized. Literally translated, verse 6 says, “But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, *let her keep on being covered.*” Literally, verse 15 is saying, “But if a woman *keeps on growing long hair*, it is a glory to her.” If one does not like the word “growing,” then it would be, “But if a woman *keeps on having long hair*, it is a glory to her.” (More about this word “growing” in a moment.) For emphasis’ sake, let it also be noticed that verse 14 literally says, “If a man *keeps on growing long hair*, it is a dishonor to him.”

In the indicative mood the point is still the same: continuous action is being stressed, though not so strongly as in the “potential moods” (i.e., the imperative and subjunctive). Literally, verse 10 is saying, “For this reason the woman *keeps on oughting* (i.e., “keeps on needing”) to have a symbol of authority on her head because of the angels.”

The present tense of these verbs points to something a woman continues to do – around the clock. Verbs describe action. The woman must keep on doing what? The apostle said she must keep on “growing her hair long.” If she must “keep on” doing this, when can she stop and have it cut or trimmed? Rick Cutter did not tell us. In fact, Rick treats these verbs as if they were nouns. He tells us in his article that “long hair” (an adjective + noun) is the covering, but that is not the whole story. Actually the Bible says “her hair is given to her for a covering,” and the divine qualification is that it must be hair that “keeps on growing long” (present tense, subjunctive mood). The Christian woman is told

to do something (verb) with her hair. What is she supposed to *do*? She is to “let it keep on growing long!” (1 Corinthians 11:15). When reading that, remember this is a command of the Lord Himself: “If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 14:37).

Dana and Mantey are not alone in saying the present tense stresses continuous action. Perschbacher writes the following under “Subjunctive Mood: Present Tense” [i.e., the tense and mood of κομῆ (“s/he may have long hair”) in 1 Corinthians 11:14-15]: “The tense does not indicate the time of the action, past or present, but the kind of action. The aorist tense refers to punctiliar or undefined action, whereas the present tense refers to stative, durative, or repeated (iterative) action” (p. 340). He makes a similar observation under the “Imperative Mood: Present Tense” [i.e., the tense and mood of κατακαλυπτέσθω (“let her be covered”) in 1 Corinthians 11:6]: “The present tense denotes progressive, iterative, or stative action, rather than temporal action” (p. 357). Robertson writes under the heading of “Subjunctive”: “The rarity of the present subjunctive (and optative, of course) has already been commented upon. The aorist is used as a matter of course here *unless durative action is to be expressed* ... The subjunctive is very common indeed but not in the present tense” (p. 889, emphasis mine - GB). Under “Imperative” he writes: “The present imperative was found to be regularly durative” (p. 890).

Perschbacher gives examples of the present subjunctive to help us see what is meant by the continuous nature of the present tense. In Galatians 5:25, the Bible reads, “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” This verse contains both the subjunctive and imperative moods in the present tense. Literally it means, “If we *keep on living* in the Spirit, let us also *keep on walking* in the Spirit.” Is there any time when a person can stop “walking in the Spirit” and still be saved? Of course not. Again, Romans 15:6 says, “that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Literally, the present tense is saying to us, “that you may with one mind and one mouth *keep on glorifying* the God and Father.” Is there any time a Christian may stop glorifying God – even momentarily? Of course not. One more example: the Lord Himself says, “And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise” (Luke 6:31). Literally, “Just as you want men to *keep on doing* to you, you also *keep on doing* to them.” Is there ever a time when we may momentarily stop treating people right? Of course not.

The point should be obvious by now. When the Lord says a Christian woman should “keep on being covered” (1 Corinthians 11:6), that she should “keep on oughting to have a symbol of authority on her head” (verse 10), and that she should “keep on growing her hair long” (verse 15), there is never a time when she may momentarily stop growing her hair. Her hair (noun) is a covering and she is supposed to keep on doing something with that hair – “keep on growing it long.”

Rick objects. He writes, “If ‘to let the hair grow’ were the proper definition of *koma*, why wasn’t it translated that way – by anyone?” (p. 6). Perhaps Rick himself should answer these questions: (a) If Luke 6:31 means, “Just as you want men to *keep on doing* to you, you also *keep on doing* to them,” then why was it not translated that way – by anyone? If 1 John 3:10 means, “Whoever has been born of God does not *keep on sinning*, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot *keep on sinning*,” then why was it not translated that way – by anyone? If Matthew 5:28 means, “whoever *keeps on looking* at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart,” why was it not translated that way – by anyone? The list is endless. Why translators translated passages the way they did will have to be taken up with the translators themselves. However, that does not remove the fact that the present tense stresses continuous, linear, durative action. The woman is to “keep on letting her hair grow long” (1 Corinthians 11:15), and this is a command of the Lord Himself (1 Corinthians 14:37).

