

Godly Attire & Today's Christian

Why should modesty be important to the Christian? There are many who staunchly defend their ideas on modesty, and are quick to dismiss it as a matter of judgment. Some have argued, "Where do you draw the line?" Others are quick to say, "What was modest 75 years ago is not the same as modesty today." And usually, after presenting these arguments—they are content to go on dressing as they please. Let us understand that the way we dress is a reflection of our overall attitude in serving Jesus!

Christians need to be careful of how they dress! There are spiritual reasons for this. In the Bible, we find moral issues fall under one of three groups. (1) Things that are right because God commanded them. (2) Things that are wrong because God condemned them. (3) Things that are neither right or wrong, but are determined by circumstance, conscience, or influence. The way we dress would fall into the third group. We must be aware that immodest dress violates some basic principles of Christianity. (Rick Lanning, Imhoff Ave., *Messenger of Truth on "Summer Sins"*)

When dressed inappropriately, we compromise our influence. Christians are to be the *salt of the earth* and the *light of the world* (Matthew 5:13-16). We are given the charge to lead others to Christ. (Matthew 28:18-20) Will others know that we are of Christ if we wear something questionable?

The definition of modesty reads, (1) "having or showing a lack of conceit or vanity; (2) observing conventional proprieties in behavior, speech, and dress." (Webster) Others have defined modesty as that which calls attention to the personality of a meek and quiet spirit. Of course, immodesty would be defined as the opposite. It is impossible to dress in an improper way and present a meek & quiet spirit. Christians need to take heed lest they compromise their influence.

Immodest dress could cause someone to stumble. Immodest apparel can call undue attention to oneself by inviting sexual interest. Someone argues, "That's not my problem," or "He's just a pervert." But, we must understand that purposely wearing attire that could lead someone to sin is not conducive to the behavior of a Christian. We must guard against placing a stumbling block before others. Jesus said: *Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes!* (Matthew 18:7) Paul instructed that Christians not put stumbling blocks in another's way. (Romans 14:13) While some will lust after others no matter how modestly they are dressed, this in no way lessens our obligation to wear godly attire.

Not only do we have an obligation to watch how we dress, but we must not look upon others with lust. The Bible teaches that there is no sin when a man looks upon his wife (Hebrews 13:4), but we do sin when we look upon someone besides our spouse and lust (Matthew 5:27-28). The Christian must learn to control his fleshly desires! This is a hard task for some, but it can be done! (Philippians 4:13; Ephesians 3:20) One of the easiest ways to steer clear of lust is to eliminate the temptation. It is easy to invite immodesty into our lives. Be it on the television, movies, the internet, or in other areas. For example, advertisers use immodestly dressed women to sell automotive parts. What does a bikini-clad model have to do with a spark plug kit? I have known "Christians" who hang these kind of posters in their basement or garage. Why? Guys, how does your wife feel about these posters? Would you hang such a poster in your living room? If not, why not? Certainly we can find other pictures to cover the walls!

The subject of immodest dress is a "touchy" one with some. Let me suggest: It will NOT be touchy to the one who is more interested about serving God than self. It will NOT be touchy to the one who wishes to be godly in everything in every way. Christians need to be ready to sacrifice some personal "want to's" and submit to the will of Christ!

The next time you are tempted to shed your clothes, ask: (1) Am I compromising my influence as a Christian? (2) Will I cause others to be misled by the things I am wearing? (3) Would Christ be pleased or ashamed of what I have on? Satan never lets up. He is always searching for new ways to cause us to stumble. We need to be vigilant in our prayers, asking God for guidance & wisdom. We then need to do what is right, knowing ultimately that pleasing and obeying Him will lead us to heaven.

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