

His Workmanship at Westside

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."

—Ephesians 2:10

Vol. XXV

June 5, 2016

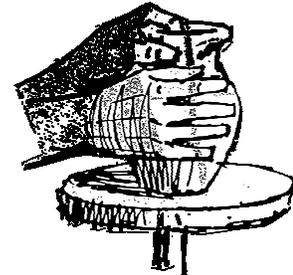
No. 23

Does God Care About Our Clothes? by Nancy L. DeMoss

Every day we make choices. The clothes we wear may not seem all that important in the grand scheme of life to anyone other than ourselves. Our clothes, however, speak volumes about us. Complete strangers may be able to surmise our gender, age, ethnicity, education, economic status, vocation, personality, and even character based on what we wear. Employers, teachers, parents, and peers will all take notice of our attire. Clothes can either reinforce or change their ideas about each of us. The way we dress may make the difference in obtaining a job, getting a good grade on a school presentation, or making a positive first impression and quickly earning the respect of our friends. Examples in the Bible of Tamar, Gen 38:14-15; Esther, Es 5:1; the woman who approached King David, 2 Sam 14:2; Mordecai, Es 6:6-9; 8:15; the worthy woman, Pr 31:17, 21-22, 24-25; the priests in Ezra's day, Ezr 2:69; 3:10; Neh 7:70-72—all demonstrate that clothing tells a story. Before we decide what we will wear tomorrow, let's consider what God has to say on the subject of modesty.

God Does Not Care About Clothes, Right? *"For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart,"* 1 Sam 16:7. Could a Christian use this verse to gloss over the subject of proper dress and modesty? Why would a

Christian do that? *"As man sees,"* implies human beings do perceive according to outward physical appearances. We should therefore adorn ourselves outwardly to reflect our *"inner man"* to others. Anything else would be hypocritical. It's all about the heart: the heart's attitude, the heart's reflection, and the heart's desire. What we wear should be broadcasting the message that we are different. It should be drawing attention to God, not to ourselves. The worthy woman made herself fine clothing of silk and purple, but she was known for much more—her clothing was *"strength and honor"*; we could say that she defined the clothes, rather than her clothes defining her. Peter said, *"Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—but rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God,"* 1 Pet 3:3-4. In other words, *"Don't let your apparel be your true attractiveness; don't try to substitute gold jewelry for the true beauty of your character."* Be more interested in your character—in your inner man/woman—than you are in your clothing and what you look like. Modesty has to come from the inside before it can be manifest on the outside. If it's not in the heart, if it's not the true desire of the person, then s/he can dress in whatever s/he wants and still be immodest.



Isaiah 64:8

God has specific instructions on how we dress our physical bodies with spiritual lessons attached: modest, neat, appropriate, clean. The outer appearance is an indicator that we are upright in heart, right with God. So God does care how we look. Not only does He care how we look, there are rules in the Bible for both men and women that govern our appearance. First, God was concerned about the attire the High Priest wore when appearing before Him, Ex 28. Coming before God dressed inappropriately brought dire consequences, Ex 28:43. In the parable of the wedding supper, Mt 22:1-13, dress was important: a guest was bound and cast into outer darkness because he didn't have on a proper wedding garment, Mt 22:13. The master would have provided the appropriate garment, but the guest didn't ask. Surely, there are lessons in both these passages about being properly dressed for an occasion.

Defining Modesty. The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language (4th Edition, Houghton Mifflin, © 2000) defines modesty as, *"reserve, restraint, or propriety in speech, dress, or behavior."* It is the opposite of excess (from the same root as *moderate*—from Latin *modus*=measured, not extreme). It carries the idea of dignity and humility. It is unpretentious; free from vanity or conceit. It does not call attention to itself, is not bold or self-assertive. Few would argue that Christians should guard speech and behavior. Yet followers of Christ

God and Clothes, from p. 1

should also demonstrate godly character in their dress. What images come to your mind when you hear the word *modesty*? If you focus on the word *propriety*, who or what determines what is proper in terms of speech and behavior? Then what is proper in dress?

A woman's clothing can be proper or improper in correlation to her character and behavior—and her heart: *"I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not so much with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but with good works which are proper for women professing godliness,"* 1 Tim 2:8-10. Modesty is an attitude.

What clothing would be proper for women *"professing godliness with good works"*? Think of clothing that is moderate alongside clothing that is not.

