

ADORNED IN MODESTY

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.

I TIMOTHY 2:11

11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

[STOP]

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.

ROMANS 12:1

1 ¶ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

I PETER 1:14

14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

I PETER 1:15

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

I PETER 1:16

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

HOLINESS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT MEANS:

GREEK LEXICON, hagiasmos {hag-ee-as-mos'}
Sanctification, consecration, purification, sanctification of heart
and life

I JOHN 2:15

15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

I JOHN 2:16

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

JAMES 1:27

27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and **to keep himself *UNSPOTTED** from the world.

UNSPOTTED: aspilos {as'-pee-los}
without spot, spotless, free from censure, irreproachable, free from vice, unsullied

JAMES 4:4

4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

1 Peter 3:3-4,

"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (KJV).

BIBLE COMMENTARY

For their adornment they should not emphasize the external, but the internal. They should dress modestly, with decency and propriety. These terms stress not so much the absence of sexual suggestiveness, though it is included, but rather an appearance that is simple, moderate, judicious, and free from ostentation. The specifics Paul mentioned (braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes) are not wrong in themselves, but become inappropriate when they indicate misplaced values. **In the Ephesian church these styles may have been associated with the local temple prostitutes. Christians must be careful about letting a pagan culture set their fashions.**

Modesty has more to do with just the way we dress. **It has to do with the way we act.** A women can think so highly of herself in her plain clothes, drab colors, and no makeup and jewelry and yet not be modest at all! How so? **Shamefacedness and sobriety are character issues.**

They have to do with how we behave.

Paul gives us the characteristics of the ideal Christian woman in the church:

Modesty

Paul is not saying that the Christian woman must wear old clothes and be out of style! Rather, he is emphasizing that the inner person is more important than the outer appearance. Modest apparel glorifies Christ; extreme fashions only point to the person and make the Christian look worldly. It is possible for the believer to be modern and still be modest.

Purity

She "professes godliness." Godliness is one of Paul's favorite words; godliness is simply a shortened form of "god-likeness."

Industry

She practices good works (v. 10). Later in this letter (5:11-14) Paul warns about idle women who wander from house to house and give Satan opportunity to lead them into sin. The best way for a Christian woman to preach is with her life.

Humility

In 1 Cor 14:34-40, Paul amplifies this commandment. Just as Satan got a footing in Eden, through Eve, so he can get a footing in the local church through some sincere, misguided woman. (Misguided men can also be a problem; see 1 Tim 1:20.) When the local church meets in assembly, the women are instructed to exercise submission. If they have any questions, rather than interrupt the meeting, they should ask their husbands at home.

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I PETER 3:3

3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

I PETER 3:4

4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

I PETER 3:5

5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, **adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:**

I PETER 3:6

6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

On the one hand, a woman who is overly sensual in the way she dresses or overdoes the jewelry and makeup adornment can reveal what is in her heart, but so can the plain woman who acts not with a 'gentle and quiet spirit', or who is arrogant and self-righteously judgemental in her heart.

Appearance is an Expression of Character

Your appearance is important! The things you wear convey a message about whom you are and the things for which you stand. The people around you cannot see your heart. Therefore, they must read your outward actions and appearance instead. **Just as a sad expression indicates an inward unhappiness, so your appearance and clothing are indications of your inner thoughts, attitudes, values, and feelings.** Your outward appearance and clothing are an expression of your character. Your appearance reveals to others your commitments and beliefs. **Your appearance reveals what you are!**

PROVERBS 7:10

10 And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.

Her attire identified her as a harlot. What kind of person does your attire identify you to be? Does it identify you as a holy person? Does your appearance send a clear message that you are a Christian, or are people left wondering?

