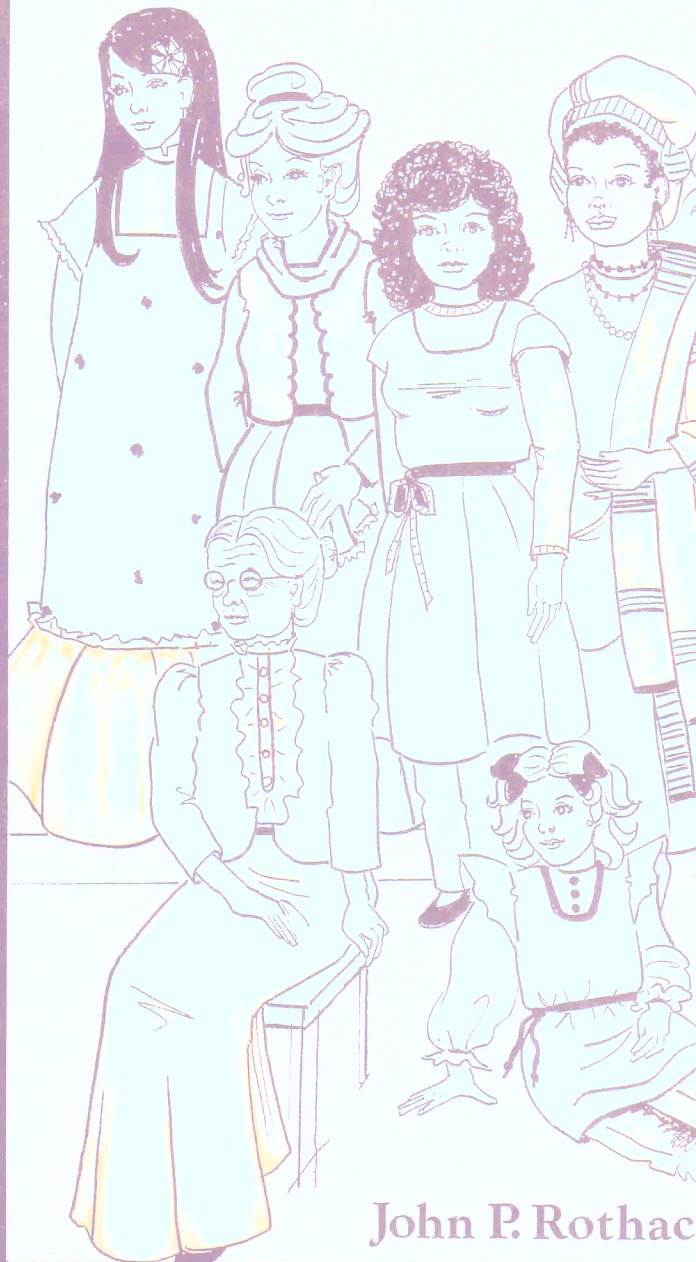


A WOMAN'S DRESS

A message for men and women



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John P. Rothac

A WOMAN'S DRESS

**A message for men and women
who want to please God!**

John P. Rothacker

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A WOMAN'S DRESS

John P. Rothacker

How important is this subject, one might ask? Well, after many years of contemplation and consideration, I believe it is of utmost importance because *how women dress is the expression of the sexual morality of people*; and, therefore, is the most significant factor in determining the sexual behavior of the church, the salt of the earth, which influences the whole world.

A person's sexual behavior is a tremendous factor in determining one's relationship to God, and conversely, one's relationship to God determines one's sexual behavior.

A person's sexual behavior is a reflection of what he or she is which is determined primarily by one's relationship to His creator, his understanding of Him, and his submission to and love for Him. A person's love is expressed by words and deeds. One's actions, however, are the true indication of what one loves, for words can be insincere and often hypocritical. Jesus' own words, "**He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me,**" are the best statement to this fact (Jn. 14:21 NAS). *Love obeys!* John gave us a similar word again when he writes, "**This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and His commandments are not burdensome**" (I Jn. 5:3 NAS).

