

DRESS IS THE SYMBOL OF CHARACTER

I TIMOTHY 2:9

9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

I TIMOTHY 2:10

10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

Brain scan studies published in National Geographic News February 16, 2009, have revealed that when men are shown pictures of scantily clad women, the region of the brain associated with tool use lights up (is activated). Tool use!

For example, areas of the brain that normally activate in anticipation of using tools, like hammers, wrenches, screwdrivers, etc. The researchers also found that a part of the brain that usually turned on during social interaction actually de-activated when they saw the pictures.

Do girls realize they're making themselves into objects—tools-- when they dress immodestly? When you cease to dress modestly you can actually cease to be a person in the eyes of men.

I TIMOTHY 2:9

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ADORN: kosmeo {kos-meh'-o}
to put in order, arrange, make ready, prepare, to ornament, adore; metaph. to embellish with honour, gain honour

MODEST: kosmios {kos'-mee-os}
of good behavior, well arranged, seemly, modest

APPAREL: katastole {kat-as-tol-ay'}
a lowering, letting down, a garment let down, dress, attire

JOHN GILL

with shamefacedness and sobriety: these are the two general rules by which dress is to be regulated; it is right and proper, when it is consistent with chastity, when it is not immodest and impudent,

and more like the attire of an harlot than of a woman professing godliness; and when it is moderate as well as modest, and suitable to a person's age and station, and is not beyond the circumstances of life in which they are.

PULPIT COMMENTARY

Religion is external as well as internal. There is the form which must be clothed with the power of godliness; religion must not be secret, but manifest to the world. Therefore women must profess the Christian name, and take part in the worship of the Church.

The highest distinction of women does not spring from dress or decoration, but from the luster that is thrown round their character by works of goodness.

Modest adornment.

"That women adorn themselves in modest apparel. " As God is the God of beauty, and nature is clothed with garments (like the high priest of old) of glory and beauty, so here we have the true idea carried out in religion. Women are "to adorn themselves. "

God's most beautiful work in creation, the human frame, is to be fitly appareled; for, to this day, art knows no higher subject than the human face and form.

MODESTY IS TO BE THE SPIRIT OF ALL ADORNMENT, because the nature of the being adorned is a sacred nature. Woman is

the true guardian of virtue. Her manner, her temper, her spirit,— all these constitute the best defense of virtue.

DRESS IS THE SYMBOL OF CHARACTER. If there is absence of shame-heartedness, there will be absence of shame-facedness. By modest apparel she can show the innate modesty of her thought and feeling.

For, say what we like, dress acts upon the mind and character. Dress like a clown, and you will feel like a clown. Modest apparel need not be shorn of taste and refinement and true beauty.

MORE COMMENTS FROM THE GUYS THAT WERE A PART OF THE SURVEY

But being modest wasn't simply a matter of clothes. Guys defined immodesty, also, as an "attitude" or a "carelessness." "Attaining modesty was also about how you use your body and the way you act, "sexually or otherwise."

An immodest lady is loud, proud, and dresses in a way that communicates such an attitude (male, age 24).

Something becomes immodest when the person wearing it has an attitude of carelessness (male, age 17).

As one guy said:

If you are dressing to get attention from a guy, then anything you wear can be immodest (male, age 13; my emphasis).

Some examples of behavior the guys mostly agreed was immodest:

Immodesty, then, is not simply about being vigilant about your clothing (don't wear a purse that falls diagonally across your body, don't show your arms or your thighs), it's a constant vigilance about how you display your body (don't stretch, bend, or bounce).

FROM YOUNG MEN ABOUT MODESTY

GUY #1:

A lot of today's fashions on women. . are well. a bit arousing; and to be fair I am not saying the woman is trying to be a "tease" or is actively trying to put a guy in this situation. but

Women, you have no idea what your God given body and image does to men. A woman who dresses modestly is not a prude or boring. It means she has CLASS. It means she respects herself, and knows what her body can do to a guy.

GUY #2

I really appreciate modesty. It's really annoying to have a barely dressed woman pass by or sit next to me on the bus. Yet should we speak up, we get called controlling or perverts. It's not like we can have absolute control over our reactions. Can I control myself no matter what a woman's wearing?

Yes. Am I comfortable when women are immodest? Absolutely not. Yes they can wear what they like but we pay a price for their choices.

GUY #3

I see the intense feeling a guy gets from an immodest woman as a warning that she does not respect him nor care about him. In nature the most beautiful creatures tend to be the most dangerous. Tree frogs for instance are very pretty but very toxic!

Translating that too woman means the same in my opinion. Once a man accepts that immodest women are more likely to support his destruction such women don't look very attractive because you can see their spiritual ugliness like a deadly contagious disease. If a man doesn't want to catch he doesn't look.

GUY #4

I think there are many women who really don't know the effect their modesty or lack of modesty have had on men, and they are probably the ones who behave somewhat naively, but with good intent. They don't want to mislead men,

but they don't know where to draw the line between "modest" and "immodest" in ways that honor men. Or, they believe they are already as "modest" as they need to be, while still feeling beautiful or comfortable according to society's standards.