APOSTOLIC PREACHER

The first thing then that the women are urged to pay attention to is their dress or apparel. There are three qualifiers mentioned before apparel: **modestly, sensibly and seemly**; these three terms are related and their meanings overlap in some ways. Modestly comes from a word that can mean "modest" in the sense of well-ordered and moderate, hence not excessive, but can also mean "proper," or "suitable," or "becoming," "simple," "unassuming."

Sensibly translates a word that means "moderate" or "reasonable" with the implication that the person is aware of what is best in a particular situation.

The third qualifier, seemly, translates a word that pertains to being proper or suitable and thus contributing to one's attractiveness and being respected by others.

A sample of how these are translated in some English translations shows this interrelationship: TEV "modest . . . sensible . . . properly"; REB "becoming, modestly, soberly"; NIV "modestly, with decency and propriety"; NRSV "modestly and decently in suitable clothing"; TNT "becoming manner with taste and modesty."

Phps "the women should be dressed neatly, their adornment being modesty and serious-mindedness"; NABR "women should adorn themselves with proper conduct, with modesty and self-control" Most translations, however, understand all three qualifiers to be connected with clothing, as, for example, TEV "women to be modest and sensible about their clothes and to dress properly"; REB "Christian women must dress in becoming manner, modestly and soberly"

BAPTIST PREACHER

Immodest dress is anything that is designed or intended to sexually attract or call attention to one's self. So when Christian women are looking at buying or wearing a particular item, they must always ask themselves questions like these: "Why am I doing this? Why am I wearing this? Why is this particular piece of clothing designed the way it is?"

Let us get even more specific.

Why do women and girls wear makeup? Why is it expected that females will wear makeup? **Face and eye painting has its origins in prostitution.** It is used by females today for the same reason that it was and is used by prostitutes. Just one look at

makeup advertisements confirms this. It is to make the person more attractive.

It is also very telling to note that high-heeled shoes were designed to make women walk in a certain provocative, "mincing" way.

Why does a preacher preach against shorts and mini-skirts? Well, once again that word modest or {kat-as-tol-ay'}, long flowing garment. **Neither shorts or mini-skirts are long and shorts do not flow**, therefore shorts or mini-skirts would not be modest, because they do not meet the length requirement. A {kat-as-tol-ay'} is a long and flowing garment. **The second reason why shorts and mini-skirts would be inappropriate for a woman is because the Bible specifically says that when a woman's thighs show, she is naked.**

The thigh goes from your hips to somewhere in the knee. So if a woman dresses in such a way where that part of her body is exposed, the Bible says she is naked. Mini-skirts expose that part of the body. Thus, if a woman wears a mini-skirt, she is naked. And shorts, they expose that part of the body, and the Bible says in Isaiah chapter forty-seven, if she shows that part of the body, she would be naked. Well then, if you wear a pair of shorts, you would be naked, according to God. Therefore shorts and the mini-skirt would be immodest, because they are not long, and because they expose nakedness. And as I said, **the thigh goes down into the knee. So the only way to guarantee that the thigh is not exposed is to wear a skirt or dress that goes below the knee.**

In the Bible days, women did not wear crotched garments. Pants have a crotch. Men in the Bible days wore crotch garments. Not only that, women in any society did not wear pants until close to the middle of this century. Pants are called britches in the Bible, and britches were worn exclusively by men for the first 5,950 years of human existence (which means up until about fifty years ago). Even the garments worn by men and women in Bible days

were different. **The woman wore a long flowing robe, and men wore a shorter and tighter robe. Underneath the woman's robe would be nothing. Underneath the man's robe would be a pair of short pants that would go down to the knees.** Whenever a man would have to do some type of labor, such as to team up an ox, pull a trailer or dig a hole, he would pull up his robe and tuck it in his pants that were under his skirt, and that was called in the Bible "girding up your loins."