Discreet. Modesty also carries with it the idea of being *discreet*, being able to keep a secret or a confidence. In dress, discretion means that a godly woman would keep some of herself—her body as well as her thoughts—hidden or covered. *"As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, so is a lovely woman who lacks discretion,"* Pr 11:22. What did God say about being indiscreet—whether by word, action, or dress? See Tit 2:5. Why do you think women are singled out in the Proverbs and Titus passages? Because a woman's indiscretion takes away her beauty and does not reinforce her good qualities. There are more rules in the Bible for women than there are for men. The reason is that God made man and women differently. Men are stimulated by sight. This is why Jesus told the men of His day, *"whoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart,"* Mt 5:28. Men are usually attracted to a woman visually before they are connected to her emotionally. In fact, they don't even want to pursue an emotional relationship if the visual attraction isn't there.

"Discretion will preserve you; understanding will keep you," Pr 2:11. How can modesty preserve or protect a woman? Do

clothes, or the lack thereof, have the power to lead people to sin? Apparently Jesus thought so: Mt 5:27-28. Women Christians must be careful that they do not wear clothes that attract sexual attention, see 1 Jn 2:16-17. Being careful in dress is wise; it is discretion. We must choose wisely. No one wants to look frumpy, so we must keep these things in mind when choosing clothes:

1. Stores sell clothes to make us think we are sexy; they are selling the tease.
2. Merchants do not care whether or not we are modestly dressed, whether it fits, or what body parts are displayed; they are interested in sales.
3. We must search for things that are modest without question.

If we keep these things in mind and cultivate a pure heart, we will be radiating beauty from within—and any attention will go to the One Who made us. *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God,"* Rm 12:1-2.

How would this passage apply to choosing and wearing clothes? Does this mean a young woman has to dress like her grandmother? How can young people dress smartly but also modestly? **Looks that Can Kill Spiritually.** While a woman's dress with the hem below the knee may cover her body, it can still be immodest if it draws attention to parts of her body that should only be seen by her husband. Slit skirts, translucent blouses, sequins or words on apparel that go across body parts, and tight jeans/skirts/blouses are examples of clothing designed to be revealing (indiscreet) and alluring (calling attention to herself). They are intended to tease a man and appeal to his carnal nature. This is an ongoing battle for Christians. *"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the*

obedience of Christ," 2 Cor 10:3-5.

Each person is responsible for his or her own thoughts, but we can cause others to stumble: *"Let us not judge one another anymore but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way,"* Rm 14:13. Some women may not realize that what they wear could cause others to stumble. How does dressing modestly show love to our brothers in Christ? *"Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves. Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification,"* Rm 15:1. Are we edifying, building up our brothers by our dress, or are we contributing to Satan's efforts to tear them down? How and when can I help others not to lust?

Men, especially fathers, how can we encourage and protect women and children? Fathers should be protecting their children from foolish wardrobe choices. Immodest clothing leaves young women vulnerable and unprotected. Song of Solomon ends with an admonition about young women who are wise (like a wall) and foolish (like a door): *"We have a little sister, and she has no breasts. What shall we do for our sister in the day when she is spoken for? If she is a wall, we will build upon her a battlement of silver; and if she is a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar,"* 8:8-9. In either case, wise or foolish, she needs to be clothed modestly. If she is wise, we adorn her inward beauty with rich clothing; if she is foolish, we cover her and protect her all the more. *"He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge,"* Ps 91:4. How can modesty preserve or protect a woman? We should help protect one another.

"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble, it would be better for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea," Mk 9:42. It takes all of us, parents and children, working together to perfect this. It's discouraging to hear girls say, *"My mom said I've got the body for it so I should wear it,"* or *"My dad said it was ok,"* or *"My sister wears things like this."* It is no wonder so many girls are wearing immodest clothing. Modesty starts in the home

continued on p. 3



Psalm 133:1

God's harvest we'll glean in 2016 "Please let me go to the field and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor." —Ruth 2:2

God and Clothes, from p. 2 and at an early age.

