

Dress that Comes from a Good Conscience

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Introduction: Everything we do outwardly comes from the heart.

A. Ultimately it is our hearts that are presented before God. **(Deut 30:6; Jer 4:4)**

1. Our study today, while making application about clothing, is actually about the heart.
2. This subject is highly sensitive because of our desire to be acceptable to others and because of possible correction to what allowed to be practiced by parents.
3. To those with a “circumcised heart” this will not be difficult but welcomed. **(Jn 3:21)**

B. We continue to examine how a “good conscience” is maintained by a joyful strife to avoid offence before God and men. **(Acts 24:16)**

1. ἀσκέω - *exercise* (oneself), *take pains, labor, strive*; followed by an infinitive (AC 24.16) - Thayer’s Lexicon
2. This kind of heart is mocked and condemned by the world and worldly religion. Some say this “strife” is against the “grace of God” and hinders our “assurance” before God. The Gnostics would have said this!
3. This is the real product of the real love of God! **(1 Jn 3:19-22)**

I. How the heart affects outward clothing

A. For a Christian woman being a “daughter of Sarah” is her goal **(1 Pt 3:6)**

1. What makes one a daughter of Sarah? Look at the heart! **(1 Pt 3:1-5)**
2. chaste - ἀγνότης - as a quality of behavior that is morally clean *purity, sincerity, blamelessness* (2C 6.6)
3. fear - in a positive sense *respect, reverence, awe, (wholesome) fear*
4. quiet spirit - ἡσυχίος, *ov* as possessing inward calm *quiet, tranquil, peaceful, at rest*
5. not - arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on *fine* apparel / rather let it be the hidden person of the heart

B. Our dress should reflect a good conscience. **(1 Tim 2:9-10) KJV**

1. **Modest** - (kosmios) - of good behaviour, well arranged, seemly.
2. **Shamefacedness** - (aidos) - perhaps ..through the idea of downcast eyes; a sense of shame or honor, modesty, bashfulness, reverence, regard for others, respect.
3. **sobriety** - (sophrosune) 1) soundness of mind 2) self-control

C. How can a woman gain such a heart?

1. She must have a genuine and reverent faith. **(Mal 1:6; Psa 89:5-8)**
2. She must be secure in her relationship with God.
3. She wants the praise of God above men.
4. She does not want to draw undue attention to herself in clothing and actions.

II. Why God gives emphasis towards women on clothing

A. Consider some possible reasons.

1. Women tend to be more focused on relationships.
2. Men are more affected by the dress of a woman. **(Mt 5:28)**

B. Nakedness should cause the painful emotion of shame!

1. Adam and Eve were naked when they had **no clothes**. **(Gen 2:25)**
2. They were **still naked** when they made the equivalent of men's swimming trunks! **(Gen 3:7, 10-11)**
3. After God made them "tunics of skin" they were not "naked." These are defined as: "generally with sleeves, coming down to the knees" **(Gen 3:21)**
4. God was very concerned with improper clothing that still left one naked! How much was covered? Look at the passages! **(Ex 28:41-42; Isa 47:2-3)**
6. Have you lost your shame concerning nakedness?

III. Some basic applications on dress

A. Let godly fathers speak out! Godly women need to seek advice of godly men.

1. Some women do not realize the message they are sending. **(Prov 7:10)**
2. "Modesty is nothing to be ashamed of!"

B. Carefully study these things before being a part of public events.

1. There are not public situations where modesty does not matter! (Ex. Sports)
2. Please think through the wedding dress and the bridesmaids' dress carefully. A Christian must refuse to be a part of that!

C. Dress Test for Women by Mary Martini

1. Look at yourself in a full length mirror – front, back and sideways and ask:
2. Will what I am wearing bring God glory and portray me as a godly woman?
3. Does what I am wearing meet or exceed God's standard for being modest? **(Genesis 3:21; Exodus 20:26; 28:40-43)**
4. Is it appropriate and respectful? **(Genesis 41:14; Matthew 22:11-14)**
5. Will my clothing help or hurt my influence for Christ? **(Romans 13:10)**
6. Is it too short? Sit down, cross your legs, bend over, reach up and squat down. At any time, does the garment reveal any of your leg above your knees?
7. Is it too tight? Am I revealing my body form (which highlights or emphasizes my feminine sexuality), thus tantalizing, enticing, or tempting men (young or old) to have impure thoughts **(Matthew 18:7; Gal 5:19 – lasciviousness)**?
8. Is it too sheer? Can I see my skin or undergarments through the material? **(John 21:7 – undergarments exposed = naked in God's eyes)**
9. Is the neckline too low? Bend over – what can you see? Sit. Have another female tell you what they can see while looking down at you. This is a real situation – be honest.

D. Watch out for the "non-traditional" scoffers **(2 Pt 2:19-20)**

1. Some of the greatest threats to keeping a good conscience come from within the church. How many scoff at social drinking and "rules?"
2. You will find that a stand in this area will cost you relationships!

Conclusion: God's wisdom will always be for our good! **(Deut 6:24)**