

DEAR SHORT-HAIRED LEGALISTS - PART 1

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Published On: Feb. 19, 2026

Last Updated: Feb. 19, 2026

No Jewish Law Mandated That Israelite Men Had To Wear Their Hair Short, The Apostle Paul's Opinion Regarding Long Hair, Levite Priests During 2nd Temple Period Were The Only Jews Mandated To Keep Their Hair Short, One Hair Prohibition Is Found In Leviticus, Uncut Hair And The Vows Of A Nazarite, Samson And John The Baptist, The Apostle Paul's Opinion Was Personal And Not A Jewish Law, Neither Paul Nor The Church As A Whole Enforced The Practice Of Short Hair For The Men, Legalistic Christians Seem To Intentionally Omit Mentioning 1 Corinthians 11:16, Paul's Habit Of Constantly Referring To The Scriptures To Support His Views And Teachings, Apostle Paul's Background As A Pharisee, Point Your Readers Directly To The Bible Because Faith Comes By Hearing The Word Of God, Paul Provides No Scriptural Support For His Position About Men Keeping Their Hair Short, Apostle Paul Had Legal Leg To Stand On, God Gave Moses No Such Mandate, Transvestitism, Possible Reasons Why Paul Embraced His Short Hair Position, Apostle Paul's Birthplace And Roman Background, History Of Tarsus And Cilicia, Vespasian Titus And Fall Of Jerusalem, Importance Of Tarsus To The Romans, Paul's Assumed Death By Beheading In Rome, Questions Regarding The Precise Location, Paul's Premonition Of His Approaching Death, Agabus Warning, What It Meant To Be Born A Free Man, Paul Reveals His Roman Citizenship, Roman Citizenship Bore Legal Weight, Short Hair And Clean-Shaven Faces Was A Dignified Established Norm For Roman Men And Soldiers, Becoming All Things To All Men: The Apostle Paul's Willingness To Adapt To The Various Cultures He Met During His Missionary Journeys In Order To Win Them To Christ, Paul Appointed As Apostle To The Gentiles, Being Legalistic Would Have Been Counterproductive To His Mission, Conclusions Of The Acts 15 Church Council, Gentiles Converts Weren't Obligated To Abide By The Mandates Of The Mosaic Law

Contrary to what certain modern Christian legalists like to promote, and who self-righteously judge others who refuse to see things their way, there is actually NO Jewish law which states that all Israelite men had to have short hair. This

modern belief which claims that it is a shame for Christian men to sport long hair is based entirely on the words of the Apostle Paul, which are found in the eleventh chapter of his first Epistle to the brethren at Corinth, where Paul writes the following lines:

"Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering."

1 Corinthians 11:14-15, KJV

Well, my friends, before you are too quick to just blindly embrace what Paul has written above as if it is some kind of immutable, eternal law that was communicated to Moses, and which therefore supposedly mandates that all Christian men today are therefore obligated to wear their hair short, let me share some rather interesting Biblical facts with you. First of all, to my personal knowledge, there was only ONE specific mandate given, and it was specifically applied to Levite priests who would serve in the rebuilt temple during the Second Temple Period, according to the Prophet Ezekiel. Consider the following Bible verse as proof of this point:

"Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long; they shall only poll [cut] their heads."
Ezekiel 44:20, KJV

To reiterate, these priests were in a SPECIAL service to the Lord as His temple servants. As such, some laws applied to them which did NOT apply to the general Israelite populace. But that's not all, folks. According to the Levitical Law -- a.k.a. the Law of Moses -- generally speaking, there is only ONE style of hair for Israelite men which was prohibited by the Mosaic Law. This one specific law is believed to have been instituted, because what it describes was apparently a hair style which was worn by the men of the gentile nations which surrounded Israel. That law is found in the following verse:

"Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard."
Leviticus 19:27, KJV

Aside from the previous two mandates which are found in the Scriptures, and which applied to Israelite society, there is one other law. What is so interesting about it is the fact

that in total contrast to the previous two commandments, the last mandate states that those Israelites -- male or female -- who took a Nazarite vow were NOT supposed to cut their hair at all, as long as they were performing their vow. They were to let their hair continue growing long, as can easily be determined by the following verse which is found in the Book of Numbers:

"All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the LORD, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow."
Numbers 6:5, KJV

As I explain in my companion series entitled "Longhairs and Weirdy Beardies vs. the Legalists", two prime examples of Israelite men who took a Nazarite vow during the course of their public ministries were Samson and John the Baptist.

