

*Because  
We Are His*

**BIBLICAL STUDIES IN  
PRACTICAL HOLINESS**

**BY  
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# FOREWORD

*“Don’t have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.” (2 Timothy 2:23-26, NIV)*

Novelist Lloyd Douglas tells about a man who went to visit his old violin teacher and asked, “What’s new?” “I’ll tell you what’s new!” said the teacher. He grabbed his tuning fork and banged it. The tuning fork, at 440 cycles per second, vibrated an “A note” which came out loud and clear. “Do you hear that? That’s an ‘A’” he proclaimed. “Now, upstairs a soprano rehearses endlessly and she’s always off key. Next door I have a cello player who plays his instrument very poorly. There is an out-of-tune piano on the other side of me. I’m surrounded by terrible noise night and day.” Plunking the “A” again, he continued. “Do you hear that? That’s an ‘A’ today. It will be an ‘A’ tomorrow. It will never change.”

One of the current trends making the rounds in church growth theory is that we must constantly change the church so it can relate to our changing society; hence the recent glut of “seeker services” and “user-friendly congregations.” Never mind that our society is obsessed with self, polluted by immorality, repulsed by commitment and smug in its new tolerance (one that tolerates everything except Biblical absolutes!). I am afraid that much of the “growth” we have seen recently in religious circles has been more of an infectious “swelling,” as ministries and movements are built on human innovation rather than Biblical instruction. I am all for any change in method that allows us to preach the Gospel more effectively. But the Bible expressly forbids us to change its message. Some things, like the “A” in the music scale, cannot be changed even slightly without destroying everything around them.

This study on Practical Holiness has been prepared to deal with a foundational issue of Apostolic faith; that is, does the Holy Ghost affect the outward appearance of the vessel He chooses to dwell in, or not? Do the standards of conduct and appearance given in Scripture apply to us today, or should they be discarded in favor of a lifestyle that is less conspicuous in – and less offensive to – our modern society? A complete study of Biblical holiness would certainly be much larger in scope than this work; however, I have chosen to concentrate on the four main areas that have been most maligned by those who find the holiness lifestyle too burdensome or embarrassing. We will discuss the relationship between “inner” and “outer” holiness, and the specifics of hair, apparel and adornment that are mentioned in Scripture.

But is outward holiness really a foundational issue of the Apostolic faith? I will answer that question with a statement and a story. My statement? “History repeats itself.” My story? Read on ...

Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch, was one of the first seven church deacons chosen to look after the business matters of the early church (Acts 6:3-5). However, his dedication to the Apostolic message was short-lived. According to early writings on heresy, Nicolas eventually backslid and introduced the Doctrine of the Nicolaitanes to the church. His doctrine came about as a “knee-jerk” reaction to the legalism of the Judaizers; it abused Paul’s doctrine of the grace of God and introduced a false freedom into the church. Nicolas and his followers erred in combating one extreme teaching with another extreme teaching!

In the book of Revelation, John compared the Nicolaitanes to Balaam in the Old Testament who “cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel” (Revelation 2:14-15). Balaam was unsuccessful in cursing Israel from without, but he taught them to mix godliness and worldliness (Numbers 22-25) and they cursed themselves from within! This same spirit was behind Nicolas’ doctrine, which was based on Greek dualism. He declared that Christians - since they were sinners saved by grace - could live like the world on the outside and still remain saved on the inside. His teaching would later be the basis of the doctrine of eternal security (once saved, always saved) and even the practice of the confessional (confessing to a priest while still living in sin!).

Since his teaching required no outward (or inward!) change to be saved, he and his followers attracted large numbers of converts - both from the pagan religions and from a lukewarm church. His message to the Apostolic believers was: Why live in the “legalism and bondage” of holiness and sanctification (the teachings of the Apostles) when you can be “free in Jesus”? Nicolas violated Apostolic teaching on sanctification, which was part of their teaching on salvation. In Apostolic belief, a holiness lifestyle included standards of dress, types of activities they participated in, and other codes of conduct (Romans 6:1-2, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7, 1 Timothy 2:8-10, Hebrews 12:14, 1 Peter 1:15-16, etc. etc.). Nicolas taught that these “externals” of holiness were not important. God, however, had a different opinion. Twice in Revelation (2:6 and 2:15), He said that He “hated” the teaching of the Nicolaitanes. And He still hates it!

An outward “standard of holiness” was the first thing to go in the Great Falling Away of the latter first century, but the tide of change did not stop there. Holiness was soon followed by real repentance, water baptism by immersion in Jesus’ name, speaking in tongues and the gifts of the Spirit, and the doctrine of the Oneness of God. As the elder Apostles died one by one, leaders with smaller vision and weaker conviction stepped in and subtly altered their message. In the words of the prophet, truth had “fallen in the street” (Isaiah 59:14). Only much later, as gross doctrinal errors took root in the church and propelled her into the Dark Ages, did it become apparent just how much was lost when the holiness lifestyle was abandoned.

We are privileged to live during the time of the Latter Rain, when Truth has been restored and God’s Spirit is being poured out upon all flesh. But let me sound a note of caution and say that the Nicolaitanes are once again rising among the Apostolics. They are compromising the non-negotiable principles of Scripture for personal convenience and societal acceptance. They are surrendering holiness because it is too burdensome and laying truth to rest in the cold grave of tolerance because it is too exclusive and inflammatory. They have massacred the Scripture, maligned the Apostles and mortified their Creator with their shoddy scholarship and their loose living.

I refuse to join them. Scripture is too precious and eternity is too long. The modern Nicolaitanes do not deceive me; I know the damage they did the last time around. Their new freedom is nothing less than the old bondage in another cloak. Observe them long enough and you will see that holiness is only the first item on their agenda of change, for the slope to ecumenicalism is steep and slippery.

Little wonder that the Scripture says, “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). Holiness must be pursued, for only when we wholeheartedly run after Jesus can we wholeheartedly run away from the world. Change God’s Word if you want to; I dare not. I can only be eternally thankful that it changed me!

~ Raymond Woodward

**Hebrews 12:14** Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

- God's Holiness is one of the essential and absolute attributes of His divine nature, and is set before us in the Scriptures as a matter of great importance:
  - (1) It is a special cause for our awe and adoration
  - (2) It sets the standard for all other holiness
  - (3) It will always remain higher than the highest holiness of men and angels
  - (4) It necessitates God's opposition to and condemnation of all sin
  - (5) It awakens and deepens man's consciousness of his own sin
  - (6) It sets before men their highest possible aspiration - to be holy as God is holy
  - (7) The whole tone of Scripture is in accordance with the weighty exhortation of our text!
- On the other hand, man appears in the Scriptures as a fallen being, by nature unholy and sinful.
- Created in God's image, he has lost one of the most essential features of that image – HOLINESS.
- The origin of the word "holiness" is Akkadian and Sumerian (earth's earliest cultures). The later Hebrew word "qodesh" and the Greek word "hagiosune" continue the meaning of "withdrawal." Therefore, scholars define holiness to mean "separate" and "apart."
- Being holy does not only mean withdrawing FROM something, it means withdrawing UNTO something. We are not separate or holy merely to make others look unholy!
- Rather, we WITHDRAW into man's original state of communion with God as we live holy lives.
- That is why in almost every place Paul refers to holiness, he does not refer only to CULTURE, but takes us all the way back to CREATION (the original state).
- Paul therefore calls for compliance in matters of "practical holiness" on the basis of CREATION, because WE WERE CREATED TO FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD IN HOLINESS.
- A.W. Post used to say, "Salvation is the most elastic word in the Bible." I was saved from the PENALTY of sin when I was justified, I am being saved from the POWER of sin as I am sanctified, and I will be saved from the very PRESENCE of sin when I am glorified. Salvation is a process!
- From God's perspective, the salvation process and the sanctification ("separation" or "holiness") process are one and the same. When we are justified, our sanctification is **POSITIONAL** for we have **IMPUTED** righteousness; when we allow God to lead us into holiness, our sanctification becomes **EXPERIENTIAL** for we have **IMPARTED** righteousness; when we are glorified, our sanctification will become **ETERNAL** for we will receive **IMPLANTED** righteousness.
  - **POSITIONAL sanctification** is just as complete for the youngest believer as it is for the oldest. It depends only upon **one's position in Christ**. A new Christian is as saved as any saint the moment they are born again, but they are only beginning to walk with God; they are immature.
  - **EXPERIENTIAL sanctification** is one's actual holiness of life, or **what one is through Christ**. It is imperative that believers allow God to lead them into sanctification ("separation"), for it is possible to eventually forfeit salvation altogether if they do not develop in holiness.

***Hebrews 6:1-9** <sup>1</sup> Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, <sup>2</sup> Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. <sup>3</sup> And this will we do, if God permit. <sup>4</sup> For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, <sup>5</sup> And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, <sup>6</sup> If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. <sup>7</sup> For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: <sup>8</sup> But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. <sup>9</sup> But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.*
- **ETERNAL sanctification** will occur in believers at the rapture, when they are instantly and eternally transformed into a state of **complete conformity to Christ**.
- "Holiness, so far as it appears in man, is an outcome of God's gracious work in salvation and yet not without the proper exertion of one's own free will and the putting forth of strenuous effort." (Unger's Bible Dictionary, page 582)

- MOST ISSUES OF HOLINESS ARE NOT SALVATION ISSUES; THEY ARE CHRISTIAN MATURITY (OR, SANCTIFICATION) ISSUES. **ONLY AS WE DO NOT OBEY GOD IN THESE AREAS DOES OUR WILLFUL DISOBEDIENCE BECOME A SALVATION ISSUE.**
- The apostles obviously placed great importance on many areas of Christian maturity, such as: Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 6:22-25), the Gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:1, 14:1), Holiness in Spirit, Conduct and Appearance (Ephesians 5:27, 1 Thessalonians 4:1,4, 5:22, 1 Timothy 2:9-10, 2 Corinthians 6:17, 7:1), Submission (Ephesians 5:21, Philippians 2:3), Proper Use of Christian Liberty (1 Corinthians 8:9,13, 10:32), Good Works (Ephesians 2:10, Titus 1:16, James 2:17-18), Doctrinal and Spiritual Maturity (Ephesians 4:14-15, Hebrews 6:1), etc, etc, etc.
- While one can certainly OBTAIN salvation without understanding or immediately experiencing all of these areas, the apostles cast certain doubt on one being able to MAINTAIN their salvation without a desire for a progressing experience (Hebrews 10:23-24,28, James 2:14,26, 4:8).
- IT IS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS TO KNOW AND NOT DO!
- Only an immature or backslidden believer would ever ask “Do I have to?” when it’s in the Word!

## **A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON HOLINESS:**

### **1. HOLINESS IS AN ABSOLUTE REQUIREMENT FOR CHRISTIANS.**

**1 Peter 1:15-16** *But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

**1 Corinthians 3:16-17** *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*

### **2. HOLINESS MUST INVOLVE SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD.**

**2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1** *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

### **3. GOD HATES THOSE WHO REJECT HOLINESS.**

**1 Thessalonians 4:7-8** *For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.*

**2 Peter 2:1-22** <sup>1</sup> *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. <sup>2</sup> And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of ... <sup>12</sup> But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; <sup>13</sup> And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; <sup>14</sup> Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children ... <sup>17</sup> These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. <sup>18</sup> For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. <sup>19</sup> While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. <sup>20</sup> For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. <sup>21</sup> For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. <sup>22</sup> But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.*

#### 4. GOD DEMANDS AN EXTERNAL WITNESS OF OUR INTERNAL HOLINESS.

**Romans 12:1-2** <sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

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

**1 Timothy 5:24-25** <sup>24</sup> Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some [men] they follow after. <sup>25</sup> Likewise also the good works [of some] are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid. (VERSE 25, AMPLIFIED BIBLE: "So also good deeds are evident and conspicuous, and even when they are not, they cannot remain hidden indefinitely.")

#### 5. WE ARE NOT SAVED BY WORKS, BUT WE ARE SAVED UNTO WORKS.

**Ephesians 2:8-10** <sup>8</sup> For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: <sup>9</sup> Not of works, lest any man should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

**Titus 3:5-8** <sup>5</sup> Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; <sup>6</sup> Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; <sup>7</sup> That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. <sup>8</sup> This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

**James 2:14-26** <sup>14</sup> What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? <sup>15</sup> If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, <sup>16</sup> And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? <sup>17</sup> Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. <sup>18</sup> Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. <sup>19</sup> Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. <sup>20</sup> But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? <sup>21</sup> Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? <sup>22</sup> Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? <sup>23</sup> And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. <sup>24</sup> Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. <sup>25</sup> Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? <sup>26</sup> For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Have you ever noticed that to every church in Revelation 2-3, God says, "I KNOW THY WORKS"? They all have faith, but God pronounces judgment and blessing on each church based on WORKS!

**HOLINESS IS NOT A MEANS OF EARNING SALVATION BUT A RESULT OF EARNING IT!**

**Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.** (1 Chronicles 16:29, Psalm 29:2, Psalm 96:9)

- **WORSHIP** - "shachah" - bow down, do obeisance, stoop, prostrate oneself - **SUBMIT TO**
- **LORD** - "yehovah" - the self-existing One, the inexpressible proper name of God - **JEHOVAH**
- **BEAUTY** - "hadarah" - holy adornment, glory, comeliness, ornament - **EXTERNAL ADORNMENT**
- **HOLINESS** - "qodesh" - apartness, separateness, consecrated, tabooed - **SEPARATION**
  
- "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness and in holy array" (Amplified Bible)
- "Bow down to Yahweh in the adornment of holiness" (Emphasized Bible)
- "Worship the Lord in holy attire" (New American Bible)

**Submit to Jehovah in the external adornment of separation!** (literal reading)

Much could be said at this point about internal holiness. It is a grievous error to preach external standards without preaching internal standards! However, modern spirit-filled Christians often pride themselves on being “holy on the inside” while remaining “unaffected on the outside.” This is an equally grievous error before God! We must have holiness both inside and outside! Our purpose in this series is to deal with **PRACTICAL HOLINESS**, that is, how your internal holiness affects your external lifestyle.

IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT EXTERNAL COMPLIANCE IS WORTHLESS BEFORE GOD UNLESS THERE IS ALSO AN INTERNAL REALITY OF HOLINESS. Internal issues are obviously the most important; therefore, we spend much more time teaching them. However, the preeminence of internals does not negate the place of externals, which are simply manifestations of the inward qualities. For example, we are saved by the work of the Holy Ghost, not by tongues. Speaking in tongues alone does not send us to heaven, and the lack of tongues alone does not condemn us to hell. Nevertheless, the initial sign of tongues definitely illustrates the reality of someone receiving the Spirit.

### **SALVATION IS A FREE GIFT, BUT SANCTIFICATION IS A COSTLY EXPERIENCE!**

- **Luke 9:62** *And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*
- **Matthew 16:24-27** <sup>24</sup> *Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.* <sup>25</sup> *For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.* <sup>26</sup> *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* <sup>27</sup> *For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.*

### **QUESTIONS CONCERNING PRACTICAL HOLINESS:**

#### **1. WHERE DOES HOLINESS TEACHING ORIGINATE?**

- The supreme source of holiness teaching is **the Bible** itself. Therefore, a holiness standard must either be a specific Biblical statement or a valid application of a Biblical principle.
- God has also given us **spiritual leadership** in the church to help us apply Biblical principles to the situations we encounter in contemporary life. (Ephesians 4:11-16)
- Finally, **the Holy Spirit** teaches us directly through internal promptings and convictions - if we will listen! (John 14:26, 16:13, Jeremiah 31:33, 1 John 2:27)
- Our “three holiness teachers” work together and complement one another, but the Bible is our final authority. God does not give human beings the right to change His message, nor will the indwelling Spirit of God speak contrary to the written Word He Himself inspired.

