

Notes on Modesty

A far more important subject
than most Christians ever realized!

By Jack W. Langford

*Notes accumulated over a number of years
which I now share with you—Sept. 1, 2013*

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Introduction

The following material on the general subject of Christian modesty in dress consists of a series of “Notes” which I have accumulated over a period of many years. These “Notes” are sometimes taken from messages that I have given on the subject on different occasions and in different places in the past. For that reason there may also be some repetition on certain aspects of the subject in these messages. Nevertheless, I have tried to temper this as much as possible. Sometimes we can view a subject from different perspectives and by that means get a more complete understanding on the issues involved.

As I look at the issue today I can honestly say that I now have come to realize that it is a far more important subject than I ever realized in the past. That importance is principally what I now want you, the reader, to also see and understand.

Obviously God is concerned about the subject of clothing for mankind. Most everyone should remember that God prepared the first garments to clothe our great grandparents, Adam and Eve, upon their departure from the paradisiac Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:21). That fact alone should cause our attention to the subject to be alerted—God has a vital interest!

Since God has a vital interest, there should, no doubt, be specific Scriptural revelations directly related to the subject. And, of course, we shall see that there are many Biblical principles related to the subject. Perhaps the most important lesson of all is the vital relationship of the covering of clothing to the gospel of Christ. We shall find that Christians can very easily “preach another gospel” by what they wear!

1. What “mind” do we have in our approach to this subject?

“Unless there is *within us*
that which is *above us*
we will soon yield to
that which is *about us*.”
(Author unknown)

It is hard to find any other subject which stirs up the emotions, triggers a fighting spirit, or draws mockery any more than the subject of *modesty* in our modern time. This is because in our modern times the millennial standards of morals and modesty have been blasted to smithereens, no doubt, more than in any other age. This is not to say there was not decadence exemplified in past ages, because there most certainly was in limited areas. For instance, let us go back about 2000 years. If one today were to take a tour through the uncovered ruins of the Roman city of Pompeii, which sits at the foot of the volcano, Vesuvius, he would no doubt be soberly warned by the tour guide of what was about to be seen. Yes, there will be many moral shocks right in the midst of what once were beautiful villas and shops, all of which have been painstakingly uncovered from the volcanic ashes of what amounted to a past sudden catastrophic “judgment.” Interestingly enough, the city of Pompeii was warned in the year A.D. 63 (just a few years after Paul wrote the book of Romans) by a small eruption. However, the pleasure happy, jolly people did not take the warning seriously. They repaired the damage that was done and went right on in their ways totally oblivious to the massive eruption which came about twenty years later.

Today, even among our very decent Christian circles, were I to openly place before us some of the sarcasms which I have read or even heard expressed, especially by certain women acting in a headless manner, though surprising, yet they would no doubt be embarrassed (most certainly a far lesser embarrassment that one would experience in the uncovered city of Pompeii). Of course, at the Judgment Seat of Christ all will be held accountable for every idle word which has proceeded out of their mouths. This is why I approach this subject, which is a most important and vital subject—*far more important than most Christians ever realized*—by this admonition to examine our hearts at the outset. Unless our mental disposition is tempered by the Word of God we can never expect to get a right answer to any of these areas of legitimate inquiry.

(a) *Let this MIND be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, . . .*
Philippians 2:5–11

As we should remember, this passage reveals to us the amazing *humility of mind* that our Savior exemplified when He came down from His glory in heaven to die for our sins. In fact, Paul precedes this revelation by exhorting Christians to be “*like minded*” (verse 2), and to act in “*lowliness of mind*” (verse 3) in our attitudes toward each other.

Thus, as with our Savior, we must have *humility of mind* as an absolute prerequisite in our attitude if we expect to have God reveal to us His will and counsel.

(b) . . . *by the renewing of your MIND, . . .*
Romans 12:1 and 2

This passage goes on to say “*that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*” In other words, it is only by our *regenerated mind* that we could ever expect to see and understand how God wants us to walk in this confusing world. When one becomes “*born again*” his whole outlook on life changes. He begins to see things from an entirely new perspective. The natural or “carnal” mind is contrary to the revelation of God—“For those who live according to the flesh set their *minds* on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, *the things of the Spirit*. For to be carnally *minded* is death, but to be spiritually *minded* is life and peace. Because the carnal *mind* is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be” (Romans 8:4–7).

(c) . . . *sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his RIGHT MIND.* Luke 8:35

This passage is taken from the account of the demonic man who lived unclothed and uncontrollable by anyone. He had a sad and frightful existence, living naked in the tombs. But when he met Jesus, and allowed Him to expel the demons and take charge of his soul, his life was so drastically changed that at first it actually frightened the inhabitants of the area so that they asked Jesus to leave and go away. Later, after they fully understood the amazing change for the good in this man, they were more than ready to hear Christ’s message. The connection of being “*clothed*” and “*in his right mind*” is obvious.

(d) *Set your MIND on things above, not on things of the earth.*
For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
Col. 3:2 and 3

This is probably the Scriptural passage from which the thought expressed at the beginning of this study is taken—“Unless there is *within us* that which is *above us* we will soon yield to that which is *about us*.” There are many such passages which stress the blessed hope of the believer. As is indicated in this passage, and as has been noted in society in general, people usually dress up according to where they are going and whom they are going to meet! The next passage expresses the danger which lurks for Christians in this sickening day of apostasy—

(e) *Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who walk, as you have us for a pattern. For many walk,*

of whom I have told you often, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is their shame—who set their MIND on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, . . . Philip. 3:17–21

When we read passages like this we can ask ourselves “What ‘MIND’ do I bring to this subject?” On the one hand, have I prejudiced my thinking by modern earthly, sensual liberties to be had? Or, on the other hand, am I a legalist who demands conformity without any explanation? Or, as should be true, do I humbly seek God’s will in all things?

2. 7 Rules for proper Dress among Christians

The following are the originally notes for a message I gave many years ago under this title. Because the subject matter of numbers 2 through 7 is dealt with more fully in later “Notes” I will only enlarge upon the 1st Rule here.

1. Numbers 15:37–41 Dress with a consciousness of obedience to God’s commandments. God wants us to remember His Word by a reminder in our dress.
2. Romans 12:1, 2 and Philippians 1:20 Dress with a consciousness of not being CONFORMED to this world, but TRANSFORMED with reference to the New Creation.
3. 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17 and 6:19, 20 Dress with a consciousness of adorning the TEMPLE of the Holy Spirit. If the Tabernacle and Temple were important, how much more the “Temple of the Holy Spirit.”
4. 2 Corinthians 11:2, 3 and Ephesians 5:22–32 Dress with a consciousness of being a Bride for Jesus Christ as depicted in these passages.
5. Genesis 3:21; Isaiah 61:10; 1 Corinthians 1:30 and John 1:36 Dress with a consciousness of being outfitted in the “righteousness of Jesus Christ.”
6. 1 Peter 3:1–6 Dress with a consciousness of reflecting the New Creation of the “inner man or person.”
7. 1 Timothy 2:9, 10 Dress with all the moderation encompassed in the admonitions of this particular passage (3 positives, 3 negatives and 2 affirmations equal 8, which number is typical of the New Creation).

Now let us focus upon number 1—

Numbers 15:37–41 (NKJV),

(37) Again the LORD spoke to Moses saying,

(38) ‘Speak to the children of Israel: tell them to make tassels [sometimes rendered, *fringes*] on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a **blue thread** [or cord] in the tassels [*fringes*] of the corners.

(39) And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and *remember all the commandments of the LORD to do them*, and that you may *not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined*,

(40) and that you *may remember and do all My commandments*, and *be holy for your God*.

(41) I am the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.’

(The emphasis is mine, J.L.)

Deuteronomy 22:12—You shall make tassels on the four corners of the clothing with which you cover yourself.

By placing this visual reminder of the blue cord on the corners of their garments God intended that His people, the Israelites, would have a perpetual consciousness of being a “holy” (separated) people, dedicated to obedience to the instructions in the Word of God. God also, in this very context, reminds the Israelites of their sinful, Adamic tendency, inherent within their being, to go astray after their own logic and worldly “harlotry.”

Some have suggested that the color “blue” would speak to them of the fact that they are getting their orders from God in heaven rather than from any earthly inclinations. In addition, these indicators in their garments would most certainly distinguish them apart from other pagan societies situated around them.

Certainly we, today, should keep in mind what Paul said in Romans 15:4—“For whatsoever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort might have hope.” Once again Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:11—“Now all these things happened to them [Israel] as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.” Therefore, we need to understand that the application of principles to us today is important. Furthermore, an application from this instruction to the Israelites is not really difficult to make.

No, God does not intend for the members of the church to literally sow tassels of blue in the borders of their garments in this day and age. However, God most certainly does want us to dress in such a manner that we will be “remembering the commandments and instructions in the Word of God” for us today. And those instructions just as surely

spell out “holiness” and a refusal to “follow” the inclinations of our carnal natures and worldly wisdom. And, of all people who should have a spiritual application from the color of “blue” it would be the church of Jesus Christ, who are a “heavenly” people, “sanctified in Christ” (Eph. 1:3 and 1 Cor. 1:2). Later in this study about modesty I will be listing the many commandments and admonitions for godliness for Christians as “patterns” in our choice for clothing. As this Hebrew Scripture demonstrates, God wants the moral principles in His Word to be reflected in our clothing. So it is, that our choice of garments should reflect God’s instruction about godliness.