While cultures are always changing, men and women have struggled with lust from the beginning of time. Why would you not do everything you could to keep others from lusting after your child? This might mean that you have to enforce a strict dress code, but rules protect us. If children are taught from a very early age to dress modestly, then it likely won't be a big issue when they are teens. Consistency is the key. Parents guide and protect their children and do everything they can to help them get to heaven. If your children are not learning how to dress from you, someone else will teach them, and most likely, what others teach them won't be according to God's word. Christians should encourage and help teach younger women and men with love and tact to dress modestly and carefully. By example, we can show that the worship is set apart for the Lord, in behavior, speech, and dress. We would dress, speak, and behave before the King of the Universe with as much propriety as at a state dinner. At a royal wedding do you see any man attending without a tie or jacket? A woman in slacks? Anyone in jeans? Young women, what do we want our clothes to say about us? What message does God want us to communicate? Why in the world would we want our behinds to be the first thing people notice about us? How can you promote and encourage proper dress among your friends?

The emphasis needs to be on the heart—the attitude to seek after God, the heart to do the best that we can to help our brothers, the heart that desires to

build up one another. It also means that we have hearts that do not look for opportunities to lust, hearts that remain focused on things above. Frankly, it's not so much the clothing as it is the attitude. The teen who buys an appropriate length skirt but does not have it in her to be modest will find herself rolling up the waistband once she's out of her parents' sight. You see, what we are on the inside reflects on the outside. It's more than modest clothes—it's the eyes, it's movement—how you walk, how you sit, how you bend or step over, when you stretch. Modesty must first come from within a person. It springs from a heart of humility—one that desires someone else or something else to be elevated. It's a heart that yearns for attention not on self, but on something or someone else. But there is also freedom in modesty, a freedom that states that who you are as a person is not judged by what you look like, but who you are. It's more about how you think than how you put on clothes; it's more about your passion for Christ's righteousness than displaying body parts.

Teaching Gender ID, from p. 4 boys or 100% girls." That lesson plan—met with outrage from parents—was designed for middle and high school students.

Washington's educational indoctrination program continues through high school where students will "distinguish between biological sex, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation."

We must beware of attempts by schools to teach morality to children in the place of parents. Teaching morality to kids is the parents' job, Eph 6:4, but there are many authority figures in education today who want to promote a very different vision of right and wrong.

Travel Howells and Kaysha Witherington in OK; Brett Witherington to OK Tues; Reingrovers to OK this pm, then elsewhere; others to OK wedding this week: Maillouxes, Campbells, Monica Thompson, Boyds, Corrays, Hadderses, Szymanski; and Topes; Mina Gonzalez in AZ this week at end of WI-TX-AZ trek; Letha Fink on 3-week trip to NM and GA; River and Forest Cox on 3-week camping trip with their mother in western states

Discipleship Here At Home

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help

- **Mike Strand**—St. Anthony's, all right side injury from fall and cut from trimming tree; broken ribs, tibia, fibula, ankle, collapsed lung, surgical repair
- **Sandra Perry**—room 560 Lutheran Hospital 3-4 days to drain fluid in lung
- **Janelle Hall**—chemo for breast cancer
- **Jennifer Clayton**—battle w/Lyme disease last 18 mos; symptoms worsened in April, including muscle & joint pain, neurological issues; pray 2-mo regimen to kill babesia, bartonella, and parasites will be effective, not require additional treatment, and not prevent Jennifer from work and worship
- **Brittany Tope's** grandmother—on dialysis, in ICU recently in Colorado Springs; **Brittany's** mother **Gayle**—breast cancer spread, 3 tumors on liver
- **Sarah Hadders**—recurring chest pains
- **Brett Witherington's** mother **Cheryl**—last week's lumpectomy ;successful; radiation; **Sylvia Chapman**, **Brett's** grandmother—3rd stage pancreatic cancer; grandmother **Sue** recent heart attack; **Sue & Aunt Connie Doss**—cancer
- **Mike Menard**, **Virginia's** son—pancreatic cancer; home, weakening; **Virginia** wrenched leg; macular degeneration
- 10-year-old **Benjamin Hymel**, of Longmont church—brain cancer; at home, school after surgery; now starting year's chemo and radiation cycles; eye patch
- **Valerie Greenwalt**—recovering from surgery to remove broken needle in elbow
- **Michael Bennett's** infant son **Jett**—recovering from hemorrhage on skull
- the **Boyd's** extended families are undergoing hardships: **Wendy's** father, **Dan Gutierrez**, back in care center with cognitive problems; pray for **Eileen** and **Dan**; **Kenny's** sister and brother-in-law— divorce; pray for family **Jennifer, Kevin, Chloe, & Elijah Whittemore**
- **Sheryle McNeill**—boil removed recently; pinched nerve
- **Berney Charo's** brother **Eliud**—prostate cancer
- **Ian Anderson**, **Mina Gonzalez's** nephew—rehab
- **Letha Fink's** brother **Kenneth Morrison** of GA—liver disease, diagnosed with neuro-muscular disease
- **Bill Dennis**—improving; recurrent infections
- **River** and **Forest Cox's** great grandmother **Martha Rowe**—in rehab for knee strengthening
- **Noah Hadders's** teacher **Sharolyn Elmore**—radiation for breast cancer; **Randy Reames's** co-worker **Diane Estes**—ocular melanoma