Jim Crouch makes the following pertinent point:

Lexicographers do not delineate the meanings of verbs in all tenses and moods. They present the basic definition of the word and then show how it is used within various contexts. That is why Thayer or Liddell or Gingrich can say that the meaning of KOMAO is, “to have or wear long hair.” Rick, and others, can say, “But it does not say to continually grow long hair.” True. That is because this is emphasized by the tense and mood of the verb-it is not inherent in the verb’s definition. I believe this an [sic] important point to stress. Many people are unwittingly led down the wrong road in their use of Greek lexicons because (1) they do not know how to use them properly, and (2) though they may come up with a proper definition, they do not know how to properly apply that definition to a specific context because they know nothing about Greek grammar. This is especially true in respect to Greek verbs. (Personal letter to me – GB – Sept. 18, 2000).

“HOW THE EXPERTS HAVE DEFINED KOMA”

Rick lists twelve experts in his paper who define the Greek word κομάω. None of these experts helps Rick’s cause. They all define κομάω as either “to wear the hair long” or “to have long hair” or “to let the hair grow long” or “to let the hair grow” (Thayer).

Rick tries his best to convince us that Thayer does not say “let the hair grow.” He writes, “No reputable English translator agrees with this definition [i.e., the “uncut hair” position that κομάω should be translated “let the hair grow”], nor apparently do any of the Greek lexicographers” (p. 8). This is false. Thayer does define the word, “let the hair grow.” We have eyes. We can see for ourselves that a reputable scholar *does* translate the verb, “let the hair grow.” In fact, Rick’s list of “experts” contains no fewer than four “experts” who say either, “let the hair grow” or “let the hair grow long.” How can our brother miss this point? When we add to this the significance of the present tense, we have “*keep on letting the hair grow*,” or “*keep on letting the hair grow long*.” The “uncut hair” position is completely “untouched” by his list of experts. In fact, they all agree with the “uncut hair” position exactly.

To Rick’s list of “experts,” there are others who should be added:

- 1) Souter – “κομάω, I wear the hair long, I allow the hair to grow long” (p. 137).
- 2) Pickering – “κομάω, to let the hair grow long, to abound with hair; to have long hair” (p. 760).
- 3) Louw & Nida – “κομάω: to wear long hair as part of one’s attire – ‘to have long hair, to appear with long hair, to wear long hair,’ ... In a number of languages it may be necessary to translate κομάω as ‘to let one’s hair grow long’ or ‘not to cut one’s hair.’” (p. 527).

Notice carefully the last thing Louw & Nida say – “not to cut one’s hair.” Louw & Nida designed their lexicon to be used by translators and are consulted regularly by the United Bible Society for guidance. If “to let one’s hair grow long” did not even remotely carry with it the idea of “not to cut one’s hair,” then why suggest this possible translation? Obviously the idea is not as foreign to the text as some think. Unfortunately for Rick’s position, there are scholars who take the position that “to let one’s hair grow long” means “not to cut one’s hair.” Furthermore, the present tense of the verbs in 1 Corinthians 11 points to continuous growth.

Aaron Risener makes the following observation:

It seems to me we can use this verse to prove the covering of verse 15 is uncut hair without ever grabbing a lexicon. Paul says, “For if a woman does not cover her head, let her also have her hair cut off; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her cover her head” (1 Cor. 11:6, NAS). Paul is speaking of a case where a woman is not covering her head, but she, at this point, is not shorn or shaved either (he says she might as well be, but she wasn’t ... she was

merely without a covering). That implies that the woman had something less than the covering, but something more than “shorn or shaven.” Since we know the covering is her hair (v. 15), Paul seems to be describing a situation common, unfortunately, to many of our sisters today: trimmed or shortened hair. She may not be shaven or shorn, but she’s not covered. (Personal letter to me – GB – Sept. 19, 2000).

QUESTIONS PEOPLE WILL ASK

Rick anticipates objections, and he tries to “head ‘em off at the pass.” Let us examine just a few.