Secondarily, what a person is, his character, is influenced by the instruction of his parents and religion, and by his friends, and culture. We as the people of God are to glorify God. We are told specifically to glorify God in our bodies! This is because He bought them with the precious blood of Christ, and, therefore, they do not belong to us. This truth is revealed plainly where we are asked the question, "**Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?**" And then the reason is given, "**For ye are bought with a price.**" Immediately the conclusion brings is this instruction. "**Therefore glorify God in your body.**" (I Cor. 6:19-20 rev.). We can only glorify God as we portray actively and accurately to the world His character, as we participate in His character. God is holy. He has instructed us to be holy as He is holy, to be holy in all of our behavior (Lev. 11:44-45; I Pet. 1:15-16).

When we talk about proper dress, we are talking about God's holiness and our proper response to His holiness, fulfilling God's desire and commandment for us to be as holy as He is and to live and demonstrate that holiness. It is mentioned several places in scripture about "**holy attire**" such as our instruction in Psalms 96:9 NAS,

“Worship the Lord in holy attire” (Psa. 29:2; Psa. 110:3; I Chr. 16:29; II Chr. 20:21). Other scriptures reveal to us what this means.

When we talk about proper dress, we are also talking about God’s love and our proper response to His love, fulfilling God’s desire and commandment, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself” (Lk. 10:27 NAS).

You see, to love God is to obey Him, and to always desire to please Him and be like Him, to reflect His character. To do so with all our hearts is first to open our hearts to the truth and yield them in humble obedience. To love Him with all our souls is to open our minds to the truth and yield our emotions and will to Him. To love Him with all our strength is to do His will with all our effort. To love our neighbor as ourselves is always to want to help him and never offend him or cause him to stumble. Always it is to draw him closer to Jesus and to help to bring him to His likeness.

As we approach this teaching, we want to keep these thoughts in mind as well as the scripture that tells us that, “When He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (I Jn. 3:2-3 NAS).

Now, in teaching what women should or should not wear, we want to consider a number of things. First, what does God clearly say about this in His Word? Then, why does He say it and what principles are involved? How can we apply these principles to our lives in whatever culture we find ourselves? Since all truth is opposed, why do people resist the truth, and why do preachers either avoid it or set standards not supported by the Word of God, and take a legalistic approach rather than a spiritual approach? And, finally, what should our attitude be toward God’s revealed truth concerning this matter of women’s dress?

Let us now look into God’s Word and see what He has to say about these matters.

Many years ago, when God first instructed me to write on this subject, I knew that what was going on in the church was wrong. The sensual dress of most women was attractive to the flesh but it was repulsive to the heart of one desiring to be as pure as the Master, to be as holy as He is. I knew that the standards of those Christians who even gave consideration to women’s dress were certainly better than those of the world’s or those of other Christians who didn’t teach on the subject, but yet they were not usually taken from the Word of God or supported by it, but rather they were either compromises with the world, church traditions, or the reasoning of yet immature minds. I prayed and asked the Lord to show me in His Word His standards, the way He wanted His people to dress.

Let me interject here that although this teaching is primarily about women’s dress, it also has much application for men’s. Also, it is written concerning women not

because they are to be singled out as wicked, or more sinful, or to be oppressed, but rather because they are the more abused of the two sexes, and their sexual attractiveness and beauty have always been more exploited than that of men due to the nature of human sexuality. Consequently, the scriptures have much more to say about how women are to dress than men.

Within the hour after asking the Lord to reveal the truth to me from His Word, He led me to the beginning of beginnings, the first chapters of the book of Genesis and there I immediately found the answer! All other scriptures support what I discovered there.

First, man (Adam and Eve) was created in God's spiritual likeness. Adam and his wife were both naked and unashamed for sin had not yet entered and their natures were like God's. Then came disobedience, sin, and they immediately were estranged from God, guilty in conscience, fallen in nature, and now subject more than ever to Satan's deceitful wiles and lustful influences.

"Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they wee naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves loin coverings."
(Gen. 3:7 NAS)

And this is the way man is today when found in a darkened, uncivilized state without one word from God. Both men and women are found barebreasted with only a small loin cloth of some type.

