

The Clothing of A Christian I Pet. 3:1-4

Thesis: To help us learn what God expects from the clothing of a Christian.

Introduction:

- A. To a large degree, our society dresses immodestly.
 - 1. A couple of weeks ago, as a few men gathered for “Men’s Night Out,” it only took one glance around the restaurant to realize that we live in an immodest world.
 - 2. As one writer says, “*As the temperature heats up, the world strips down; and all too often the church follows the world in its scantily clad ways*” (Tract: “Nakedness and Modesty” by Holger W. Newbauer).
 - 3. In fact, the Tift County Jail has warnings about inappropriate clothing on its sign as you enter the jail.
 - a. The sign reads: “*All visitors must be appropriately dressed – (no revealing clothing)*”
 - b. It is sad when ladies will wear something to worship services that would be considered inappropriate at the county jail.

- B. I do not expect people to change their minds based on only one sermon.
 - 1. However, I do hope to give you some ideas to think about in the upcoming days and weeks.
 - 2. Temptation (and therefore sin) is fun, and it takes some time to train ourselves not to fall into it.

I. God has always been concerned with the outer clothing of man.

- A. There are several examples in the Bible when God commands His people to wear certain things in order to cover their nakedness.
 - 1. Adam and Eve
 - a. **Gen. 2:18-25** (Before Adam and Eve ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they did not care that they were naked) - **And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.” {19} Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. {20} So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. {21} And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. {22} Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. {23} And Adam said:**

“This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” {24}

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. {25} And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

- b. **Gen. 3:6-11** (After they ate the fruit of the tree, they covered themselves because they realized they were naked) - So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. {7} Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. {8} And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. {9} Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?” {10} So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.” {11} And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?”

- c. **Gen. 3:21** (God was not pleased with their coverings, so He made them better ones) - Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

2. The priests of God

- a. **Ex. 20:26** - Nor shall you go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness may not be exposed on it.

- b. God will give further command concerning the nakedness of the priests.

1) God has given a great deal of description concerning the garments of the priest (the ephod, the breastplate, along with other garments).

2) **Ex. 28:42-43** (After God describes the immediate clothing of the priests) - And you shall make for them linen trousers to cover their nakedness; they shall reach from the waist to the thighs. {43} They shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they come into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister in the holy place, that they do not incur iniquity and die. It shall be a statute forever to him and his descendants after him.

3. The point is that God has always required a certain standard of dress for His people.

B. The Bible also contains examples of sin that were brought about because of immodesty.

1. David and Bathsheba
 - a. **II Sam. 11:1-2** (David first observes Bathsheba in an immodest manner) - It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. {2} Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold.
 - b. **II Sam. 11:3-4** (David then pursues a relationship with Bathsheba) - So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" {4} Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house.
 - c. From this point forward, David tries to get Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, to come back from the battle and spend the night with her.
 - d. When he refuses to go to his house, David has Uriah killed.
 - e. It all started with David seeing something that should have never been revealed to him.
 - f. Lust turned to murder, and it cost David his child that was conceived in the adulterous relationship.
2. Jesus also gives us a strong warning about lusting after others.
 - a. **Mt. 5:27-28** - "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' {28} But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."
 - b. While men must be careful not to look at a woman with the intent of lusting after her, a woman must also be diligent not to dress in such a manner that causes a man to lust.
 - c. Incidentally, Jesus tells us what to do to keep us from lusting after others.
 - a. **Mt. 5:29** - If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.
 - b. While Jesus is not promoting self-mutilation, He is telling us the importance of not committing this type of sin.

II. Some offer many excuses as to why they should be allowed to wear immodest clothing.

A. Some suggest that we must dress like the world to be in style.

1. Dressing according to the style of the day is not sinful.
2. However, when that “style” violates the modesty that God expects us to uphold, we should not be like the world.
3. **Rom. 12:2** - And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
4. **I Jn. 2:15** - Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
5. We cannot allow worldly popularity to come between us and God.

B. One might say, “Everyone else is doing it.”

1. Our mothers have always said, “If everyone else was jumping off a bridge, would you do it too?”
2. **Mt. 7:13-14** - Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. {14} Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

C. Because everyone is doing it, then no one thinks anything of it.

1. Israel’s great sin was that they lost their ability to decide what was modest and immodest.
2. **Jer. 6:15** - “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; at the time I punish them, they shall be cast down,” says the LORD.
3. **Jer. 8:12** - “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed, nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; in the time of their punishment they shall be cast down,” says the LORD.

D. One might say, “God knows my heart.”

1. Sometimes we use the excuse that God looks at the heart, which is true.
 - a. **I Sam. 16:7** - But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”
 - b. **Jn. 7:24** - Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.
2. However, your actions display your heart.
 - a. **Ps. 141:4** - Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men who work iniquity; and do not let me eat of their delicacies.
 - b. **I Thes. 5:22** - Abstain from every form of evil.

E. Some say that if a man lust after her, then that is his problem.

1. Jesus made it very clear that if a man looks at a woman in order to lust after her, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Mt. 5:27-28).
2. While the man would be guilty of sin, the woman would also because she knowingly caused the temptation.
 - a. Lk. 17:1-2 - Then He said to the disciples, “It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! {2} It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.”
 - b. Mt. 13:41-42 (Jesus explaining the Parable of the Tares) - The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom *all things that offend*, and those who practice lawlessness, {42} and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

III. Even though God is concerned with our outer clothing, He has always been more concerned with our inner clothing.

A. If our inner clothing is right, then our outer clothing will be proper (3:3-4).

1. The husband should be able to look at the conduct of the wife and be won to the church (3:1-2).
 - a. This cannot happen if the wife does not control her conduct.
 - b. When one acts (and dresses) like the world, her husband will never believe that she is right.
2. Peter says very specifically that the clothing of a woman should not “be merely outward” (3:3-4).
 - a. She should not be concerned with dressing to impress others (3:3).
 - b. Her true beauty should be “the hidden person of the heart” (3:4).
3. When we truly seek to put Jesus first in our lives, then our outward appearance will match the inner man.

B. Proper clothing is a matter of the heart.

1. Some say that you cannot tell me what I can and cannot wear.
2. If our heart is right, we will want to wear that which is appropriate and proper for a child of God.
3. We must remember that we, as children of God, are set apart for a divine purpose.
 - a. I Pet. 2:9-10 - But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; {10} who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.
 - b. If we are set apart for the Master’s service, we should live and dress as such.