

"WHAT SHALL I WEAR?"

INTRODUCTION

- A. There is a growing problem in our society about proper clothing.
- B. "What shall I wear?" question ask nearly every morning, as dress for work, to relax. Weighing fashion versus form, style versus substance
- C. When ask by Christian - issues considered. Is it modest? Is it proper for those professing godliness? 1Tim 2:9-10
- D. What's modest, according to world, is constantly changing
 - 1. At one time, immodest for woman to expose her ankles
 - 2. Today's most modest of dress - scandalous
- E. So the question remains, "What Shall I Wear?"...
 - 1. Should a Christian woman wear shorts, mini-skirts, low-cut blouses, tight skirts or pants? 1Tim 2:9-10
 - 2. Should men be concerned about modest apparel? Ex 28:41,42
 - 3. What effect might this have on certain activities, such as mixed swimming and other athletic sports?
- F. No easy answer, or simple guideline (such as: "inch above knee"). But scriptural principles help determine modesty, which begins in the heart.

DISCUSSION:

I. IT IS SHAMEFUL TO EXPOSE ONE'S NAKEDNESS

- A. Consider example of Adam and Eve after sin
 - 1. Made aprons "coverings" Gen 3:7-10 covers mid-section
 - 2. Lord made coats "tunics"nkjv Gen 3:21 garment reaching knee
- B. Shameful to expose or draw attention to private parts
 - 1. Exposure often a form of judgment intended to shame the wicked Isa 3:16-17; 47:1-3
 - 2. Paul notes thqt some parts are "unpresentable" and should be covered 1Cor 12:23-24 (comeliness KJV - decorum, modesty – **Decorous** - decent; suitable to a character, or to the time, place and occasion; becoming; proper; befitting - Webster:) NKJ "have greater modesty"
- C. There is a line it is a shame to cross, some parts of body should remain private.

II. DON'T PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR FLESHLY LUSTS

- A. Clearly condemned in Scriptures Rom 13:13-14
- B. Can way we dress excite lusts? Consider following:
 - 1. "Mini-clothes are symbolic of those girls who want to seduce a man..." , Mary Quant (one of the designers of miniskirts and hot pants)
 - 2. Asked where it was all leading to she replied with one word: "Sex."
 - 3. When Santa Maria hijacked in 1967, women on ship concerned rebels might have designs on them, quit wearing "enticing clothing"; i.e., shorts and halter-tops, and swimming in pool
 - 4. If "women of world" know what stimulates lust of flesh, why not "daughters of God"?
- C. Jesus warned about "committing adultery in the heart"...
 - 1. A two-fold responsibility here? Matt 5:27-30
 - a. Man must guard his mind from impurity Phil 4:8

- b. Woman must help prevent lewd stare?
- 2. Man's lust inexcusable, but if woman's apparel or conduct encourages she shares guilt! Pro 7:6-27

- D. If our clothing encourages arousal of fleshly lusts in others, we have clearly crossed the line.

III. CLOTHING MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH GODLINESS

- A. Consider carefully 1Tim 2:8-10 ("in like manner also")
 - 1. "Modest" (*kosmio*) "Orderly, well arranged, decent, modest" (*akin to kosmos, in its primary sense as "harmonious arrangement adornment"* Vine's "Well-ordering is not of dress and demeanor only, but of inner life, uttering in deed and expressing itself in the outward conversation" - Trench
 - 2. "Shamefacedness" "a sense of shame, modesty, is used regarding demeanor of women in church, Vine's This word applies more to issue of brevity of clothing
 - 3. "Sobriety" "denotes soundness of mind" Vine's - "that habitual inner self-government, with its constant rein on all the passions and desires, which would hinder temptations to these from arising" - Trench. A sound mind considers effect of apparel on others
 - 4. "Not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly array" Excess, rather than adornment, condemned Isa 3:16-26; Ezek 16:10-14
 - 5. Adornment (in the sense of enhancement) not wrong absolutely, but is to be of lower priority and lesser importance
 - 6. "Becometh women professing godliness" that which is fitting, seemly, suitable, becoming Eph 5:3; Ti 2:3 Would woman professing godliness knowingly adorn herself in a way that excites lust in another person?
- B. Consider also 1Pet 3:1-6...
 - 1. Note potential value of chaste conduct 1Pet 3:1-2 Good behavior can influence one for good. Likewise, immodest clothing can have an adverse effect!
 - 2. Emphasis on adorning one's inner person
 - 3. The adornment that greatly pleases God 1Pet 3:4-6 The incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit

CONCLUSION

- A. Can't set specific rules for modest apparel... be doing what Bible doesn't do. Offer general principles to help Christian who desires to please God rather than self or man
- B. Suggestions for question: "What shall I wear?",
 - 1. Ask does adornment reflect your profession of godliness, and principles found in God's word
 - 2. Seek counsel from those who are mature in faith, whose senses have been exercised to discern good and evil (cf. He 5:14)
- C. Do this, and meet God's set standard Phil 2:15

Ideas from a lesson by Mark A. Copeland