1) Rick writes in his paper:

“‘You say that a woman must have “long hair.” Well, how long is “long?”’ This is by far the most common question I hear, and the most ridiculous” (p. 14).

Labeling this question as “the most ridiculous” argument that can be made is designed to cause us all to shy away from this question. After all, none of us wants to be guilty of making “the most ridiculous argument” known to Rick Cutter! But the label of “ridiculous” does not answer the question: How long is long? This is a valid question, and one which Rick cannot answer. It is left in the field of subjectivism.

Rick continues to be plagued with the basic problem of not being able to distinguish between nouns and verbs. The Bible does not say “long hair is given her for a covering.” That is Rick’s concoction. The Lord says, “hair is given her for a covering.” What kind of hair covers the woman? Hair that “keeps on growing long” (present tense, subjunctive mood – stressing durative, linear, continuous action).

According to Rick’s argument everything is subjective. The man subjectively decides how short to wear his hair, and the woman subjectively decides how long to wear hers; and on Judgment Day the Lord will decide if they were doing things well enough. Rick has God giving a command (a) to show respect for authoritative heads, (b) that affects one’s prayer life, and (c) that involves eternal principles laid down since creation; but he draws the unwarranted conclusion that God leaves the entire matter subjective, leaving it up to each person to decide whether or not he has complied. This is false. God does not leave the matter in the realm of subjective decision based solely on a person’s judgment.

Women are to “keep on letting their hair grow long” (1 Corinthians 11:15) – continuously (present tense, subjunctive mood). When God told the Nazarites to “let your hair keep on growing (long)” (Hebrew and English – Numbers 6:5), He meant, “no razor shall come upon his head.” Is that not plain enough? The Septuagint has God saying that the Nazarites must “keep on nourishing the hair of the head.” The noun κόμην (used in 1 Corinthians 11:15) is also used here. The meaning is the same – “no razor shall come upon his head.” The Scriptures seem to anticipate false teaching. It is as though God knew someone would come along some day and argue that “keep on letting the hair grow long” does not mean “do not cut the hair.” So, to prevent any misunderstandings, God recorded Numbers 6:5 so there would be no doubt as to what He expected.

Men, on the other hand, are not to “keep on letting their hair grow long” (1 Corinthians 11:14) – continuously (present tense, subjunctive mood). They are to interfere with the process of growth. They are to get a haircut on a regular basis. This command is not as subjective as Rick makes it appear.

God clearly says that if a woman is not going to cover herself (i.e., continue to grow her hair long), she might as well be “shorn or shaved” (1 Corinthians 11:5-6). What does this necessarily imply about the man then? Since he is not to be covered, it must be inferred that he might as well be consistent and be “shorn or shaved.” What one (the woman) must do to be consistent, the other (the man) must also do to be consistent. When men begin to look like sheep at the end of winter, it is time to go get sheared or shaved. For emphasis, we say again, this command is not as subjective as Rick makes it appear.

2) Rick writes in his paper:

“Paul could have used several Greek words to denote “cut” hair, but he did not. Here’s a simple question: If Paul really did not want women to cut their hair at all, why didn’t he simply say it outright, so that the translators could have translated it clearly as: “Do not cut your hair”? That would have ended this debate once and for all. ... Why did he instead use a word – koma - that translators have essentially unanimously agreed should be translated as “long hair” instead of “uncut hair”? It would have been so easy for Paul to have said “uncut hair”, but he did not. He said “long hair.”

First, the translators have not “essentially unanimously agreed” that κομᾶ “should be translated as ‘long hair.’” Translators know the difference between adjectives, nouns, and verbs. The Greek word κομᾶ is a verb and the translators translated it correctly. They translated it as “have long hair” (a verb describing action). The “debate” is between Rick himself (who adds adjectives and nouns to the Word of God) and the Holy Spirit (who uses a verb denoting action). Who is the one guilty of adding to the Scriptures? As already pointed out, the verb κομᾶ, in its present tense, subjunctive mood, literally means

“keep on growing the hair.” The Holy Spirit said what He meant and meant what He said. The Spirit wanted Christian women to grow their hair continuously – linear, continuous action – and that is exactly the wording He chose.

Second, Louw & Nida do explain to translators that, “In a number of languages it may be necessary to translate κομῶ as ‘to let one’s hair grow long’ or ‘not to cut one’s hair’” (p. 527). That is as clear as anyone could want.