What about floor length skirts? It flows. It is modest. However, the word used for modest is *katastole*, which is long and flowing, and a word that would be used in the Greek for a floor length gown would be *poderis*. Since the word for modest is *katastole*, and not *poderis*, the garment has to be long but not necessarily floor length, since nakedness ended at the knee. Long would be somewhere in between the knee and the floor, but it doesn't necessarily have to go to the floor. So if you want to wear a floor length skirt or dress, that is fine. There is nothing wrong with it, but it is not absolutely necessary. Just because your skirt goes to the floor and the other ladies' skirts only go halfway down their calf, that doesn't make you more spiritual than she is.

What about tight skirts? I see a lot of women with tight skirts. I went to a Bible college where we had rules. Women had to wear dresses and skirts. They weren't allowed to wear slacks. But let me tell you, a lot of those girls wore some pretty tight dresses and skirts. You could see every curve on their body. **Was that modest? No, because it didn't flow. If it flowed, it wouldn't show the figure. Was it shamefaced? No, because shamefacedness is to be dressed in such a way as not to draw attention to the figure.** So a modest garment is a flowing garment. A tight garment or dress is not modest, regardless of how much flesh it covers. Granted, **it may go down below the knees and you are not naked, but you are still not modest. You are still not shamefaced. So a woman needs to wear a dress or a skirt that is not just below the knees, but a dress or skirt that is full or flowing. It is modest only if it**

goes below the knee and it is not tight or reveals the form of the figure.

Of course, men who are **sin-loving pigs** want women to wear pants and miniskirts. It is sinful for women to wear pants or miniskirts. Please don't misunderstand me, I'm not saying that it's wrong for a woman to be attractive; **but Word of God clearly teaches that a godly woman should desire to attract men to her character rather than her body...**

As American society becomes more apostate, homosexualized, promiscuous, and adulterous—the Biblical teaching of modesty is increasingly scorned with utter contempt. Indeed, pants on women is obscene by Biblical standards, and is a form of obscenity which encourages men to lust. Let the heathen rage if they don't like the truth—God is still on His throne!

The bottom line is that pants on women **cause people to lust** with sinful adulterous thoughts (Matthew 5:28). Do you think it's a mere coincidence that homosexuality, child molesting, rape, and all sorts of other sexual sins have become prevalent in the United States within the past couple decades? It's our sex-crazed American society. That's why condoms are being passed out to public school children.

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;

HISTORY

Ephesus was a wealthy commercial city, and some women there competed against each other for attention and popularity. In that day expensive hairdos arrayed with costly jewelry were an accepted way to get to the top socially. Paul admonished the Christian women to major on the "inner person," the true beauty

that only Christ can give. He did not forbid the use of nice clothing or ornaments. He urged balance and propriety, with the emphasis on modesty and holy character.

from Bible Knowledge Commentary/Old Testament:

The women who came to the Christian assemblies in Ephesus arrayed themselves in costly attire, and sometimes made unbecoming display of their personal charms till the custom was becoming the sensation, if not the scandal, of the city.

The specifics Paul mentioned (braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes) are not wrong in themselves, but become inappropriate when they indicate misplaced values (cf. 1 Peter 3:3). In the Ephesian church these styles may have been associated with the local temple prostitutes. Christians must be careful about letting a pagan culture set their fashions.

ADAM CLARKE SAID:

It is the extravagance in ornaments and costly garments that Paul rebukes. In fact, the passage is not condemning any one style, ornament, or such, but demanding moderation in dress and behavior in general as women professing godliness. When either men or women live primarily for dress and outward show, it is wrong.

But (which becometh, etc. - That is: Good works are the only ornaments with which women professing Christianity should seek to be adorned. **The Jewish matrons were accustomed to cry to the bride: "There is no need of paint, no need of antimony, no need of braided hair; she herself is most beautiful." The eastern women use a preparation of antimony, which they apply both to the eyes and eyelids, and by which the eye itself acquires a brilliant lustre.**

JOHN GILL:

Not with broidered hair, or plaited, The Jews had women on purpose for this business; Mary Magdalene is thought to have her name from hence; Or gold, or pearls, or costly array: not that the apostle forbids all use or wear of such things. .

