

THE SOUTHEAST SOWER

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FOUR QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT OUR WARDROBE LONNIE OLDAG

(Note: It is now December, warm weather is not around the corner. However, now may be the time to think about our dress before the warmer weather arrives. And, I have notice over the years that immodest apparel is “not a respecter” of weather conditions. Therefore, the following article for your consideration.)

As the temperature begins to climb, so does the opportunity and temptation to violate our Lord’s will regarding our manner of dress. The influence of our society only increases the danger we face in this area. However, if we equip ourselves with the knowledge of the scriptures, maintain an honest heart, and take time for self-examination, we can consistently adorn ourselves so as to pro-

fess godliness with good works.

In 1 Timothy 2:9-10, Paul instructs “*that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or costly clothing, but which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.*” Modest apparel is clothing that is decent, appropriate, and well thought out. It is not just well thought out in regard to comfort and fashion, but is well thought out in terms of how it will represent our character, its effect on others, and its acceptance to our Lord. Selecting modest apparel requires both a proper sense of shame (“propriety”) and sound judgment (“moderation”). Here are four questions that, if honestly an-

swered, will help us select modest apparel.

DOES THIS COVER MY NAKEDNESS BY GOD’S STANDARDS”?

It may be good to start by asking ourselves if our wardrobe accomplishes one of the most basic purposes for clothing—Does it cover my nakedness? After Adam and Eve sinned, the text says, “*they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings*” (Gen. 3:7). The “coverings” they made for themselves were a “girdle, loin-cloth” type of garment (Strong’s) - covering what a pair of short shorts may cover. But Genesis 3:21 says “*the Lord God made them tunics of skin, and clothed them.*” Strong’s defines these “tunics” as

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*35 Walnut Ct.
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44260*

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10:00 am

Worship:

10:50 am

6:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study:

7:30 pm

“a long shirt-like garment” that generally had sleeves and reached from the top of the shoulders to the knees. It seems reasonable to conclude that the “coverings” that Adam and Eve made were insufficient to cover their nakedness, so the Lord made them garments that covered from the shoulder to the knees as proper clothing. While modest clothing entails more than just the amount of the body covered, this still serves as a good starting point.

HOW WILL THIS REPRESENT MY CHARACTER?

Besides covering our bodies, clothing is an advertisement of who we are (or who we want people to think we are). As Christians, our emphasis is not on wealth, popularity, or sex appeal, but on purity and godliness and our dress should reflect this. Peter would instruct, *“Do not let your beauty be that outward adorning of arranging the hair, of wearing gold, or of putting on fine apparel; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God”* (1 Peter 3:2-4). When selecting our wardrobe, we should always be conscious of how our clothing represents our character. Our goal should be to choose apparel that *“professes godliness, with good works”* (1

Tim. 2:9-10).

WHAT IS MY MOTIVE IN WEARING THIS?

This question, in some ways, is the most difficult to answer because it requires an in-depth look into our own hearts and complete honesty in acknowledging what we find there. Is my real reason for wearing this to impress others with my outward appearance? Am I trying to gain attention or even invite sexual interest by the way this garment displays my body? Oftentimes it is the heart that needs to be changed as much as the clothing.

WHAT WILL BE THE LIKELY EFFECT ON OTHERS?

Even if we determine our motive is pure, it is still important to consider if our wardrobe may be a stumbling block to others. Is it likely to create jealousy or envy? Is it going to display my body in such a way as to invite sexually impure thoughts? Paul instructs us to *“make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts”* (Rom. 13:14). We should never knowingly dress in a way that tempts the fleshly weaknesses of others. It is possible for us to be ignorant of the effect our clothing may have on others (particularly the opposite sex). This is where the wise counsel of mature Christians is beneficial to us. It may be good for girls to ask their fathers or wives their husbands if they consid-

er their apparel to be a potential stumbling block. We never want our clothing to be a tool Satan can use for his purposes.

As warmer weather settles in, let us remember these biblical principles and let them be a lamp to our feet, guiding us down the path of godliness, in a world of darkness.

“WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND BIBLE STUDY”

(NOTE: THE FOLLOWING IS ADAPTED FROM AN ARTICLE BY ED HOLCOMB, “SOUTHEAST SOWER, VOL. XVI, NUM. III, MARCH 1999)

1. One should attend because he loves the Lord. (Mk. 12:30)
2. We should attend Bible classes because we’re commanded to study. (2 Tim. 2:15)
3. One ought to attend Bible study since it presents opportunities to see ourselves as God sees us. (Jas. 1:22-25)
4. It is beneficial to attend Bible classes that we may be prepared to defend the faith. (Jude 3)
5. It is essential to attend Bible classes to feed our souls, the real man. (2 Cor. 4:16)
6. We need to attend Bible classes to remain free, and have spiritual security. (Jn. 8:31-32)
7. Lastly, we should attend the Bible study classes because we are to be judged by the word. (Jn. 12:48)