#### **2. WHAT ARE HOLINESS STANDARDS?**

- In the Old Testament, a standard was a banner that was lifted up or displayed before the people on a pole as a rallying point or signal. In Numbers 21:8-9, this same word is used to indicate the pole upon which the bronze serpent was placed. It was customary to give a standard as a token of protection, and that was regarded as the surest pledge of fidelity. God’s lifting up or setting up a standard (Isaiah 11:12, 59:19) implies a particular presence, protection and leading of His people in the execution of His righteous will. (Unger’s Bible Dictionary)
- The modern dictionary definition of “STANDARD” is: (1) something established by authority, custom, or general consent as a model or example; (2) a means of determining what a thing should be; (3) a test of quality whether formulated as a rule or not; (4) a simple test for determining the authenticity or value of something intangible.
- Quite simply, holiness standards are NOT the “tangible part” of holiness - that is an internal work of God’s Spirit. However, they ARE an external sign that an authentic work of salvation and subsequent Christian maturity have taken place. Thus, they are a “test of quality.”
- There are three types of holiness standards: (1) Bible Standards, which are explicitly commanded in Scripture and demand immediate obedience; (2) Church Standards, which are established by spiritual leadership to deal with the practical application of Scriptural principles in modern situations, and are usually understood and implemented gradually as a believer matures; (3) Personal Standards, which are prompted by the Holy Spirit in individual lives due to the unique background of each believer, and may have no relevance to any other believer.



### **3. ARE EXTERNAL STANDARDS A TYPE OF PHARISEEISM, HYPOCRISY OR LEGALISM?**

- Jesus' main problem with the Pharisees was not that they appeared holy, but that their outer holiness was only a façade to camouflage their inner sin. Paul consistently taught external holiness, but he condemned some for merely "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" and admonished us "from such turn away." (2 Timothy 3:5)
- Jesus used the word "hypocrite" ("godless actor") to describe the Pharisees seven times in Matthew 23. And yet, He made a distinction between the righteous principles they taught and the unrighteous actions they committed. "All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." (Matthew 23:3)
- Legalism is the act of basing one's salvation on their own good works, or imposing non-Biblical rules to earn salvation. This is strongly condemned by the Bible (Romans 3-4, Galatians 3). However, the proper alternative to legalism is not the absence of God's laws, but the proper relationship to God's laws. We realize that we have a RELATIONSHIP to God on the basis of GRACE, but also certain RESPONSIBILITIES to God on the basis of GRATITUDE.
- Thus, the only case in which external standards could be Pharisaical, hypocritical or legalistic is when there is no corresponding relationship with God on the inside. This is a much rarer case than many today would have you believe. Quite simply, anyone can live like the world! Those who are separated from the world in externals are usually very much in love with Jesus.

### **4. WHY ARE PRACTICAL HOLINESS ISSUES MENTIONED INFREQUENTLY IN SCRIPTURE?**

- Proverbs 25:2 says "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter." The Bible is a goldmine, with much treasure hidden beneath its surface. The more you search in the original languages and background, the more beauty you behold. Some resent the necessity of "digging for truth" (spending quality time in serious, prayerful study) and feel that we should only obey what "lays on the surface" of God's Word. But they have missed the treasure - and the point! God designed His Word so that the plan of salvation is obvious to the sinner, but the paths of sanctification are apparent only to the serious student.
- Some have taught that you must have two or three Scriptures to teach any holiness standard, using 2 Corinthians 13:1, Deuteronomy 17:6, Deuteronomy 19:15, 1 Timothy 5:19 and Matthew 18:16 ("in the mouth of two or three witnesses") for support. What they have completely overlooked is that each of these verses deal with the discipline of an individual who has sinned under the law (either OT or NT). This is a LEGALISTIC concept. A much BETTER concept is to keep the spirit and counsel of the entire Bible in each case. If the Bible consistently looks upon certain types of conduct as evil, we are foolish to condone them simply because several "proof texts" are not available. The listing of the Fruit of the Spirit and the Gifts of the Spirit (as well as many other things) appear only ONCE in God's Word. Should we discard them for lack of "two or three witnesses"? No, because they agree with the entire COUNSEL of the Bible.

### **5. WHY DO MANY EXTERNAL STANDARDS SEEM TO AFFECT LADIES MORE THAN MEN?**

- The reason there seem to be "more rules" for women is that God created men and women differently (even if that is not a "politically correct" thing to say!).
- Men are stimulated by sight. This is why Jesus said, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." (Matthew 5:28) A man is always attracted to a woman physically before he is connected to her emotionally. That is why pornography is sold almost exclusively to men. Statisticians tell us that even the majority of pornographic magazines published for women are actually purchased by men (homosexuals).
- Women on the other hand are stimulated by touch, either a physical touch or an emotional touch. That is why Paul gives a different command concerning women: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman." (1 Corinthians 7:1) So, while a woman is commanded to APPEAR a certain way so that the man is not stimulated, the man is commanded to ACT a certain way so that the woman is not stimulated.
- That is why there are more "external standards" for women. The additional "rules" for appearance are for the lady's own protection, to protect her from the lusts of man.
- In actuality, standards of ACTION are often harder to keep than mere standards of APPEARANCE. In 1 Timothy 2:8, just before he mentions "external standards" for godly women, Paul mentions three strict requirements for godly men: (1) Lift up holy hands (a body free from sin), (2) Worship without wrath (a spirit free from anger), (3) Worship without doubting (a mind free from doubt). Men, these are some of YOUR "holiness standards"!

## 6. WHAT HAPPENS TO A BELIEVER WHO REJECTS EXTERNAL HOLINESS STANDARDS?

- This question can best be answered by comparing the state of five different individuals according to the Word of God:

CURRENT STATUS	INTERNAL HOLINESS	EXTERNAL HOLINESS	FUTURE STATUS	SCRIPTURE REFERENCE
Sinner	None	None; even their good works are not accounted as righteousness by God	Lost	Romans 3:23 Proverbs 21:4
Immature Believer	Present through Justification	Not yet developed through Sanctification	Saved, if Holiness is allowed to develop	Romans 5:1 1 Thessalonians 4:1
			Lost, if Holiness is rejected	
Hypocritical Believer	Not present because they are backslidden in heart	Good works are maintained, but are not accounted as righteousness by God	Saved, if they repent of their sin	1 John 1:6 1 John 1:9 Ezekiel 3:20
			Lost, if they continue to live in hypocrisy	
Worldly Believer	Present through Justification	Good works have been abandoned for convenience and worldly acceptance	Saved, if they return to doing good works	Romans 5:1 1 John 2:15 Titus 1:16 Revelation 2:5
			Lost, if Holiness is continually stifled	
Mature Believer	Present through Justification	Continually developing through Sanctification	Saved	Romans 5:1 Romans 6:22 1 Thessalonians 3:13

## 7. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I DO NOT FEEL CONVICTED ABOUT A CERTAIN STANDARD?

- First, you should carefully and prayerfully study the Word of God on your own, allowing it to convict you. Many times the Holy Ghost will illuminate your understanding through the anointed preaching and teaching of God's Word as well. Your responsibility is to willingly submit to God's Word as it is revealed to your spirit. James tells us to "receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21)
- In cases where principles of holiness must be practically applied, there might be cases where you view things differently than other Christians. In these areas, your responsibility is to submit to the man of God who has been placed over you. You cannot be saved without submitting to your pastor! If you can't submit to the one you have, find another one!
- Romans 10:14 says, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"
- Hebrews 13:17 says, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

## 8. HOW CAN I DEVELOP REAL INTERNAL HOLINESS?

- The good news is that if you are a Spirit-filled child of God, you already have internal holiness, for God's Spirit is holy! However, you must let Him reign in your life - both inside and outside.
- Since holiness is God's very nature, when we receive the Holy Spirit we receive a holy nature. Through the Spirit's power, we can overcome sin and live righteously (Romans 8:2-4, Galatians 5:16, 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8). We have freedom from sin's dominion, the power to choose not to sin (John 8:34-36, Romans 6:11-25). We will not continue to live in sin, and in fact our new nature cannot sin (1 John 3:9). However, our old nature is not eradicated but merely subdued within us, so our flesh still has the ability to commit sinful acts (1 John 1:8, 2:1, Galatians 5:6-17). However, the born again nature within us restrains us from habitually committing sin. As long as we let the Spirit lead us, we will not sin!
- The law of the Spirit does not destroy the law of sin but overcomes it. As long as a bird flaps its wings, the law of aerodynamics enables it to overcome the law of gravity. However, gravity has not been destroyed. If the bird folds its wings, gravity reasserts itself and the bird plunges to the ground. Christians can live above sin - if they continually "flap their spiritual wings!"

## Review Basic Holiness Principles

- The word “holiness” carries the meaning of “separate” or “apart.” Being holy does not only mean withdrawing **FROM** something, it means withdrawing **UNTO** something.
- We are not separate merely to make others look unholy! Rather, we **WITHDRAW** into man’s original state of communion with God as we live holy lives.
- That is why in almost every place Paul refers to holiness, he does not refer only to **CULTURE**, but takes us all the way back to **CREATION** (the original state).
- Paul therefore calls for compliance in matters of “**PRACTICAL HOLINESS**” on the basis of **CREATION**, because we were created to fellowship with God in holiness.
- **THREE TIMES IN ONLY SIXTEEN VERSES, PAUL REFERS TO THE ORDER OF CREATION!**
- Salvation is a process! When we receive JUSTIFICATION at the time of our initial salvation, we are saved from the PENALTY of sin. If we then allow God to lead us into a state of holy living, He performs in us an ongoing work of SANCTIFICATION that saves us daily from the POWER of sin. If we allow that process to continue, we will finally receive GLORIFICATION at the time of the Rapture, and be forever saved from the very PRESENCE of sin.
- **However, it is vital to remember that we can “short-circuit” this lifelong process and forfeit our salvation entirely if we do not allow God to lead us into sanctification (“separation”).**
- The Bible teaches that we are not saved **BY** good works, but we are saved **UNTO** good works. Therefore, holiness is not a **MEANS** of earning salvation, but it is always a **RESULT** of salvation.
- **Most issues of holiness are not salvation issues; they are Christian maturity (sanctification) issues.** That is why these teachings are sometimes mentioned infrequently in Scripture (God expects a mature believer to only need it said ONCE - much like the obedience you would expect of your mature child!). They may even need to be “dug out” by prayerful study of the context, culture, background and language of the Bible (again, something God expects of the mature believer!).
- Only as we do not obey God in these areas does our willful disobedience become a salvation issue. It is extremely dangerous to **know** God’s commandments and not **obey** them!
- The **preeminence** of **internal holiness** does not negate the **place** of **external holiness!**

## Put the Book in Context

- The church in Corinth was founded by Paul as a result of 18 months of labour there (Acts 18:1, 11).
- After Paul’s departure, grave disorders broke out, and he made at least three visits to Corinth to try to straighten out the problems (2 Corinthians 12:14, 13:1). He also wrote at least four letters to the Corinthian church, but we only have record of two of them (1 Corinthians 5:9, 2 Corinthians 7:8). **First & Second Corinthians are really Second & Fourth Corinthians.**
- First Corinthians (the second letter) was written in response to several questions from the members of the church to Paul (see 1 Corinthians 7:1).
- The lowest accusation of the day was to call someone a “Corinthian,” which meant to be sexually immoral. God still wanted to build a church there, but the Corinthian Christians had allowed the sins of the city inside their church! Believers – not sinners – were hindering the work of God!
- **THE MAIN PROBLEM OF THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH WAS THAT ITS SELF-CENTERED MEMBERS CONSTANTLY TRIED TO EXERCISE PERSONAL FREEDOM WITHOUT REGARD FOR THE NEEDS OF OTHERS OR THE GLORY OF GOD!**

## Put the Chapter in Context

- In First Corinthians, Paul deals with: Envy, strife and division in the church (chap. 1-3), Judgmental attitudes, especially toward those in leadership (chap. 4), Rebuke for the toleration of sin (chap. 5), Reproof for going to court against brethren, warning against moral impurity (chap. 6).
- Only after dealing with these pressing issues did Paul turn (see 1 Corinthians 7:1) to the questions asked by the Corinthians. As Jesus said, some matters are weightier than others (Matthew 23:23). **It would be of no benefit for the church to be externally holy in appearance and action if they were not first internally holy in the attitude of their heart!**
- Who is First Corinthians written to? Who is chapter 11 written to? Does it merely deal with a cultural problem at Corinth, or does it contain PRINCIPLES of holiness that apply cross-culturally?
- 1 Corinthians 1:2 - “in every place” applies to all churches in all cultures (Jew, Greek, Roman, etc.)

## Know the Symbolism of Hair in the Bible

- Some will say, "I just obey God's direct commands – symbols don't matter to God." **Get real!** Tell that to Israel who kept feast days, made sacrifices, and built a Tabernacle. Tell it to Moses who forfeited his entrance into the Promised Land because he smote the rock one extra time and broke typology. Tell it to Joash who forfeited victory over the Syrians because he didn't smite the ground enough times with his arrows. Tell it to Jesus who instituted the Lord's Supper. Tell it to Peter who redirected first century evangelism to the Gentiles because of one symbolic vision. Tell it to John who received almost all of his grand vision of the last days in symbolic language. **SYMBOLS DO MATTER TO GOD!**
- Hair had a role in the Law of Jealousies (Numbers 5). When a woman's hair was loosed ("uncover the woman's head"), she lost her symbol of morality. Scholars believe the sentence for those guilty of adultery was to have their heads shaved ("the woman shall be a curse among her people").
- A Jewish man marrying a Prisoner of War (Deuteronomy 21) would shave her head. Since this was a mark of shame for a woman, it completely repudiated her old life as a Gentile. Scholars agree that, once she became an Israelite, her hair would be allowed to grow again.
- The Nazarite Vow (Numbers 6) had three specific restrictions: they could not eat things made with grapes, they could not touch a corpse, they could not cut their hair for a specified time. Other than three rare exceptions (Samson, Samuel, and probably John the Baptist), a Nazarite would always cut their hair after a specified time – usually 30 days according to the Mishna, although double and triple vows for 60 and 100 days were sometimes made. The Nazarite vow resembled the sanctified life of the priest, except that it was done spontaneously unto God by ordinary Israelites. This vow not only set a man apart but also shamed him, perhaps signifying the shame Jesus would endure.
- Some contend that because women also took Nazarite vows (Numbers 6:2), they cut their hair as men did at the end of the vow. However, they have overlooked the fact that a woman's vow was ALWAYS subject to her father's or her husband's approval. God Himself specifies this limitation in Numbers 30:1-16. Since the entire point of this limitation was **submission**, and the Bible explicitly teaches that a woman's hair is a **symbol of submission**, many scholars and historians believe that while women let their hair be "UNKEMPT" for the specified time, they did not cut it at all.
- Some contend that while Paul taught men to have short hair, he himself took a Nazarite vow, basing this opinion on Acts 18:18 - "*And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.*" However, the "vow" referred to in this verse is from "euche," the same word used in James 5:15 for the "prayer" of faith. Paul did not **shave** his head because he was finishing a Nazarite vow, for the New Testament church did not practice that! Rather, he had just been delivered from the court of Gallio, so he needed to **cut** ("kiero") his hair because he was going to prayer! **Paul knew that God cared what his hair looked like!**
- **NOTE THAT JESUS WAS NOT A NAZARITE, BUT A NAZARENE ("OF NAZARETH").** He drank the fruit of the vine, touched dead bodies (and raised them from the dead!), and had short hair! All men of Christ's day wore their hair short. The Talmud states that the hairstyle was Julian (like Caesar) and that priests cut their hair once every 30 days (based on Ezekiel 44:20 - "*Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long; they shall only poll their heads*").
- Until very recently, images of Israelites were not found depicted in ancient artifacts unearthed by archaeologists. This is obviously because of the injunction against the making of graven images. There are plentiful ancient depictions of the Assyrians, Philistines and other heathen nations with long hair and beards, often woven together. However, an image recently discovered in Northern Israel shows Israelites being enslaved by the ancient Philistines. All of the Israelite men depicted have their hair cut very short, unlike the manner of the heathen who lived round about Israel.
- God's judgments on backsliding Israel were symbolized by the shaving of the head or cutting of the hair (Isaiah 3:24 – "*instead of well set hair baldness*", Jeremiah 7:29 – "*cut off thine hair*"), and His blessings when they repented were symbolized by growing hair (Ezekiel 16:7 – "*thine hair is grown*"). Israel – God's "wife" – is always symbolically presented as a WOMAN!
- Shame or judgment on a MAN was symbolized by the extremes of baldness or shaving the head (Ezra 9:3, 2 Kings 2:23) or by his long hair (Daniel 4:33, the Nazarite vow).
- **There is not one verse in the entire Bible that looks favorably on a woman cutting her hair!**