Some have pointed out that Jesus Christ, Himself, as a Law abiding Jew, Who fulfilled the Law perfectly, no doubt in obedience to this command in Numbers 15, wore tassels or borders of blue on the edges of His own garment. In this regard it is most interesting that in the New Testament record there was a Greek word (*kraspedon*) which Thayer in his *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* says was used for these fringes, borders or tassels spoken of in Numbers 15. In the NKJV it is translated “hem” or “border,” and is used in Matt. 9:20, Mark 6:56 and Luke 8:44 in reference to Christ’s own garment. It is noteworthy to observe this case:

“Now a woman having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the *border* of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. And Jesus said, ‘Who touched Me?’

When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, ‘Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say ‘Who touched Me?’ But Jesus said, ‘Somebody touched Me, for I perceive power going out from Me.’

Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling: and falling down before Him, she declared in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately.

And He said to her, ‘Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.’”

(Luke 8:43–48)

This is another amazing story in the Gospel accounts. If we take it at face value, this woman wanted but to touch that *border of blue* (the *kraspedon*) on the garment of Christ, and she had faith that she would be healed of her physical infirmity. O, how I wish there were some modern women today who would want only to touch that border of blue, which would remind them of God’s commandments and be healed of their immodesty.

Again, there is the account where Christ came back to the place where He had healed a certain demoniac. This was the mad man who lived naked and violent, and of whom it was stated when he was healed: “[He was] sitting at the feet of Jesus, *clothed* and in his *right mind*” (Luke 8:35). It is now stated in Matthew 14:35 and 36:

And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all that were sick, and begged Him that they might only touch the hem (*kraspedon*) of His garment. And as many as touched it were made perfectly well.

Shall we not understand that this blue border or tassel serves as a powerful emblem, not only to those miraculously healed in the past, but to us today who need to be healed of all our philosophical diseases about the moral principles of godliness and modesty?

There is one other case where this particular word is used, and that is where certain of the religious clerics of that day “enlarged the borders (*kraspedon*) of their garments” (Matthew 23:5). This was done in obvious religious hypocrisy to make themselves look to the world as specially holy and saintly. You see this same hypocrisy reflected today in such systems as the high clerics of Roman Catholicism, who dress in their long robes but, inwardly, many, if not most, are lecherous men. There is also that hypocrisy of Amish groups who dress very modestly, but believe a false gospel of good works for salvation.

What a beautiful difference it makes when Christian men and women dress in carefulness and proper modesty, displaying in their garments the emblems of God’s holy Word, and doing so out of the honesty and integrity of their hearts.

3. Our bodies—“the Temple of the Holy Spirit”

In Paul’s instructions to the Corinthian saints, and beyond them “to all who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Cor. 1:2), he twice states that it is highly important for all believers to realize that their own bodies are “the temples of the Holy Spirit of God.”

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.
(1 Corinthians 3:16–17)

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit Who is in you, Whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you are bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.

(1 Corinthians 6:19–20)

Obviously, the Holy Spirit wants us to think very carefully and soberly about this amazing reality. If there was one thing important about where God placed His name and dwelt on earth, it was how that Temple was *to be adorned*. Yes, in the revelation concerning the Tabernacle given to Moses, and then about the plans for the Temple which were revealed to King David, it was the excellent manner and precise design of all the finishing and furnishing which adorned the Temple that was so important. The reason is that all the furnishing which adorned the Temple spoke of God's glory and praise (Psalm 26:8 and 27:4)—and most important of all, it spoke of His gracious redemptive work for mankind. In fact, it has well been observed that the actual furniture spelled out the gospel of the grace of God through the finished work of Jesus Christ our Savior.

Now, to those today who want to argue that it is not that important to God how we redeemed sinners dress here on this earth and in this present world system, I would respond—

“Are you telling me that the God of heaven, Who chose to place His Holy name in a physical Temple on earth, and Who was consequently so particular as to how that physical Temple was to be adorned—I say—are you telling me that same God Who has chosen to place His Holy name in redeemed sinners, and Whose Holy Spirit now dwells in our physical bodies, and specifically tells us ‘*our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit*,’ is NOT particular as to how we adorn this temple? Because if this is what you are telling me, then it is evident that you do not read the same Bible that I read.”

2 Corinthians 4:6, 7, 11—*For it is the God Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, Who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not us . . . that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

Read also all of Romans 13:11–14. And then—

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts.

I said at the beginning that most Christians today don't begin to realize just how important this subject of how we dress really is in the sight of God. Of course, it was God Himself Who designed the first coverings for Adam and Eve—Genesis 3:21. Those “coats of skins” were made to replace the very inadequate “fig leaves” that Adam and Eve had used. In addition, at the other end of the Divine revelation, it was God in heaven Who planned the last garments mentioned in the Bible, the “robes of righteousness,” as described in Revelation 19:7 and 8. So it is that one way to look at the Bible is to think of everything between its beginning and ending as the most wonderful catalogue on dress in the world. In fact, that is one way to express what the Bible is all about—“how to be

properly dressed.” When Adam and Eve sinned in disobedience to God they immediately were made conscious of their nakedness. They frantically made themselves “coverings” (NKJV) of “fig leaves.” God actually replaced man’s covering of “fig leaves” with the covering garments of “Salvation and Holiness.”

4. The vital connection to the Gospel of Christ

“COATS OF SKIN”

When Adam and Eve first sinned and rebelled against the instructions of God, they were immediately embarrassed by a consciousness of their own nakedness. So striking was this consciousness that they quickly made for themselves “coverings” by sewing fig leaves together for garments (Gen. 3:7). However, even this effort on their part did not suffice to calm their embarrassment when they heard the voice of God calling for them in the garden. The inspired text says they “hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden” (Gen. 3:8). The works of their own invention would not suffice as an adequate “covering” in the presence of a holy and righteous God.

One of the most significant events in the Bible was the act of God in preparing special garments of animal skins to clothe the man and woman (Gen. 3:21). This would provide adequate covering for them as they would be expelled from the garden and enter into a world which was now hostile to them and under a curse from God.

However, most careful Bible students have recognized that God did not intend to merely provide adequate clothing for man to protect him against the elements. This was important, but in actuality it was not God’s primary purpose. God intended by this particular provision to demonstrate to man the fundamental basis of the Divine plan of redemption and atonement on man’s behalf. Though not specifically stated, yet it is well understood that, in order to provide coats of animal skins, there must first be the sacrificial death of that animal. The animal’s blood is spilt and it dies. The animal is, as it were, an innocent substitute on man’s behalf. Its furry coat is stripped off and specially fashioned by God as coats for covering the man and woman. Man is now seen as being adequately covered in the eyes of the righteous God. It is as if God looks upon the garments supplied by an innocent substitute and is satisfied, or as stated in later Scriptures, God is “*propitiated* (satisfied).” We will look at other Scriptures in this regards shortly.

On man’s part, the faith or confidence in the receiving of these garments is all that God requires of him. The garments received provided a real and proper “covering” for his nakedness—and especially for his guilty conscience—as he now walks outside the garden into the world. This proper clothing prepared by God allows man to stand in God’s presence with confidence and even in fellowship with God during his journey through life. In this provision by God on man’s behalf there is the idea of “at-one-ment”—which we commonly call “atonement.” It means that man can stand in God’s

presence again. Restoration and redemption have been made on man's behalf. All the basic truths about spiritual soul salvation are herein prefigured in the inspired record of God clothing Adam and Eve.

The first sacrifice has been made by God. There follows the long historical drama in the outworking of man's redemption. The sacrificial covering becomes the vital connecting link in the plan of salvation. For the next 4000 years man approached God by means of the sacrifice. This ultimately finds its fulfillment in the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ as "the lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world."

"ATONEMENT—TO COVER"

In the Hebrew Scriptures the subject of salvation and redemption is repeatedly spoken of in our translations of the Bible by the English word "ATONEMENT." Most people don't realize that this English word "Atonement" is merely the translation of the Hebrew word *kaphar* which literally means "COVERING" or "TO COVER." Over seventy times in the King James Version *kaphar* is rendered "atonement." About 22 other times it is rendered in English by "reconcile," "forgive," "merciful," "pardon," "appease," "cleansed," etc. But basically the Hebrew word *kaphar* simply means "to cover, to cover over or to cover sins" (see Gesenius, or Strong's Hebrew Lexicons.) Actually the fullest and most accurate rendering of this Hebrew word is given by Rotherham in his *Emphasized Bible, A Literal Translation*. He translates the word with the complete meaning of a "**propitiatory-covering**." This is a covering which effectively "appeases" or "satisfies" God. This satisfaction is the meaning of the word "propitiation"—God is "appeased" or "satisfied." So it is that this covering alone satisfies God in heaven. It also clearly stands in opposition to man's own works in "covering" himself.