It was a complaint of Chrysostom's many hundreds of years ago, that some who came to public worship, **appeared in such a dress, as if they came rather to dance than to pray**; such apparel should be avoided: it is said of Pythagoras, that he taught the inhabitants of Crotona, the men literature, and the women chastity and modesty; and by his disputations so far prevailed upon the latter, as to lay aside their garments of gold and other ornaments of their dignity, as instruments of luxury; all which they brought into the temple of Juno, and dedicated them to that goddess; declaring, that shamefacedness or chastity, and not garments, are the true ornaments of matrons.

POOLE SAID:

The apostle condemneth not these ornaments where they are suited to the quality of women, but where they are too excessive with respect to the purse of those that wear them, or take up more time to be spent in putting them on than is fit to be so spent, especially on a sabbath day, or where they are put on out of pride, or to make a vain show, or are of that nature and fashion as they speak an unchaste or an immodest heart, or may cause scandal to others.

ADAM CLARKE SAID:

The extravagance to which the Grecian and Asiatic women went in their ornaments might well be a reason for the apostle's command.

When either women or men spend much time, cost, and attention on decorating their persons, it affords a painful proof that within there is little excellence, and that they are endeavoring to supply the want of mind and moral good by the feeble and silly aids of dress and ornament. Were religion out of the question, common

sense would say in all these things: Be decent; but be moderate and modest.

ALBERT BARNES SAID:

Females in the east pay much more attention to the hair than is commonly done with us. It is plaited with great care, and arranged in various forms, according to the prevailing fashion, and often ornamented with spangles, or with silver wire, or tissue interwoven. The sense here is, that Christian females are not to imitate those of the world in their careful attention to the ornaments of the head. It cannot be supposed that the mere *braiding* of the hair is forbidden, but only that careful attention to the manner of doing it, and to the ornaments usually worn in it, which characterized worldly females.

Or gold, or pearls. It is not to be supposed that all use of gold or pearls, as articles of dress, is here forbidden; but the idea is, that the Christian female is not to seek these as the adorning which she desires, or is not to imitate the world in these personal decorations. It may be a difficult question to settle how much ornament is allowable, and when the true line is passed. But though this cannot be settled by any exact rules.

Any external decoration which occupies the mind more than the virtues of the heart, and which engrosses the time and attention more, we may be certain is wrong. The apparel should be such as not to attract attention; such as becomes our situation; such as will not be particularly singular; such as shall leave the impression that the heart is not fixed on it. It is a poor ambition to decorate a dying body with gold and pearls.

When the *heart* is right; when there is true and supreme love for religion, it is usually not difficult to regulate the subject of dress. *Costly array.* Expensive dress. This is forbidden, for it is foolish; and the money thus employed may be much more profitably used in doing good. "Costly array" includes that which can be ill

afforded, and that which is inconsistent with the feeling that the principal ornament is that of the heart.

DAKE SAYS:

It is the extravagance in ornaments and costly garments that Paul rebukes. (from Dake Annotated Reference Bible © 2007 by Dake Publishing. All rights reserved in U.S.A. and Other Countries.)

John G. Butler says:

“Not with braided hair” This braiding (sometimes translated “plaiting”) of the hair does not attack pig tails and hair braiding. It speaks of a particular practice in Paul’s day. Women braided their hair in order to pin to it all sorts of gaudy, expensive jewelry. They would try to outdo each other in a vain show of wealth and beauty.

“Not with . . . gold, or pearls, or costly array”. The exhortation here does not forbid jewelry but forbids extravagant expense.

“But, which becometh women professing godliness, with good works” (1 Tim 2:10). Here the figure is used to dress in character, such as, in honesty, charity, humility, and purity. These attributes of character exceed the beauty of any material apparel. It is not wrong for a woman to look attractive but the most important attractiveness is holy character.