Let me guess. You want to know why on earth I would choose to write about this. Oh, I
don’t know, no particular reason. I just happen to come across a Christian article on it,
and since hair coloring is so common, I thought I’d throw in some thoughts.

First a Few Stats
Hair coloring is a very old practice. Most think the Egyptians were the first to color their
hair. They apparently used various plant extracts. One article said that in the Roman
Empire women dyed their hair with pigeon dung. Of the world’s population, 75-84%
have naturally black hair, 11% are naturally brunette, 3% are naturally blonde, and only
2% have naturally red hair (holleewoodhair.com). Although hair coloring is still mostly
done by women, more men are doing it. On January 29, 2014, Kavita Daswani reported
in the “Los Angeles Times,” “11% of men ages 50 to 64 now color their hair” (latimes.
com).

Some Biblical Considerations
1. Although it was going on at the time, the Bible
says nothing about hair coloring. So, we have to
go at it from peripheral comments. But we can
conclude initially that no biblical author thought
it was significant enough to comment on.

2. Before he anointed David to be king, the Lord
told Samuel, “God sees not as man sees, for man
looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD
looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7). Heart usu-
ally refers to our most basic moral desires. It
would seem that the reason for doing what we
do is significant to God. Sometimes outward acts
are in-and-of themselves significant, but since
hair coloring is never mentioned, we can assume
what’s significant is the reason for it, not the fact
of it. It is also possible that not coloring hair may
be done to draw attention to yourself the way the
Pharisees would neglect their appearance so they
will be noticed by men (Matthew 6:16; see also
23:28). Whether, then, you eat or drink or what-
ever you do, do all to the glory of God (1 Corin-
thians 10:31).

3. Paul said, Give no offense either to Jews or to
Greeks or to the church of God (1 Corinthians
10:32). Does coloring hair offend people? Well,
wild pink, purple, and yellow stripes or blotches
might. But keeping your hair a natural color? In
most circles today, it’s probably not offensive.

4. Paul went on to say, just as I also please all men
in all things, not seeking my own profit but the
profit of the many, so that they may be saved (1
Corinthians 10:33). For example, if you have red
or blond hair and are ministering in a country
where everyone has black hair, it might profit the
gospel to color your hair.

5. The usual reason men or women color their
hair is simply to look better. Paul addressed the
subject of the appearance of women. Likewise,
I want women to adorn themselves with proper
clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braid-
ed hair and gold or pearls or costly garments
(1 Timothy 2:9). First, notice Paul said, I want
women to adorn themselves..., not neglect them-
selves. Adorn is the word κοσμεῖν (kosmein)
meaning “adorn, arrange, or set in order,” from
which English gets the word “cosmetics.” Then
Paul said adornment is best done modestly (or re-
spectably) and discreetly (with wisdom or good
sense). Braided hair is a bad translation. It’s the
word for an “elaborate hair style.” If we apply
all this to hair coloring, we should ask: “What is
adorning without being elaborate?”

Conclusion
I see nothing in the Bible prohibiting hair coloring.
It’s all about motives. Coloring hair should not in-
tentionally offend people, hinder the gospel, or draw
attention. It should adorn…modestly and discreetly.