In today's culture, which has been robbed of the Word of God, miniskirts or tight shorts, sometimes appropriately called "hot pants," are comparable attire. However, society still demands at least a flimsy T-shirt over the braless swingers of today, except in special places such as nudist beaches, certain parlors and nightclubs, and secluded areas. Nudity is a disregard of the truth of God and fallen human nature and its consequences as well as the satanic battle for the souls of men and women. But, in the beginning, God in His redemptive love and wisdom came to man to clothe him properly in holy attire.

"And the Lord made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them."
(Gen. 3:21 NAS)

Herein lies the truth that needs to be taught so much. First, notice that God made the garments. We must get our standards from Him. In Hebrew, the word for "**garments**" is "*kethoneth*" and means "to cover or hide," and refers to a long coat or robe. In Middle Eastern culture, it is translated "*tunic*," and most of us know what that is. But what does it mean? A tunic is a long, flowing, loose-fitting garment that completely covers from the neck to the feet. Almost any child with exposure to movies or picture books could draw Jesus, Mary, or Joseph in similar garb. And so as to help us

not to miss the point, God specifically adds, **“and clothed them.”** Here the Hebrew word *“labesh”* means literally “to wrap around,” and is properly translated “to clothe.” These tunics were both for the man and the woman. Also, they were made of animal skins, Hebrew *“ore,”* meaning a naked hide or leather, a far more substantial, protective, and covering material than fig leaves.

You see, if you really want to be in style with God, then let Him be your supernatural designer and tailor. Wow! What fantastic fashion this is! And what a designer label, “Made by God!”

Please realize, God slew an animal and shed its innocent blood and took its naked skin to cover Adam and Eve’s nakedness. This is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, the innocent, substitutionary Lamb of God, who was stripped of His garments for which they cast lots and slain at Calvary for our sins, but who in the mind of God was **“slain from the foundation of the world”** so that we could be forgiven by His shed blood and covered with a robe (tunic) of righteousness (Jn. 1:29; Mt. 27:35; Rev. 13:8, 7:9, 19:8). Praise the Lord!

Notice, also, God clothed them before any other humans were on the face of the earth, only the man and his wife. You see, God, the author of sex, created it for good, to be enjoyed within the love and commitment and responsibilities of marriage, but not to be a source of preoccupation, or lust, even for one’s own mate.

So we see, God’s initial revelation to man about how he is to dress is one of holiness and love. It is complete coverage of the flesh and hiding of those parts that would stimulate lust and cause others to stumble.

Now let us look at other scriptures that continue this revelation right through to the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, given in the last book of the Bible.

“Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a varicolored tunic.”

(Gen. 37:3 NAS)

And so, too, that’s what our heavenly Father wants to give us, beautiful, holy attire, but we must be ready for the jealousy of the brothers and sisters. But remember this, if they even succeed in throwing us into a pit and putting us into bondage, like Joseph, it is because God has something greater for us in leading His people into holiness (Gen. 37:24, 28, 36). Realize this and be like Joseph who said many years later after God’s redemptive plan for His people had been accomplished, **“You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive”** (Gen. 50:20 NAS).

Other scriptures revealing to us that we are to dress in holy attire as a holy priesthood unto God are those describing the holy garments of the priests. It is written,

“And thou shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for *glory* and for *beauty*. And thou shalt speak to all that are wisehearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office. And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered *coat* [Hebrew: *tunic*], a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office.”

(Ex. 28:2-4)

“And thou shall make them linen *breeches* [undergarments] to cover their *nakedness* [their flesh]; *from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach*; and they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that they bear not iniquity, and die: it shall be a statute for ever unto him and his seed after him.”

(Ex. 28:42-43)

So here we find that as priests unto God, we are not only to wear garments suitable for our culture with the modesty and holiness of a tunic, but even our underwear is to be holy, not the skimpy or sexy bikini type that has become so popular today, the outline of which can be so shamefully seen through the tight skirts or pants usually worn with them. In fact, most undergarments such as brassieres, girdles, panties, and pantyhose, are designed purposefully to make the flesh more sexually appealing. Proof are the prurient ads in magazines and the lewd commercials on TV where women flaunt their bodies and show other women how to make theirs as sexually attractive as they can. What amazes me is how naive some women are in not realizing that showing one’s hips, buttocks, breasts, and legs in a manner as appealing as possible is deliberate sexual provocation to men. Contrast this again with God’s word to the children of Israel,

“You shall not go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness may not be exposed on it.”