So now we return to what the Apostle Paul wrote in the two verses I shared with you earlier. My view is that his words were his PERSONAL OPINION. His word was NOT a part of Jewish law. In fact, if you continue reading PAST verses 14 and 15, what you will quickly discover is that Paul as much as made this admission when he concluded his thoughts regarding the matter by writing that short hair was NOT something which they specifically enforced. In other words, enforcing short hair was NOT the custom of Paul and his companions, or even of the Christian Church in general. Consider the following verse where Paul makes this point:

"But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God."
1 Corinthians 11:16, KJV

Now let me ask you an important question. Why is it that some legalistic Christians mention 1 Corinthians 11:14-15 to enforce their view, but then they totally neglect to mention -- or perhaps intentionally omit? -- verse 16? Is it because verse 16 goes against the twisted, legalistic doctrine they are trying to promote and enforce on their fellow brethren? If that is their motivation, aren't such people being a bit dishonest by trying to manipulate the Scriptures so that they conform to THEIR denomination's pet doctrine?

As we just saw, the Apostle Paul specifically said in verse 16 that if a man argues -- or is contentious -- about hair

length, the Church does NOT have the custom of forcing men to wear their hair in a short manner. Period. Personally, I find that very interesting. Why so? Well, because throughout his many Epistles, the Apostle Paul repeatedly quotes from the Old Testament Scriptures to explain different concepts to his readers. Let us not forget that Paul was a Pharisee and a lawyer of the Word, who was trained under Gamaliel, as he tells us himself in the following Bible verse:

"I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day."

Acts 22:3, KJV

"But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."

Acts 23:6, KJV

"Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee."

Acts 26:5, KJV

"Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless."

Philippians 3:4-6, KJV

So the Apostle Paul obviously knew the Scriptures of the Old Testament very well, and he constantly resorted to them to support what he was writing to the Christian brethren. This is one reason why I personally really admire Paul. Unlike many modern Christian writers, Paul did NOT just talk off the top of his head. He knew his stuff, and he knew it well. Paul made it his habit to point his readers directly to the Holy Scriptures, so that their faith was in God's Word, and NOT just in what he was writing. Of course, I also strive to do the very same thing in my articles as well. After all, as Paul wrote in his Epistle to the brethren at Rome:

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Romans 10:17, KJV

In short, Paul used the Scriptures to validate, verify and confirm everything that he wrote in his various Epistles. Well, that is, almost. You see, what I find extremely odd is the fact that in this one instance where Paul mentions his personal preference regarding men having short hair, he does NOT quote a single Old Testament verse. My friends, if you are familiar with Paul's writings, then you will know that not supporting his work with the Scriptures is contrary to Paul normal writing style. Whether he is writing about the Mosaic Law versus God's Grace, or the Messianic prophecies regarding Jesus Christ and how Jesus became our final High Priest and Sacrificial Lamb, or Jewish holy days, or Jewish dietary laws, or any other subject, Paul repeatedly points to the Old Testament Scriptures. That is why for me, Paul's failure to back up his position with a verse from the Old Testament sticks out like a sore thumb.

So why is that? Why doesn't Paul mention one single verse from the Old Testament when explaining his personal opinion that Christian men should wear their hair short? Well, my friends, isn't it rather obvious? Personally, I suspect that it is because as Paul was writing that particular Epistle, he already knew that insofar as the Mosaic Law is concerned, he did NOT have a legal leg to stand on. He couldn't legally justify his personal position against men having long hair by pointing to a clear Levitical law, because none exist. So this is why I think he concluded that section of his Epistle with the exact words "we have no such custom". Personally, I understand his words to mean "We cannot enforce what is not clearly written in the Laws of Moses." But there is another important reason why I think Paul said this, which I will be explaining to you in just a moment.