## Recognize the Historical Significance of Hair

- Due to the consistent association of hair with rebellion, it would certainly be valid and Biblical for godly leadership to make a case from history for a “church standard” concerning hair. **However, because we have a direct Bible standard concerning hair, there is no need for them to do so.**
- It is still a good practice to investigate the “associations” involved with hair in human history. In doing so, we find that there was no issue at all for the first 5900 years of recorded history!
- The widespread practice of women cutting their hair began in the United States in the “Roaring Twenties,” a decade defined by its spirit of frivolity, materialism, immorality and rebellion. The world had survived World War I, but not without paying the price of great societal upheaval. During the 1920’s, no national issue aroused U.S. citizens like that of “bobbed hair.”
- *Marian Spitzer, “The Erstwhile Crowning Glory” (The Saturday Evening Post, June 27, 1925):* “There hasn’t been a newspaper printed for the last two years ... that hasn’t carried some sort of little story ... about women’s hair. It used to be a woman’s crowning glory, but now it’s just hair.”
- *Ann Harding, “Your Crowning Glory” (Ladies Home Journal, March 1927):* “The most radical change in the costume of women in our times has been the change in hair styles. Hair really is the crowning glory of a woman ... her hair still remains the most telling item of her appearance. And now short hair is considered chic. It is also the symbol of the freedom of women.”
- The number of hairdressing shops quadrupled in four years. Some department stores and hospitals discharged all their female employees with bobbed hair. Many men divorced their wives. A Missouri court in 1926 awarded custody of three children to private homes with “Christian influences” because their mother bobbed her hair. Hair was the “O.J. Simpson case” of the day!
- God brought judgment upon the United States for this decade of open rebellion and immorality on October 24, 1929 when the stock market crashed on “Black Tuesday.” A coincidence? Hardly!
- The “Angry Decade” of the Sixties again brought rebellion against God, with rioting, drug use, the hippie culture, unisex clothing, eastern religions, atheism, rock and roll music and free sex. Is it a coincidence that long hairstyles for men entered our culture during this period of time? Hardly! This “hair revolution” was started by the Beatles in the spring of 1964. According to one estimate, barber shops across America were forced to close at the rate of one hundred a month as young men displayed their rebellion against “the establishment” through their shaggy disheveled hair.
- It is worthy of note that nearly all subsequent rebellion in society has been identified with hairstyle (i.e. punk rockers, skinheads) or clothing. It is clearly ridiculous to claim there is no association!

## Recognize the Spiritual Significance of Hair

- If only Christians knew what witches and New Agers know! **There is “power on [the] head” because of what we do with our hair!** What God meant for good, the devil wants to use for evil!
- *The Encyclopedia of Superstition, Folklore and The Occult Sciences of the World, page 282:* “Women’s hair is a most precious amulet and wards off a great many evils and diseases.”
- *The Power of Magic Secrets and Mysteries Ancient and Modern, page 74:* “Hair has always been considered strong magic; witches casting an evil spell needed a piece of hair from their victim to make it truly efficacious.”
- *The Women’s Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects, page 313:* “Women’s hair carried heavy symbolic and spiritual significance in Oriental Religions. Tantric sages proclaimed that the binding or unbinding of women’s hair could control cosmic powers of creation and destruction.”
- *The Donning International Encyclopedic Psychic Dictionary, page 269:* “Hair has psychical powers that act as a protection from evil entities of the etheric world; cutting of the hair was done in a ritual to discontinue this protection; it is symbolic of strength. It contributes to one’s personality, and is a mark of identification; to shave one’s head is to remove one’s self-image so one can begin a new self-image.”
- *Encyclopedia on Witches and Witchcraft, page 149:* “A witch’s magical power is bound in her hair; by shaking her hair in the wind, the power of a spell is doubled.”
- *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology, page 572:* “Hair has had an occult significance since ancient times. It has been regarded as a source of strength. The association of hair with sexual features of the body has given it remarkable force, and distinctions between male and female hair have emphasized sexual attraction. The unisex fashions of the permissive society and rock groups have tended to create sexual confusion and neurotic behavior.”
- Think of the “classic image” of a witch ... it is a woman with long, scraggly uncut hair. **WHY? Because the evil side of the supernatural realm knows there is power associated with hair!**

While it is certainly important and enlightening to examine these areas, it goes without saying that such facts mean nothing unless the Bible actually teaches this principle! Note that the 1 Corinthians 11:1-16 passage is longer than either of the “lists” of the Nine Gifts and Nine Fruit of the Spirit and (like them) its contents agree with the entire tenor of Scripture on the subject. If they are important doctrines, this must be important also! To understand “The Hair Question,” we MUST understand this crucial passage.

## Find Out What The Bible Says – Put Each Verse in Context

- v. 1 – Here and in several other places in the New Testament, Paul teaches that each of us is to be an example for others to follow. It is the perfect transition verse between chapter 10, which teaches us not to damage our witness among fellow CHRISTIANS by our actions (eating meat sacrificed to idols), and chapter 11, which teaches us not to damage our witness in our CULTURE by our actions (women not wearing a veil). **The examples given in both cases are specific to Corinth, but the principles taught are undeniably cross-cultural and for all time.**
- v. 2 – Paul was appreciative of the kindness of the Corinthians to him, but that would not have sufficed had they not kept his teachings! The word “ordinances” here is “paradosis” or “traditions.” In several places in the New Testament, Paul teaches things which are not direct commandments from God, but which he expects to be followed because they have grown out of his experience as an apostle or elder in the church. (1 Corinthians 7:6 – “*But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment*” / 2 Thessalonians 3:6 – “*withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us*” / 1 Corinthians 7:12 – “*But to the rest speak I, not the Lord*”) We never go wrong by submitting to the teaching of godly elders!
- v. 3 – The Apostle Paul, when dealing with matters of minor importance (here, the wearing of veils) in his epistles, will usually first enunciate the grand eternal principle on which his conviction rests. Here, before giving an admonition to the Corinthian women about their **APPEARANCE**, he shows them how they should be under **AUTHORITY** (“kephale” – “head”). A submissive heart on the inside will always demonstrate a submissive demeanor on the outside!
- v. 3 – Is this idea of being under authority culturally determined (like “*greet one another with a holy kiss*” – Romans 16:16) or is it an absolute principle for all time? The answer is found in the last phrase, “*and the head of Christ [humanity] is God [divinity].*” The nature of God is in no way culturally conditioned! It is the absolute reality for all time! **Our submission is based on that truth.** In God’s economy a subordinate role does not imply inferiority, just as Jesus was equal to the Father in His divinity, but submissive to the Father’s will in His humanity.
- BACKGROUND:**  
The problem in the Corinthian church was not with Christian women cutting their hair – **every reputable Bible scholar emphatically states that moral women in all cultures of Paul’s day did not!** The problem was that Christian women, enamored with their newfound freedom in Christ, were no longer wearing veils as their culture demanded. This unintentionally identified them with the heathen priestesses in the local temples to Apollo and Aphrodite who offered their worship bareheaded with disheveled hair, and thus by association with the hundreds of temple prostitutes who even cut off their hair to offer it in sensuous religious rites. That is why Paul tells them in the same epistle, “*All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.*” (1 Corinthians 10:23)
- v. 4 – Literally, a man is not to worship “wearing something down over his head” (i.e. a veil). This would not be relevant to Paul’s discussion of veils for women, except that he wants to show them the more important principle of headship. A man does not wear a covering which can be seen because his head (Christ) is also invisible.

### 1 Corinthians 11:1-16

<sup>1</sup> Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

<sup>2</sup> Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered *them* to you.

<sup>3</sup> But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman *is* the man; and the head of Christ *is* God.

<sup>4</sup> Every man praying or prophesying, having *his* head covered, dishonoureth his head.

<sup>5</sup> But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with *her* head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

<sup>6</sup> For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

<sup>7</sup> For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

<sup>8</sup> For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.

<sup>9</sup> Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.

<sup>10</sup> For this cause ought the woman to have power on *her* head because of the angels.

<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.

<sup>12</sup> For as the woman *is* of the man, even so *is* the man also by the woman; but all things of God.

<sup>13</sup> Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

<sup>14</sup> Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?

<sup>15</sup> But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for *her* hair is given her for a covering.

<sup>16</sup> But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

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- v. 5 – On the other hand a woman is not to worship “uncovered” (“without a veil”), not necessarily because it invalidates her prayer but because it dishonors her head (her husband or father) in that culture. The woman is to wear a covering which can be seen because her head (the man) is also visible. If she refuses to wear a veil, Paul says that she might as well just shave her head (identifying her with Corinthian slave women and adulteresses) because she is already bringing shame to her husband. (“even all one” – “one and the same thing”)
- v. 6 – Again Paul emphasizes that if a woman is not going to wear a veil, she might as well shame herself by cutting her hair. He states, “if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn [cut hair, identifying with temple prostitutes] or shaven [shaved head, identifying with slaves and adulteresses], let her be covered.” **Scholars agree that these women would never even think of cutting their hair – Paul has made his point! REBELLION IN A “MINOR” AREA IS STILL REBELLION!**
- v. 6 – Is it a **sin** or just a “**shame**” for a woman to cut her hair? This word “shame” comes from the Greek “aischron” which refers to something that is a disgrace. It is the neuter form of “aischros” which is translated “filthy.” In W.E. Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, “aischros” is defined as “that which is opposed to modesty or purity.”
- v. 6 – In spite of its obvious Greek meaning, some still object to the strength of the word “shame” by quoting **1 Corinthians 14:34-35**. (“*Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.*”) By taking these verses out of context, they claim that if we teach women not to cut their hair, we must also teach them not to speak in church since the same word for “shame” is used here. However, if Paul was teaching that, he would be contradicting himself – in the same epistle in which he has already stated that women did pray and prophesy in the church! (1 Corinthians 11:5) **They have overlooked the entire thrust of chapter 14, which is to teach ORDER in church services**, so that EDIFICATION would be the result rather than CONFUSION.
- BACKGROUND:**  
 The church services in ancient Corinth were like a rather informal synagogue meeting, in which the men and women sat in different areas, and only the men were allowed to ask questions of the speaker. Many of the women addressed here by Paul had recently been converted from heathenism; they were hungry for the gospel, but had little or no education (due to their subservient role in ancient culture) and were disrupting the meetings with questions shouted to their husbands. The word used for “silence” here is the same word used in 14:28 and 14:30, where Paul is teaching that a message in tongues should not be given without an interpreter and that two prophecies should not be given at the same time. **It is not a mandate to silence the woman in church any more than Paul means to silence messages in tongues or prophecies!** When Paul says it is a shame for women to SPEAK in the church, he uses the Greek word “LALEO” which means “to chatter, babble, prattle, gabble or talk in an undertone.” There are several other Greek words he could have used if he merely meant normal speech. **Rather, Paul is teaching that it is “A DISGRACE, A FILTHY THING” before God for the women to DISRUPT the moving of His Spirit with their idle chatter.** (see 14:32-33, 14:40) **WE MUST BE REVERENT IN THE HOUSE OF GOD!** It is faulty interpretation and dishonest scholarship to twist the meaning of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 in an attempt to negate the clear meaning of 1 Corinthians 11:6. To God, **SHAME IS SIN!**
- v. 6 – The word shaven is self-explanatory (“cut near the surface, make bare or smooth”), but what does shorn (Greek “keiro”) mean? Most scholars and translators see it as meaning “cut with shears, remove by cutting” **WITHOUT SPECIFYING HOW MUCH**. It seems that hair is “shorn” if it is cut at all. **However, to be sure we will need to look beyond this verse for further explanation.**

- v. 7 – Once again, Paul stresses that a man should not cover (i.e. veil) his head while worshipping – or at any other time, since Christians “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17) – since he is the image and glory of God. A woman, on the other hand, is the glory of the man. (Proverbs 12:4 – “A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband, but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.”) A man’s covered head detracts from the headship of Christ, while a woman’s uncovered head detracts from the headship of her husband (or father). **These coverings are symbolic only, but to reject the symbol is to reject authority!**
- v. 7 – The word glory (Greek “doxa”) expresses the fact that man in his redeemed state REFLECTS the image of God. Woman on the other hand is the reflection of man. Man is the only creature that can stand in the presence of God “uncovered” because he is the only creature that is made in the image and likeness of God. Women must have a head covering! Angels must cover their faces!
- v. 8 – Paul reaches back to creation to show the Corinthians that God has decreed this symbolism because of the order of creation and the distinction of the sexes. Man was created first, then woman was created for him. Their roles are complementary, but distinct. This distinction needs to be understood by Christians. It has absolutely nothing to do with intelligence, superiority, or any controversies associated with “women’s liberation.” It has to do only with the order of creation. When a woman enters God’s presence with her hair cut, she removes herself from God’s order.
- v. 8 – God gave man and woman certain unchangeable physical characteristics to distinguish them, but He allowed them to possess **one changeable physical characteristic**. Both men and women can manipulate their hair! Men can grow their hair long and women can cut their hair short, but by conforming to God’s standard, they demonstrate their willingness to accept God’s authority.
- v. 9 – According to Genesis 2:18, God created woman as an help meet (“a helper suitable”) for man. This praises a woman’s strength rather than subordinating her. “Helper” is used more of God than of anyone else in the Old Testament; “suitable” means “appropriate to.” Woman was created because man needed her strength, not to be his servant! A woman praying without a covering breaks God’s order of creation.
- v. 10 – Paul can never rest until he has based his rules of conduct on large eternal principles which may be applied under all conditions. **Nowhere else does Paul exert so much emphasis in using so many comparisons as here.** There is good reason godly women choose to be under authority!
- v. 10 – Because of her unique place in God’s creation, a submitted woman has “**power**” on her head. This word “**exousia**” means “**liberty of action (permission), authority (influence), delegated power (jurisdiction)**” and pictures the woman exercising her God-given right to guard her home, her husband, her children and her church.
- v. 10 – An ancient Jewish rabbi named Simeon used to say, “If a woman’s head be uncovered, evil angels come and sit upon it.”
- v. 10 – If a woman is willing to submit to her role (“for this cause”), she will have power on her head “**BECAUSE OF THE ANGELS.**” This phrase could have one of four possible meanings, but the first two meanings (especially the first one) have the weight of Biblical scholarship behind them:
  1. **HOLY ANGELS** – As these angels veil their faces before God, so the godly woman wears a veil. The holy angels receive “delegated power” as they submit to God, just like the godly woman. These angels were present at creation, and know the order of creation!
  2. **EVIL ANGELS** – These fallen angels are constantly looking for an opportunity to destroy. Rebellion opens the door to evil (1 Samuel 15:23), but submission to God’s authority blocks their efforts. These angels were also present at creation, and know the order of creation!