In other words, we are to understand that when God originally prepared coats of skins to clothe Adam and Eve, He was providing "atonement" or, more accurately, a "*propitiatory-covering*" for them. In preparing coats of skins, though not specifically stated, it is nevertheless understood in our minds that there was first the shedding of blood with the death of the animals. The "shedding of blood" speaks of a substitute giving its life, thus paying the price of death for sins. And then there would be the benefit of a "propitiatory-covering" by the making of coats or robes from those animals to *cover* their nakedness (and sin). Many Bible teachers have noted that God is herein demonstrating the first animal sacrifice for man's benefit. From this time forward man approached God through the animal sacrifices. As a summation for all animal sacrifices Leviticus 17:11 says, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement [*kaphar*- a propitiatory-covering] for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement [*kaphar*- propitiatory-covering] for the soul." The basis for making the covering was the shedding of blood. All the sacrifices pointed to Christ. We all should realize that the ultimate sacrifice was that of the Lord Jesus Christ Who shed His blood on our behalf. Man's trust in Christ's substitutionary death (shed blood) makes a propitiatory-covering for him in the eyes of God. Yes, as stated before, the

ultimate sacrifice for sins was that of “the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). And indeed, the supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ was to provide for our “atonement” or more accurately, our “propitiatory-covering.”

“PROPITIATION”

The prophet Isaiah ties together the sacrifice of God’s Servant with the idea of “satisfaction” or “propitiation”—

But the LORD [the Father] was pleased to crush Him [the Son],
putting Him to grief; if He would render Him *as a guilt offering*,
He will see His offspring, He will prolong His [the Son] days,
and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand,
as a result of the anguish of His soul [the Son], He [the Father]
will see it and be *satisfied* . . . as He [the Son] will bear their
iniquities. (Isaiah 53:10–11.)

By means of the “propitiatory” sacrifice of God’s suffering Servant the Inspired Psalmist of old would joyfully proclaim—

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is *covered*. (Psalm 32:1.)

“Atonement” (literally, the *propitiatory-covering*)” has been called “the central doctrine of the Christian faith.” The doctrine stems from the fact that sin separates man from the presence of a Holy and righteous God. God is intolerable towards rebellion and unrighteousness. A proper “covering” for man’s sin is simply the basis for restoration towards favor and fellowship with God. That sacrificial “covering” points towards the Lord Jesus Christ and the work He has provided on our behalf. This truth is expressed in the very important passage of Romans 3:22–25:

- (22) . . . For there is no difference;
- (23) For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
- (24) being justified freely by His grace through the
redemption that is in Christ Jesus,
- (25) Whom God set forth as a *propitiation* by His *blood*,
through faith, to demonstrate *His* [Christ’s]
righteousness, . . .

The use of the word “blood” in the Scriptures is quite often used as a figure of speech called a “metonymy.” A metonymy is when one word is used in place of another word, fact or condition. In this case the word “blood” is used in place of “death” or the “giving of a life.” It is understood that when the blood is spilt a life has been lost and death takes place. W. E. Vine explains in his lexicon, “The fundamental principle on which God deals with sinners is expressed in the words ‘apart from shedding of blood,’ i.e., unless a death takes place, ‘there is no remission of sins, Heb. 9:22.’” Thus, the basis

upon which God is *propitiated* is the substitutionary death of His own Son on man's behalf. Man appropriates the benefits of this redemption *through faith* and not by works.

“RIGHTEOUSNESS”

Notice also that this propitiatory-covering demonstrates “*His righteousness*” which has been credited to the repentant sinner, trusting in Christ. The innocent victim (Christ), by Whom God prepares a covering for mankind, was perfectly righteous and His perfect righteousness is “imputed” to all those who trust in Him.

No doubt, this importance is why the Spirit of God would lead Paul to write, “*But put on [as if a garment] the Lord Jesus Christ*, and make no provision [fig leaf aprons] for the flesh, . . .” (Romans 13:14). Christ, Himself, is the “propitiatory-covering” that Christians can now “put on” just as Adam and Eve accepted the garments provided by God. In this exhortation by Paul, God would have us to walk and manifest in our lives the Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah the prophet spoke further of this clothing as “the garment of salvation”—

*I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
My soul shall be joyful in my God;
For He has **clothed** me with the **garments of salvation**,
He has **covered** me with the **robe of righteousness**,
As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments,
And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
Isaiah 61:10*

The theme is continued in the very last book of the Bible—

*I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire,
and **white garments**, that you may be **clothed**,
That the **shame of your nakedness** may not be revealed; . . .
Revelation 3:18*

Undoubtedly this is what Christ had in mind when He gave the parable of the man who came to the final wedding feast of eternity without being properly dressed—

*But when the King came in to see the guests,
He saw a man there who did not have on **a wedding garment**.
So He said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here
without **a wedding garment**?’ And he was speechless.
Then the King said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot,
take him away, and cast him into outer darkness;
There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’
Matthew 22:11–13*

In years gone by I have told some individuals that no one can get into heaven unless he or she is *properly dressed!* They have looked at me with some astonishment and asked, “Where do you find that in the Bible? Of course, I shared this passage from Matthew with them, and the other passages as well.

In addition, Revelation 19:7 and 8 says—

*Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb has come,
and His wife has made herself ready.
And to her it was granted to be **arrayed in fine linen,
clean and bright, for the fine linen is the
righteousness of the saints.***

“THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST”

These passages makes it evident that from God’s perspective a *redeemed* sinner is vitally connected to his *clothing*. In the case of a Christian, the clothing is intended to be a reflection on his *profession of godliness*, and furthermore, as all the other passages in this section suggest, our clothing is a reflection upon *Christ Himself*. Since we are made *righteous* in Christ, our dress should likewise be a demonstration of His righteousness. In fact, Christ, Himself, in His prayer to the Father stated “. . . I am *glorified in them*” (John 17:10). Consequently, we have Christ’s exhortation to us through Paul in Philippians 1:27:

Only **conduct** [Greek, *politeuomai*, meaning behave as a *citizen becoming to a polity or form of government*, which in this case is—] yourselves in a manner worthy of **the gospel of Christ**. . . .
(This same word is used again in Philippians 3:20, “For our *Citizenship* is in heaven, . . .”)

So it is that the believers’ outward conduct should be demonstrations of their heavenly *citizenship*. These outward demonstrations will show them to not be from this world’s lower wicked standards. In so doing the believer will consistently—

. . . *adorn* the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.
(Titus 2:10.)

In light of all these passages and spiritual truths we can very well ask the question —“What **gospel** do you preach” by your clothing? Man’s “*conduct*” first of all manifests itself in his clothing—how he or she is dressed (their *adornment*). If you are a Christian, are you dressed in a manner fitting to your *Savior* and *destiny*? What gospel are you demonstrating by your attire? Is it the gospel of Jesus Christ, manifested as a “*propitiatory-covering*,” which demonstrates our “*heavenly citizenship*”? Or, is it the gospel of damnation, demonstrated by those who are “perishing” (2 Cor. 4:3)? It

becomes very obvious today that many—if not most—Christians are preaching “another gospel.”

For further references to the important subject of “propitiation” as spoken of in the New Testament (Greek Scriptures) see the following Scriptures:

(1) Under the Greek word *hilaskomai* (# 2433, Strong), meaning to appease or satisfy, and translated “propitiation” and “merciful,” see Hebrews 2:17 and Luke 18:13.

(2) Under the Greek word *hilasmos* (# 2434, Strong), meaning merciful or propitious, and translated “propitiation,” see 1 John 2:2 and 4:10. God’s provision is made for the whole world. The actual efficacy in application is made for all those who believe.

(3) Under the Greek word *hilasterion* (# 2435, Strong), meaning propitiation or mercy seat, and translated thusly, see Rom. 3:25 (“propitiation”), and Heb. 9:5 (“mercy seat”)

5. Five initial questions to be answered in preparation for thinking about clothing

No. 1 *What consciousness* did God implant into the human psyche when Adam and Eve first sinned against Him? And, how did God ordain that mankind should respond to that *consciousness*?

The answer, of course, is that man was instantly conscious of shame and embarrassment at being naked. This consciousness of outward nakedness was actually a reaction to a serious inward condition. Inwardly, man had rebelled and sinned against God. This sin brought instant separation from God and needed an atonement or covering. The God-implanted consciousness of physical nakedness is therefore the outward moral manifestation of man’s inward spiritual condition. The need for the covering of clothing thus became the outward sign or manifestation of the inward condition. In addition, God now ordained that man was to realize the immediate need for action to cover his nakedness in this sinful condition.

Every believer should realize that Satan hates this God-implanted consciousness. It contradicts his original temptation to the woman that knowing good and evil would be desirable. So this consciousness in man also leaves Satan embarrassed and exposed as a false salesman. Today, perhaps as never before, since Satan is soon to embody himself in the Antichrist, he is tempting man to break that consciousness in further and final rebellion against God. “Nakedness is beautiful” he is whispering in the ears of rebellious humanity. “What’s wrong with displaying your bodies?” he is further taunting. When Satan is cast out of heaven and comes to earth, such “lawlessness” will be his rule (2 Thessalonians 2:7 and 8). We all should realize that the flaunting and exposing of the flesh in disorderly and provocative ways is actually *the design of the Devil*.

No. 2 *To Whom do we now belong* as saved sinners? In other words, are we the boss of our lives, or do we belong to the One Who saved us? The Scriptures make it very plain that lost mankind is in a “slavery” to sin (see Romans 6:16–23). But Jesus Christ

has “redeemed us” from that slavery, and by the very price of His own blood has “purchased” us to Himself. We will read Romans 6 in a moment. Suffice it to say, that we redeemed sinners are going to get all our orders from the One Who purchased us—“For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body. . . .” (1 Cor. 6:20).