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Christian Harrod; Addison Tope; Rocco Jr.; Ann Cox; Joel Walker; Logan Corray—asthma
Orchid Cox—chronic blood clot condition
Autumn Hadders—epilepsy; celiac disease
Delmer Hice, **Lynda Szymanski**—COPD
Kirk Johnson—MS; **Amanda Mailloux**—IBS
Sandra Perry—breathing and diabetes complications after hospitalizations in April and May
Cheryl Reames—fibromyalgia; diverticulitis



Exposing current trends *gender and propaganda*

WA State Schools Teach "Gender ID" to Kinders, by Philip Hodges

By fall of 2017, Washington state schools will be teaching students as young as kindergartners about gender identity, and how the idea of gender is a "social construct," under newly-approved health education learning standards that designate sexual health a "core idea" of public K-12 education.

The Washington state Health Education Glossary defines terms associated with gender identity: "• Gender: A social construct based on emotional, behavioral, and cultural characteristics attached to a person's assigned biological sex. • Gender expression. The way someone outwardly expresses their [sic] gender. • Gender identity. Someone's inner sense of their [sic] gender. • Gender roles. Social expectations about how people should act, think, or feel based on their assigned biological sex." [Note: the incorrect grammatical number used for the pronoun (a singular, such as "he" or "she" should be used to refer to "someone" instead of the plural "their") demonstrates a tiny aspect of how control of language can corrupt a society; here in the modern view, "someone" should be without sex, such as "he" or "she," and so the pronoun "their" has to be used even though it's the incorrect plural. Confusion in language equals confusion in thought.] These definitions differ from the state's definition of "biological sex" which is "based on chromosomes, hormones, and internal and external anatomy."

According to the Daily Caller: "While some aspects of sexual health aren't taught in kindergarten (HIV prevention begins in fourth grade), one component of sexual health titled 'Self-Identity' begins in kindergarten, where students will be expected to 'understand there are many ways to express gender.' ...By third grade, students will be expected to 'explain that gender roles can vary considerably' and 'understand [the] importance of treating others with respect regarding gender identity,' as part of the 'Self-Identity' component of sexual health."

This is hardly the first time the subject of gender identity is being taught to kids as young as five and six years of age, and it certainly won't be the last. A Minnesota K-12 charter school had decided to teach its kindergartners about "gender identity." The decision stemmed from a student who attends the school who is a boy but likes to dress as a girl. The Nova Classical Academy principal sent out an email to parents in October that informed them that the school would be introducing issues to students in order to "support a student who is gender nonconforming," a student later found to be a kindergartner. The email explained that kindergarten students "will listen to various books that celebrate differences and will teach children about the beauty of being themselves." One of the books that the kindergarten teacher would be reading to 5- and 6-year-olds is My Princess Boy, a book about a boy who likes to dress in girls' clothing and do other "girly" things. [We applaud the school's teaching children about the beauty of being themselves, because that is the way God created each of us. We do not see how "gender nonconforming" is being oneself; nonconforming means an attempt not to be oneself.]

Last month, Fox News's Todd Starnes described a Virginia county's lesson plans on gender spectrum as "the idea that there's no such thing as 100% continued on p. 3



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Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

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Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

- **adult Bible class**, "Courage to Live Holy Lives," DeWayne Howell

- **sermon**, Preaching Through First Corinthians (PTFC): chapter 15, "The Nature of the Resurrected Body," Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon

- **sermon**, "Women of Genesis (Genesis 3, 16, 18-19, 21, 24-25, 29-30, 34, 38)," Kenny Boyd