Here is a most pertinent question: Why did the Holy Spirit not use an adjective and noun as Rick teaches? For example, why did the Spirit not have “μακρὰ θρίξ” or “μακρὰ κόμη”? Either of these two constructions would have carried with them the idea of “long hair as measured by a ruler.” The point is, the Spirit could have chosen the wording necessary to teach what our brother is teaching, but HE DID NOT. We may not add adjectives and nouns in place of verbs as we choose. We may add nothing to the Word of God (Galatians 1:8-9).

3) Rick writes in his paper:

“Finally, it amazes me how that ‘Uncut Hair’ believers have no problems with women perming their hair, using hot blow dryers on their hair, using hot curling irons on their hair, dying their hair (which causes it to break off) or employing other techniques which often damage hair and cause it to break off. This seems to me to be grossly inconsistent. Is it ok to ‘break off the hair’ so long as we just don’t ‘trim it off?’ Is it ok to ‘chemically burn off’ the hair? Are these techniques perfectly acceptable, while trimming off dead-ends is gross sin? Is this not hypocritical? Yet many Christian women who claim to profess that trimming the hair is sin seem to have no problem with some of these other procedures of ‘keeping the hair from growing.’” (pp. 15-16).

All Rick does here is point out an inconsistency in how people live their lives. He does not disprove anything about the need to “keep on letting the hair grow long” (present tense, subjunctive mood). Many of us agree with Rick on this point: It is inconsistent on the part of any Christian woman to remove her hair with chemicals or hot curling irons and then pride herself in the fact that she never uses shears (1 Corinthians 11:6) on her hair. Some of us “uncut hair” believers do “have problems” with this behavior.

4) Rick writes in his paper:

“‘When a woman cuts her hair, isn’t she cutting her ‘glory?’’ ... The problem with this argument is obvious: It makes the assumption that ‘hair’ is a woman’s glory. But this is NOT true. ‘Hair’ alone is not a

woman's glory. Neither is 'growing hair' a woman's glory. LONG HAIR is a woman's glory." (p. 16).

Rick is actually confusing verbs with nouns here. This is somewhat difficult to see and explain, but here is an illustration that may clarify what is happening:

In 1 Timothy 2:12, the Scriptures say, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence." In the English, the four words "to have authority over" all come from one single Greek word αὐθεντεῖν. In other words, there are two things a woman is not allowed to do: (a) she may not teach (i.e., in public) and (b) she may not "have authority over" (one verb here) a man. Sunday School advocates borrow the word "over" from this verb to reconstruct the sentence and make it say: (a) a woman may not teach "over a man" and (b) she may not have authority "over a man." It is wrong and inexcusable to take the word "over" and place it wherever it seems convenient because the word "over" is not a free-standing word that may be moved around. Sunday School people are treating "over" as though it were a preposition that can be moved around, whereas it is actually part of the definition of the verb.

Rick inadvertently does the same type of thing here. He writes that "LONG HAIR is a woman's glory." Actually, in the Greek, "long hair" is part of a verb. In the English the three words "has long hair" all come from one single Greek word κομᾶ. This is a verb that describes action. Action is something a person *does*. There is something a woman *does* that is a glory to her. That is, if a woman "keeps on growing her hair," it is a glory. This is something she *does* that brings glory to her. But in the same way that Sunday School advocates dissect the verb αὐθεντεῖν in 1 Timothy 2:12, Rick dissects the verb κομᾶ. He borrows "long hair" – originally embedded in the verb – and essentially re-labels it a noun phrase. Now he says that "long hair" (an adjective + a noun) is what is a glory to the woman. In other words, when Rick is finished with the verse, the glory to a woman is not something she is doing (verb) but rather an object (noun) she is possessing.

If "LONG HAIR is a woman's glory" (as Rick contends), then some women are in trouble because their hair will never grow "long" by Rick's definition. Try as they might, some sisters in the church just have hair that will not grow "long" when the tape measure is the standard.

God is not so much concerned about something (noun) a woman possesses. He is concerned about what women *do*. When women "keep on letting their hair grow," that is something they *do*. When God uses verbs, He is showing us that what women do is more important than what they possess (nouns). Thus, when a woman makes a confession or is baptized, if she allows her hair to "keep on growing" (present tense, subjunctive mood), it does not matter how much hair (noun) she possesses. God punished Samson for allowing his hair to be cut off (Judges 16:19); but when he began to grow it again (Judges 16:22), God accepted him. God was more concerned with what Samson was doing (verb) than with what he was possessing (noun).

