

What Shall We Wear?

What does it matter? Christians need to think about pleasing God when it comes to what we wear. It matters for God more than anyone else. It matters, and we need to make a decision. We need to think before we put on the world's typical attire for Summer. Shall we wear that which shows modesty, shamefacedness, sobriety, and godliness with good works (1st Tim. 2:8-10)? Or shall we wear that which promotes the flesh rather than the Spirit of God? (1st Pet. 3:1-4) That which is short, skimpy, revealing, or tight advertises the figure and not the faith. It's worn not only at the swimming pool, but at the stores, and in the neighbor's yard. Revealing apparel reflects careless attitudes among those who wear such, and it tempts fleshly thoughts within the opposite sex. Immodest apparel is powerful...for Satan's cause. It matters!

Nakedness. "Nakedness" is a big deal concerning the apparel we wear? God coupled the word "naked" and "shame" in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2-3). God used the term "nakedness" to refer to the shameful state of Judah when other nations saw her continue in sin (Lam. 1:8). Jesus called the wealthily dressed Christians in Laodicea, "naked" with "shame", because they were not spiritually zealous for the Lord (Rev. 3:14-18). Our apparel is important because it reflects honor and dignity towards God, and towards us. Nakedness removes such honor and dignity and opposes God.

Inward –vs– Outward. Look at the contrast in 1st Tim. 2:8-10 and 1st Pet 3:1-4 between the inward and the outward. We can draw these conclusions:

- What is worn inwardly must be emphasized over what is worn outwardly. Purity and holiness is absolutely necessary!
- What is worn outwardly matters. God must be shown. Satan must not be served.
- What is worn outwardly must reflect what is godly inwardly.
- What is worn outwardly does not guarantee the proper inward spirit.

Godly apparel is beautiful! Modestly dressed women and girls (*inwardly and outwardly*) are truly beautiful. Godly apparel is not a step down in "beauty." It's easy to think that because clothes do not meet a modern fad, they are not beautiful. Some might think that "Christian" apparel is prudish or old fashioned, and one would not want to be seen "dead" wearing such. We cannot change the world's taste, yet if we are beautiful inwardly, our clothes take on a back seat to who we are. Consider, *clothes* do not make us beautiful; *God* makes us beautiful, if we are created in Jesus Christ. It's beautiful because it shows God. Godly young men, who want Christian wives, agree that modest apparel is beautiful. Women and men need to be encouraged to exhibit this true beauty.

Some clothes may not be enough clothes. Adam and Eve "knew they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." (Gen. 3:7) But still they were shameful (Gen. 3:10). So "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them" (Gen. 3:21). We must wear sufficient clothing to hide our nakedness. If we wear shorts, skirts or dresses which reveal the thighs (see Exodus 28:42), low cut tops, midriffs, shoulder or back revealing tops, we may have covered up some nakedness, but we have left some showing; or at least we have left a chance of shame. We should make sure God is honored with our bodies.

"I'm not trying to hurt anyone with what I wear." One may just be seeking comfort, style, or the "expected" sports uniform. The motive for skimpy clothing may not intentionally be evil. But God tells us to be mindful of others. Our influence must shine a light, not darkness (Matt. 5:16). We must help others bear their burdens, rather than putting a stumbling block before them (Gal. 6:2; 1st Cor. 8:9). Yes, others have the responsibility not to "look" (Matt. 5:27-28), but that does not give us the license to tempt them? We must take the Lord's side who "leads us in the paths of righteousness" (Psalm 23:3), and who "leads us not into temptation (Matt. 6:13)." Whether or not one purposes with what they wear to sell sexuality and the flesh, as do harlots (Prov. 7:7-10), it works, very powerfully, unraveling the

purity of even the strongest; both male and female, young and old. In good conscience we must keep our hearts pure, and help others do the same (1st Tim. 1:5). We may not intend to corrupt others, but we can; and we must serve God before concerning ourselves with comfort, style, or uniforms.

It's hard to be different. Looking like the world is not God's way (Rom. 12:1-2). Apparel which God approves is truly beautiful. God's difference brings us close to him, in purity and peace, and it bears fruit for God. This difference will matter as we look for Christ and a home in heaven (Titus 2:11-15). As Christians, we must exhort others in this; especially parents teaching children, and the older women teaching the younger women, and the older men teaching the younger men (Titus 2).

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