My friends, really think about this issue for a moment. If God felt that it was important to clarify that men should not wear their hair long, does it not seem likely that He would have given such a mandate to Moses as He dictated the Levitical law to him? For example, I was just reminded of what the Laws of Moses state regarding transvestitism, or men and women wearing each other's clothing. Consider the following verse:

"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God."

Deuteronomy 22:5, KJV

In my view, if the Lord really wanted men to sport short hair, and if it was truly an absolute necessity to do so, including another commandment right before or after the one I just shared with you would have been the perfect place to insert such a mandate. Yet as I have already stated, such a commandment is absent from the pages of the Torah. So that leaves me wondering. If the Apostle Paul didn't acquire his view regarding men wearing their hair short from the Mosaic Law, exactly where did he acquire it from?

Well, I obviously don't know with any degree of certainty. However, I do have one suspicion -- or personal theory, if you prefer -- regarding why Paul embraced the position that he did. In short, while Paul was an Israelite, as well as a rather strict Pharisee, let us not forget that his life was undoubtedly heavily influenced by Roman culture. After all, Paul's father was a Roman citizen, which made Paul a Roman citizen as well. In fact, Paul was born in Tarsus, which was a key port in the coastal province of Cilicia in Asia Minor, which was also formerly known as Anatolia. Today, this area is a part of modern Turkey. During Paul's time, Cilicia was a Roman province which had been annexed almost a century earlier by Roman General Pompey in 64 BC. It was strategic to the Romans in both a military and a political sense.

Cilicia bordered Syria, which was yet another Roman province at the time. As I point out in my lengthy twenty-five part series called "Vespasian, Titus and the Fall of Jerusalem", when Vespasian and his son Titus began their campaign against Israel, and eventually against Jerusalem itself, a major part of their forces came from Syria. In fact, the entire region -- meaning Syria, Cilicia and Phoenicia -- were provinces of Rome, and it was through the port of Ptolemais in Phoenicia that Vespasian and Titus entered extreme northern Israel to begin their assault. About two years after Jerusalem fell in 70 AD, Cilicia and Syria were joined together as a single Roman province by Vespasian in 72 AD, with the capital at Tarsus. So again, Tarsus was very important to the Romans.

The official joining together of the provinces of Cilicia and Syria by Emperor Vespasian would have occurred five to eight years after the Apostle Paul had been executed. While

there is no clear Scriptural proof to support this belief, Church tradition holds that Paul may have been beheaded at the Mamertine Prison in Rome during the reign of Emperor Nero. However, please note that the location of his demise is not definitively proven. Some sources suggest that Paul was actually executed on the Ostian Way, which was a vital ancient Roman road which connected the city of Rome to its primary seaport -- Ostia -- at the mouth of the Tiber River. Having already been forced to appear before Emperor Nero on two occasions, Paul knew that his time on this Earth was growing rather short. His premonition of his approaching death becomes evident by verses such as the following:

"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, SO NOW ALSO CHRIST SHALL BE MAGNIFIED IN MY BODY, WHETHER IT BE BY LIFE, OR BY DEATH. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again."

Philippians 1:19-26, KJV

"Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Yea, and IF I BE OFFERED UPON THE SACRIFICE and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all."

Philippians 2:16-17, KJV

"For I AM NOW READY TO BE OFFERED, and THE TIME OF MY DEPARTURE IS AT HAND. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

2 Timothy 4:6-8, KJV

In fact, we also know from the following actions which were performed by the Prophet Agabus, that Paul's journey to the city of Rome -- and his eventual martyrdom there -- actually

began the moment in which Paul decided to continue on to the city of Jerusalem, where he was eventually arrested. While it would still take a few more years -- which included some years of imprisonment -- the end of Paul's life arrived, as we have already discussed:

"After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

Acts 19:21, KJV

"And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done."

Acts 21:10-14, KJV

At any rate, the fact that Paul was beheaded -- as opposed to being crucified -- was due to his being a Roman citizen. Again, please note that while the New Testament does not explicitly state that Paul was killed by beheading, certain late First Century and Second Centuries writers -- such as Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Dionysius of Corinth, and Tertullian -- assert that this was the manner of Paul's martyrdom. All I will say is that this does appear to agree with the manner of death given to Roman citizens.