## 1 Corinthians 11:1-16

<sup>1</sup> Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

<sup>2</sup> Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered *them* to you.

<sup>3</sup> But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman *is* the man; and the head of Christ *is* God.

<sup>4</sup> Every man praying or prophesying, having *his* head covered, dishonoureth his head.

<sup>5</sup> But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with *her* head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

<sup>6</sup> For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

<sup>7</sup> For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

<sup>8</sup> For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.

<sup>9</sup> Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.

<sup>10</sup> For this cause ought the woman to have power on *her* head because of the angels.

<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.

<sup>12</sup> For as the woman *is* of the man, even so *is* the man also by the woman; but all things of God.

<sup>13</sup> Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

<sup>14</sup> Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?

<sup>15</sup> But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for *her* hair is given her for a covering.

<sup>16</sup> But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.



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11:1-16**

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3. **MINISTERS** – The word “angel” (or “messenger”) is used for ministers in both the Old Testament (Malachi 2:7) and New Testament (Revelation 1:20). In this view, women should wear veils to avoid inadvertently drawing the attention or affection of the ministry.

4. **HEATHEN SPIES** – This same word is used in James 2:25 to refer to the spies Joshua sent into Jericho. In this view, women should wear veils because the heathen constantly sent spies into Christian assemblies to report on violations of public decorum.

- v. 10 – A godly woman’s uncut hair is the mark of her authority in the presence of God, and in the world of angels and demons. Greek scholar Marvin Treece teaches: *“When you come into the presence of God having your hair cut, or you have some idea in your head of changing your image to look like a man in some way, it changes your relationship with God, and you have no authority. I would adjure you, do not attempt to cast out demons with your hair cut, Sister!”* Both angels and demons (fallen angels) recognize spiritual authority - and they know when it is not present!
- v. 11 – Paul inserts this to prevent anyone from falsely concluding that one sex is superior to the other in the sight of God. Men and women (especially couples) are interdependent in their relationship to God. **Men and women are equal in rights but not equivalent in roles.**
- v. 12 – While woman originally came from man, every man since Adam has come from a woman. Ultimately, both sexes come from God, deriving their value and uniqueness from submitting to Him.
- v. 13 – Now Paul moves to the crux of the matter. **JUDGE IN YOURSELVES!** After everything Paul has taught, the only logical conclusion is that it is not “COMELY” (“becoming”) for a woman to worship if she is unwilling to submit to authority by wearing a veil. This is one of Paul’s rhetorical questions that must be answered in the negative (*“Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?”* - 1 Corinthians 1:13).
- v. 14 – **This is the clincher of Paul’s argument.** It is not unreasonable for him to insist that men pray unveiled, because nature teaches a similar lesson. Man’s inbred sense of propriety (“nature” or “instinct”) makes virtually every society look at long hair on a man as uncomely. **BUT HOW DOES “NATURE ITSELF” TEACH THIS?** Take a look at a number of men who have reached mature years, and no doubt the answer will stand out prominently. We find very few bald women in humanity, but as men age most of them will experience some baldness, by some complex genetic mechanism. God clears off the head of man as time goes on! Only sickness is associated with the balding of women, but many men begin to bald as early as their mid-twenties. Nature’s teaching is so plain that it sometimes escapes our sophisticated minds!
- v. 15 – By the same token, it is not unreasonable for him to insist that the women veil themselves, because nature has already provided them with a natural covering – their long hair! **Paul can insist on the temporary because nature has provided the permanent.**
- v. 15 – The word “glory” (“doxa”) here means “a good opinion resulting in praise.” Literally it means “God has a good opinion of her!” The word further expresses how the woman’s submission in having long hair “reflects” God’s glory (as in verse 7).
- v. 14-15 – **SO HOW LONG IS LONG?** The words “koma” and “kome” which are translated “long” in verses 14-15 mean “UNCUT” or “LET THE HAIR GROW” according to authoritative sources like Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, Thayer’s Lexicon, Gingrich’s Lexicon, Bauer’s Lexicon, Moulton & Miligan’s Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament, and W.E. Vine’s Expository Dictionary.

- v. 14-15 – The verbs in these verses imply “a condition which remains to be seen, expressed in the present tense, active voice, and subjunctive mood.” By expressing himself in this manner, Paul is saying that if a man **CONTINUES** to have short hair (regularly cuts it), he maintains his authority in the presence of God and is not shamed. But, if a woman **CONTINUES** to have uncut (and therefore long) hair, it is a glory to her and she maintains her authority in the presence of God. **THE TENSE AND MOOD OF THE VERBS LEAVE NO ROOM FOR DEBATE!** The condition of a man or woman’s hair is a “continuing and incomplete” project, and must be maintained to be accepted by God. A man maintains this relationship by the continued cutting of his hair, while a woman maintains it by the continued growth of her hair.
- v. 15 – **DO CHRISTIAN WOMEN HAVE TO WEAR A VEIL TODAY?** Not according to Paul’s teaching! As he concludes his teaching on authority and the cultural necessity of wearing a veil, he reminds the women that their long hair is their **REAL** covering. The phrase “for a covering” is translated “INSTEAD OF a covering” by Young’s Literal Translation of the Bible, “TO SERVE AS a covering” by Today’s English Version, and “INSTEAD OF a veil” by the Interlinear Greek-English New Testament. This meaning is also supported by Dana and Mantey’s Grammar, Bauer’s Lexicon, Thayer’s Lexicon, Gingrich’s Lexicon, and several other translations.
- IN GENERAL, CHRISTIAN WOMEN TODAY DO NOT NEED TO WEAR A VEIL BECAUSE:**
  - The wearing of a veil was only a temporary localized custom
  - Old Testament women in general did not wear them. In fact, it was normally prostitutes (i.e. Tamar) who wore veils in the Old Testament.
  - The present eastern practice of women wearing veils comes from the Muslims, not from the Jews or early Christians.
  - The original plan of God does not indicate that women were to wear head veils, although other concerns of dress were specified. Bible scholars call this the “from the beginning” principle – Jesus used it when he bypassed the Law of Moses to show the Pharisees God’s original opinion on divorce (Matthew 19:8)
  - The only time a veil is needed is when culture demands it of modest women. We then observe the practice not because it is necessary before God, but because we want to win our culture to God!
- CHRISTIAN WOMEN TODAY DO NEED TO HAVE LONG UN CUT HAIR BECAUSE:**
  - It demonstrates her acceptance of her God-given role.
  - It demonstrates her submission to her husband (or father).
  - It brings “permission, influence and jurisdiction” in the spirit realm (“power on her head”) because of her submission.
  - The holy angels observe a woman’s submission to God’s authority.
  - It is a disgrace (“shame”) before God for a woman to cut her hair.
  - Nature (“instinct”) teaches us these principles.
  - It maintains a definite line of distinction between the sexes.
  - It is her glory (“God has a good opinion of her!”) and reflects God’s glory.
  - Her submission is a type of the church’s submission to Christ.
  - GOD REQUESTS IT!
- v. 16 – Paul says if any man is a “fight lover” that the churches have “no other practice.” Every reputable translation of Scripture supports this interpretation! It is the only natural summary to Paul’s teaching. **“But there is no direct Biblical command saying women should not cut their hair!”** Paul said, *“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the **COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD.**”* (1 Corinthians 14:3)

**1 Corinthians  
11:1-16**

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**Deuteronomy 22:5** *The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God.*

## WHY DOES THE BIBLE HAVE MORE “EXTERNAL STANDARDS” FOR WOMEN THAN FOR MEN?

- God created men and women differently!
- Men are stimulated by sight. This is why Jesus said, “Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” (Matthew 5:28)
- Notice that Jesus did not say, “Whosoever looketh on a man ...” This is not because it wouldn’t be sin for a woman to visually lust, or because women have no inclination to visually lust, but merely because women are generally not tempted by the lust of the eye as men are.
- In the same way, women are more commonly given to enticing dress than men are. We read in the Scripture of “the attire of an harlot” but never “the attire of an whoremonger.” **Women, not men, are warned especially of this sin in the Scripture (1 Timothy 2:9-10, 1 Peter 3:34)**. This is not because men cannot sin in the way they dress, but merely because the sin of intentional enticement in dress is not so much the sin of men as it is of women.
- Why do fallen women have an innate desire to entice men in the way they appear? Because they instinctively know that men are attracted by sight! Women on the other hand are stimulated by touch (either physical or emotional), but they intuitively realize they cannot get a man to “touch” them unless they first appeal to him visually. That is why Paul gives this command regarding women: “It is good for a man not to touch a woman.” (1 Corinthians 7:1) Godly men must “refrain from touching” (physically or emotionally) even when a woman tries to entice them visually.
- **While a woman is commanded to APPEAR a certain way so that the man is not stimulated, the man is commanded to ACT a certain way so that the woman is not stimulated.**
- That is why there are more “external standards” for women! The additional “rules” for appearance are for the lady’s own protection, to protect her from the lusts of fallen men.

**1 Samuel 16:7** *But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.*

- Does it matter how we appear on the outside if God looks on the heart? ABSOLUTELY! This same verse tells us that man DOES look on the outward appearance. It does matter how we dress!
- **The subject of “Holiness in Dress” is sensitive because it touches what many people treasure most, their pride. WHAT WE WEAR IS VERY MUCH A PART OF WHO WE ARE!**
- Our clothes reveal not only our social and economic levels, but also our moral values. What we wear reveals what we want the world to believe or admire about us!
- People who adorn their bodies with eye-catching cosmetics, jewelry and clothing are seeking for love, attention and acceptance from others. When they become a Christian and discover that God accepts them as they are, in their natural beauty, they gradually lose this desire to decorate their bodies. As they recognize that what Jesus loves most about them is the inward adorning of the heart, they willingly follow the simplicity of Jesus’ lifestyle – even in their clothes and appearance.
- **If external holiness in dress is not developing in the life of a believer, then IMMATURITY, a WORLDLY SPIRIT or INCORRECT TEACHING is to blame!** The concern of most churches is to teach people how to BECOME Christians, while not teaching them how to LIVE as Christians! As a result, there are many SINCERE believers who are sincerely doing what is WRONG before God.

**Hosea 4:6** *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*

- Many ministers preach, “Jesus accepts you no matter how you live or what you wear.” **That message is true, but incomplete!** The good news of the Gospel is that Jesus initially accepts us as we are, **BUT** He will also subsequently empower us to become what we ought to be.
- **We must teach people not only how to PROFESS their faith but how to PRACTICE their faith!**
- Your modest apparel silently tells the world that you live to glorify God and not yourself.

## **CLOTHING IS VERY SIGNIFICANT IN SCRIPTURE!**

- **Clothing for modesty's sake was instituted by God**  
*Genesis 3:21* Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.
- **Nakedness is a mark of shame**  
*Ezekiel 16:39* And I will also give thee into their hand, and they shall throw down thine eminent place, and shall break down thy high places: they shall strip thee also of thy clothes, and shall take thy fair jewels, and leave thee naked and bare.  
*Luke 8:27* And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in [any] house, but in the tombs.
- **Jesus was concerned about external covering as well as internal deliverance**  
*Mark 5:15* And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.
- **Clothing is used to indicate a negative spiritual state**  
*2 Samuel 14:2* And Joab sent to Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman, and said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself to be a mourner, and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead:  
*Psalms 35:13* But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing [was] sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.  
*Psalms 109:18* As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.  
*Psalms 109:29* Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.  
*Ezekiel 7:27* The king shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled: I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I [am] the LORD.
- **The wearing of proper clothing is commanded by God**  
*1 Timothy 2:9* In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;  
*1 Peter 3:3* Whose adorning let it not be that outward [adorning] of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;
- **Improper clothing displeases the Lord greatly**  
*Zephaniah 1:8* And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD'S sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.  
*Deuteronomy 22:5* The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so [are] abomination unto the LORD thy God.
- **Those improperly dressed were prohibited from the king's presence**  
*Esther 4:2* And came even before the king's gate: for none [might] enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.
- **A change of clothing was required to be in royal presence or in God's presence**  
*Esther 5:1* Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on [her] royal [apparel], and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.  
*2 Samuel 12:20* Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed [himself], and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.
- **Clothing was used to indicate the blessing of a king**  
*Esther 6:9* And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man [withal] whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.  
*Esther 8:15* And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.

- **A king's glory was evidenced by the clothing of His servants**  
*2 Chronicles 9:4* And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; his cupbearers also, and their apparel; and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her.
- **Clothing is indicative of personal purity**  
*2 Samuel 13:18* And [she had] a garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters [that were] virgins apparelled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her.
- **Clothing is indicative of a repentant attitude**  
*Joshua 7:6* And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads.  
*2 Chronicles 34:19* And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes.  
*2 Chronicles 34:27* Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard [thee] also, saith the LORD.
- **Clothing is used as a type of spirituality**  
*Psalms 132:16* I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.  
*Psalms 132:18* His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish.  
*Zechariah 3:4* And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.  
*Proverbs 31:25* Strength and honour [are] her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.  
*Isaiah 59:17* For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance [for] clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.  
*Job 29:14* I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment [was] as a robe and a diadem.  
*Psalms 132:9* Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.  
*Isaiah 61:10* I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh [himself] with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth [herself] with her jewels.  
*1 Peter 5:5* Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all [of you] be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.
- **Clothing is the identifiable mark of the redeemed in eternity**  
*Revelation 4:4* And round about the throne [were] four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.  
*Revelation 7:9* After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;  
*Revelation 19:14* And the armies [which were] in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.  
*Revelation 19:8* And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

## **THE APOSTATE SPIRIT OF THE LAST DAYS WILL REJECT HOLINESS TEACHING!**

***Isaiah 4:1*** And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.

- The last days church is represented by seven candlesticks in Revelation chapters 1-3.
- The seven would-be brides of Isaiah 4:1 are a prophetic picture of the church in the last days.
- All seven women seek to take hold of one man (i.e. seven churches seek the Lord Jesus Christ).
- Just as the characteristics of all seven churches in Revelation are in evidence today, this type of "apostate attitude" is also found throughout the church world.
- **Many Christians today want to eat their own bread, their own interpretation of God's Word. But this bread is polluted and unacceptable to God!**

**2 Timothy 4:3** For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

**Malachi 1:7** Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible.

- **Many Christians today want to wear their own apparel, rejecting separation from the world, reproof, holiness preaching, spiritual authority, and anything they think is “negative.”**
- These “women” want to be the Bride of Christ, but only on their own terms! They have no desire to submit to the authority of a husband; they are not interested in his needs or his concerns. They want an arrangement that benefits them without intimacy, love or devotion.
- **They want nothing more than forgiveness, to have the reproach of sin removed.**
- **THIS IS THE APOSTATE SPIRIT OF RELIGION IN THE LAST DAYS!**

**PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN APPAREL:**

**1. Dress and appearance are an important indicator of Christian character.**

- The call to dress modestly has echoed throughout Biblical and Christian history, but it is especially relevant today when modesty and decency are out, and nudity and sensuality are in.
- Clothes and appearance are our most powerful nonverbal communicators, not only of our socioeconomic status, but also of our moral values. We are (or soon become) what we wear!
- Our outward appearance is a visible and silent testimony of our Christian values.
- **Some people dress to be admired, pleasing themselves. Other people dress to be accepted, pleasing others. Christians, however, dress to glorify God.**
- Clothes are important for Christians because they serve as a frame to reveal the picture of the One we serve. We cannot say, “What I look like is no one’s business!” because what we look like reflects on our Lord, and show how He has changed our life from the inside out.