No. 3 ***God alone***, in Christ Jesus, ***sets the patterns*** for adequate adornment of His redeemed people. Yes, we descendants of our great grandparents, Adam and Eve, must also like them be willing to submit to God’s “prepared” adornment in our life here on this earth. As Adam and Eve disposed of their fig leaf aprons and originally submitted to God’s prepared coats of skins, so it is that we should also dispose of our carnally-minded clothing and be submissive to God’s revealed counsels on this subject as well. Some Bible teachers have pointed out that Adam and Eve’s willingness to accept those “coats of skins” was an indicator of their acceptance of God’s redemptive plan. Should not the same be a true testimony from us today?

In this study we will note some of those “patterns.” They are such characteristics as would demonstrate “righteousness,” “holiness,” “separation,” “good works,” “fruit of the Spirit,” etc., etc.

No. 4 ***What or whom*** are we dressing up? God’s Word teaches us “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a *new creation*; old things are passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17). That new creation is “Christ in us.” Paul says, “. . . but Christ lives in me, . . .” (Galatians 2:20). So it is that the believer, who is a forgiven and redeemed sinner, should now realize that he or she is dressing up the new life—*Jesus Christ*. This *new life* is spoken of by the God-ordained clothing to prepare us for God’s presence. Should that make a difference in how we dress?

No. 5 As was stated earlier, people normally dress according to ***where they are going*** and ***whom they are going to meet***. Where are we going? And Whom are we going to meet? I don’t doubt that when believers are “caught up to meet Christ in the air,” we will leave behind all our earthly attachments and even our earthly clothing. Then we will be clothed upon with heavenly garments. However, I also don’t doubt that many Christians from our generation today will be drastically embarrassed by the contrast to what they were accustomed to wear down here.

6. God’s Patterns Revealed in the Scriptures

When we think of “patterns” for clothes as revealed in the Scriptures we normally think of the original coats that covered Adam and Eve—Genesis 3:20. We can say that these garments were the “patterns for the plan of redemption.” (We have expounded upon these in the previous section.) In addition there are many references in the Scriptures to other types of garments, such as:

Joseph’s coat of many colors—Genesis 37:3

The priestly garments—Exodus 28:1–43; 29:5–9; 39:27–31; 40:14, 15.
Leviticus 8:7, 13; 10:5; 16:4.
 which includes even the under garments—Exo. 28:22, 23; 20:26.
Ezra 2:69.
Nehemiah 2:70, 72.

The special ribbon of blue sewed into the corners on the garments of the Israelite people to remind them to keep the Word of God—Num. 15:37–41.

The robe of the king’s daughter—2 Samuel 13:18, 19.

The robe of the king himself—Isaiah 22:21.

The clothing of Christ at His crucifixion—John 19:23, 24
and at His glorification—Revelation 1:13 and 19:16.

Finally, in the book of Revelation the references to the clothing of the saints in heaven—Revelation 3:18; 6:11; 7:9; 19:7, 8.

GOD’S SHOPPING MALL

Different verses have come to my mind wherein the inspired writers speak by metaphor of the very person of Christ, Himself (Rom. 13:14) and our new natures (Col. 3:10) and the many virtues from the fruit of the Spirit (Col. 3:12–14, Eph. 4:22–24) as clothing we can “*put on*” in our lives. It thus occurred to me that the many other exhortations for godliness, for the members of the Church in this time period, can also be viewed by legitimate secondary applications as to how God wants us to dress ourselves before this present evil world system.

Therefore, note the following Scriptures and make application from them to the subject of your dress and conduct. All Christians should enjoy going to “God’s Shopping Mall” to look and see the many beautiful sorts of clothing to which we have total access — and it is all free of charge, just like our salvation. It is amazing how many admonitions are given in the Scriptures for our life and conduct. Each of these admonitions, though they have a broad application to the Christian’s life and conduct, most certainly would also have a legitimate application in choosing the type of clothing which we wear. When viewed from this perspective, going into these Scriptures is, indeed, like going into God’s giant “Shopping Mall.” Here we will find different shops exemplified by the various books of the letters to the Church. In each shop we can explore the different “patterns” for the clothing made by God’s designers.

Patterns from Romans

6:4 “ . . . *walk in newness of life.*”

6:8 “ . . . we shall also *live with Him* [in resurrection life].”

- 6:10–11 “Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but *alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”
- 6:13 “. . . *present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*”
- 6:18–19 “. . . you became *slaves of righteousness.* . . . so now present your *members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.*”
- 6:22 “But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your *fruit to holiness, and the end everlasting life.*”
- 7:6 “. . . we should *serve in the newness of the Spirit* and not in oldness of the letter.” (In other words, the Christian is not living his life because of, or by, a legalistic demand, but rather because of the energy and strength of the Holy Spirit in him.)
- 8:2 “*The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. . . .*”
- 8:4 “That *the righteousness of the law* might be *fulfilled in us* who do not walk according to the flesh but *according to the Spirit.*”
- 8:5 “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who *live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.*”
- 8:9 “But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed *the Spirit of God dwells in you. . . .*”
- 8:10 “And if *Christ is in you,* the body is dead because of sin, but *the spirit is life* because of *righteousness.*”
- 8:13 “. . . but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, *you shall live.*”
- 8:29 “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be *conformed to the image of His Son, . . .*”
- 12:1–2 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present *your bodies* a living sacrifice, *holy, and 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.*”
- 13:13–14, “Let us *walk properly,* as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. but *put on the Lord Jesus Christ,* and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”

14:8 “. . . we live to the Lord; . . .”

Patterns from 1 Corinthians

- 1:2 “To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are *sanctified in Christ Jesus*, called *saints*, . . .”
- 1:7 “. . . waiting for *the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ*.”
- 1:8 “. . . that you may be *blameless*. . . .”
- 1:30 “But of Him you are *in Christ Jesus*, Who became for us wisdom from God—and *righteousness* and *sanctification* and redemption—”
- 3:16–17 “Do you not know that you are *the temple of God* and that the *Spirit of God dwells in you*? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God *is holy*, which *temple you are*.”
- 6:13 “Now *the body* . . . *is for the Lord*, and *the Lord for the body*.”
- 6:15 “Do you not know that *your bodies are the members of Christ*?”
- 6:19–20 “Or do you not know that your body is *the temple of the Holy Spirit Who is in you*, Whom you have from God, and you are not your own. For you have been *bought with a price*; therefore *glorify God in your body* and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
- 10:31 “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or *whatever you do*, do all to the *glory of God*.”

Patterns from 2 Corinthians

- 5:15 “. . . and He died for all, that they who live should live no longer for themselves, but *for Him Who died for them and rose again*.”
- 5:17–18 “Therefore if anyone is *in Christ*, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new. Now all things are *of God*. . . .”
- 5:21 “. . . that we might become *the righteousness of God in Him*.”
- 6:16 “. . . For you *are the temple of the living God*. . . .”
- 7:1 “. . . let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, *perfecting holiness in the fear of God*.”

Patterns from Galatians

- 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but *Christ lives in me*; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by

faith in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

5:16 “. . . *Walk in the Spirit*, . . .”

5:22-23 “*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control*, . . .”

5:25 “If we live in the Spirit, let us also *walk in the Spirit*.”

6:14 “. . . the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

Patterns from Ephesians

1:4 “. . . just as He chose us . . . that we should be *holy* and *without blame*. . . .”

1:12 “. . . that we . . . should be to *the praise of His glory*.”

1:18 “. . . *the hope of His calling*, . . .”

2:2–3 “[We] once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, . . .”

2:5–6 “. . . made us *alive together with Christ* . . . and *raised us up together*, and *made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus*.”

2:10 “For we are *His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works*, which God prepared beforehand that we should *walk in them*.”

2:19 “. . . you are . . . *fellow citizens with the saints* and members of the *household of God*, . . .”

2:22 “. . . in Whom you also are being built together for *a habitation of God in the Spirit*.”

3:19 “. . . that you may be filled with all the *fullness of God*.”

4:1 “. . . *walk worthy of the calling* with which you were called.”

4:15 “. . . may *grow up* in all things into Him who is the Head—Christ—”

4:17 “. . . no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their minds.”

4:20 “But you have not so learned Christ.”

4:22–24 “. . . that you *put off*, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt . . . and be *renewed* in the spirit of your mind, and that you *put on* the *new man* which was created according to God, *in righteousness* and true *holiness*.”

- 4:30 “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by Whom you were *sealed for the day of redemption.*”
- 5:1 “Therefore be *followers of God* as dear children.”
- 5:8 “. . . *walk as children of light.*”
- 5:9–10 “For *the fruit of the Spirit* is in all *goodness, righteousness, and truth.*”
- 5:11 “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.”
- 5:15 “See then that you *walk circumspectly, . . .*”
- 5:18 “. . . but be *filled with the Spirit.*”
- 5:23–32 (Dress as a fellow member of the bride of Christ.)
- 6:11–18 “Put on the whole armor of God . . . stand therefore, . . . having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, taking the shield of faith, take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, praying always. . . .”