Returning to Paul's origin story, when it finally came time for Paul to defend himself after he had been unduly arrested in Jerusalem, he immediately revealed to the Roman centurion that he possessed Roman citizenship, as we can determine by the following group of Bible verses. Please notice that in these verses, when he responded to the Roman chief captain, Paul informed him that he was born free. This is because he was born in Tarsus, and the only way that he could be born a free man is if his father was also a free man, meaning that he was a citizen of Rome. Thus we see that Paul apparently inherited his Roman citizenship from his father:

"And there was a certain disciple at Damascus [Syria], named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight."

Acts 9:10-12, KJV

"But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people."

Acts 21:39, KJV

"I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day . . . The chief captain commanded him [Paul] to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman. Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born. Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him."

Acts 22:3, 24-29, KJV

"And when the governor [meaning Governor Felix] had read the letter, he asked of what province he [Paul] was. And when he understood that he was of Cilicia; I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall."

Acts 23:34-35, KJV

Please carefully notice that Governor Felix only agree to hear Paul's case AFTER he had learned that Paul was a Roman citizen who was from Cilicia. Thus we see for a second time

that Paul's Roman citizenship did in fact bear legal weight with Roman authorities and their local appointees as well.

So why is the Apostle Paul's Roman citizenship important to our current discussion? Well, because it is common knowledge that short hair for men was very much a defining cultural norm, and standard practice in Roman society for much of the period of the Republic, and for the early Empire as well. It in fact served as an obvious sign of civilized society, in contrast to the more barbarian Germanic and Celtic tribes who often wore their hair long and unkempt, and who also sported beards as well. Furthermore, from the Roman perspective, it was also believed that short-cropped hair and clean-shaven faces signified dignity, control, and Roman identity.

But there is even more to this particular Roman stance. You see, insofar as the Roman military was concerned, short hair was advantageous as well. In other words, as should be very obvious, by maintaining their hair very short, Roman soldiers prevented their enemies from grabbing on to their hair during situations in which they found themselves engaged in close combat. No surprise there, right?

So again, while I cannot prove this point conclusively, I do suspect that the Apostle Paul's upbringing was affected by Roman culture to some degree, and that it later influenced his views as a Christian as well. But there is yet another very important reason why I believe that Paul and his fellow companions didn't enforce the practice of wearing short hair on their Gentile converts. Consider what Paul wrote in the following Bible verses:

"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you."

1 Corinthians 9:19-23, KJV

As you can plainly see from the previous group of verses, the Apostle Paul was highly adaptable. In other words, he adapted

to each culture that he encountered, so that he could win as many of them as possible to Jesus Christ. Now, let me remind you that Paul was plainly appointed by God as the Apostle to the Gentile nations. This truth becomes evident by verses such as the following:

"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."

Acts 13:46-47, KJV

"And he [Paul] reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles."

Acts 18:4-6, KJV

"And he [the Lord] said unto me [Paul], Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles."

Acts 22:21, KJV

"For I [Paul] speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:"

Romans 11:13, KJV

"Whereunto I [Paul] am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity."

1 Timothy 2:7, KJV

"Whereunto I [Paul] am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles."

2 Timothy 1:11, KJV

"By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith AMONG ALL NATIONS, for his name:"

Romans 1:5, KJV

Now, my friends, think about how the Apostle Paul would have

been received by the Gentiles, if from the very start of his public ministry, he had begun to make all kinds of rules and requirements for their Gentile converts, many of whom surely wore their hair long. Let's face it. It was difficult as it was to reach those people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were sometimes mocked, beaten and even imprisoned. Paul, Barnabas, Silas, et al, met stiff resistance in many places during their missionary travels. So adding rigid requirements to the mix -- such as "You must wear your hair short in the Roman style" -- would have only made Paul's job all the more difficult, right? So Paul was very wise in not making such rigid demands on his Gentile converts. Of course, this was in addition to the fact that he simply had no legal standing to do so anyway based on the Mosaic Law.