In summary, the English Bible may leave the impression that “long hair” (an adjective + a noun) is a woman’s glory. But in the Greek, the glory is an action performed by the woman (a verb) – she must do something to receive glory from God – she must “keep on growing her hair.” Her “hair is given to her for a covering” (1 Corinthians 11:15). But she must *do* something with that hair – “keep on growing it.”

5) Rick writes in his paper:

“Clearly, an artificial covering is not needed when long hair is present - it is only required when long hair is not present on the woman (and she is in the act of praying or teaching the Word of God). After all, the Bible is very clear (verse 6) that it is a shame for a woman to pray or prophesy when her head is shorn or shaved and not otherwise appropriately covered” (p. 17).

Rick assumes the “artificial veil” position that has been argued and debated for years. There is plenty of material that has been published to demonstrate soundly that the “hair is given to a woman for (ἀντί - “in place of, instead of, for the purpose of”) a covering” (1 Corinthians 11:15). But the woman must *do* something (verb) with that hair in order for it to serve the place of a covering – she must “keep on growing it.”

First Corinthians 11:6 teaches that a woman must “keep on being covered” and if she does not, she should be consistent and be shorn or shaved. Since the covering is the hair (verse 15), it means she must “keep on being covered by hair that keeps on growing.” If she does not, she should be consistent and be shorn or shaved.

Rick completely misses the point and says, “No ... she should not be shorn or shaved. The woman in verse 6 is already shorn or shaved and because she is already that way, she should cover herself with an artificial veil.” Read 1 Corinthians 11:6 for yourself. See with your own eyes. Read what Rick writes above. He is saying the woman is already shorn or shaved and should then be covered. The Bible says just the opposite. The Bible says if she is not covered, let her then be shorn or shaved. This is a serious mistake on Rick’s part.

6) Rick writes in his paper:

“‘But how can women with short hair [e.g., due to chemotherapy] be properly covered?’ someone will ask. Obviously, long hair is provided instead of a covering (v 14-15). But sometimes a woman’s hair is not long. If a woman must be covered, and long hair is given to her instead of a covering, then of course she needs to have some sort of ‘covering’ if she doesn’t have long hair. Otherwise, we violate the Scriptures which

plainly teach that it is a shame for a woman to worship if she is shorn or shaven (in other words, to have a head which is 'uncovered'). Furthermore, we find ourselves trying to explain the dilemma of how a bald headed woman can be considered covered, while a man whose hair is visibly longer, is not" (p. 17-18).

Again, Rick makes the mistake of assuming the idea that long hair, as measured by a ruler, is the covering of verse 15; however, the Bible does not make this statement. Hair that "keeps on growing" is a glory to the woman and is given to her for a covering (1 Corinthians 11:15).

When a woman loses her hair due to chemotherapy, if she does not interfere, her hair will begin to grow again. Notice again what the Bible says about Samson's hair, "However, the hair of his head *began to grow again* after it had been shaven" (Judges 16:22). In other words, Samson's hair began to "keep on growing again" after it was shaven off. God accepted this from Samson, who was to be a Nazarite from birth. We know He accepted Samson again because the Scriptures tell us so (Judges 16:28-30; Hebrews 11:32).

7) Rick writes in his paper:

"It is hypocritical to teach others to take the Bible literally and not add or subtract from it, while we completely ignore the literal reading of I Corinthians 11:14-15, ignoring not only how all the reputable translators translated this passage but also how most of if not all the Greek lexicographers defined koma" (p. 19).

We agree that nothing should be added to the Word of God nor deleted from it. But who is the guilty one in this case? Who is *adding* artificial veils into the church when the Scriptures clearly teach that hair that "keeps on growing" is given as a covering? Who is *taking away* the force of the Greek present tense – continuous, linear, durative action?

We are merely contending for what the passage literally says: "If a woman keeps on growing her hair long, it is a glory to her, for her hair is given to her for a covering." That is what the passage literally says. It agrees with the Greek grammars, and it agrees with all the Greek lexicographers.

8) Rick writes in his paper:

"I cannot accept the 'Uncut Hair' doctrine because I will never agree that a woman with hair 5 feet long has shorter hair than a woman with hair 1 inch long." (p. 20).