Patterns from Philippians

- 1:10 “. . . that you may approve the things that *are excellent, . . .*”
- 1:11 “. . . being filled with the *fruits of righteousness. . . .*”
- 1:20 “. . . so now also *Christ will be magnified in my body*, whether by life or by death.”
- 1:21 “For to me, to live *is Christ*, and to die is gain.”
- 1:27 “Only let your *conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ.*”
- 2:12–13 “. . . work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God *Who works in you* both to will and to do *His good pleasure.*”
- 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.*”
- 3:14 “I press toward the goal for the prize of the *upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*”
- 3:17 “. . . as you have us for a *pattern.*”

- 3:20 “For our *citizenship is in heaven*, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, . . .”
- 4:5 “. . . *The Lord is at hand.*”
- 4:8 “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are *true*, whatsoever things are *noble*, whatsoever things are *just*, whatsoever things are *pure*, whatsoever things are *lovely*, whatsoever things are of *good report*, if there is any *virtue* and if there is anything *praiseworthy*—*meditate on these things.*”

Patterns from Colossians

- 1:10 “That you may *walk worthy* of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being *fruitful in every good work*. . . .”
- 1:12 “. . . the inheritance of the *saints in the light.*”
- 1:13 “. . . translated us *into the kingdom of the Son of His love.*”
- 1:22 “. . . to present you *holy, and blameless, and irreproachable* in His sight—”
- 1:27 “. . . *Christ in you*, the hope of glory.”
- 2:8 “Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to *Christ.*”
- 3:1 “If then you were *raised with Christ*, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, *sitting at the right hand of God.*”
- 3:2–3 “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and *your life is hidden with Christ in God.*”
- 3:5 “Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, . . .”
- 3:10 “. . . and have *put on the new man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him Who created him.”
- 3:11 “. . . where . . . *Christ is all and in all.*”
- 3:12–14 “Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, *put on tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; . . . But above all these things put on love*, which is the bond of perfection.”
- 3:17 “And whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the [brand] *name of the Lord Jesus*, . . .”

Patterns from 1 Thessalonians

- 2:12 “. . . *walk worthy of God* Who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”
- 4:1, “. . . to *walk and to please God*.”
- 4:3–4 “For this is the will of God, your *sanctification*: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to *possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor*.”
- 4:7 “For God did not call us to uncleanness, but *in holiness*.”
- 4:12 “. . . that you may *walk properly* towards those who are outside, . . .”
- 5:22 “Abstain from every *form of evil*.”
- 5:23 “Now may the God of peace Himself *sanctify* you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and *body* be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Patterns from 1 Timothy and Titus

- 3:11 “Likewise their wives [of deacons] must be *reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful* in all things.”
- 5:2, “. . . [respect] the older women as mothers, the younger as sisters, with all *purity*.”
- 2:3 “. . . the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior . . . teachers of *good things*.”
- 2:5 “. . . [young women] to be *discreet, chaste* . . . that the Word of God be not blasphemed.”
- 2:13–14 “. . . *looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works*.”

Patterns from 2 Peter

- 1:4 “. . . you may be partakers of the *divine nature*, . . .”
- 2:9–10 “. . . the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations . . . [in contrast to the unjust] who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness. . . .”
- 3:14 “Therefore, beloved . . . be diligent to be found by Him in peace, *without spot and blameless*; . . .”

Patterns from 1 John

- 1:3 “... and truly our *fellowship* is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.”
- 2:15–17 “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”
- 2:29 “If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices *righteousness* is born of Him.”
- 3:2–3 “Beloved, now we are the children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, *we shall be like Him*, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him *purifies himself, just as He is pure.*”

All these exhortations are specifically for believers in this day and age. If exhortations like these do not prepare our minds for such things as how we are to dress, then they would also be sterile and empty for any area of our lives.

They not only perfectly apply to Christians in any society, under any customs, but also in any time period and in the midst of any special trends or styles.

Obviously, the application of these exhortations as to how we dress our “temples” is often going to make Christians unique and different in the exemplification of their moral and ethical outlook on life and conduct. Though Christians live in a wide variety of societies yet their dress and conduct, by God’s design, are going to be a demonstration that they are redeemed sinners who have become, by God’s grace, citizens of a foreign country—heaven. When an American goes traveling to another foreign country he must realize that in the eyes of this new society he is a representative of his own country. The same is true of the Christian. He is a representative of his citizenship in heaven. The Christian’s outlook on the world is different, his moral standards are different, his life has been changed and he is often like the healed demonic person who sat at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ, “clothed and in his right mind.”

Of course, most Christians today realize that there are no shopping malls anywhere around in the world like those revealed in the Greek Scriptures. However, there are some places that may carry what they call “modest clothes.” (Even J. C. Penny had at one time a section that they advertised as “Modest.”) Now such stores are very rare and hard to find. Consequently, Christians must be discrete and careful in selecting appropriate garments. Some Christian mothers have been skilled enough to alter or even make their own garments for the family, especially for the womenfolk. The heads of homes certainly must be alert and attentive to this subject.

7. A Careful Look at 1 Timothy 2:9 and 10

Since 1 Timothy 2:9-10 specifically addresses the Christian woman's adornment, many have asked the question, "Just exactly how should Paul's admonition in this passage be interpreted?" Actually Paul speaks in such very simple and plain language that most any translation will give a reliable rendering.

The problem, of course, is that in our modern changing world we are seeing the near total abandonment of any concrete ideas about what "modesty" means. The new generations take it for granted that near nakedness is perfectly acceptable in society. The constant exposure we have to open sensuality in dress and conduct has dulled the consciousness of most Christians to the soberness of the sacred exhortations in the Bible. A carnal brother or sister sees these admonitions from the inspired writers as pliable to interpretation as are the particular fancies of each individual person. Most often the men who are supposed to be "shepherds" to God's people shirk their responsibility on this subject. Other leaders, even among conservative fundamentalists, actually mock what they call "the old standards" as merely an old form of "legalism" which has kept Christians "in bondage." Consequently, most fathers would not dare exert any kind of restraint on their families lest they be hounded as "old, out of date, unreasonable, legalists."

And so it is today, that an observer can look, for instance, at a group of professing Christians at a park picnic, and then look at another group of non-professing Christians in the same park, and see absolutely no difference whatsoever. And this is precisely what Satan wants. He most certainly does not want the unsaved to feel guilty or even be sobered by the contrast between themselves and those Christians. The Christians' moral standards are "the odor of death" to the unsaved (see 2 Corinthians 2:15 and 16).

Most Christian women today have joined the "liberated" crowd (with, of course, the permission of their spineless husbands). They will take care to be CONFORMED to this modern world's cultural patterns so that their worldly friends won't be offended by any differences between them. Naturally, when they do this, they forget all about the fact that God wanted them to do just the opposite! Christ appealed to "blood bought believers" to "BE NOT CONFORMED to this world: but be ye TRANSFORMED by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2).

In fact, the only way this passage in 1 Timothy 2 can be properly understood is in its Biblical setting of all the various admonitions we have just read about in the different letters from the apostles of Jesus Christ. In further contemplation on the words of this

passage we can use some of the Greek Lexicons and Bible Dictionaries which are available for the layman. Using a Greek Interlinear, we will first note that the order of words is a little different than in the English translation. Nevertheless, let us read the text following the standard order of the English language from the NKJV—

Likewise also the women

Meaning, of course, the Christian women.

adorn themselves

“Adorn” here is from the Greek word *kosmeo*, Strong # 2885. (Similar to *kosmios*.) It means—“primarily to arrange, to put in order, to adorn, to ornament.”

in modest

From the Greek word *kosmios*, Strong # 2887. (Related to *kosmos*, world.) The lexical meaning here is in the primary sense of “harmonious arrangement.” Keep in mind that the world of Genesis 1:2 was a *chaos*—without form, void, under darkness and submerged in water—whereas the world after the six days of God’s work in creation was a *kosmos* or *kosmios*, meaning a world in “orderly arrangement.” As in the physical creation, so in the new creation of saints—God brings *order* out of chaos in life. The same word *kosmios* is used in the very next chapter (3:2) of overseers or shepherds in the church. Indeed, one of important qualifications for this position is that the man be of “good or orderly behavior” (*kosmios*). Therefore the lexical works say the word denotes “to be well-arranged, orderly, seemly, proper in behavior, decent, modest.”

apparel

From the Greek word *katastole*, Strong # 2689 (from *katastello*, # 2687), meaning to let down or lower (*kata*, down, *stello*, to send), hence, primarily a loose outer garment, dress or attire as worn by kings or persons of rank (W.E. Vine).

with propriety

From the Greek word *aidos*, Strong # 127, (*a*, as a negative particle, and *eido*, to look on, perceive or see), hence the idea of downcast eyes, a sense of shame, reverence, modesty (Thayer). In the K.J.V. it was rendered ‘shamefacedness.’ Others have corrected this to mean ‘shamefastness’ (Alford, W. E. Vine, A.S.V., etc.). This word is used only one other time and that is in Hebrews 12:28—“Whereby we may serve God acceptably with (*aidos*) reverence and Godly fear. . . .” As can be understood, *aidos* is intended as a strong word (Trench), which attitude is expected to be exercised by every believer out of fear and reverence for God’s instruction. It is quite possible that the “sense of shame”

indicated here traces itself all the way back to the consciousness of shame by Adam and Eve in the garden after they had sinned. E.W. Bullinger makes a further observation in his lexicon. He says that *aidos* carries with it “the inner grace which recoils from anything unseemly or impure, an innate moral repugnance to the doing of a dishonorable act, shamefastness.” Some newer translations will render this word by the English idea of “modesty” rather than the earlier Greek word *kosmios*.

and moderation

From the Greek word *sophrosune*, Strong # 4997. It denotes soundness of mind, sound judgment, sobriety, or discretion. “It is that habitual inner self-government, with its constant rein on all passions and desires, which would hinder the temptation to these from arising, or at all events from arising in such strength as would overbear the checks and barriers which *aidos* opposed to it.” (Trench and W. E. Vine). “Soundness of mind, self-control, curbing one’s desires and impulses, temperate.” (Thayer). The fact that this word denotes “soundness of mind,” takes us right back to my original question, “What “mind” do we have in our approach to this subject?”