**2. Scripture is consistent in its condemnation of improper apparel.**

- The Bible recognizes the critical importance of dress, as indicated by its numerous stories, examples, allegories and admonitions regarding jewelry, cosmetics and clothing.
- Wrong apparel and adornment appeals to (and reveals!) our inner pride, which is spiritually destructive to us and – by our example – to others.
- In both the Old and New Testaments, there is a consistent pattern of the use of colorful cosmetics, glittering jewelry and eye-catching clothes to accomplish seductive purposes. Such a pattern implicitly reveals God’s condemnation of their use!
- **THIS TRUTH IS TAUGHT IMPLICITLY BY MANY NEGATIVE EXAMPLES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND EXPLICITLY BY THE ADMONITIONS OF PAUL AND PETER.**

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE	TYPE OF INSTRUCTION	ACHIEVED BY
Old Testament	Implicit Teaching	Negative Examples
New Testament	Explicit Teaching	Positive Admonitions

- *IMPLICIT* – “implied; capable of being understood from something else though unexpressed”
- *EXPLICIT* – “obvious; so plain there is no ambiguity or reason for difficulty in interpretation”

**3. Christians are required to dress modestly, showing respect for God, themselves and others.**

- To dress modestly implies that clothing must provide sufficient covering for the body so that others are not tempted. **Modesty must conform to GOD’S opinion, not YOUR opinion!**
- The Bible explicitly condemns the lustful look. The revealing clothes of our day awaken lustful passions in the heart of the beholder and contribute immeasurably to the depravity of society.
- By dressing modestly, the Christian woman especially plays a key role in public morality.
- **God calls us to dress modestly not only to prevent sin, but also to preserve intimacy!** Nakedness is a gift from God in marriage, but is a shame and danger when exposed to others. The intimate relationship with one’s spouse (even if not yet married!) is a fragile one – guard it!

4. **Christians must respect gender distinctions in clothing by wearing apparel that affirms their male or female identities. Like most holiness issues, this principle goes back to creation!**
- The Bible attaches great importance to gender distinctions in apparel as well as in roles, since these are fundamental to understanding who we are and what role God wants us to fulfill.
  - A woman who wants to function as a man will dress like a man; a man who wants to be treated like a woman will wear feminine items. When we blur the gender distinctions by wearing genderless clothing, we gradually lose our male or female identity and confuse our roles.
  - Unisex clothing is yet another effort of Satan to destroy the order and beauty of God's creation.
  - **It is not always easy for Christian women to find clothes that affirm their gender identity – but it has never been “easy” to live by Biblical principles!**
5. **Clothes (and other externals) do not make a Christian, but real Christians always reveal their identity through their modest clothing and appearance!**

## **TRACE THE CONCEPT OF APPAREL THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES:**

### **1. MANKIND'S FIRST CLOTHING**

- At first Adam and Eve were “clothed in innocence,” but after sin came their nakedness became a shame and danger to them. Their nakedness did not result from removing physical garments, for they had never worn any. Rather, they became aware of their nakedness because of sin; they now were separated from God's glory which had been their covering.

**Genesis 2:25** *And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*

**Genesis 3:7** *And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

**Genesis 3:10** *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*

**Genesis 3:21** *Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.*

- They tried to cover their nakedness by sewing together fig leaves to make an **APRON**. The Hebrew word **HAGORA** means “girdle, belt, loincloth, apron, loin-covering.” This is a garment covering the pubic region and hips, and is **MAN'S IDEA OF MODEST APPAREL**.
- Verse 10 indicates that Adam and Eve still knew they were “naked” in God's sight!
- Since their covering was not acceptable to God, He used animal skins to make them a **COAT**. The Hebrew word **KUTTONET** means “a tunic with sleeves, coming down to the knees, sometimes to the ankles.” This is a garment with sleeves, covering from the shoulders at least to the knees, and is **GOD'S IDEA OF MODEST APPAREL**. It dates back to Adam and Eve!
- *Definitions from authorities such as: Harris, Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament; Gesenius, Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon; Brown, Driver, Briggs, Hebrew and English Lexicon.*
- **Since God doesn't change, the principles of modest apparel have not changed either!**

### **2. THE MORAL SHAME OF NAKEDNESS**

- The concept of “nakedness” in the Bible can refer either to nudity or to partial nakedness (not being adequately or fully clothed). The context of the word determines which meaning it has.
- For example, Job 1:21 refers to nudity while John 21:7 refers to being partially clothed.

**Job 1:21** *And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.*

**John 21:7** *Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.*

- Keil and Delitzsch: “A person was looked upon as stripped and naked if he had only taken off his upper [outer] garment.” (STILL WEARING A “TUNIC”)

- This is why the Bible says David danced before the Lord “uncovered” (2 Samuel 6:20), Isaiah prophesied before the Lord “naked” (Isaiah 20:2), and the men of Jerusalem “cast off their clothes” (Acts 22:23). **This is not referring to nudity, but to being “in common language ... lightly clad”** (Liddell and Scott, Greek-English Lexicon). Thus, there is NO MORAL SHAME involved here, since the person is PARTIALLY CLOTHED, BUT COVERED.
- However, there are other instances in Scripture where a person is PARTIALLY CLOTHED, BUT UNCOVERED. In these cases, they expose themselves to MORAL SHAME. Notice that in the following references, either the uncovered TORSO or THIGH (upper leg) bring shame:

**Genesis 3:10** *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked (COVERED ONLY WITH AN APRON); and I hid myself.*

**Exodus 20:26** *Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness (THIGH, UPPER LEG) be not discovered thereon.*

**Exodus 28:42** *And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs (FROM THE WAIST TO THE KNEES) they shall reach:*

**Isaiah 47:2-3** <sup>2</sup> *Take the millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh (UPPER LEG), pass over the rivers.* <sup>3</sup> *Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen (GOD CONSIDERS THIS TO BE NAKEDNESS): I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man.*

- Nakedness was covered from the beginning by God to defeat the temptation it created.
- Nakedness was associated with sexual impulses and desires, so much so that to “see” or “uncover” nakedness is a Biblical euphemism for “sexual intercourse.” (Leviticus 20:17)
- Nakedness as a moral shame is found from Genesis (3:7) through Revelation (16:15).
- **Nakedness must be covered! This principle is not cultural, but Biblical.**

### 3. APPAREL IN BIBLE TIMES

- The original function of clothing was to protect the body from changing climate and lustful desires. Soon, however, people made clothing and ornaments the expression of pride and sex. These desires led people to flaunt themselves with showy or scanty dress and costly or gaudy ornaments. Thus, apparel and adornment soon became the index of spiritual decline. The more depraved people became, the more outwardly extravagant and immodest they became.
- A Jewish commentator in the Midrash said, “The Lord’s glory is man, and man’s ornament is his clothes.” Nothing – not even food and drink – was more highly valued by the Israelites. The prize offered by Samson for solving his riddle was not money, but “thirty sheets and thirty change of garments” (Judges 14:12). During the conquest of Ai, Achan was tempted as much by “a goodly Babylonish garment” as he was by money (Joshua 7:21). Naaman offered “two changes of garments” along with money to Elisha’s servant (2 Kings 5:23). Sisera’s mother wished him to return from battle with “divers colours of needlework” (Judges 5:30).
- The wardrobe of a person living in Bible times was fairly basic. The undergarment, when worn, was either in the form of a loincloth or a small waist “slip.” The tunic was the essential garment, and in many ways it resembled an inverted sack. A v-shaped opening was cut for the head, and slits were made in the two corners for the arms, thus forming a sort of sleeve. The tunic was bound at the waist by a band of cloth referred to as a girdle. Headwear, footwear and an outer garment were options.

### 4. GENDER DISTINCTION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- Since it is apparent that both men and women wore robes in Bible times, an obvious question is: **How was it possible for them to fulfill God’s command for gender-distinct clothing?**

**Deuteronomy 22:5** *The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God.*

- Historically, men and women have worn robes of one kind or another for the major part of human history. Thus, the distinctiveness of masculine and feminine attire as far as its CONSTRUCTION was concerned was in ORNAMENTATION, that is, in their style, color, markings, length, cuts and trim. These were obviously quite significant distinctions, since one’s sex could be casually observed at a distance (Genesis 24:65).
- **However, the most important gender distinction was not simply in WHAT they wore, but in HOW they wore it. There were MALE and FEMALE ways of utilizing their clothing.**



- **Firstly**, the priests wore “breeches” under their robes in Bible times. This word does not occur very often in Scripture, but in every case it is men’s apparel (Exodus 28:42, Exodus 39:28, Leviticus 6:10, Leviticus 16:4, Ezekiel 44:18) – women were not allowed to wear “breeches.” According to Hebrew lexicons, “breeches” means “trousers that extend below the knee.” The later English word “britches” developed from this term, as did our modern concept of “pants.”
- Women in Bible times did not wear “crotched garments” (pants) because of God’s disapproval. Thus, pants were worn exclusively by men for the first 5900 years of human history. It is only in our century that women’s apparel has suddenly become “impractical” for women to wear!
- In trying to argue a positive case for cross-dressing, some point out that every time the word “skirt” is used in the KJV, it refers to a man. (Their inane and uneducated reasoning is, “Modern women can wear pants because Bible men wore skirts”!) However, the Hebrew word “kanaph” actually means “the extremity or corner of a garment.” When Saul tore “the skirt of [Samuel’s] mantle” in 1 Samuel 15:27 and David cut off “the skirt of Saul’s robe” in 1 Samuel 24:4, they did not rip their clothes off but merely took a piece (“corner”) of their garment.
- **Secondly**, men in Bible times were permitted to “gird up their loins” while women were not. A man could transform his robe into a closer-fitting, less cumbersome garment by bringing the back hem of his robe between his legs and tucking it into his waistband (girdle). This created a trouser-like effect, and was a distinctively masculine appearance. Women were allowed to lift up the hem of their robe to help carry something, but to raise it above their knees or to “gird up their loins” like a man was considered grossly immodest by God and by Biblical society.

**Job 38:3** *Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.*

**Job 40:7** *Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.*

**Jeremiah 1:17** *Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.*

**1 Peter 1:13** *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;*

- The “girding of the loins” was allowed in alignment with masculine roles and responsibilities. When God wanted Jeremiah to “be a man” and not be afraid of people as he delivered his prophetic message, He commanded him to “gird up [his] loins.” Notice also that when God wanted Job to face Him in a masculine posture of accountability, he commanded him twice to “gird up [his] loins LIKE A MAN.” God associated Job’s acceptance of manly responsibility with the state of his apparel! But that is perhaps not so remarkable when we consider the modern association of responsibility with the question of “who wears the pants in this family”!
- Peter later uses this analogy when he instructs Christians to “gird up the loins of your mind.” His idea is for the mind to be so freed from encumbrance that it is able to act quickly and decisively – just like a man’s girded body. This phrase became a metaphor for “preparedness.”
- **ANY GARMENT THAT SHOWS A SEPARATION OF THE LEGS ABOVE THE KNEE IS IMMODEST APPAREL FOR A GODLY WOMAN. GOD DOES NOT APPROVE OF IT!**

## 5. AN ABOMINATION UNTO THE LORD

- Just how serious is this idea of gender distinction in apparel to God? It is VERY SERIOUS!

**Deuteronomy 22:5** *The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God.*

- This verse is very plain in its condemnation of cross-dressing, but notice that the commands are different for men and women. A man must not “put on a woman’s garment,” that is the feminine attire itself with its distinctive styling. That is enough of a command for him, because adorning is not his particular problem area. However, the instructions are more strict for a woman (because she is tempted more in this area). She is not even to wear “that which pertaineth unto a man.” Pertain means “relate, have reference to, be appropriate for, belong to as an accessory, attribute, feature or function.” It’s Latin root word means “to reach toward.” In other words, SHE MUST NOT ALLOW HER FEMININE APPAREL TO “REACH TOWARD” OR EVEN SLIGHTLY RESEMBLE A MAN’S CLOTHING OR HIS MASCULINE BEARING.

- The word “abomination” in its various forms occurs over 40 times in the Pentateuch. In general, its root meaning is something that is “disgusting, filthy, loathsome or abhorrent.” **While there were certain things that were merely an abomination “to Israel” (Leviticus 11:10) under the ceremonial law, other things were an abomination “unto the Lord.”**

<b>SEVERAL THINGS IN SCRIPTURE ARE NOTED TO BE AN ABOMINATION “UNTO THE LORD”</b>	
Deuteronomy 23:18	Prostitution (“whore”) or Homosexuality (“dog”)
Deuteronomy 7:25, 27:15	Idolatry
Deuteronomy 18:10-12	Involvement in the occult
Deuteronomy 25:13-16, Proverbs 11:1, 20:10, 20:23	One who cheats others
Deuteronomy 24:1-4	One who divorces a spouse, then remarries them after they have been married to another
Deuteronomy 17:1	Offering blemished sacrifices to God
<b>Deuteronomy 22:5</b>	<b>A woman wearing that which pertains to a man, or a man in a woman’s garment</b>
Proverbs 3:32, 11:20	Perversion (“the froward”)
Proverbs 12:22, 6:16-19	A liar, especially one who vows they are telling the truth
Proverbs 16:5, 6:16-19	A proud person
Proverbs 6:16-19	A murderer
Proverbs 6:16-19	A heart that plans to do evil, or one who is continually involved in evil
Proverbs 6:16-19	One who creates division among brethren
Proverbs 15:8, 15:9, 15:26	The lifestyle (“sacrifice, way, thoughts”) of a wicked person
Proverbs 17:15	One who excuses sin or condemns righteousness
<p><b>There are other sins to be sure, but these are things that especially degrade God’s creation or destroy its order. Thus, in the sight of God these are especially filthy, abhorrent and loathsome.</b>  <b>WE NEED TO FORSAKE EVERY ABOMINATION ON THE LIST!</b></p>	

- Some who attempt to discount the impact of Deuteronomy 22:5 take the position that we do not need to obey it today because it is found in a chapter containing many other instructions to Israel which we do not apply to modern life. For example, the Jews were required to put a safety railing around their roof (22:8), refrain from mixing different types of seed, animals and material together (22:9-11), and wear fringes on the corners of their garments (22:12).
- HOWEVER, NONE OF THESE THINGS WERE AN ABOMINATION “UNTO THE LORD”!**

