

Grace, thank you for asking about Deut 22:5 and 1st Cor. 11:6. Both of these scriptures have caused good Christian people and churches to divide and go their own separate ways. Oftentimes, these divisions have caused a lot of hurt feelings, even to the point of causing anger and bitterness in people's hearts. This, as we know, cuts deep into the heart of God; He teaches us very clearly that we are to get along with one another as much as possible.

Let's go ahead and look at Deut 22:5 first:

Deuteronomy 22:5 *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.*

Before we talk about what the verse says, let me say that during the Old Testament times, the Israelites were given thousands and thousands of laws. There were so many laws that the regular people were not able to remember all of them, and so Moses put certain men in charge of learning all the laws; their full time job was to teach and remind the regular people what the law said. And now, with that said, please realize that what is written in **Deut 22:5**, is one law of about 7,000- 8,000 other laws. If we are going to give ourselves under that one law, than we also need to give ourselves under all the other laws. Here are just five other laws that are given to us in the same chapter...

1. **22:11:** *Thou shalt not wear a garment [clothing] of divers [different] sorts, as of woollen and linen together.*
2. **22:12:** *Thou shalt make thee fringes [tassels] upon the four quarters [front, back, and both sides] of thy vesture [outer garment], wherewith thou coverest thyself.*
3. **22:21:** *Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you.*
4. **22:22:** *If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.*
5. **22:24:** *Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die: the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: so thou shalt put away evil from among you.*

Again, if we are going to place ourselves under the law that is given in verse 5, than we also need to place our self under the laws as given in verses 11, 12, 21, 22, and 24.

The Lord teaches us in James 2:10 and also in Galatians 3:10 (New Testament) that people who want to place themselves under the law must keep ALL (100%) of them, and if they don't, if they miss just one law, then they are guilty of breaking ALL the laws. Matter of fact, in Galatians He says, CURSED IS THE ONE THAT DOES NOT CONTINUE IN EVERY LAW. See James 2:10 and Galatians 3:10 below.

James 2:10 *For whosoever shall keep the WHOLE LAW, and yet offend [fail] in ONE POINT, he is guilty of ALL.*

Galatians 3:10 *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in ALL things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*

The Lord teaches us that it is NOT POSSIBLE that the LAW could make us right, in the sight of God.

Galatians 3:11-12 *But that no man is justified [made right] BY THE LAW in the sight of God, it is evident: for, the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them.*

The person who approaches God by law is cursed because he/she does not keep the whole law. Note a crucial fact: there is a righteousness that is of the law (Romans 10:5; Galatians 3:12). That righteousness promises life to any man or woman who can obey the law perfectly. If a person can meet every requirement of the law during his/her lifetime and never once fall below God's holy standard, then that person can escape the penalty for sin, which is death (Romans 6:23).

Every thinking and honest person knows that he/she is nowhere close to being perfect nor to attaining perfection. He knows that he fails and comes short too often. He knows that what this verse says is exactly true: no man or woman can continue in and do all things which are written in the law of God.

Galatians 3:13 *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us...*

Scripture says that "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law." The word "redeemed" means to buy back or to buy from or to ransom. Christ has bought man back and ransomed him from the curse of the law. That man has broken the law of God is unquestionable; every honest man knows this. Therefore, every man stands guilty before God and must be judged and condemned to bear the curse and punishment of the law. But this is the glorious news: Jesus Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law.

Galatians 3:21-29, *Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.* ²² *But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.* ²³ *But before faith [in Jesus Christ] came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.*

²⁴ *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*
²⁵ *but after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.*

²⁶ *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.* ²⁷ *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* ²⁸ *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* ²⁹ *And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

So the question still remains, what do we do with Deuteronomy 22:5?

This is what I believe...

1. To give myself under the law would be a curse (Gal 3:10)
 2. We live under the New Covenant [Testament], not the Old Covenant. The New Covenant is to live by faith in Jesus Christ to be right with God (Gal 3:21-23)
 3. Nowhere in the New Covenant does it tell us how to dress except for 1st Tim 2:9 and 1st Peter 3:3. These scriptures say to dress modestly. We have to be careful what we consider modest or immodest because depending on where we live in the world (Africa, Russia, English--American, Mennonite—American, or Amish--American) --- immodesty could mean a different thing.
 4. I also think that 1st Cor 11:14-15 could be taken as meaning that men and women ought to look different
 5. To say that men should wear pants and women should wear dresses and/or skirts is ok, but not necessary according to scripture. In the Old Testament, BOTH men and women used to wear long ropes.
 6. In conclusion: I believe that we should be able to tell men and women apart from each other, all people should cover their bodies, and no one should show off their body by wearing skin tight clothing.
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Ok Grace, you also asked about 1st Cor 11:16. I am surprised that you chose verse 16 and not 5-6. But in any case, here is what the Lord said in 1st Cor 11:16.

