

April 2002

THE COVERING/HEADSHIP VEIL

The hanging veil and its use -

1. Considerations in making a covering style change.

Several congregations have requested help from our committee with this issue. A congregation can make a decision like this and go it alone. Those requesting help however are aware that there are other neighboring congregations and they want to be considerate of them. As a committee we see that desire as commendable and appreciated.

2. Our discussion and review follows:

A. Why the change? What is the goal?

B. The following are things that we feel should be considered:

1. Is the change to strengthen the application of the headship principle or is it for practical considerations only?
2. Many of the changes in our Beachy Amish fellowship have been based on the practical side of the issues. ie: color of cars, buttons vs. hooks and eyes, discussion on or about covering strings.

3. Our recommendation -

A. Consider these facts. We have those among us who have made the change to the hanging veil and we have been able to maintain full fellowship. Some of these have made a complete change where every member is uniform. Others have allowed the dual practice of either the conventional veil or the hanging one. Some allow the hanging veil to be used during the week but ask that the conventional veil be worn on Sunday or other church worship services.

B. Carefully consider the following as you consider or plan any change.

1. Make well thought through plans with prior set goals
2. Never allow this to be a divisive issue - no church splitting!
3. Remember that words of experience are wise words - seek to listen
4. Changing to the veil is not a way (of itself) to regain covering size. Those who choose to wear small coverings will probably do the same with the veil.
5. The veil is not totally more convenient. Both can be caught with the wind and both are on the back of the head. You have heard about bothersome covering strings - the trailing edge of the veil is much the same and both are objects for the child's grabbing hand.

C. Coverings are to cover

1. Have white opaque material as the choice of covering. (This follows our present practice) Varied colors seem to register instability.
2. This choice of color has been cleared with our missions in the north and they support our recommendations.
3. Make a choice that reflects both the sign and the symbol of the covering.
4. Consider with serious thought all changes and do not allow lacy or doily type of (so called) coverings to be worn.
5. Many communities have had a problem finding someone to make conventional coverings. We have been told that many sisters that already practice the wearing of the hanging veil do not make the veil either.

History has stories to tell of far too many church groups (including but not limited to our own Mennonite church) who at one time practiced the wearing of the covering but today have dropped it completely. For that reason we feel that any changes must be made on solid Biblical principles. There is need for messages and teachings on this practice if we desire to see it kept alive.

Summary - Let us all be committed to maintaining the use and practice of the veil and the headship order.

1. Preach it and teach it
2. Constant struggle at Calvary Bible School.
 - A. Among students
 - B. among teachers wives.
 - C. let us review the CBS standard. (and practice it at home)

LET US GO HOME AND ASSUME OUR GOD GIVEN DUTY AS HIS SERVANTS

Shared at the 2002 ministers' meeting business session.

Committee members - David Yoder, Elmer Smucker, Ivan Beachy, Nelson Beachy, and Ernest Hochstetler.

Shared for the committee by Ernest Hochstetler (primary author)