Look at this statement carefully: “I will never agree ...” Who is being dogmatic? Who has closed his mind? Who is being unreasonable? Who is “*going to defend personal positions rather than plain Biblical passages in their unaltered state*” (Rick, p. 19)?

“Uncut hair advocates” are not asking anyone to agree that five feet is shorter than one inch. A “straw man” has been erected and attacked, but the point is missed entirely. The Bible says that the woman’s hair must “keep on growing long.” If a person’s head has been shaved (cf. Samson – Judges 16:19), yet his hair begins “to grow again after it has been shaved” (Judges 16:22), God will accept that because that is all He is asking. He is merely asking for hair that “keeps on growing” to be on a woman’s head to serve for a covering (1 Corinthians 11:15). Nothing more, but nothing less either.

9) Rick writes in his paper:

“I cannot accept the ‘Uncut Hair’ doctrine because its strongest arguments are weak.” (p. 21).

The strongest argument for “keep on letting the hair grow long” is a literal translation of the present tense, subjunctive mood. Dana and Mantey say the durative, linear, continuous sense is stronger in the subjunctive mood than the indicative mood. This is not a weak argument. It is an argument that Rick apparently never considered and that he cannot successfully overthrow.

If the continuous, linear, durative force of the present tense can be overthrown, then all the grammars are wrong and all the passages that teach us to “keep on glorifying the Father” (Romans 15:6) are wrong. All the passages that tell us to “keep on walking in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25) are wrong. All the passages that teach us to “keep on doing righteousness” (1 John 3:7) are wrong. It is a completely futile effort to resist the Word of God. The Lord says, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words will not pass away” (Matthew 24:35).

10) Rick writes in his paper:

“I cannot accept the ‘Uncut Hair’ doctrine because I cannot accept tradition over Truth.” (p. 21).

Rick needs to be careful here, for there are divine traditions as well as human traditions. The Apostle Paul praised brethren because they “kept the traditions” as they were delivered (1 Corinthians 11:2). Sometimes tradition *is* truth! We must be careful not to “throw the baby out with the bathwater” so to speak. It is God who says, “keep on growing the hair long” (1 Corinthians 11:15).

CONCLUSION

Rick has written as though the brotherhood is intolerant of anyone who would disagree over the hair and the veil. He writes:

“Today, the ‘uncut hair’ doctrine is unquestionably one of the most emphasized doctrines of the church. It is taught nationally and internationally, and is so embedded in the one-cup ranks that any preacher found to believe otherwise will almost certainly be ostracized and siphoned of financial support. Local teachers who disagree with the ‘uncut hair’ doctrine are usually sought out and forbidden to teach their ‘false doctrine.’ Many are simply encouraged to leave congregations when their belief is exposed. Other teachers are demoted from their congregational teaching schedules.” (preface to the article, second paragraph).

This does not describe our brotherhood. Maybe Rick is writing of his own experience. We have had some differences on this issue among us for many years, and to my knowledge, I know of no one who was ever disciplined solely as a result of these differences. But when men begin to push their unscriptural beliefs onto a congregation, they should expect opposition. If the unscriptural beliefs continue to be advocated, the opposition by those who disagree will increase. If a man makes himself contentious and a heretic, he may well find himself disciplined, not merely because he has different views from others but because he makes himself divisive and contentious and disturbs the “peace in Israel” (Galatians 6:16).

The position that a Christian woman must allow her hair to “keep on growing” is based upon the Scriptures themselves, without any addition or subtraction. The idea of continual growth, without trimming of any kind, comes not only from the definition of the verb κομᾶω, but also from its syntactical usage, the immediate context of the passage at hand, and the overall context of the entire Bible. Our brother is wrong in his conclusions: (a) that a woman may trim her hair so long as she still thinks it is long, and (b) that an artificial veil is needed by some women who have extremely short hair. A wise man once said, “*A person can be honestly mistaken, but when he is shown the truth, he either stops being mistaken, or he stops being honest.*”

Rick’s article was sent out en masse in an unethical way – perhaps even illegally. And it is indeed false doctrine. This article was sent out to the email accounts of minor children. Think of this: It was sent, unsolicited and against the wishes of many godly parents, to children who are presently being taught the opposite of what Rick is trying to advocate. Rick has the right to disagree with people over any issue he wishes, but he has absolutely

no right to try to indoctrinate minor children against the wishes of their parents. This is an unconscionable act on his part. One day, if Rick is blessed to have children of his own, perhaps he will understand the seriousness of what he has done.

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