Note: The awakening of man’s consciousness to the evil of sin and nakedness was ordained by God. To be properly “clothed” and “*in his right mind*” was the result of the demoniac’s conversion to Christ, Mark 5:15. The Savior now had control of his mind. Furthermore, the “soundness of mind” would be that mind in contemplation of all the many Scriptural exhortations previously listed as in this study.

not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or expensive clothing

The meaning here is in the negative. Taken at face value it simply exhorts us that the Christian women should avoid having her hair gorgeously intertwined and decorated with gold or pearls, and having on such expensive clothing as to proudly show her rich estate or position of prestige in society, if that be the case.

A few commentators have pointed out what may have possibly been another reason for this prohibition by the apostle Paul. This was the fact that some prostitutes dressed in this manner in those ancient times. Historically this is demonstrated by a quote from the Jewish expositor and philosopher named Philo, who also lived in the first century in Alexander, Egypt. Note his expressions:

Accordingly, the one comes to us luxuriously dressed in the guise of a harlot and prostitute, with mincing steps, rolling her eyes about . . . having the hair of her head dressed with the most superfluous elaborations, having her eyes penciled, her eyebrows covered over . . . painted with fictitious color, exquisitely dressed with costly garments, richly embroidered, adorned with armlets, and bracelets, and necklaces, and all other ornaments which can be made of gold, and precious

stones, . . . (The Works of Philo, by C. D. Young, page 96.)

but which is proper for women professing godliness

Meaning the Christian women's adornment should be in keeping with her spiritual testimony of faith in Christ, and her profession of following Christ's teaching of righteous living.

with good works

Literally, *by means of good works*. In other words since Christians are "created unto good works," her profession should be demonstrated and/or accompanied by such. The first "good works" of the Christian woman would be in the *modest* and *proper attire* with which she has *wisely* chosen to *adorn* herself.

As an overall accurate translation of this passage I highly recommend the New American Standard Bible—

Likewise, I want women to **adorn** themselves with **proper clothing, modestly and discreetly**, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of **good works**, as befits women **making a claim to godliness** (1 Tim. 2:9–10).

8. A careful look at 1 Peter 3:1–6

A somewhat literal translation of the passage should dispel any doubts about its beauty of thought and understanding. Peter is addressing the following exhortations to the Christian wives with, of course, a partial application to all the believing women folk whether married or unmarried:

- (1) Likewise, [you] wives,
subject yourselves to your own husbands,
so that even if some [husbands] are disobedient to the word,
they, without a word,
may be won by the conduct of their wives,
- (2) [the husbands] having observed
your chaste conduct with fear [or respect].
- (3) Of whom [the wife],

do not let your adorning be the outward
braiding of the hair,
wearing of gold,
or the putting on of apparel,
(4) rather [let it be],
the hidden person of the heart
with the incorruptible [attitude]
of the gentle and quiet spirit,
which before God is very costly.
[or, is very precious in the sight of God.]
(5) For in this manner, in former times,
the holy women who trusted [or, hoped] in God
also adorned themselves, being
submissive to their own husbands,

(6) as Sarah obeyed Abraham,
calling him lord,
whose daughters you are,
if you do good
and not being afraid with any terror.

Verses 3 and 4 touch on the subject of outward appearance and dress. In some respects this is similar to Paul's exhortation in 1 Timothy 2:9 and 10. It does, however, have a slight difference. Paul exhorts the women to not use fancy hair styles mingled with gold and pearls or expensive clothing. Peter simply exhorts wives to not place the emphasis of their appearance on the outward hair styles or clothing and jewelry but, rather, upon those inward qualities stemming from their new lives in Christ. In other words, just translate the qualities of the new nature, called here "the hidden man of the heart," and the attributes of a "quiet and gentle spirit" into the type of garments the women are to wear and you will see and understand what is God's will in this important area of life and demeanor.

Furthermore, we are now to understand that in reality God is not "cheap" when it comes to dressing up His children. It can be said that in this case God only takes us to the most expensive clothing stores of all—those that carry the lines and styles promoting godliness and the fruit of the Spirit. The "price tag" on these clothes is higher than anyone could ever possibly afford—they are "of great price." Therefore, the sales person, as it were, would also let us know that if we are "born again," then whatever you select or choose in this store has already been paid for by our Heavenly Father.

Just imagine the privilege Christians have of "putting off" (Eph. 4:22) those old clothes which in our unsaved lives were characterized by lust and lawlessness, and "putting on" (Eph. 4:24) those garments which demonstrate our new life in Christ and glorify God. Normally, everyone likes to put on new clothes and see how they make us look. How about the privilege of "putting on the new man," himself (Col. 3:10)!

A PROBLEM?

The most notable problem which some professing Christians have had with this passage is in their misunderstanding of the use of the negative “not” in this context. Generally, the Amish sect, along with other similar religious groups, and even some mistaken ministers, take Peter’s use of “not” as meaning a strict prohibition against their women wearing any type of outward braided hair, any type of gold or metallic jewelry (or even eyelets, attachments, belt buckles, etc.), or any type of dresses—other than what is very plain and drab in design and color.

One mistaken minister whom I personally know stated in a meeting where this passage was being discussed, “The key word is ‘not’.” He went on to explain that one should “not want to substitute the word ‘some’ or ‘moderately’ or ‘a little bit’ for the word ‘NOT’.” Basically, he then took the position that anything classified as “outward adornment” should “not” be worn. He then went to other places in Peter’s letters where the word “not” was used in the manner as a strict prohibition.

Of course, in the Greek Scriptures the word “not” is also sometimes used to show “contrast,” “comparison,” or for the sake of “emphasis.” For instance in John 6:27 Christ said, “Labor not for the meat which perishes, but for that meat which endures to everlasting life, . . .” No one who reads this thinks Christ meant that His words are to be understood as a strict prohibition to “not” labor for your food. Christ is here using “not” in the sense of a contrast, meaning that the real and primary labor of our lives should be for eternal things that do not perish. Many times the word is used this way in the Scriptures. For instance in 1 John 3:18 John exhorts believers with these words, “My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” Now, are we to understand John as saying we should never tell someone that he is loved? Why, of course not! That would be the last thing John meant. John is emphasizing the need for genuine love which is demonstrated by “deeds” and “truth.” Some translations indicate that this is to be understood in this passage of 1 Peter 3:3. For instance, in the New King James Version the word “*merely*” is inverted in italicized print—“Do not let your adornment be *merely* outward. . . .”

When it was further brought to this minister’s attention that if absolutely no “braiding” of the hair, and no wearing of any “gold” jewelry was intended, then it follows in consistency that no wearing of “apparel” must also be intended. He realized, of course, that it could never mean “not” to wear apparel. Without explanation he merely accused us of somehow twisting the meaning. However, we finally realized that in his mind he had defined the word “adornment” to mean “a decoration” which carries the sense of “*evil* or *worldly* clothing, jewelry or makeup,” and therefore, “outward adornment” should “not” be worn. Of course, whether in the original Greek language or in the English dictionary “adornment” is never defined this way. All “adornment” whether good or evil is “outward.” “Outward adornment” in and of itself is perfectly legitimate. Consequently, Peter could not be understood as saying not to have adornment.

So Peter's exhortation should never be understood to mean, as an absolute rule, "no adornment." Rather he is saying "do not emphasize your adornment" as those outward physical things which are often only for show. Instead, let your adornment be such as would be a reflection of your inner spiritual nature which is given to us by God and is very costly!

It is also to be noted that both Paul's and Peter's exhortations place the emphasis in this dispensation of time upon the spiritual realities which God wants exemplified instead of the physical riches as were bestowed upon the nation of Israel. There is a notable contrast between how God deals with flesh and blood "Israel" and how He deals with the "church which is Christ's body." To Israel God promised a physical land; in contrast the church has a heavenly hope. To Israel God promised physical prosperity and riches; to the church Christ has promised "spiritual blessings in heavenly places." Israel had a physical Temple; the church itself constitutes a spiritual temple. Israel had a physical kingdom; the church has a spiritual kingdom. When it comes to physical adornment, in the Hebrew Scriptures gold and silver were often used in describing their jewelry. In contrast, as exemplified by Paul and Peter, this is not to be found in the church of Jesus Christ.

It has been understood, and I think it is very true that we must recognize this distinction between Israel and the church. In light of the Scriptures it should be easy to realize that we in the church of Jesus Christ are living in a different environment than Israel. We are blessed with "spiritual blessings in heavenly places" rather than physical blessings in earthly places. Consequently, the adornment that we should be adorned with will be that which identifies us with the place where our hope is—" . . . the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, . . ." (Col. 1:5.)

