



# *For Love of God and Man*

## Modesty in Dress and Manner

by Linda Minnick

*Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness.*

*~ 1 Timothy 2:9-10*

### *Our Motivation for Modesty*

We live our lives in accordance to what is in our hearts. Likewise, modesty is not a list of rules but a matter of a pure heart. What is in our hearts will determine how we dress and conduct ourselves as women.

*"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"  
And He said to him, "You shall Love the LORD your God with all your **heart**, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment."*

*"The second is like it, 'You shall Love your neighbor as yourself.'  
"On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:36-40)*

**What motivates us the most in the way we dress and behave?**

Is it what other people think ----- peer pressure,  
or what God thinks ----- **loving God?**

Is it to please myself ----- selfishness,  
or in consideration for others ----- **loving one another?**

**Love** for God and **Love** for Man is the only motivation we need.

## *Our Commandment for Modesty*

There is really only one passage in Scripture that gives us a commandment for how we should dress and conduct ourselves.

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

Two kinds of “modesty” in this passage.

1. **Modestly**—bashfulness toward men, shamefacedness, sense of shame that hinders doing something inappropriate
2. **Discreetly**—
  1. Marked by, exercising, or showing prudence and wise self-restraint in speech and behavior; circumspect.
  2. Free from ostentation or pretension; **modest**.  
—**mod · es · ty**
    1. The state or quality of being modest.
    2. Reserve or propriety in speech, dress, or behavior.
    3. Lack of pretentiousness; simplicity. (American Heritage Dictionary)

### *For Love of Man - definition #1*

*Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves...modestly (bashfulness toward men, shamefacedness, sense of shame that hinders doing something inappropriate)...*

#### **A. The Problem**

1. The reason it is so important for us as Christian women to dress and behave modestly is for the men's sake.
2. We cannot relate to what men experience  
*You have heard that it was said, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY"; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matthew 5:27-28*
3. What tempts a man?—the female figure, whether it is revealed by tight fitting clothes, or through transparent clothes, or by lack of sufficient clothes, or by body language.

How do we want men to see us? How can we show Christian **love** to our brothers in Christ? Do we want to bear the guilt of the adulterous woman of Proverbs?

*For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Proverbs 7:26*

**T**One man put it this way. "When a woman approaches a man he is either aware of her female figure (only he put it more specifically) or he is not aware."



## B. The Solution

1. Why do Christian women wear things or behave in such a way that tempts our Christian brothers to sin?

a. Sometimes it is because we are in ignorance—lack of consideration for others.

**KNOW AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE FACTS.**

b. Sometimes it's because our flesh is warring against our spirit--we feel a sense of power, accomplishment and self worth when we get the attention of a man.

**ACKNOWLEDGE SIN AND TURN AWAY.**

Our modesty is primarily not so we will never be tempted, but so we will never tempt. Just like it is wrong for a man to give in to the temptation to lust after a woman, it is wrong for a woman to give in to the temptation to use her beauty and charms to deliberately stir up a man's lust. "Notice me," "admire me" is not innocent.

c. **CULTIVATE A PURE HEART**

*Older women likewise are to ...encourage the young women ...to be ... pure (clean, innocent, modest)  
Titus 2:3-5*



"To be pure means to be so cleansed of all ulterior motives and of self that one has become pure enough to see God. Rather than wishing to escape God's sight; the one who is pure is able to bear His very scrutiny." ~ Elizabeth George

2. How can Christian women dress and conduct themselves so as not to tempt our Christian brothers to sin?

Adorn the **HEART!**

- a. Not like the **heart** of harlots

*And behold, a woman comes to meet him, dressed as a harlot and cunning of heart. Proverbs 7:10*

Proverbs 2:16--flatters with words, 17—unfaithful to husband, 6:24—smooth tongue, 25—captures with eyelids, 7:10—dressed provocatively, cunning heart, 11—boisterous, rebellious, out and about, 13--physical contact, brazen face

- b. Like the **heart** of "holy women of former times"

*Your adornment must not be merely external...but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, . . . 1 Peter 3:3-4*

- c. Love the brethren!

*Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more. For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you. Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-9*

## *For Love of God – definition #2*

*Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves . . . discreetly (of sound mind, self control, —marked by, exercising, or showing prudence and wise self-restraint in speech and behavior; circumspect. Free from ostentation or pretension; modest. Reserve or propriety in speech, dress, or behavior, simplicity.)*

### **A. God's Viewpoint**

According to the greatest commandment, our highest motivation for anything is our Love for God. If we truly love God, we will do anything and everything to please and honor Him. He has told us what pleases Him regarding our dress and behavior as Christian women.