In fact, as I mention in a number of other BBB articles, that is also why when Paul and the leaders of the Jerusalem Church held a meeting in Acts 15 in order to establish doctrine, you will notice that they placed very few Jewish restrictions on the Gentile converts, as you can see by the following set of Bible verses where they wrote their response to Paul. After all, the Gentiles were NOT Jews. As such, they were under NO obligation to abide by the Laws of Moses. Thus, to impose too many unnecessary rules on the Gentiles would have undoubtedly driven them from the Church, and away from Christ, and NOT towards Him, which was the Apostles' ultimate goal, and that of the Apostle Paul as well.

In short, it would have been a counterproductive requirement, and it would have been divisive and unnecessary. Thus, Paul wrote "we have no such custom", and the elders at Jerusalem wrote the following lines. You will notice that not only do they not mention anything regarding Gentile converts wearing their hair short, but neither do they mention observing the Jewish Sabbath, as I amply discuss in the companion article entitled "Are Christians Obligated to Keep the Sabbath?":

"For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well."

Acts 15:28-29, KJV

Please go to part two for the conclusion of this article.

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DEAR SHORT-HAIRED LEGALISTS - PART 2

Copyright 1994-2026 Bill's Bible Basics

Published On: Feb. 19, 2026

Last Updated: Feb. 19, 2026

Pressuring Christian Men To Wear Their Hair Short Is Just A Modern Man-Made Doctrine Formulated By Christian Legalists, Online Meme: False Claim That Jewish Law Mandated That Men Wore Their Hair Short, Mandating Short Hair On The Gentile Converts Would Have Been Foolish And Unproductive, Is It A Deliberate Act Of Omission?, Deceivers Who Pervert The True Meaning Of Paul's Writings, Male Lions With Manes Contradict Paul's Position, My Respect For Paul's Writings, Examples Of Israelites With Long Hair, Admonition To Christian Legalists To Stop Promoting Their False Doctrine And Stop Criticizing Their Brethren, Beware Of The Pauline Extremists, Letter Of The Law Versus The Spirit, Prophet Samuel: The LORD Looketh On The Heart, Ignore Others Who May Condemn Your Actions And Judge Righteous Judgment, Possible Retort From Contentious Christians, My Strong Opposition To Modern Body Mutilations, Abstain From All Appearance Of Evil, Our Outward Appearance Should Be A Reflection Of Our Inner Spiritual Man, Undoing The Damage After Coming To Christ, Still A Part Of The World Or New Creatures In Jesus Christ?, We Can't Criticize People For Things Which Even The Bible Does Not Outright Restrict, My Personal Practice, Closing Remarks, Suggested Reading List

Continuing our discussion from part one, while you are free to agree or disagree with my personal position, those are some of the reasons why I personally do NOT believe that the Apostle Paul established some kind of new Church rule or law -- as if he even had the authority to do so -- whereby all new Gentile converts had to sport short hair in order to be admitted to the Church. Sadly, as we learned earlier in this same article, without any Scriptural precedent or backing to

do so whatsoever, certain modern legalistic Christians are in fact trying to foist this practice on the Body of Christ. In other words, my friends, as far as I am concerned, their attempt is a modern, man-made doctrine formulated by rigid legalists, and nothing more.

In fact, recently, I came across a particular online meme where the meme's creator actually claimed that for men to sport short hair is Jewish law. Furthermore, while I wrote "Longhairs and Weirdy Beardies vs. the Legalists" thirteen years ago in 2013, it was upon viewing the aforementioned meme that I was motivated to write this current article. It is a good thing that I have too, because this article does offer new and interesting information which is not found in the aforementioned article, while that series contains info which is not found in this article. Thus, contrary to the false claim which is made in that person's meme, all I can say is sorry, but no, short hair on men is NOT mandated by the Mosaic Law, as I have now clearly proven.