9. Words from an Aztec mother 560 years ago

The following article entitled—

"ADVICE OF AN AZTEC MOTHER TO HER DAUGHTER
An Original Document of Mexico"

—was given to me many years ago by a Christian sister doing some research in the downtown Fort Worth Public Library on the past history of Mexico. She and I both realized that the article was so beautiful and so important that I went back to the Fort Worth Library to establish exactly where and how this article written so long ago came to be preserved. Here is what I found, and here is the article.

SOURCE

This particular manuscript was translated from Sahagun's Spanish *Historia de Nueve Espanna*, Lib, VI Cap. XIX, by Prescott in his *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, Vol. 3, pp. 405–409.

Sahagun was a Franciscan friar who came to Mexico in 1529 as a missionary. This was about ten years after the original Spanish conquest under Cortez. He learned the highly complex hieroglyphic or figurative-picture writing of the Aztec people and studiously compiled a reliable history of that civilization.

The Aztecs had not only silver and gold, but they also treasured a great many manuscripts made of nicely prepared skins, cotton cloth, a silk and gum mixture and/or fabric formed into paper similar to the Egyptian papyrus. Sad to say, the first archbishop of Mexico thought these Aztec manuscripts were symbols of horrible superstition and had most of them destroyed. Obviously, some have been preserved from his fires.

It is true that the Aztecs, at the time of the Spanish conquest, were practicing human sacrifices in grotesque numbers. However, the earlier peoples (the Toltecs) who formed the basis for the Aztec civilization did not practice human sacrifices. Also, a most popular and sophisticated ruler of all the Aztec monarchs (Nezahualcoyotle, meaning 'the fasting coyote,' ruler of Texcoco from 1431 to 1472) rejected human sacrifices and all idolatry and returned the people to the belief in one supreme being—"The God Who is Near and Close." The Spaniards who heard some of the history about this ruler referred to him as "the King David of the Aztecs" and also as "The Solomon of the Aztecs." (The reason for these descriptions is very interesting as well.) This particular manuscript which contains the advice of a mother to her daughter reflects the doctrine and moral standard from this period of time, and preserves for us a very beautiful attitude as to the domestic manners and customs of this earlier Aztec society.

Prescott says, "After she had come to a mature age, the Aztec maiden was treated by her parents with a tenderness from which all reserve seemed banished. In the counsels to a daughter about to enter into life, they conjured her to preserve simplicity in her manners and conversation, uniform neatness in her attire, with strict attention to personal cleanliness. They included modesty, as a great ornament of a woman, and implicit reverence for her husband; softening their admonitions by such endearing epithets as showed the fullness of a parent's love." (Vol. 1, pg. 153.) The young woman in this case was of noble descent and her manners and decorum were of genuine importance to her mother and father. This serves as a vivid illustration to modern Christian parents and young people who belong to the highest order of society—the family of God. Our Lord

Jesus Christ is reflected in our lives and we have a great privilege in bringing honor and glory to Him.

The translation from the Spanish is very literal—

THE DOCUMENT

My beloved daughter, very dear little dove, you have already heard and attended to the words which your father has told you. They are precious words, and such as are rarely spoken or listened to, and have proceeded from the bowels (affections) and heart in which they were treasured up; and your beloved father well knows that you are his daughter, begotten of him, are his blood, and his flesh; and God our Lord knows that it is so. Although you are a woman, and are the image of your father, what more can I say to you than has already been said? What more can you hear than what you have heard from your lord and father? who has fully told you what it is becoming for you to do and to avoid; nor is there anything remaining, which concerns you, that he has not touched upon. Nevertheless, that I may do towards you my whole duty, I will say to you some few words.

The first thing that I earnestly charge upon you is, that you observe and do not forget what your father has now told you, since it is all very precious; and persons of his condition rarely publish such things; for they are the words which belong to the noble and wise,—valuable as rich jewels. See, then, that you take them and lay them up in your heart, and write them in your bowels. If God gives you life, with these same words will you teach your sons and daughters, if God shall give you them.

The second thing that I desire to say to you is, that I love you much, that you are my dear daughter. Remember that nine months I bore you in my womb, that you were born and brought up in my arms. I placed you in your cradle, and in my lap, and with my milk I nursed you. This I tell you, in order that you may know that I and your father are the source of your being; it is we who now instruct you. See that you receive our words, and treasure them in your breast.

Take care that your garments are such as are decent and proper; and observe that you do not adorn yourself with much finery, since this is a mark of vanity and of folly. As little becoming is it, that your dress should be very mean, dirty, or ragged; since rags are a mark of the low, and of those who are held in contempt. Let your clothes be becoming and neat, that you may neither appear fantastic nor mean. When you speak, do not hurry your words from uneasiness, but speak deliberately and calmly. Do not raise your voice very high, nor speak very low, but in a moderate tone. Neither mince, when you speak, nor when you salute, nor speak through your nose; but let your words be proper, of a good sound, and your voice gentle. Do not be nice in the choice of your words.

In walking, my daughter, see that you behave becomingly, neither going with haste, nor too slowly; since it is evidence of being puffed up, to walk too slowly, and walking hastily causes a vicious habit of restlessness and instability. Therefore neither walk very fast, nor very slow; yet when it shall be necessary to go with haste, do so—in this use your discretion. And when you may be obliged to jump over a pool of water, do it

with decency, that you may neither appear clumsy nor light. When you are in the street, do not carry your head much inclined, or your body bent; nor as little go with your head very much raised; since it is a mark of ill breeding; walk erect, and with your head slightly inclined. Do not have your mouth covered, or your face, from shame, nor go looking like a near-sighted person, nor, on your way, make fantastic movements with your feet. Walk through the streets quietly, and with propriety.

Another thing that you must attend to, my daughter, is, that when you are in the street you do not go looking hither and thither, nor turning your head to look at this and that; walk neither looking at the skies nor on the ground. Do not look upon those whom you meet with the eyes of an offended person, nor have the appearance of being uneasy; but of one who looks upon all with a serene countenance; doing this, you will give no one occasion of being offended with you. Show a becoming countenance that you may neither appear morose, nor, on the other hand, too complaisant.

See, my daughter, that you give yourself no concern about the words you may hear, in going through the street, nor pay any regard to them, let those who come and go say what they will. Take care that you neither answer nor speak, but act as if you neither heard nor understood them; since, doing in this manner, no one will be able to say with truth that you have said anything amiss.

See, likewise, my daughter, that you never paint your face, or stain it or your lips with colors, in order to appear well; since this is a mark of vile and unchaste women. Paints and coloring are things which bad women use,—the immodest, who have lost all shame and even sense, who are like fools and drunkards, and are called “rameras” (prostitutes). But, that your husband may not dislike you, adorn yourself, wash yourself, and cleanse your clothes; and let this be done with moderation; since if every day you wash yourself and your clothes it will be said of you that you are over-nice,—too delicate; they will call you “tapepetzon tinemaxoch.”

My daughter, this is the course you are to take; since in this manner the ancestors from whom you spring brought us up. Those noble and venerable dames, your grandmothers, told us not so many things as I have told you,—but they said few words, and spake thus: “Listen, my daughters; in this world it is necessary to live with much prudence and circumspection. Hear this allegory, which I shall now tell you, and preserve it, and take from it a warning and example for living aright. Here in this world, we travel by a very narrow, steep, and dangerous road, which is a lofty mountain ridge, on whose top passes a narrow path; on either side is a great gulf without bottom; and if you deviate from the path you will fall into it. There is need, therefore, of much discretion in pursuing the road.”

My tenderly loved daughter, my little dove, keep this illustration in your heart, and see that you do not forget it,—it will be to you as a lamp and a beacon so long as you shall live in this world.

Only one thing remains to be said, and I have done. If God shall give you life, if you shall continue some years upon the earth, see that you guard yourself carefully, that no stain come upon you; should you forfeit your chastity, and afterwards be asked in marriage and should marry anyone, you will never be fortunate, nor have true love,—he

will always remember that you were not a virgin, and this will be the cause of great affliction and distress; you will never be at peace, for your husband will always be suspicious of you.

O my dearly beloved daughter, if you shall live upon the earth, see that not more than one man approaches you; and observe what I now tell you, as a strict command. When it shall please God that you receive a husband, and you are placed under his authority, be free from arrogance, see that you do not neglect him, nor allow your heart to be in opposition to him. Be not disrespectful to him. Beware that in no time or place you commit the treason against him called adultery. See that you give no favor to another; since this, my dear and much beloved daughter, is to fall into a pit without bottom, from which will be no escape. According to the custom of the world, if it shall be known, for this crime they will kill you, they will throw you into the street, for an example to all the people, where your head will be crushed and dragged upon the ground. Of these says a proverb, "You will be stoned and dragged upon the earth, and others will take warning at your death." From this will arise a stain and dishonor upon our ancestors, the nobles and senators from whom we are descended. You will tarnish their illustrious fame, and their glory, by the filthiness and impurity of your sin. You will likewise, lose your reputation, your nobility, and honor of birth; your name will be forgotten and abhorred. Of you will it be said that you were buried in the dust of your sins.

And remember, my daughter, that, though no man shall see you, nor your husband ever know what happens, God, who is in every place, sees you, will be angry with you, and will also excite the indignation of the people against you, and will be avenged upon you as He shall see fit. By His command, you shall either be maimed, or struck blind, or your body will wither, or you will come to extreme poverty, for daring to injure your husband. Or perhaps He will give you to death, and put you under His feet, sending you to the place of torment.

