

Immodesty

Following the Example of Man or God?

Scripture Reading: Philippians 2:12-16

Introduction

1. **As we begin our lesson this morning, please notice the following words from Jesus and the apostle Paul:**

Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Romans 2:24 For "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you...."

- A. **So much of what we do says something about us:**

- 1) **The way we talk; the way we conduct ourselves around other people; the way we do business; the way we conduct ourselves in the workplace; our respect for the property of others.**

- B. **So it is with the way we dress.**

2. **We are living in a loose and lascivious age.**

- A. **There is a swarm of immodesty on the streets, in the movies, and on television.**

- B. **Even Christians are dressing immodestly, wearing things they should know that God is not pleased with.**

Jeremiah 6:16-17 Thus says the LORD: "Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, **'We will not walk in it.'** Also, I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, **'We will not listen.'**

These type of words occur in every generation - a rebellious attitude.

3. The Bible is God's Word

2 Timothy 3:16

A. As a result, we should be motivated to be like David:

Psalms 119:11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You!

- 1) This word is God's word, not mans word and we should have a desire to put it into our hearts!**

B. We have always taught that the Bible is our guide throughout life.

4. Today as we address the issue of immodesty we want to be affected by the truth of almighty God.

A. I am not going to teach my opinion on this subject, or what man says, but rather I am going to teach what God's word says.

B. This morning, lets see what the word of God has to say about immodesty because we already know how the world feels about it.

Old Testament Principles

1. **We use the Old Testament not as our Authority for what we do today, but rather we look to it for examples and principles that God has given to man over many hundreds of years.**

Romans 15:4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come.

- A. **As an example, we often turn to the book of Proverbs to learn how we are to train our children today.**

2. **Scriptures pertaining to Modesty:**

Genesis 3:7

- A. **Genesis three begins by telling the story of temptation and Satan's success with Adam and Eve.**
- B. **Aprons or coverings: They made coverings because they had sinned and recognized that they were naked.**
 - 1) **People need to recognize when they are naked - God's word will do that through faith.**

Genesis 3:8-11

C. Adam knew he was naked and he was afraid.

1) But he had clothes on — however, he was still naked.

James 2:15-16 If a brother or sister **is naked** and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?

a. naked in this context most likely does not mean totally stripped, but rather the clothing that is required to cover their nakedness.

2) “who told you” — no one needed to — they knew it!

a. Adam and Eve didn’t have a world to desensitize them. They knew they were naked!

b. Some Christians adopt the worlds attitudes about dress and then when it is preached on they may say; “I’ve always dressed this way.”

Genesis 3:21

D. Earlier they made themselves coverings, now God has clothed them in tunics.

Exodus 28:42

- A. “from the loins to the thighs” — Not just covering the loin area, but covering down to the knee.**
- 1) The New Living Bible says: “hips to the knees” (covers the thigh)**
- B. God has told us how to dress, it is man that has neglected His word.**
- 1) The following quote regarding **neglect** comes from the pulpit commentary, volume 2, page 293: “an unloving spirit arising from a consciousness of disobedience to a command; a habit of refusing to submit to positive injunctions, and, growing out of that, a habit of choosing which of God’s commandments he will obey.”**
- C. If the priests needed to be careful — don’t we need to also be careful?**

1 Peter 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 47:1-3

- A. Here is a figurative discussing of the destruction of Babylon by the Persians**
- 1) They are going to be taken off their throne, they are going to be doing menial tasks. They are going to be shamed by Persia — see how God describes their shame!**
 - 2) They were shamed in that they were conquered by the Persians - their thigh was uncovered. When their thigh was uncovered — their nakedness was revealed.**

3. **As stated in Romans 15:4 and 1 Corinthians 10:11, we can go back to the Old Testament to see what the mind of God is.**
 - A. **Jesus constantly went back (Genesis 2:24 - One man for one woman). In 2 Peter 2, Peter goes back to Sodom and Gomorrah and the flood of Noah.**
 - B. **Just because cultures, societies, and times have changed, why would we think that God's view of nakedness has? We can use the examples of His teaching from long ago to understand what God considers nakedness to be.**

New Testament Principles

1 Timothy 2:9-10 in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in **modest** apparel, with **propriety** and **moderation**, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.

