

THE WORLD'S BIBLE #17

By Keith Greer

MODEST APPAREL. Part 1

We want to continue discussing the subject of "The World's Bible." Today we want to examine the issue of "MODEST APPAREL."

"... For the Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance but the Lord looks on the heart." (1 Samuel 16: 7)

In first reading this passage, we might be tempted to say, "well, if anyone has a problem with anything I wear, it is their problem, not mine". While God alone, does indeed judge our hearts whether we like it or not, however we as human beings are judged by our "outward appearance". What are people in the world "seeing" in the way that we dress?

What causes so many Christians today to have such difficulty in adorning themselves "modestly"? The number one cause in our society is the media, whether it is television or the movies. We are heavily influenced by what is "fashionable", even though, quite often, that which is "fashionable" is being dictated by some of the most immoral people in our society.

In times past, even in our society, it was considered "indecent" to wear clothing that exposed or revealed undergarments in public. Now, however, with the likes of Madonna and Cher wearing (or not wearing) such revealing clothing in their performances, we have been influenced by their immodesty. Is it any wonder that so many teenage girls dress so indecently when they are looking up to someone like Madonna for their example? What about boys wearing their shorts so low that you can see half of their underwear?

As Christians, we have a particular responsibility in our dress to not be "like the world". In 1 Peter 2: 9, we are told that we are a "... chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:"

We are to be "peculiar" in the sense that we are to be set apart for God's work and His purpose. Does this mean that we have to look odd? No, rather, we are to be known for our modesty not only in our appearance, but in how we conduct ourselves.

"Modesty", quite simply, means "orderly, well-arrayed, or decent". (W.E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of N.T. Words) The apostle Paul told Timothy that "I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shame-facedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becomes women professing godliness) with good works. (1 Timothy 2: 8-10)

Modesty begins and ends with one's attitude about their dress. Do we dress to fit into our society or do we dress to adorn the gospel of Christ? Most women who dress "immodestly" are seeking to draw attention to themselves by the opposite sex. Why? Nothing

wrong of being proud of the wonderful body God has blest a person with, but it shows ingratitude towards Him when we use it in such a way to generate lust in one of God's other children. Men may like to look, whistle and have immoral thoughts race through their head, but that doesn't mean they have a high regard for the woman either.

We live in a society that promotes, and encourages, sin and uncontrollable lusts. As Christians, can we be a part of that, and still be pleasing to God? All my life I've heard "if a person lusts after me because of my dress, he's got the problem not me." Such thinking is incorrect because God also holds the person accountable who causes the other to sin. Please read Matthew 22:37-40. Could it be we don't love the souls of others as much as we should? ***