Our Lord is compassionate; but, if you commit treason against your husband, God, who is in every place, shall take vengeance on your sin, and will permit you to have neither contentment, nor repose, nor a peaceful life; and He will excite your husband to be always unkind towards you, and always to speak to you with anger.

My dear daughter, whom I tenderly love, see that you live in the world in peace, tranquility, and contentment, all the days that you shall live. See that you disgrace not yourself, that you stain not your honor, nor pollute the luster and fame of your ancestors. See that you honor me and your father, and reflect glory on us by your good life.

May God prosper you, my first-born, and may you come to God, who is in every place.

10. Modesty in the End Times

It is important to recognize that in the closing days of this dispensation, the conservative evangelical Christians are constantly lowering their standards of modesty among their congregations and Bible schools. This is done in order to accommodate the growing trends of multitudes of professing Christians who are consistently moving away from the godly standards set at earlier dates by conscientious shepherds following clear Biblical instructions. Heads of religious institutions came to realize that they could no longer attract young people to their colleges and churches if they tried to maintain modest dress codes. Therefore the tendency was to drop any admonitions in these important areas. Certain popular preachers even went so far as to ridicule as “legalistic” and contradictory to the principle of “grace” any enforcement of modesty. They proclaimed that an attitude of “love” and “tolerance” was far more desirable and in keeping with God’s Word than imposing the “old fashioned” standards which are no longer valid in “today’s world.”

Take as an example my own experience. I attended the Bible Institute of Los Angeles from 1952 to 1954. The dress standards were very clear. There was little or no makeup, no women in pants and certainly no shorts. Dresses were down below the knees. There was no mixed bathing and Hollywood movies were “out.” But changes came fairly rapidly. The school was raising its standard to become a recognized university. Along with this meant lowering its standard on modesty if they wanted to attract more young people. And so they did. Sixty years later you can look at their campus advertisements and magazine and you could not tell “Biola” from any other worldly, immoral and immodest school on earth. The miniskirts, tight pants, shorts, and general exposure of flesh is the same as you would see in any modern Wal-Mart store. In addition, with this new found “liberty” the school now allows the existence of a “Gay and Lesbian Student Group.” In further apostate direction, they now embrace preachers and speakers from the “Contemplative” and “Emerging Church” movements to come and spread their perversions to the student body. So it is that their “immodesty” in dress goes right along with their “apostasy” from fundamental, conservative, dispensational Bible teaching and profession.

Here is another example from right where I live in Burleson, Texas. I recently picked up an advertisement for the “First Baptist Church of Burleson.” On the front side was an article and a beautiful picture of the new impressive buildings, main auditorium and grounds of the church. On the back side was a large reproduction of an old picture taken back in the early 1900s of a baptism ceremony down at a nearby creek. Now this was to demonstrate how old and important this church is in this particular city. However, the picture also demonstrated how far removed from the standards of modesty in that time from the modern date of 2013. The 18 or so women getting baptized, and all those standing along the bank, were very modestly dressed, with their long hair, no showy jewelry, no makeup, or any hint of carnal exposure. I looked at that picture and thought how embarrassed that church should be by today’s standards of laxity and looseness in dress and conduct.

I have had several articles stating that certain churches which have been considered as strict in past times on the subject of modesty have now “adopted new guidelines.” This became so common in Christendom that I stopped collecting them.

All these modern institutions have forgotten that in past times on every occasion of what has historically been called a “general revival of religious importance” there has likewise followed a renewal of exhortations about the subject of dress and modesty. This was true of the more recent “Fundamentalist revival” of the 1920s and 30s. Certainly the “Wesleyan or Methodist revival” across America in 1760 through the early 1800s, brought exhortations on the subject. John Wesley, for instance, was not hesitant in the least to issue lengthy written “Advice” and “Thoughts” “with regards to dress” and general modesty in men and women professing to be “Methodists.” The same was true of the “Brethren revival” in England, and the earlier Puritan and Quaker revivals as well.

I can still remember sitting beside my mother in a theater in the early 1940s. Suddenly my mother gasped so strongly that I looked at her to see what was wrong. Of course, her eyes were fixed upon a new scene in this movie. I looked back at the screen and saw the beautiful Hollywood star who had stepped out of a small airplane somewhere in a desert setting. She was wearing a pair of smoothly tailored slacks which the wind caused to wrap around her legs, becoming all the more revealing. This was my introduction to women’s tailored pants. Along with many women now working in the war plants in regular pants, like wild fire, the trend caught on. And why not? Here in the USA in the “roaring twenties” they laughed out the old “long-hair style,” and danced in the “bobbed-hair” which became the norm. In addition, the so-called “Sexual Revolution” brought in many total changes. Instead of “sex for procreation” it was now “sex for recreation.” Instead of careful male responsibility there came careless male irresponsibility. Instead of wives and mothers being homemakers they increasingly became outside providers. Instead of the sanctity of marriage came the simple “pairing off.” Instead of healthy homes there came an explosion of sexually related diseases. So it was that many so-called Christian churches turned a blind eye towards modesty and morals. And so it is that Christendom’s general testimony at the end of this age is as sickening as were the Roman cultural habits at the fall of the Roman Empire. Our modern societies have virtually come back to the foot of Vesuvius (see page 3).

Interestingly enough, on the other side of this subject, the reestablishment of the Jewish nation of Israel has led to a surprising revival of interest in the restoration of “Halacha Law” on the subject of modesty among their Orthodox people. Though secular Israelites are no different than any other nation in their morals, yet Orthodox Judaism has had a very noticeable awakening in the realization of their responsibility to instructions from God’s Law on the subject of modesty and orderly home life.

It is not unusual to see in certain sections or neighborhoods signs like this—

Women in Immodest Dress
ARE STRICTLY FORBIDDEN
To Enter

Our Neighborhood

Publishing books like the following—

RETURNING TO TRADITION:

The Contemporary Revival of Orthodox Judaism.

In recent years, many young American and Israeli Jews raised in nonreligious families have chosen to become practicing Orthodox Jews, eating only kosher food, honoring the Sabbath, and observing laws of family purity that require periodic sexual abstinence and modesty in dress and behavior.

Another article reminded the Orthodox in Israel that—“Guided by the Torah’s rules of modesty, Orthodox Jews don’t uncover their flesh for anyone except their spouses and even then only at certain times.”

Another article in the Jerusalem Post (July 25-31, 2008, International Edition) was captioned “You’ve been Aish’d”—

You’ve been Aished! This is similar to saying ‘you have been brainwashed.’ Only in this case it means you have been ‘immersed in Jewish law (Halacha), and being ‘modest’ is a ‘natural step in the observance of that Law. This is taking place in different Orthodox outreach programs. These are programs that are usually paid for by certain donors who act as sponsors to special excursions for groups of young people in camps or outdoor camping trips under the leadership of Orthodox men and women encouraging all to observe Halacha on these occasions. One participant writes: ‘With a brand-new, floor length skirt swishing against the linoleum tiles, I walked into school the first day of the 11th grade to confused stares. When had the graphic, midriff-baring T-shirts and sweat pants gone? Three weeks of my summer vacation had been spent traveling the West Coast of the United States with an Orthodox outreach youth group. Alongside a Grand Canyon hike, I had been immersed in Halacha (Jewish Law), and becoming “modest” seemed like a natural step.’”

It was further stated in this article that quite often, right now, this modesty is short-lived among Jewish young people, yet it is still a growing trend among many who are growing in the Orthodox teaching of Judaism—even in the United States.

Another Jewish authority recently wrote this way:

Let modest be the new sexy.

Here's the truth of the matter: Modest women are the sexiest of all. They look feminine, desirable, and their covered bodies invite male curiosity. True, they might not get the immediate stare at exposed cleavage, but the difference is that the man will stay focused on the covered woman's flesh well after her cleavage-bearing sister has nothing left to offer.

The modest woman who conceals her sexuality invites a man to reveal it, always teasing the possibility of more. And what is eroticism if not the arousal of limitless possibilities?

It is time to praise the Orthodox Jewish woman who, with her sleeves, stockings and long flowing skirt, is not just a model of femininity but is super-desirable to boot. Her modest reserve is erotically irresistible.

(Shmuley Roteach—

Jerusalem Post, February 20-March 6, 2008, International Edition)

I note that at the time I am completing this study Billy Graham has recently called for a revival or “spiritual awakening” amongst Christians and the people in this United States of America. He has stated this in light of his increasing belief that the second coming of Christ is very near and his realization that this society is not at all prepared. Of course, Billy Graham is more noteworthy for his compromises by his “Cooperative Evangelism” methods which have only strengthened modern Christendom's rapid apostasy. The apostle Paul and others prophesied that the closing days of this present age will be characterized by “apostasy” (2 Thessalonians 2:3 and 2 Timothy 3:1–4:5).

Actually, all the evidence points to the fact that modern Christendom has chosen to ignore all of the spiritual admonitions for the church of Jesus Christ to “walk” in. Instead of walking in holiness and separation they are walking in the Christ-rejecting shame of the world around them. God is finished with Christendom—and Paul's “mystery” is upon us—

For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.
Romans 11:25.

THE END