<b>THE JEWISH LAW OF THE OLD TESTAMENT WAS COMPRISED OF THREE DISTINCT PARTS</b>	
<b>The Civil Law</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>this applied to daily living in Israel (i.e. Deuteronomy 24:10-11)</li> <li>many of these laws gave rise to modern day legal statutes</li> <li>because modern culture is so different, some of these laws do not apply specifically today</li> <li>however, the principles they contain are timeless</li> </ul>
<b>The Ceremonial Law</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>this related specifically to Israel’s worship (i.e. Leviticus 1:2-3)</li> <li>its primary purpose was to point forward to Jesus Christ</li> <li>these laws are no longer necessary because of Jesus’ ultimate sacrifice</li> <li>since Jesus fulfilled this Law, we are not bound by its requirements today</li> <li>however, the major guiding principles behind these laws (separation) still apply to us today</li> </ul>
<b>The Moral Law</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>these were the <u>direct commands</u> of God, and required strict obedience</li> <li>they reveal the nature and eternal will of God, so <u>they still apply to us today</u></li> <li>the Ten Commandments are a familiar part of this Law</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outside of the Ten Commandments, which were written by the finger of God (Exodus 31:18), other moral laws are indicated in God’s Word by the phrase “ABOMINATION UNTO THE LORD.” God never changes (Malachi 3:6) so ... “ONCE AN ABOMINATION, ALWAYS AN ABOMINATION!”</b></p>	

- Others have tried to say that Deuteronomy 22:5 is only referring to transvestite behavior associated with heathen worship. But they have to misread the text to arrive at that fanciful interpretation!
- “There is no reference, as some have supposed ... to the practice of the priests (at heathen festivals) ... Whatever tends to obliterate the distinction between the sexes tends to licentiousness; and that the one sex should assume the dress of the other has always been regarded as unnatural and indecent.” - *H.D.M Spencer, Joseph S. Exell, Pulpit Commentary*
- “... the proofs ... of the existence of such usages among heathen nations are very far-fetched ... Every violation (or wiping out) of this distinction ... was unnatural, and therefore an abomination in the sight of God.” - *Keil-Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament*
- Others who attempt to discount Deuteronomy 22:5 teach that the word “man” (Hebrew “geber”) should actually be translated “soldier” because it comes from a root word meaning “strong.”
- **HOWEVER, NO MAJOR BIBLE TRANSLATION USES THE ENGLISH WORD “SOLDIER” TO TRANSLATE “GEBER” EVEN ONCE, THOUGH THE TERM IS USED IN HEBREW 66 TIMES!**

## 6. APOSTOLIC ADMONITIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- Commandments concerning apparel are EVEN MORE SPECIFIC in the New Testament than in the Old Testament. There are two passages of Scripture that sum up these commands best:

**1 Timothy 2:8-15** <sup>8</sup> *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.* <sup>9</sup> *In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;* <sup>10</sup> *But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.* <sup>11</sup> *Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.* <sup>12</sup> *But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.* <sup>13</sup> *For Adam was first formed, then Eve.* <sup>14</sup> *And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.* <sup>15</sup> *Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.*

**1 Peter 3:1-7** <sup>1</sup> *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;* <sup>2</sup> *While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.* <sup>3</sup> *Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;* <sup>4</sup> *But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.* <sup>5</sup> *For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:* <sup>6</sup> *Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.* <sup>7</sup> *Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.*

- **Notice that Paul’s “list of standards” is basically identical to Peter’s “list of standards”!**
- Paul’s teaching to Christian women is largely repeated by Peter, although in a different context. While the context of Paul’s teaching is the conduct of women in the church, the context of Peter’s teaching is the conduct of women in the home (especially where an unsaved husband is present). The striking similarity between the two teachings goes to show that the principles of modesty and decency in outward appearance apply equally to the home and to the church.
- These were definitely areas of concern in the early church, for Christianity was born into the Roman world of luxury and decadence. Since middle and upper class women did not receive higher education, work outside the home or hold public office, they spent much of their time beautifying themselves in excessive dress and adornment.
- It was in this social context that Apostolics were called to live their faith. It is not surprising to find many New Testament admonitions to seek inner adorning rather than outward adorning!

### • **PAUL SAYS THAT A WOMAN’S CLOTHING MUST BE:**

#### A. **MODEST, OR “ORDERLY”**

- The word “modest” comes from the Greek word “kosmios” which means “well-ordered, becoming, dignified.” It describes one whose inner self-discipline and humble attitude is reflected outwardly in appropriate attire.
- “Paul was shrewd enough to know that a woman’s dress is a mirror of her mind.” (*Donald Guthrie, The Pastoral Epistles*)

- What a woman wears not only reflects her morals, it affects her conduct and demeanor. Appropriate dress tends to encourage appropriate deportment.
- Paul's admonition to dress in a modest orderly way strongly suggests that there is no special merit in ignoring personal appearance either, for that draws attention as well!

#### **B. APPAREL, OR "LONG AND FLOWING"**

- The word "apparel" comes from the Greek word "katastole" which means "a long flowing garment." This word reflects directly on a style of garment the Greeks called "katastola" which was loose-fitting ("flowing") and covered from the neck to the knees ("long"). **Notice that Paul requires the same type of garment God required in Genesis 3!**
- The garment of a woman should therefore cover her thigh and knee. It does not have to be longer than that; if Paul had wanted to specify an ankle-length garment he would have used the Greek word "poderes" (as in Revelation 1:13).
- Pants are not a modest garment for a woman, because even though they are past the knee ("long") they are not a "flowing" garment. They also "gird up the loins" (separate the legs above the knee), so they are only appropriate for a man to wear.
- A TIGHT garment of any type is also not modest because it is not a "flowing" garment.

#### **C. DECENT, OR "WITH SHAMEFACEDNESS"**

- The word "shamefacedness" comes from the Greek word "aidos" which means "a sense of shame, bashfulness, reverence, regard for others." It is derived from the root word "eido" which has the significance of "turning the eyes, the mind, the attention to anything."
- **This word has a deeper significance in regard to "adornment" than to "apparel."**
- However, in the matter of clothing, this word tells us that a woman is responsible to dress so that she does not "turn the eyes, the mind or the attention" to the form of her body. The reason for dressing decently is similar to the reason for locking the house – to protect what is inside and to prevent intrusion from the outside. Clothing can evoke intimate and even passionate responses, which must be reserved for the marriage relationship only.
- The purpose of decency in dress is not primarily to hide ourselves from the view of others, but to preserve our intimacy for our spouses. Decency should be respected even within the immediate family, for indecent exposure always destroys mutual respect. Various states of undress which are commonly accepted among family members can cause children to become desensitized to nudity, and may be a major cause of incest.
- There is a sense in which modesty is "variable." For example, what is Biblically modest in public differs from what is Biblically modest in the privacy of a married couple's bedroom. What may be modest between husband and wife can be immodest in front of the children. What may be modest family dress (i.e. nightclothes) is immodest when exhibited to others.
- **The modern day problem over modesty is not primarily the putting on of apparel, but the taking off of apparel! People – and unfortunately "Christians" – have taken modesty confined to private settings and moved it to public display.**
- "Shamefacedness" or "shamefastness" is the godly internal moral quality of "blushing" when sin is viewed as repulsive. It is that modesty which is "fast" or rooted deeply in the character. If a woman desires to display her body to others, there is something wrong!
- It has been said that one can wear the most modest clothing and yet still be immodest. That is true, and is the reason Paul requires that a woman dress with a sense of decency.

#### **D. RESTRAINED, OR "[WITH] SOBRIETY"**

- The word "sobriety" comes from the Greek word "sophrosune" which means "soundness of mind, sound judgment, curbing one's impulses, self-controlled, temperate." It signifies a "habitual inner self-government with constant rein on all passions and desires, which would hinder the temptation to these from arising." - *Vine's Expository Dictionary*
- **This also has a deeper significance in regard to "adornment" than to "apparel."**
- However, in the matter of clothing, this word speaks of the inner self-control a Christian woman must exercise, being constantly vigilant to resist the seduction of fashion. It speaks of her careful consideration to not only wear apparel that is modest, but also to restrain from apparel that purposely attracts attention to her.

**Mark 7:20-23** <sup>20</sup> And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. <sup>21</sup> For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, <sup>22</sup> Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: <sup>23</sup> All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

- The Christian woman will be constantly prompted by the Holy Ghost to realize that she is responsible to dress with restraint. A common argument goes like this: “If a man lusts after my body then that’s his fault, not mine!” However, look what Jesus said:

**Matthew 5:28** *But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery **WITH HER** already in his heart.*

- The man who looks on a woman to lust commits adultery WITH HER in his heart. Therefore, SHE HAD A PART IN IT by wearing clothing that either accented the outline of her body or showed portions of her body that only her husband should be allowed to see.
  - The principle of inner restraint causes the Christian woman to “use” fashion without “abusing” it. It is not the “DESIGNERS” who are important to her, but her “CREATOR”!
- **It is important to note that, while first-century Christians could follow the general dress style of their culture with only minor modifications, modern Christian women cannot follow today’s popular dress standards due to the overall degeneration of society.**

## 7. A WORD TO CHRISTIAN MEN

- There are more “external standards” in God’s Word for women than for men. However, the principles of MODESTY, DECENCY and RESTRAINT certainly apply to your clothing as well!
- Immodest male apparel may not be as much of a danger to most women as immodest female apparel is to men. However, there is still the danger of temptation to some women. As well, in our wicked society there is additional danger with the rapid spread of homosexuality.
- Remember that Adam’s idea of proper covering was not God’s idea of proper covering!
- **Most of all, remember that God has more INTERNAL HOLINESS commandments for men than women, because God’s men need to be GODLY men – even in their apparel!**

## 8. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

### THE ORDER OF CREATION

- Men and women were created by God with different emotions, different desires and different physical make-ups. God has decreed in His Word that He wants us to maintain and celebrate those differences, even in the minute matters of outward apparel and adornment.
- God is so adamant in maintaining this difference between men and women that He calls it an abomination when we break down His standards (Deuteronomy 22:5).
- The matter of separation in dress, like most holiness standards, goes all the way back to the order of creation. To rebel against your function and role in creation is to rebel against God!
- One of the most effective ways Satan works to advance the work of sin in society is to dilute God’s standard of dress so that others are tempted and God’s order of creation is broken.
- There will always be a difference in gender, because there has to be! But the sad thing is that now the emphasis is not on the beauty of a woman’s femininity or the strength of a man’s masculinity, but merely on the difference in body parts! To only emphasize physical body differences can only lead to lust and a degradation of womanhood – and manhood.
- The driving force behind the unisex fashion of our time is the feminist vision of a new genderless society, where the clothes and roles of men and women are undifferentiated and interchangeable. Such a vision of a genderless society is clearly condemned in the Bible. God wants us to clothe ourselves in ways that affirm our gender identity and roles.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF HOLINESS IN APPAREL

- Since women do not generally look upon men as men look upon them, Christian women may not think modesty is all that important. But it is for this very reason that they should pay particular attention to what the church teaches about holiness in apparel. Otherwise, they can easily get caught up in the immodest lifestyle of the world.
- In the Garden of Eden, through Israel’s idolatrous apostasy, and even in recent history you will find that women often lead in matters of sin. Although they are the “weaker sex,” they wield incredible power over men! They also have the most influence on succeeding generations through their role of motherhood. Their influence – for evil or good – is immeasurable!
- God has always desired His people to be a “peculiar” (“rare”) people (Deuteronomy 14:2, Deuteronomy 26:18, Exodus 19:5, Psalm 135:4, Titus 2:14, 1 Peter 2:9). That’s why He told the Jews to dress a certain way. God wants us to be identifiable to the world in our apparel!

## YOUR PERSONAL OBEDIENCE

- You might say, "I'm not convicted about wearing pants, etc." but your lack of conviction does not give you permission to ignore or rebel against the Word of God. You must ask yourself, "What is the final authority for how I live? My feelings and convictions? Or the Bible?" Human feelings are very deceptive, but the Holy Ghost will never lead you contrary to God's Word.
  - Some say that such apparel is okay because it is common, comfortable and convenient. But these concepts have absolutely nothing to do with a Biblical relationship with God!
  - Persistence in immodesty has serious ramifications. Wearing immodest apparel in the face of Biblical instruction demonstrates a willful lack of subjection to God and to your pastor.
- **THE ATTITUDE OF MANY TODAY IS, "HOW MUCH DO I HAVE TO DO TO BE SAVED?" THE ATTITUDE OF A CHRISTIAN IS, "HOW MUCH CAN I DO TO PLEASE MY SAVIOR?" IF YOU LIVE BY THAT ATTITUDE, YOU WILL HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH HOLINESS!**

## **1 TIMOTHY 2:8-15, 1 PETER 3:1-7 THE ADORNMENT QUESTION**

- There are two very clear and concise passages in the New Testament which deal with the subject of "adornment" for Christian women. Both Paul and Peter express very similar admonitions; thus, the "standards" of the first century Apostolics become very clear to us through even a casual study.
- Paul's teaching is found in a different context than Peter's, since he is dealing with the conduct and appearance of women in the church, and Peter is dealing with the conduct and appearance of women in the home (especially where an unsaved husband is present). Note that the principles of modesty and decency in outward appearance apply equally in either setting!
- **Basically, Paul deals with the THEOLOGICAL reasons for modest adornment while Peter deals with the PRACTICAL reasons for modest adornment.**
- These were definitely areas of concern in the early church, for Christianity was born into the Roman world of luxury and decadence. It was in this context that Apostolics were called to live their faith.

