

## MODESTY

*M*odest dress is a year 'round concern for Christians. Any manner of clothing or dress that is designed to draw attention to the individual is immodest and is to be avoided by the servant of God (1 Timothy 2:9). However the warm months sharpen our concern as people of both genders tend to wear less and less clothing. Along with decreasing coverage comes increasing excuses and justification for the lack of cover. Some are quick to claim that the Bible nowhere gives a precise definition of what is modest and what is not. We agree. But Scripture does offer guidance and direction for our lives. Let us consider the issue biblically with a mind toward Godly, righteous living.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Six days later God created man and created woman from a rib. In the early sinless days of Eden man was evidently inadequately unclothed for God created coats for the first pair after their sin. It is reasonable to conclude that clothing became necessary once sin entered the world. Could it be that adequate clothing reduces temptation? We absolutely think so and, along with protection from the elements, believe it to be one of the primary purposes of clothing.. In considering the first two accounts of Genesis, we know that God created the human body, declared it to be good and then covered it with coats of skins. We may also conclude that there is nothing inherently evil or embarrassing about the body. However, there is a time and place for its display and it is not in public.

Further, the body is the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 6:19) and must not be considered defiled or dirty. It is not the human body that is bad but the improper use of the body which leads to sin.

Immodest apparel feeds temptation which leads to sin and death (James 1:13-15; Romans

6:23). Make no mistake, the man who lusts after a woman, regardless of her attire is guilty of lust and adultery (Matthew 5:28). Women who lust after men are just as guilty. All Christians must protect themselves from temptation and avoid any situation which may create temptation. Thus Christians actively seek to avoid anything or any situation that creates, or may create, lust. This is the reason why we avoid many television shows, magazines and even shopping catalogs. It is why we avoid the prom and modern dances and why we avoid the populated areas of the beach. Christians avoid temptation.

Some would argue that since it is someone else lusting, they have neither concern nor responsibility to dress appropriately. Nothing could be more wrong. When a person deliberately chooses

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to wear revealing clothing in order to draw attention to themselves and specifically to their body, they are sinning. Here is

Paul writing to Timothy: “Women, for their part, should display their beauty by dressing modestly and decently in appropriate clothes, not by braiding their hair or by wearing gold, pearls, or expensive clothes, but through good works. This is proper for women who claim to have reverence for God” (1 Timothy 2:9,10 ISV) . Did you notice that Paul says women should be modest and dress decently? Clearly those who profess faithfulness to Jesus Christ dress modestly.

One final word here to parents. Sometimes our children lack the maturity and real world experience to make good decisions about their dress and appearance. When a young person is allowed to wear revealing clothing it not reflects upon them but also upon their parents. Perhaps more importantly it reflects upon the church for which our Lord bled and died.

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