1 Corinthians 11:16 *But if any man seem to be contentious, WE HAVE NO SUCH CUSTOM, neither the churches of God.*

Before we get too deep into our study, do you remember how we started our letter out? We talked about how good Christian people and churches sometimes divide and go their own separate ways over scriptures like this. These divisions often cause a lot of hurt feelings, anger and bitterness in the hearts of God's people. And the church at Corinth was no different, as we read chapter 11, we can easily see that they were having turmoil and division in the church. Look what the Apostle Paul says in verses 17-18 (these verses follow your verse in question).

1 Corinthians 11:17-18 *Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.*

The big problem in 1st Cor chapter 11 was not so much whether women should wear head coverings, shave their heads, or have long hair. The root problem that the church was having in 1st Cor chapter 11; they were not getting along with each other. Verse 30 of the same chapter tells us that some church people were weak, sick, and many even sleep [meaning they died], all because of they were not dealing with their problems in a proper way.

Going back to the head covering dilemma: Here is my conclusion...

1. It is my understanding in reading between the lines that back in the days of the Corinthian church, you had Jews (who were used to following the law) and Gentiles (who did not follow any law, but worshipped idols), coming together in one place to worship their Savior, Jesus Christ. And when they did this, they found themselves clashing with each other because of culture and custom differences. (Rom 3:9, 3:29, 9:24, and Eph 2:11-19)
2. It is also fairly clear that it (women wearing a veiling) was only a CUSTOM in that day. And here is why I believe that. The Apostle Paul concluded on the matter of head covering, when he wrote, "WE HAVE NO SUCH CUSTOM, neither do the churches of God". (1st Cor 11:16)

We must not contend and argue over customs. Believers should conform to the *expected* customs of Christian behavior and church order and not argue and rebel against them. The implication is this: we are not on earth to argue and fight over trivial matters, but to carry on the ministry of God's church. There are too many desperate people in the world who are dying from hunger, thirst, poverty, disease, and sin—too many who need our help—for us to become involved in arguing over personal rights and customs.

3. One last thing to keep in mind when division and arguments arise in the church: (1) choose your battle wisely. There are some things just not worse fighting over (2) We dare not allow Satan the opportunity to get us side tracked (3) when it comes to salvation we HAVE to be right on, or we will miss heaven for all eternity—but—when it comes to the way we dress, or what we eat, or how we travel, then we have to be open and realize that God did not make humans with a cookie cutter; no, He made us all different.

----- Below is an outline of how we should treat each other when there are differences of opinion -----

1 Cor. 1:10 says, "*Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁽¹⁾ that ye all speak the same thing, and ⁽²⁾ that there be no divisions among you; but ⁽³⁾ that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment*"

But as we all know, sometimes it is almost impossible for Christians to ⁽¹⁾ speak the same thing, ⁽²⁾ not be divided, and ⁽³⁾ be perfectly joined together. I would guess that this was the case when we read Romans chapter 14.

In Romans 14, some Christians were open to eating all things, while others in the church were not so open and only ate herbs. But look what the Lord tells us to do.

Romans 14:2-3 says, For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

In Romans 14, we are also told that to some Christians every day of the week was the same. In other words, it didn't matter if it was Sunday, Tuesday, or Friday; it didn't matter if it was Christmas Day, Easter, or Memorial Day. But now to some other Christians, in the same church, it was a big deal because they believed that certain days of the week were much more important than others.

Romans 14:5-6, One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it...

If we keep reading in Romans Chapter 14, we will see how God says to handle these kinds of issues, in the church. Let's take a look at what He says...

Romans 14:13-15, Let us not therefore judge one another anymore: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

According to what the Lord teaches us in Romans 14, we should do ONE or ALL of the following when we are faced with differences of opinions, within the church.

1. We should not judge one another (v-13a)
2. We should try our best to not become a stumbling block to the weaker Christian (v-1 and 13b)
3. We should do everything possible to stay at peace with each other (v-17-19)

The Lord teaches us that the “kingdom of God” IS NOT about meat and drink but rather the “kingdom of God” IS ALL ABOUT righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Let's read it...

Romans 14:17-19, For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

~ Joe Keim