**1 Timothy 2:8-15** <sup>8</sup> I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. <sup>9</sup> In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; <sup>10</sup> But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. <sup>11</sup> Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. <sup>12</sup> But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. <sup>13</sup> For Adam was first formed, then Eve. <sup>14</sup> And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. <sup>15</sup> Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

**1 Peter 3:1-7** <sup>1</sup> Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; <sup>2</sup> While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. <sup>3</sup> Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; <sup>4</sup> But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. <sup>5</sup> For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: <sup>6</sup> Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. <sup>7</sup> Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

- **ADORN** means "to beautify or decorate with ornaments." The Greek word is "kosmeo," from which we derive our English word "cosmetics." It comes from the root word "kosmos," which is translated "world," but also has the meaning "order, arrangement or decoration." Thus, just as the attractive and orderly arrangement of the stars "adorns" the world, so humans can "adorn" themselves.
- The topic of "adornment" thus covers not only the area of modern cosmetics, but also jewelry.
- **However, the Apostles make it very clear that the way women often desire to adorn themselves is in direct opposition to the way God desires for them to adorn themselves!**

- An honest Biblical study of “makeup and jewelry” is apt to be offensive to many, since most women today engage in their use. For example, there is no way to get around the fact that the Bible implicitly teaches “face-painting” to be the practice of harlots. That is not meant to deduce that anyone who uses make-up is therefore a harlot! **However, the Scripture does admonish them to forsake such a practice because it is unfitting to their Christian character and modesty.**
  
- **THERE ARE BASICALLY THREE POSITIONS TAKEN IN REGARD TO ADORNMENT:**
  1. **FULL RESTRICTION.** This teaching states that all external adornment is wrong. Extremists who hold this viewpoint may even forbid the use of things such as perfume, medicinal creams, hair clips and functional jewelry such as wristwatches.
  2. **NO RESTRICTION.** This teaching states that external adornment is basically of no consequence to God (most of “Christendom” falls in this category). Extremists who hold this viewpoint teach that it is “legalistic” to put any restrictions on women as to how they appear.
  3. **SOME RESTRICTION.** This teaching states that the Bible, through its implicit examples and explicit admonitions, sets forth clear principles on adornment to guide women in godly living. Decisions on the “details” of adornment must be based on these larger Scriptural principles, which are not open to “private interpretation” (2 Peter 1:20). **Simply because every detail of adornment is not a “Scriptural absolute” does not imply that there are “no absolutes!”** (*Extremes are easy – balance is more difficult!*)
  
- Before dealing with the New Testament passages concerning adornment, it would be wise to examine the history of adornment as it relates to God’s people in the Old Testament, since “these things were “written for our admonition” (1 Corinthians 10:11). Bear in mind the following points:
  1. **IMPLICIT TEACHING.** In the Old Testament, we may find God’s condemnation of certain practices in His consistent expressed attitude toward them, rather than in a direct prohibition. In such cases, we look to the New Testament’s explicit teaching to expand on the principle. Since it is obvious that God reveals His will for us not only by precepts but also by examples, the numerous instances of seduction, adultery, apostasy and divine punishment resulting from the use of jewelry and cosmetics should constitute a solemn warning for us.
  2. **EARTHLY TABERNACLE.** In the Old Testament, God dwelt among His people but in the Tabernacle (or Temple). In the New Testament, God dwells in us, and our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost. Thus, the Tabernacle itself is normally a better type of how we should live than the often-rebellious Israelites! The Tabernacle was undecorated on the outside but extremely beautiful on the inside. Thus it emanated not Israel’s glory, but God’s glory!
  3. **TYOLOGY OF ADORNMENT.** Gold in the Bible was obviously a type of God’s divinity, for in every earthly structure God dwelt in, the inside had virtually everything covered with gold. Only in the church age has it finally become possible for the divine “gold” of God’s presence to be in man, not just with man. Only the most careless student could overlook this dramatic change.
  4. **DESCRIPTIVE PASSAGES.** Careful study of some passages which seem to speak favorably of the use of ornaments will reveal that they are descriptive of the prevailing cultural understanding of beauty, and not prescriptive of how God wants His people to beautify themselves. Failure to make this distinction can lead to fanciful conclusions! Renowned Old Testament scholar Walter Kaiser points out that “reporting or narrating an event in Scripture is not to be equated with approving, recommending, or making that action or characteristic normative of emulation by all subsequent readers.” (*Walter Kaiser, Old Testament Ethics*) We must constantly search for God’s attitude toward a practice, and not adopt it just because it is included in a descriptive or allegorical passage of Scripture. Details of stories, parables or allegories should be looked upon as the props of the story, and not be used to formulate doctrine unless their fundamental teaching is confirmed by the general tenor of Scripture.
  5. **PROGRESSIVE REVELATION.** To put it frankly, not everything that was allowed in Old Testament times is reflective of God’s ideal for His people! Typical examples are polygamy and divorce, which were allowed in Old Testament times because of Israel’s stubbornness. We do not find explicit condemnation of such practices in the Old Testament, but we certainly do in the New Testament! The same principle of “progressive revelation” applies to adornment.

## ADORNMENT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- Pieces of jewelry were used as money in Old Testament times, simply because they were so valuable in ancient culture (Job 42:11). They could be used to barter for items, or in payment of a dowry, as in the case of the gift from Abraham's servant to Rebekah (Genesis 24:53).
- Rebekah's story is a beautiful parallel to the church. Abraham's servant is a type of God's anointed ministry, seeking to find a Bride for Christ and presenting her with great gifts when she consents.
- **IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT JEWELRY WAS ORIGINALLY A BLESSING FROM GOD.** Abraham was wealthy in silver and gold (Genesis 13:2), and God even instructed Israel to take the jewelry of the Egyptians on the night they were freed from bondage (Exodus 3:22, 11:2). This was God's blessing on Israel, for it would give them "currency" with which to survive on their journey. Until this point, jewelry seems basically to be viewed positively because of its practical function.
- However, a disturbing trend was developing among God's people at the same time, as they began to use their ornaments as an expression of pride and even sensuality. This development helps us to understand why in the Old Testament God began calling His people to repentance by removing their ornaments. The first episode is found in Genesis 35:1-4 when Jacob, to lead his family members in an inward spiritual cleansing, summoned them to an outward cleansing. Notice that they delivered to Jacob not only their idols, but also their jewelry – because they recognized that this also would have been a barrier to acceptance with God. To ensure that his family members would not be tempted to "backslide," Jacob wisely buried the idols and jewelry under a tree before proceeding on their journey. **THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME, BUT DEFINITELY NOT THE LAST!**
- The situation came to a crisis point in Exodus 32-33 while Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments. Tired of waiting for Moses and anxious to have a visible god, the Israelites brought their ornaments to Aaron, who used them to make a molten calf in imitation of the gods of Egypt (Exodus 32:3-4). Moses was warned by God of the apostasy in the camp and hastily returned, only to find the people dancing around their idol. Moses threw down the tables of stone, breaking them to signify that they had broken their covenant with God. He destroyed the golden calf and, with the help of the Levites, punished those who persisted in rebellion (Exodus 32:15-29).
- **ISRAEL HAD TURNED INTO IDOLS THE MOST VALUABLE GIFTS GOD HAD GIVEN THEM!**
- When Moses went up again to the mountain to plead with God to forgive their sin, God reassured Moses that He would keep His covenant to bring Israel to the land of Canaan, but He Himself would not go with them! If He were to appear among them in their rebellious state, His direct presence would mean their complete destruction (Exodus 33:2-3).
- When Israel learned that God would no longer guide them with His personal presence, they deeply repented of their sin and took off their jewelry (Exodus 33:4). In response, God offered to reconsider His action toward them, but He requested that they prove the depth of their repentance by permanently removing their ornaments (Exodus 33:5).
- Israel recognized that their jewelry was a serious obstacle to their reconciliation with God, so they stripped themselves of their ornaments "**from Mount Horeb ONWARD**," according to the Amplified Bible, the Revised Version, the New American Standard, and many commentators. The Bible in Basic English states that they "did not put them on again," while Moffat's New Translation of the Bible says this happened "at the mountain of Horeb and ever after" (Exodus 33:6).
- Thus Israel made a sincere commitment to discontinue the use of ornaments in order to show their honest desire to obey God. This experience closely resembles that of Jacob's family at Shechem.
- **God's command to the Israelites to remove their ornaments before going into the land of Canaan applies to us as we also journey to our "Promised Land."** Canaan is not a type of Heaven, but of a "deeper spiritual experience" with God (accompanied by giants and battles!).
- WHY WERE ORNAMENTS SUCH A STUMBLING BLOCK TO THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF ISRAEL? WHY DOES THE BIBLE TEACH THAT JEWELRY IS DETRIMENTAL TO OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE? Part of the answer is that "we wear what we worship, and we worship what we wear." Our clothing and ornamentation best reveal our idols, whether they are beauty, wealth or sophistication. To adorn our bodies with jewelry turns the attention from God to us, and promotes the "cult of self" which is idolatry. That is why outward adorning is a stumbling block to the inner spiritual life!
- When God instructed Moses to take up a freewill offering for the construction of the tabernacle, at the top of the long list of suggested items was GOLD. God was not forcing it from the Israelites, but the suggestion is conspicuous! They must have taken the hint, because they "brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold" to the Lord (Exodus 35:22).



- Israel also freely dedicated to the Lord the spoils of their future military victories, “what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets” (Numbers 31:50).

- **GOD EVENTUALLY VERBALIZED HIS HATRED FOR JEWELRY ON HIS PEOPLE.**

**Deuteronomy 7:25-26** <sup>25</sup> *The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: **thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it is an abomination to the LORD thy God.*** <sup>26</sup> *Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.*

- Even the kings of Israel were forbidden, among other things, to accumulate silver and gold (Deuteronomy 17:17). King Solomon later transgressed these laws, and it cost him his relationship with the Lord. Joshua pronounced the sentence of death upon Achan and his family because they kept gold and silver, instead of turning it over to the treasury of the Lord (Joshua 7:21).
- When Gideon broke the command of God, took the earrings of the Ishmaelites and made them into a priestly vestment for himself, he caused all of Israel to backslide. Note from this passage that jewelry was a trademark of the sinful Ishmaelites and not of Israel – except when they backslid!

**Judges 8:24-27** <sup>24</sup> *And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey. **(For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.)*** <sup>25</sup> *And they answered, We will willingly give them. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the earrings of his prey.* <sup>26</sup> *And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold; beside ornaments, and collars, and purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that were about their camels' necks.* <sup>27</sup> *And Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah: **and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house.***

- **THE OLD TESTAMENT REVEALS A GROWING TREND AGAINST JEWELRY**, for every time God's people began to possess it, jewelry became an occasion for spiritual decline through pride, sensuality or idolatry. God never forgot the mockery and idolatry associated with jewelry!
- **Israel's fascination with adornment was a constant snare to them; this was precisely the reason God began demanding for them to sacrifice their jewelry. And nowhere in the Old Testament did God ever give them permission to take back their jewelry!**
- In **Ezekiel 16**, the prophet portrays Israel as an abandoned child found by Jehovah. He cared for her, raised her and even adorned her with jewelry. Israel then played the harlot, flaunting her beauty and using her ornaments to attract lovers and make idols. God was filled with wrath!

**Ezekiel 16:11-17** <sup>11</sup> *I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck.* <sup>12</sup> *And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head.* <sup>13</sup> *Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and brodered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom.* <sup>14</sup> *And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD.* <sup>15</sup> *But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was.* <sup>16</sup> *And of thy garments thou didst take, and deckedst thy high places with divers colours, and playedst the harlot thereupon: the like things shall not come, neither shall it be so.* <sup>17</sup> *Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them.*

- Isaiah thundered God's judgment against the women of Israel for their haughtiness in wearing extravagant clothing and jewelry, placing a great part of the blame for the apostasy of the nation directly on them (“women rule over them” – Isaiah 3:12). Their pride provoked the Lord's punishment, which was meted out by taking away all their ornaments and humiliating them.
- **Isaiah 3:16-26** is the most inclusive enumeration of female ornaments and fine clothing to be found anywhere in the Bible. It is not customary for Isaiah “to enter into such minute particulars,” but he is trying to expose “the boundless love of ornaments which had become prevalent in the time of Uzziah-Jotham.” (*Franz Delitzsch, Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah*)

- Some try to explain this passage away as merely God's rejection of Judah rather than His condemnation of ornaments and extravagant clothing. **However, this is not an allegorical representation of God's rejection, but a literal description of what caused God's rejection** (the conduct of the women, whose seduction misled the leaders and led Judah into rebellion). God saw the ornaments as part of the problem and consequently dealt with them by taking them away!

**Isaiah 3:16-26** <sup>16</sup> Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: <sup>17</sup> Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts. <sup>18</sup> In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, <sup>19</sup> The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, <sup>20</sup> The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, <sup>21</sup> The rings, and nose jewels, <sup>22</sup> The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, <sup>23</sup> The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils. <sup>24</sup> And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty. <sup>25</sup> Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war. <sup>26</sup> And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.

- **The prophets consistently portray Israel as an unfaithful woman decked with jewelry and makeup. The serious Bible student cannot fail to see the obvious connection in God's mind!**

**Hosea 2:13** And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the LORD.

**Jeremiah 4:30** And when thou art spoiled, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with crimson, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou rentest thy face with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; thy lovers will despise thee, they will seek thy life.

**Ezekiel 23:40** And furthermore, that ye have sent for men to come from far, unto whom a messenger was sent; and, lo, they came: for whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thy eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments.

- **The many examples cited from the Old Testament reveal a consistent pattern. Women who wore jewelry and painted their faces with cosmetics were always trying to seduce men into adulterous relationships. Such consistent association should be a solemn warning to us!**
- It would be impossible to make a proper study of adornment in the Bible without mentioning the name of **Jezebel**. She is not merely a Bible character, but rather a **"representative person"** in Scripture, much like Joseph served as a type of Christ. Because Jezebel so completely embodied the spirit of seduction in Israel's history, her name is even carried over into the New Testament and used symbolically to express God's abhorrence of similar conduct (Revelation 2:20).
- Jezebel's seductive look, obtained with cosmetics and jewelry (2 Kings 9:30), is consistent with her lifelong effort to seduce the Israelites into idolatry. She not only dealt Israel a crippling spiritual blow (from which it never fully recovered), but her spirit is seen trying to infiltrate the church all the way to Revelation (where it causes the church at Thyatira to fall under God's judgment). To be connected with this spirit of Jezebel is equated by God with "the depths of Satan" (Revelation 2:24).
- God was so concerned that the Israelites might make an idol out of Jezebel's tomb in the future that He judged her by having wild dogs devour her body (1 Kings 21:23, 2 Kings 9:35-37).
- The inane reasoning of some would say, "Yes, Jezebel put on makeup and jewelry ("tired her head"), but she also looked out a window! So it is no more sin to wear these things than to look out a window!" They completely overlook the emphasis on Jezebel's SEDUCTIVE SPIRIT in the text, and its undeniable association with her ADORNMENT. Furthermore, Jezebel "looked out at a window" ONLY IN ORDER TO SEDUCE the new King Jehu, so that he would not put her to death!