They may believe they are just flattering themselves, "building-up their confidence," or "using what God gave them," but really they are stealing emotions from men they don't care about, and have no intentions to satisfy the responses they stir-up. It is false advertising – a deceit – a lie!

A young Christian woman made the following quote about modesty:

"Women should dress like a flower to be looked at, valued, and appreciated, not like a sandwich to be bitten. "

I don't think women need to work so hard to follow society's definition of beauty to look or feel attractive.

God has a much different idea of beauty and modesty than society has told women, and godly men want to see more women choose to reflect that type of beauty.

Not too long ago, women would pretty much always wear a dress or a skirt. But with the Feminist movement, women were convinced that they were "oppressed" or not equals to men, so they started wearing pants, and cutting their hair short (among other things) to try to be more like men.

And today, a lot of women do reject femininity. The culture has told them that it's wrong to be feminine. So you see a lot more females acting and dressing like males. That's not empowering

women, that's enslaving them. Forcing them into a role that they weren't created to fill.

Men were meant to be masculine, and women were meant to be feminine. A feminine woman is more appealing than a masculine woman, and a masculine man is more appealing than a feminine man. Modest skirts and dresses are more feminine, so they're naturally going to be more attractive.

Some fear that being feminine or modest is unattractive, but that's a lie. You do NOT have to be immodest to be attractive. Here is what guy B has to say, "Something that is immodest is something that is designed to arouse lust within me.

Attractiveness is a far more mysterious quality, a mixture of spirituality, personality and physical beauty. "

I know a lot of girls dress immodestly to attract guys, and as I said at the beginning of this part, it works. However, it's not the kind of attraction that any girl would want to receive.

First of all, a girl shouldn't waste one thought or action on how to attract a guy. Girls (and guys) shouldn't spend any time thinking about how to attract the opposite gender. We should focus instead on living for Christ and growing into the men and women He wants us to be.

If we do that, people will be attracted to us, not because we have done anything to manipulate them, but simply because a person living for Christ is someone other people want to be around.

Second, when a girl attracts a guy because of immodesty, she is attracting him with her body only. The feelings she is stirring up in him are lust and desire, not admiration and nothing that even resembles love.

Guys who are attracted in that way are attracted because they see an object they can use for selfish pleasure.

However, there are good God-fearing guys out there who are striving to live for Christ. They want to respect women and treat them as equals and sisters. But in our culture, it can be a struggle to treat them the way they deserve because they insist on dehumanizing themselves.

Immodesty invites guys to treat girls poorly. It can make it hard for guys to even see girls as people.

Immodesty is extremely unappealing to such God-fearing guys, but that doesn't mean they don't/can't fall to their fleshly weaknesses. Lust is a weakness for guys, and I don't like girls trying to prey on my weakness. When girls dress immodestly,

I feel like they're trying to take advantage of me because of my weakness. I feel like they're trying to manipulate me. I don't like that. Who does? Who likes people trying to take advantage and manipulate them?

I don't know how many girls consciously realize what they're doing, but whether they realize it or not, that's what they're doing. They are attempting to manipulate and trip up men when they are immodest.

Guy C also makes this great point about immodesty, "It's a testimony to insecurity when women dress immodestly. A woman who knows she is beautiful doesn't have to walk down the street half naked to be noticed. "

I really like what this girl (girl E) had to say about the whole issue, "The thing about immodesty being the norm is that it shouldn't be. Sure, it is, and maybe some people tune it out, but I, for one, don't. And it makes me, even as a girl, feel uncomfortable.

Yeah, lots of guys are going to 'think bad thoughts' anyway, no matter how girls dress, but that's no reason to throw basic standards to the wind.

And I also sincerely agree with the sentiments of this girl (girl F): "I think it's VERY important to dress modestly. Not only does it please God, but it makes it easier for the guys. You can be very cute and fashionable, and also dress modestly. You can wear colorful and fashionable shirts, and skirts.

They are very pretty and feminine. I think people these days are so careless in how they dress. It's actually disgusting. When I walk past billboards with girls in bikinis, showing off their body, it just sickens me. It always makes me happy to see girls wearing skirts or modest clothes.

It's hard to find. To me, they're much more beautiful when they're modest, than when they're exposing themselves. "

Immodesty really is a sad thing for everyone involved. A lot of girls do it to attract guys, which is totally wrong. Girls shouldn't be trying to attract guys. Plus, the guys they do attract through immodesty are not the guys they want to attract,

because those guys are not interested in those girls as people, but as objects for their own personal enjoyment. Girls think they're being loved, but they're really being used.

And then you have men who really and truly are trying to live for Christ, yet women are placing so many obstacles in their way. It's frustrating and even infuriating. Sometimes there can even be a temptation to hate or resent the girls who dress that way,

which is as wrong as giving into the temptation of lust. So, loving these girls and women the way Christ would have us love them becomes extremely difficult as well. You're battling your fleshly weakness on one hand,

and you're battling not to resent the people who are trying to manipulate you and cause you to stumble on the other. Terrible situations to be in, I can assure you.