1. God wants us to be known for our good works, not for being “cool” or stylish.

*Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves ...discreetly (of sound mind, self control), not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, but rather by means of good works, as is proper (towering up, appropriate) for women making a claim to godliness.*

2. God wants our primary adorning to be internal, not external.  
*Your adornment must not be merely **external**—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the **hidden person of the heart**, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. 1 Peter 3:3*

## *God's clothing list:*

*...put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth*  
Ephesians 4:24

*...put on the full armor of God,...*Ephesians 6:11

*...put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.* Colossians 3:10

*...put on the armor of light.* Romans 13:12

*...put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other,...Beyond all these things put on love,...*Colossians 3:12-14

*...clothe yourselves with humility toward one another,...*  
1 Peter 5:5

*...put on the Lord Jesus Christ,...*Romans 13:14



## B. Man's Viewpoint


Why do Christian women wear things or behave in such a way that does not please God?

1. Sometimes it's because we're under tremendous pressure from our culture. Culture determines our dress, but culture changes and sometimes those changes are deliberately made for ungodly purposes.

For a thorough handling of this aspect, listen to Pastor Minnick's recordings on modesty—Restoring Scripturally Defined Modesty—January 2004

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2*

We seek to live in the world but not be of the world by dressing in keeping with our culture yet in a godly manner.  
*I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world . . . John 17:15-16*



"If a person has ugly thoughts, it begins to show on the face. And when that person has ugly thoughts every day, every week, every year, the face gets uglier and uglier... A person who has good thoughts cannot ever be ugly. You can have a wonky nose and a double chin and stick-out teeth, but if you have good thoughts they will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely." —from a children's story writer (*God's Design for Women*, Sharon James, p. 276)



2. Sometimes it's from a natural God-given desire to be beautiful and feminine.

We're not trying to be alluring or seduce anybody. We just want to be noticed, to be admired, to feel wanted and loved by everybody, not just men. That's all very natural but it can also be very vain and self-centered, and it is in direct contradiction to how the Bible says women are supposed get attention.

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*Your adornment must not be merely external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; **but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.** 1 Peter 3:3*

It is our inner beauty, not our outer, that will be praised in the end.

*Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying: "Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all." Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, **but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.** Proverbs 31:28-31*

*But let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is **precious in the sight of God.** 1 Peter 3:3*

## Proper Clothing

*Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with **proper** (orderly, well arranged) clothing*

### A. Attractive

Modesty and godliness do not contradict our desire to be attractive. No matter what our age or what having babies has done to our physical attractiveness, it is legitimate and necessary for us to strive to be attractive, neat, clean and feminine.

—for the sake of the Lord's testimony

*But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine . . . so that the word of God will not be dishonored. Titus 2:1*

—for the sake of our husbands

*. . . rejoice in the wife of your youth. Proverbs 5:18*

—publicly and privately (at home)


—make it easy for them to help you

### B. Orderly

Modesty and godliness would exclude the two extremes of looking frumpy or faddish (do not draw attention!)

*Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper (orderly, well arranged) clothing, . . . and discreetly (of sound mind, self control), not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, ...*

*Strength and dignity are her clothing, . . . Proverbs 31:25*

 "The outer should be the expression of the inner, not an ugly mask or disguise. If the King's daughter is to be 'all glorious within' she must not be outwardly a fright! I must dress both as a lady and a Christian." ~ Frances Havergal author of "Take My Life" (*God's Design for Women*, Sharon James, p. 265)

### C. Feminine

Modesty and godliness do not exclude femininity.

*And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE." Matthew 19:4*



"Don't be afraid to be feminine and to add physical and spiritual loveliness to the setting where God has placed you." ~ Nancy Leigh DeMoss

### Conclusion

#### Adorning of "Women Making a Claim to Godliness":

- ✧ proper clothing
- ✧ modesty and discretion
- ✧ good works I Timothy 2:9-10
  
- ✧ gentle and quiet spirit
- ✧ submission to husband I Peter 3:1-6
  
- ✧ strength and honor (dignity) Proverbs 31:25
  
- ✧ in such a way as will adorn the  
doctrine of God in every respect Titus 2:1-10

*Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper (orderly, well arranged) clothing, modestly (bashfulness toward men, shamefacedness, sense of shame that hinders doing something inappropriate) and discreetly (of sound mind, self control), not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, but rather by means of good works, as is proper (towering up, appropriate) for women making a claim to godliness.*

### God's Design for "Women Making a Claim to Godliness":

- demonstrate love for our Christian brethren by taking care to not provoke their flesh.
- demonstrate love for God by drawing attention to the work of the Spirit in our lives rather than our outward appearance.
- . . . and to do all in an orderly, well arranged way.

### One Closing Comment:

Because the terms in I Timothy 2 are broad and general terms, in order for each of us to make specific applications, we will need to remember to exercise the Romans 14 principle not to judge or despise each other for the applications we make. Give each other the benefit of the doubt that we are all trying to dress and conduct ourselves out of a heart of love for God and man.

### *Resources:*

*A Woman's High Calling*, Elizabeth George.

*Disciplines of a Godly Woman*, Barbara Hughes.

*Lies Women Believe*, Nancy Leigh DeMoss.

*Memorials of Frances Ridley Havergal*, Maria Havergal.

*Restoring Scripturally Defined Modesty*, Mark Minnick, "sermon link" at [www.mountcalvarybaptist.org](http://www.mountcalvarybaptist.org).