As we have now seen, implementing such a short hair mandate would have been both foolish and rather unproductive, and it would have had the opposite effect of what the Apostle Paul and the other Apostles desired, which was winning more souls to Jesus Christ. Furthermore, I find it troubling that the ONLY Bible verses which such Christian legalists can point to in their endeavors to justify their wayward position is in 1 Corinthians 11:14-15. Not only that, by what appears to be an act of deliberate omission -- meaning that they do NOT mention verse 16 -- they are purposely twisting the meaning of what Paul actually wrote. This reminds me of what Apostle Peter wrote regarding Paul's writings, and how there were certain novice Christians who distorted -- or wrested -- the meaning of Paul's words. Consider the following two verses:

"And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

2 Peter 3:15-16, KJV

By the way, while in 1 Corinthians 11:14-15 the Apostle Paul claims that men having long hair is contrary to nature, I've often wondered why he would even say such a thing. I can only

conclude that, apparently, he never saw a male lion with its long, flowing mane, which was created by God himself. Are we to believe that God went against nature as well? Hardly, my friends! So a male lion with its long mane contradicts what Paul wrote in those two verses. Lest anyone should get the wrong impression, while I disagree with Paul regarding this one particular issue, as I mentioned in part one, for years now, I have had great respect for Paul's writings. The depth of his understanding of the fulfillment of all the Messianic prophecies which are found in the Old Testament is amazing, not to mention his dissertations regarding law versus grace.

As I point out in my three-part companion series entitled "Longhairs and Weirdy Beardies vs. the Legalists", there are a number of specific examples to be found in the Scriptures where Israelite men in fact had long hair and/or long beards. I encourage all of you legalists to please read that series for proof, and to STOP promoting your narrow-minded legalism, and STOP condemning Christians who don't see things your way, which is NOT even Scripture-based anyway.

As I warn in my companion article entitled "Beware of the Pauline Extremists", we all need to be very careful, because those people are treating the Apostle Paul's writings as if they are the absolute law which must be observed and adhered to by all modern Christian Believers, and that is simply NOT so. In certain instances, Paul was simply expressing his own PERSONAL OPINION -- as in the case of hair length -- and yet those Christians use certain verses as a weapon to bludgeon their fellow Christian brethren into doctrinal submission. In my opinion, they are hung up on the letter of the Law -- similar to the unbelieving Jews -- and they seem to forget that the Apostle Paul likewise wrote the following verse:

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

2 Corinthians 3:6, KJV

Upon reflecting further on the fact that Paul concluded his comments by writing "we have no such custom", and while at the same time considering how well-versed Paul was in the Old Testament Scriptures, I was reminded of something that the Lord said to the Prophet Samuel when he visited Jesse's house while looking for the individual who God has selected to succeed stubborn Saul as the next king of Israel. While Samuel was considering the possibility of David's brother

Eliab being a candidate for the royal position, God spoke the following words to Samuel:

"But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."

1 Samuel 16:7, KJV

So I am wondering. Is it possible that the Apostle Paul also considered this verse when he arrived at the conclusion that while he personally preferred Gentile Christian converts to sport short hair, he was not going to impose such a mandate on them? In other words, in his accumulated wisdom, did Paul realize that the spiritual state of their hearts was so much more important than their physical appearance? Thus, he put aside his personal preference and wrote instead "we have no such custom." I am likewise reminded of what Paul wrote in Romans 14, and something that Jesus said in the Gospel of John. Consider the following two Bible verses:

"Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth."

Romans 14:22, KJV

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

John 7:24, KJV

So if a Christian man does not feel condemned for choosing to wear his hair long, who are these legalistic Christians to condemn him and to say otherwise, particularly when there is no law or Bible verse which clearly demands that he wear his hair short? Thus, as Jesus said, we should NEVER judge someone by their appearance, but rather judge righteously. Of course, I already understand that by even sharing such thoughts, there are going to be some contentious, legalistic Christians who will probably come out of the closet, and who will retort with something similar to the following:

"Well, Bill, you are really opening a can of worms by saying something like that. If sporting long hair is okay in your view, why stop there? What about those weird people who like to dress up in the goth style using white makeup, bright red lips, dark rings around their eyes, etc? Or what about those odd freaks who mutilate their bodies by using ring piercings, gouging huge holes in their ears, inserting demon-like horns

under their skulls, chopping off their noses, sticking pins and beads all over the place, grinding down their teeth to make them appear like fangs, wearing contact lenses so that their eyes look similar to snake eyes, etc.? Are those evil practices okay with you too? After all, as you said, it is the spiritual condition of one's heart which truly matters the most, right?"