**2 Kings 9:22** And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace, Jehu? And he answered, **What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?**

**2 Kings 9:30** And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and **she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window.**

**2 Kings 9:37** And the carcase of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; **so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel.**

**Revelation 2:20** Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because **thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.**

- The spirit of Esther stands in contrast to the spirit of Jezebel. When a woman was brought before a Persian king, she was allowed access to anything she desired in order to beautify herself (Esther 2:13). Esther, however, used only what the king's eunuch selected (Esther 2:15). The Bible only records that she used oil of myrrh, perfume, and other preparations to purify the skin (Esther 2:12).
- **The Bible speaks favorably of perfume** in the Song of Solomon and other places, and some feel that it is no different than makeup. However, while the Bible speaks frequently about the "lust of the eye," it never refers to the "lust of the nose!" The eye is "the light of the body" (Matthew 6:22-23), thus sight is the greatest gateway to temptation. Since makeup is designed to attract attention to the body, accentuate sensuality and appeal to sight, the Bible always mentions it unfavorably.
- **Jewelry is sometimes used to typify good things in Scripture**, such as wisdom (Proverbs 1:9, 25:11-12). However, this is not a reason for us to adorn ourselves with jewelry any more than an occasional positive mention of wine (Luke 5:39, Luke 10:34, John 2:10) gives us permission to become drunk. In each case, the weight of Scriptural example and teaching forbids the action.
- **Several good people wore jewelry in the Bible**, but these examples are normally found in descriptive or allegorical passages. We must remember the principle of progressive revelation: God allowed many Old Testament practices because of the hardness of men's hearts (Matthew 19:8) or their ignorance (Acts 17:30), but explicitly reveals His will to us in the New Testament.
- **The Bible does not condemn all jewelry**. For example, men such as Judah (Genesis 38:18), Joseph (Genesis 41:42), Mordecai (Esther 8:2), Saul (2 Samuel 1:10), and Daniel (Daniel 5:29) wore jewelry. However, in each case the jewelry had a **FUNCTIONAL USE**. Signet rings were used to transact legal business; crowns, chains and bands were used to signify royalty and convey legal authority. The high priest's breastplate of precious stones had a similar function of authority in Israel's worship (Exodus 28:17-38). Jewelry also had a functional use as a wedding token in Bible times (Genesis 24:47, Isaiah 61:10, Jeremiah 2:32).
- "Jewish men did not indulge in extravagance of dress, and there was little ornamentation among them ... Certain men wore a ring on their right hand, or suspended by a cord or chain around the neck. Actually this was the signet ring or seal, and served as the personal signature of its owner, and so was not usually worn as an ornament." - *Fred Wight, Manners & Customs of Bible Lands*
- **Because the Bible does not condemn these various types of "functional" jewelry in the Old Testament, we also maintain a balanced position by making allowance for a minimal amount of "functional" jewelry (such as wedding rings, wristwatches, hair clips, etc.), while maintaining God's desired prohibition on jewelry for the sole purpose of adornment.**
- The early church obviously interpreted Old Testament "standards" this way, for they condemned the wearing of jewelry while allowing only the marital ring. (*Churchill Babington, A Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*) In the next century, Tertullian, recalling "those laws of your fathers," condemned the wearing of jewelry "save on the finger which, with the bridal ring, her husband had sacredly pledged to himself." (*Tertullian, Apology 6*) His contemporary Clement of Alexandria agreed: "[Christ] permits [women] a finger-ring of gold. Nor is this for ornament ... [it serves as] a band of chaste modesty ... Other finger-rings are to be cast off ..." (*Clement of Alexandria, The Instructor 3, 11*)
- **However, rings seem to exercise almost a fatal attraction for humans!** *The use of marital rings eventually exercised a "leavening influence" among Christians by tempting people to wear ornamental rings and other types of jewelry. Historically, the plain wedding band has not been regarded as an ornament, but history also teaches us that it did not remain plain – or alone – for very long! We must constantly guard against the temptation to increase our tolerance of adornment!*

## **ADORNMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

- **Did God drop His objection to jewelry and makeup in the New Testament?** Evidently not, for the apostolic admonitions of Peter and Paul are even more explicit than Old Testament commands. The New Testament repeatedly contrasts the INNER ADORNING of a gentle and quiet spirit with the OUTER ADORNING of the body by elaborate hairstyles, gold, pearls and costly attire. These are not TWO MODES of the SAME lifestyle, but **TWO COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LIFESTYLES!**

- **The New Testament culminates in the revelation of two symbolic women in the book of Revelation, the Great Harlot (world church) and the Bride of Christ (true church). The contrast in their outward appearance certainly has implications for followers of Christ:**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>THE GREAT HARLOT</b> Revelation 17:1-6</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>THE BRIDE OF CHRIST</b> Revelation 19:7-9, 21:2, 22:4, 22:17</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• represents the end-time apostate religious-political power, or World Church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• represents the true church, who is the Bride of the Lamb, or body of Christ</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• she lures the inhabitants of the earth to commit spiritual fornication with her</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• she invites others to prepare themselves for the marriage supper of the Lamb</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• like Jezebel, she takes sadistic joy in pouring out the blood of martyrs like a drunkard pours out wine to drink</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• she lives not for herself but for her Bridegroom, “pouring out” her own desires as a sacrificial offering unto the Lord</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• she is arrayed in purple and scarlet, and bedecked with gold, jewels and pearls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• she is clothed in fine linen that is clean and white, representing her inner righteousness</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• she has a name (“Mother of Harlots”) on her forehead, like the name-bearing frontlets prostitutes wore in Roman times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• she has a name on her forehead, obviously the name of Jesus by which she has been baptized into the body of Christ</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John’s portrayal of the use of her various adornments to accomplish her seductive purposes represents an implicit condemnation of their use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John’s representation of her righteousness by unadorned white robes corresponds to the obvious emphasis of the New Testament in the matter of adornment</li> </ul>
<p><i>God saw fit to represent the character of these symbolic women by their appearance because our appearance reveals who we are!</i></p>	

- **Which of these two women should serve as the role model for our Christian dress code?** If we choose to pattern our lives after Christ’s Bride, we (like her) will show our inner purity and godliness by the simplicity and modesty of our unadorned outward appearance.
- **The same contrast** between the apparel of the harlot and the apparel of the bride appears also in the pastoral exhortations of Peter and Paul. Both apostles emphasize the contrast between worldly adorning and Christian adorning. These passages deserve close attention, not only because they give us fundamental principles of appropriate Christian dress, but also because they provide us with explicit condemnation of the use of jewelry and extravagant apparel.
- **Both Peter and Paul expect women to adorn themselves, so long as it is in a proper fashion.** God does not condemn natural ornaments! He has filled the world with things that are not only useful but also beautiful. God could have designed all fruits and vegetables to be green, but He created them in a variety of colors so that they would give us not only food but also beauty. God does not expect us to be drab or colorless in appearance, but He does expect godly adornment!
- **True adornment is that which enables a Christian to express the real self.** There must be a consistency between the inward life and the outward appearance of a Christian! To pretend to come humbly before God while we are adorned in a way we know He does not like is **hypocrisy!**
- **Before dealing with the admonitions of Peter and Paul, it is necessary to first deal with a common (and ridiculous!) objection that is advanced by some to explain away these verses.**
- Their inane reasoning runs like this: *“Peter and Paul were using a common ‘Hebrew idiom’ which minimizes the first clause in order to emphasize the second clause. Today, in order to express the thought contained in this type of idiom, we would place the word ‘only’ in the first clause, and the word ‘also’ or ‘rather’ in the second clause. Thus, the Apostles were really saying ‘Let not a woman’s adorning be ONLY that of outward things (such as plaiting the hair, wearing of gold, or putting on of apparel) but ALSO/RATHER let it be the inward adorning of a meek and quiet spirit.”*

- These self-proclaimed “scholars” support their “Hebrew idiom” by “clarifying” verses like **John 6:27** (“Labour not ONLY for the meat which perisheth, but ALSO for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life”) and **1 John 3:18** (“Let us not ONLY love in word, neither in tongue; but ALSO in deed”). It is amazing that they are finding a “Hebrew idiom” in these Greek texts!
- **This is a devious approach, for it adds words to the Bible, in some instances twisting them to mean the opposite of what they literally say!**
- **Using this technique, we could rewrite any verse with a similar “not ... but” grammatical structure**, such as **Luke 9:56** (“For the Son of man is not ONLY come to destroy men’s lives, but ALSO to save them”) or **Romans 8:15** (“For ye have not ONLY received the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ALSO ye have received the spirit of adoption”) or **1 Corinthians 6:13** (“Now the body is not ONLY for fornication, but ALSO for the Lord”) or **1 Corinthians 14:33** (“For God is not ONLY the author of confusion, but ALSO of peace”) or **Ephesians 5:18** (“And be not ONLY drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but ALSO be filled with the Spirit”) or **1 Thessalonians 4:7** (“For God hath not ONLY called us unto uncleanness, but ALSO unto holiness”).
- **GET THE POINT?! Let’s stick to the actual words of Scripture!!**
- Should Paul wish to use an “only ... also” grammatical construction, he is eloquent enough to clearly do so without us putting words in his mouth! (1 Thessalonians 1:5 – “For our gospel came not unto you in word ONLY, but ALSO in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance”)
- **It is also important to note that no major translation of Scripture renders 1 Timothy 2:9-10 or 1 Peter 3:3-4 the way these “scholars” are suggesting. It simply is not there in the original!**
- These verses are actually describing **TWO MUTUALLY INCOMPATIBLE LIFESTYLES**. Women are taught to put away certain unholy things and possess certain contrasting holy things, just as men are taught to put away “wrath and doubting” and possess “holy hands” (1 Timothy 2:8). Wrath and doubting are not permissible for men as long as they also have holy hands! The same principle of incompatibility applies to the issues mentioned for women (“in like manner also”).

## **1 PETER 3:1-7 - PETER’S PRACTICAL REASONS FOR MODEST ADORNMENT**

*<sup>1</sup> Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; <sup>2</sup> While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. <sup>3</sup> Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; <sup>4</sup> But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. <sup>5</sup> For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: <sup>6</sup> Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. <sup>7</sup> Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.*

- Peter sets his “adornment standards” for women in the practical context of the home, showing how a Christian woman can win her unsaved husband to Christ by submission, and inward adorning instead of outward adorning. (Her outward adorning would only appeal to his flesh, anyway!)
- He gives them the example of holy women in the Old Testament (like Sarah), who also accepted their God-given role by submitting to their husbands and practicing inward (not outward) adorning.
- Saved husbands are commanded to give honor to their wives for willingly living in this manner.
- Christian women are admonished to have an INNER ADORNING of a MEEK AND QUIET SPIRIT. “*Meekness toward God is that disposition of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. Meekness is the opposite of self-assertiveness.*”
- Christian women are admonished NOT to have an OUTER ADORNING of PLAITING THE HAIR, WEARING OF GOLD, or PUTTING ON OF APPAREL. (NIV - “fine clothes” / NKJV - “fine apparel”)
- **This is virtually identical to Paul’s list of “adornment standards” in 1 Timothy 2:8-15.**

## **1 TIMOTHY 2:8-15 - PAUL'S THEOLOGICAL REASONS FOR MODEST ADORNMENT**

<sup>8</sup> I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. <sup>9</sup> In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; <sup>10</sup> But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. <sup>11</sup> Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. <sup>12</sup> But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. <sup>13</sup> For Adam was first formed, then Eve. <sup>14</sup> And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. <sup>15</sup> Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

- Paul sets his “adornment standards” for women in the theological context of the church, showing why God requires this kind of “external compliance” from them more than from men.
- He begins by requiring that men submit to God by having a body free from lust (“lift up holy hands”), a spirit free from anger (“worship without wrath”) and a mind free from cynicism (“worship without doubting”). This reflects the three major problem areas for men in their spiritual life!
- He then requires similar submission from women, but in their unique problem area of adornment.
- **According to Paul, Christian women must adorn themselves ...**
  1. In a becoming and dignified way (“modest”)
  2. In a long and flowing garment (“apparel”)
  3. Decently, with regard for her effect on others (“shamefacedness”)
  4. With restraint and self-control, so as not to draw attention (“sobriety”)
- These four requirements were explained as they relate to clothing in the lesson on “Apparel.” However, two of them have a particular meaning in relation to “Adornment.”
- **SHAMEFACEDNESS:** The word “aidos” is used in a particular sense in this passage, the only time it is so used in Scripture. Here, it literally means “shocked face” or “blanched face” and refers to Paul’s requirement that Christian women wear no makeup, since it promotes sensuality. (*Treece*)
- **SOBRIETY:** The word “sohprosune” refers to Paul’s requirement that Christian women refrain from using any adornment that draws attention to the body such as makeup or jewelry. Only by restraint can a woman “keep a constant reign on all passions” that may arise in herself or in onlookers.
- **According to Paul, Christian women must NOT adorn themselves ...**
  1. With elaborate hairstyles (“broided hair”)
  2. With excessive (i.e. non-functional) jewelry (“gold, or pearls”)
  3. With extravagant clothing (“costly array”)
- Instead, they should adorn themselves with “good works” – that is, they should occupy themselves in more profitable activities than merely spending time adorning their bodies like heathen women.
- **BROIDED HAIR:** In the Roman world of the time, women braided their hair with great care, arranging it outlandishly, dyeing it and interweaving it with gold and jewels. Thus, Paul is not condemning the fixing of the hair in an orderly, becoming manner, but rather this prideful extreme.
- **GOLD OR PEARLS:** These were also plentiful in the Roman world in the form of rings, bracelets, earrings, etc. Paul spoke against their use because they wasted money and had no function other than to encourage personal vanity and a desire for attention from the opposite sex.
- **COSTLY ARRAY:** Some types of clothes were extremely expensive in Paul’s time, such as anything made out of purple cloth. Paul spoke against their use because they also wasted money and reflected only personal vanity and a desire for attention from the opposite sex.
- Like Peter, Paul ties the idea of a woman’s outward adorning to her God-ordained place of submission. She is to “learn in silence with all subjection.” The word subjection used here comes from a Greek military term meaning “to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader.” In non-military use, it was “a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden.” The word silence used here means “tranquility, peace, quietness, one who does their own work and does not meddle in the affairs of others.”

- Thus, Paul is saying that women should serenely accept their place in God’s order of creation, their role as a helpmeet to their husbands, and their responsibility in matters of outward adorning.
- Paul does not allow women to teach (“discharge the office of a teacher”), but since he later commands older women to teach younger women (Titus 2:3-4) and commends Timothy for being taught by his mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5, 3:15), he is obviously referring only to women “lording it over” men in matters of church leadership. This is in accordance with their role.
- Greek scholar Marvin Treece teaches that Paul’s command for a woman not to “usurp authority” over men means she is not to “use her self-weapon” (i.e. her feminine wiles) to manipulate men. This powerful “weapon” is one of the major reasons she is to be godly in apparel and adornment!
- According to Treece, both Peter and Jude quote extensively from the Book of Enoch in their epistles (a Hebrew copy of this book dating to 300 years before Christ has recently been found in Israel). While this extra-Biblical literature is not considered “inspired,” Peter and Jude’s direct quotes from it let us know that they considered a great deal of the information in the Book of Enoch to be factual. Take note of the following direct reference to the Book of Enoch in Jude 8:

**Jude 8 Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile (PAINT) the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.**

- Enoch recorded that it was the fallen angels who originally taught men to create weapons (in order to destroy men), and taught women to produce makeup and paint their faces (also in order to destroy men!). Treece teaches that Jude is referring to this, and that is why he uses the word “miaino” here, meaning “to dye with another color, to stain” (only used in this way in Jude 8).
- The greatest reason for a godly woman to assume a spiritual posture of submission is simply God’s order of creation. (“*For Adam was first formed, then Eve*”) However, another compelling reason is the role the woman played in the fall. (“*And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression*”) **Eve fell because she usurped her husband’s headship!**
- The Bible specifically points out that, while Eve was DECEIVED, Adam sinned WILLINGLY. When she returned to him with the forbidden fruit, she was already dying! Adam could see and sense the difference in her, but he loved her! In that moment, HE MADE A CHOICE TO JOIN HER IN SIN.
- **Even in the fall of man we see a beautiful picture of Jesus, who knew we were dying in sin; but He loved us, and chose to partake of sinful humanity so that we could be saved!**
- Paul concludes by reaffirming the woman’s role. (“*Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety*”) Even though she was the initial agent who led the human race into sin, through childbearing she can be freed from that stigma by raising a generation of godly children. It is this that motivates her personal godliness.

## **CONCLUSION**

- In Revelation 21:2, John sees “the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” The purpose of this imagery is not to teach us to wear jewelry any more than the imagery of the city’s walls is to teach us to build walls around ourselves. Rather, it is to show us that the Lord thinks of His church as His peculiar treasure (Exodus 19:5). She is His bride adorned with her jewels (Isaiah 61:10). The church’s “jewels” are its individual believers, for God regards each of His people as a precious gem (Malachi 3:17).
- **One of the most basic reasons God does not want us to adorn ourselves with earthly jewels and other adornments is because WE ARE HIS HEAVENLY JEWELS!**
- **There is no longer a negative connotation associated with jewelry or makeup in our culture, but we seek to please God rather than man. Society’s acceptance of any practice does not change the way God views it, or the spiritual reasons for its prohibition. Makeup and jewelry still highlight sensuality, encourage pride, affect the wearer and observer, and teach a distorted value system as much as they ever did.**
- **God’s opinion on adornment is clear. What will your response be?**