1. **Modest: well arranged, seemly, modest (Thayer, p. 356)**
 - A. **Culture changes:**
 - 1) **Lincoln's day: dresses were down to or below the ankle often times dragging the ground. Sleeves were to the wrist. Most spent a great deal of time in the sun.**
 - 2) **God's example for dress was the same then as today. We don't have to cover every part of our skin to be modest. But we do have to cover that which God has left us an example.**
 - a. **Most can't blush today. Most are not concerned about modesty.**
 - B. **Example: A woman in a full length slip says, "I can't get the door" but a woman in shorts and a halter top says, "Oh, I'll get it." She saw herself as being dressed.**

2. **Shamefacedness** (propriety NKJV): having a sense of shame, modesty (Thayer, p. 14).

A. **Jeremiah 6:16 shows us that they could no longer blush. Why? Because they practiced this sin and it didn't bother them anymore.**

1 Timothy 4:2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

B. **Having a sense of shamefastness will prevent me from wearing immodest clothing because I will blush.**

3. **Sobriety** (moderation, NKJV): soundness of mind and judgment; curbing one's desires and impulses, self-controlled, temperate (Thayer, p. 613).

A. **Let's not have a double standard - it's hurting us.**

1) **Some go by God's standard that has been drawn for us while others say, "no, that doesn't bother us."**

B. **After seeing and hearing God's standard, seeing God clothing Adam and Eve, telling the priest what to do to be modest – we learn that exposing the thigh is nakedness.**

1) **Can we then say "wear whatever you want, if it feels good do it?"**

What Does Our Dress Say to People?

1. The American Institute of Public Opinion took a poll on the following problem: **"Do you approve of women wearing shorts on the street?, In public eating places?, At the Office?"** The results of the poll are as follows:

PLACE;	YES; NO; DON'T KNOW	
Street:	Men - 24; 69; 7	Women - 14; 83; 3
Eating Places:	Men - 14; 80; 6	Women - 6; 92; 2
Office:	Men - 8; 87; 5	Women - 3; 96; 1

2. **Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary's Visitation Handbook contains the rules and regulations which must be observed by anyone who visits an inmate there:**
 - A. Rule 5: "All visitors shall dress in an appropriate manner ...halter tops, tank tops, sun dresses, shorts, and other revealing attire shall not be acceptable on persons over the age of 10" (via Greg Gwin, The Beacon).

3. **The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's list of rules governing those who visit inmates of their institutions:**
 - A. No see-through or tight fitting clothing
 - B. No shorts (shorts will be permitted for children under 12)
 - C. No skirts or dresses higher than the middle of the knee
 - D. No clothing with gang/club insignia or obscene gestures and/or language
 - E. No tank tops, tube tops or muscle shirts and no bare midriffs
 - F. Shoes and shirts must be worn at all times
 - G. Any other attire found to be potentially disruptive or offensive (via Larry Devore, via "Bible Matters List")

Principles That Should Guide Christians

Philippians 2:15 that you may become **blameless and harmless**, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

Blameless - a qualification of an elder

Harmless - pure; immodesty is harmful (church, influence)

Romans 12:1-2 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. And 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.

Living Sacrifice - giving everything for God's purpose

Transformed - according to God's will, not man's

Renewing - Learning what God wants us to do

Eph 5:11 And have no fellowship with the **unfruitful works of darkness**, but rather expose them.

Unfruitful works - Can't be like them, must teach them

Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may **see your good works** and glorify your Father in heaven.

Good works - Must live for Christ in all we say and do

1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from **every form of evil**.

Every form of evil - Immodesty; what are we trying to do, what are we advertising. Let's keep our mind focused on God in all that we do.

1 Peter 2:11-12 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from **fleshly lusts** which war against the soul, **having your conduct honorable** among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Immodesty is a fleshly lust. You can't be condemned if you're totally covered. However an immodestly dressed individual will be spoken evil of and be called a hypocrite.

Luke 17:1-2 Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but **woe to him through whom they do come!** It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

If you cause one to lust because of your immodest dress, then you have sinned.

2 Peter 3:14 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, **without spot and blameless**;

A Christian works toward peace and sinlessness. After we are dead, what will people say about us?

Conclusion

1. **Question: Would you walk arm in arm with Jesus everywhere you go and with everything you put on each day? Would He approve of what you are wearing?**
2. **God has left man with an example of how to dress modestly.**
3. **A transformed individual, striving to live the Christian life will strive to ensure that they are dressing in a way that would be pleasing to God and not cause one to stumble.**
4. **May we always respect and follow the divinely revealed principles of modesty and demeanor and to remember the words of Paul:**

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.**