My friends, to even take my words in that direction is quite ridiculous. As I explain in other commentaries such as in my 2024 article called "Beauty Products/Cosmetics Industry: An Exposé", I am strongly opposed to such practices, and I view them as being demon-inspired, and the product of some very sick, warped minds. Those people obviously need some serious help. Furthermore, there is a very huge difference between what those people do to their bodies, and a man who simply prefers to wear his hair long, for whatever his reasons. Of course, in describing such practices, I am referring to the children of the world. We Christians are held to a different standard, and part of that standard dictates that we avoid the appearance of evil, and that we flee from the works of darkness, as we can easily determine by this set of verses:

"Abstain from all appearance of evil."

1 Thessalonians 5:22, KJV

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."

Romans 13:12, KJV

"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. . . And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

Ephesians 5:8, 11, KJV

So not only are we Christians supposed to refrain from any activity which may cast a dark shadow on our faith, result in criticism, and in so doing bring reproach to the cause of Christ, but at the same time, our outward appearance should be a reflection of our inner spiritual man. This certainly prohibits us from engaging in any of the aforementioned devilish, worldly, body mutilation practices, doesn't it?

Now, of course, there are sometimes people who eventually do come to Christ AFTER they have already performed such wicked

mutilations on their bodies. I have read accounts where such individuals who are serious about their newfound faith, make an effort to restore their body to its natural form as much as possible. This may include having their tattoos removed, having all of their prosthetics removed, removing the weird contact lenses, allowing their ear lobes to slowly return to their natural state, etc. This is commendable, although not always totally successful, because some bodily mutilations are simply too severe to fully reverse, sad to say.

On the other hand, if an individual comes to Jesus Christ, and THEN desires to do some of those wicked things to their body, then I would obviously have to question how serious they really are about their Christian faith. Are they still a part of the world in their hearts -- similar to how the Israelites constantly murmured and complained after being liberated from their Egyptian bondage -- or have they truly become new creatures in Christ as the following Bible verses explain, where the old lifestyle is crucified and buried, in order that the new man of the Spirit, and the new life in Jesus might shine through?:

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

2 Corinthians 5:17, KJV

"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

Ephesians 4:24, KJV

"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:"

Colossians 3:10, KJV

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Romans 12:2, KJV

So, my friends, these are my personal thoughts regarding the practice of Christian men wearing their hair long. If I were to summarize my thoughts in a single sentence, it would be by saying this: We cannot criticize and condemn people for things which even the Bible itself never outright restricts in a clear and authoritative manner. Thus, you short-hair legalists really need to reconsider your misguided position.

For anyone who is wondering, in the name of transparency and honesty, I will inform you that throughout my adult life, at different times I have worn my hair rather short, while at other times I have allowed it to grow long. Depending on the weather, and how hot our summers become, there are occasions when I will even shave my head completely -- meaning totally bald -- and then allow my hair to slowly grow back over the next six months or year before I decide to cut it again. For me personally, however I choose to wear my hair, it's really no big deal, and I most certainly don't feel condemned about it. You shouldn't either, despite how those self-righteous, legalistic Christians may try to paint you. As the Apostle Paul wrote, live your faith according to your own personal convictions, and in a manner which you believe is pleasing to the Lord, and don't worry about the opinions of others.

With these thoughts, I will bring this article to a close. It is my hope that you've found it informative and enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would really appreciate if you'd take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information and further study, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were either mentioned in this article, or which contain topics which are related to this article. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server. To read these articles, simply click or tap on any link you see below.

Are Christians Obligated to Keep the Sabbath?

Are You Flexible?

Beauty Products - Cosmetics Industry: An Exposé

Beware of the Pauline Extremists

Do You Seek the Truth or Short-Change Yourself?

Doctrinal Correction: The Proper Way to Do It

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