But again, if a man does fall pray to immodesty and sins, he can blame no one but himself. He is responsible for his sin. However, when a man sins as a result of a woman's immodesty, the woman has also sinned.

A lot of the guys in this survey talked about temptation. In some cases, the men would use very powerful words, such as this guy defining immodest:

Immodest: Screams that her body is different than mine. Attempts to manipulate me. Forcefully offers to trade what I want (in the flesh) for what she wants: attention (male, age 30).

This language — suggesting that women's bodies "scream" at him, attempt to control him, and "forcefully" tempt him — is reminiscent of Tim Beneke's interviews with men about sexual violence in *Men on Rape*.

He discusses how lots of the terms used to describe a beautiful, sexy woman are metaphors for danger and violence: "ravishing," "stunning," bombshell," "knockout," "dressed to kill," and "femme fatale." "Women's beauty," can be perceived as violence to men".

Women's bodies incite men's sexual desires, sometimes to violence; they must be kept hidden. These Christian guys, however, did claim responsibility for their own thoughts, feelings, and actions. When asked about their role in avoiding lust, many were adamant that it was their own responsibility.

Many felt that innocent, shameless, platonic interaction between men and women was a team effort.

Sisters in Christ, you really have no concept of the struggles that guys face on a daily basis. Please, please, please take a higher standard in the ways you dress. True, we men are responsible for our thoughts and actions before the Lord,

but it is such a blessing when we know that we can spend time with our sisters in Christ, enjoying their fellowship without having to constantly be on guard against ungodly thoughts brought about by the inappropriate ways they sometimes dress.

We see why suggestions regarding the length of hemlines and the depth of necklines are important because we live in a sexual world where even the youngest of girls are sexualized to an extreme degree and they are told their "sexiness" will bring them popularity, love, and happiness.

Studies show girls as young as 6 years old are sexualizing themselves because media messages show them being sexy yields rewards (a July 2012 study in Sex Roles reveals the latest). As we've written about before, even girls' TOYS and cartoon characters are sexualized to the extreme these days.

But when we fixate on the inches showing we are missing the point. When we judge girls and women for the skin they are or are not showing, we are minimizing them to their bodies and repeating the same lies that females are only bodies in need of judgment and fixing.

We are even perpetuating the shame-inducing belief that female bodies are sinful and impure, and must be covered to protect boys and men who can't be held responsible for their thoughts or actions.

FROM A CATHOLIC ARTICLE

Immodesty, particularly in a woman because of her nature as the temptress of man, involves an offence against God and a lack of respect for ourselves and our neighbor. Not to disapprove of

trousers for women is to shrug aside the seriousness of the situation.

We can deduce two things from this enduring and universal phenomenon:

a moral consensus, based on instinctual feelings of shamefacedness, existed up to modern times among all women, and that their desire to conceal rather than reveal was not a social construct but a natural reaction.

trousers as an outer garment are not and never have been feminine apparel, and by putting them on women (with a different designer label) does not make them any less men's clothing.

This evidence quite escapes those who deny the significance for our time of God's edict given to Moses: "A woman shall not be clothed with a man's apparel; neither shall a man use woman's apparel: for he that doeth these things is abominable before God" (Deuteronomy 22:5).

The mere mention of such an edict is enough to make some people hiss "Old Testament fundamentalist" in my direction, but it was the basis on which the Church formed her teaching that women must dress in a distinctively feminine manner and be modest in heart as well as apparel (I Peter 3:3-4).

Conclusion

The key to the whole issue is for women to dress in a feminine manner so as to communicate the language of submission and acceptance of womanhood rather than the language of rebellion and rejection of God's design. As Christian women, we have a biblical obligation to dress modestly and reflect holiness,

and so we should dress in a feminine manner, to show that we accept the place God has given us in the Church, in the family and in society,. God's message about modesty may seem embarrassingly old-fashioned in our culture, but God's word does not change.

There are no general circumstances either in the past or present which mitigate or set aside this teaching. While it is acceptable to have feminized forms of coats, hats, shoes etc. , trousers are in a category of their own because of the area of the body on which they are worn and their inherent "suggestiveness".

Has the trouser culture really elevated our uniqueness as women? Has it contributed to an increase in chivalry from men? On the contrary, the fashion has become counter-productive for women:

their dignity has been lowered both in the eyes of society and of their own children

as fashions have become bolder, their innate sensitivity to immodesty has been blunted by sensual overload

their minds have been ideologically corrupted by feminist thinking so that they have generally rejected God's design for the family

there is widespread confusion in society about what constitutes femininity and masculinity

the de-feminising effect of trousers on the younger generation is unedifying. Young girls of today have, for the most part, worn trousers most of their life, and as a result they tend to behave like boys. It is little wonder that they feel uncomfortable in dresses and that,

and they have lost the instinct for modesty. Our age has witnessed a general coarsening of conversation and manners

among young girls at a time of their life when they should be learning standards of modesty and deportment.