(Ex. 20:26 NAS)

Another challenging scripture concerning the wearing of tunics is given to us in the story of Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom, a lovely virgin daughter of King David.

“And she had a garment [Hebrew: tunic] of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king’s daughters that were virgins appalled.”

(II Sam. 13:18)

Here we find it was the usual custom for the virgin daughters of the king to wear very beautiful, colorful, and modest apparel, not drab or sexually appealing styles, thinking that to reveal one's body might attract more admirers or facilitate one's becoming a bride, that desperate but tragically premature quest of modern women.

A Christian woman might well consider who she really is, a daughter of the King of kings, the Holy One of Israel, and that Jesus said God would clothe us with more glory than that of Solomon, "**much more**" than the colorful and radiant lilies of the field if by faith we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness (Matt. 6:28-33).

We've seen by the foregoing examples that God designed very modest clothing, tunics, for Adam and Eve and later for the priests, and then a father for his son, Joseph, and also this modest apparel was the custom for the king's daughters. Now let us look at some scriptures that explain in more detail what God's standard of modesty really is.

But, first, what do we mean by modesty? The American College Dictionary defines modesty as "the freedom from vanity, boastfulness" and "the regard for decencies of behavior, speech, dress, etc." Noah Webster, that scholarly Christian of earlier America, originally gave us in the 1828 edition of his dictionary, "Modesty consists in humble, unobtrusive deportment, as opposed to extreme boldness, forwardness, arrogance, presumption, audacity or impudence. In females, modesty has the like character as in males; but the word is used also as synonymous with chastity, or purity of manners. In this sense, modesty results from purity of mind, or from the fear of disgrace and ignominy fortified by education and principle. Unaffected modesty is the sweetest charm of female excellence, the richest gem in the diadem of their honor."

This fits perfectly with what we find in the scriptures, both Old and New Testaments. Paul said in his first letter to Timothy,

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array, but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."

(I Timothy 2:9-10)

Here we find some wonderful truths as we examine the words inspired by the Holy Spirit. The word for **adorn** in Greek is *kosmeo* and means "to put in order, arrange, make ready, prepare," and also "to ornament, to adorn." Also, it is interesting to note that metaphorically it means, "to embellish with honor, to gain honor." The Greek word for **modest** is *kosmios* and means "well ordered, well arranged, seemly, modest, decorous, respectable, and honorable." Both these words come from the word *kosmos* which in early Greek meant "an apt harmonious arrangement or constitution, order," and in later Greek meant "ornament, decoration, and adornment." By the time of the New Testament Greek it proceeded in usage to mean "the world, then the institution of the world, and then the ungodly multitude, and finally the affairs, pleasures, and lusts

of the world that are obstacles to the cause of Christ" (I Jn. 2:15-17). It may also be used of "any aggregate or general collection of particulars of any sort," such as "the sum of all iniquities" in "**the tongue is a fire, a world (*kosmos*) of iniquity**" (Jam. 3:6).

The word for **apparel** is *katastole* and means first "a lowering, a letting down" and secondly, "a dress or attire." The prefix *kata* means "down" and the root *stole* means "a loose outer garment, a robe which extends to the feet," and was worn by kings, priests, persons of rank, angels, and please take a note, will be by glorified saints (Mk. 12:38, 16:5; Rev. 7:9, 13, 14).

Next, the word **shamefacedness** in the original KJV was more properly translated **shamefastness**, that is, the character of holding fast to one's honorable shame. Shame is "the painful feeling arising from the consciousness of something dishonorable, improper, ridiculous, etc., done by oneself or another." The Greek word for **shamefacedness** is *aidous* and means "the shame, or sense of honor, which hinders one from doing and unworthy act" or "the innate moral repugnance to the doing of a dishonorable act." It is primarily objective in reference, that is, its regard is for *others*. And, if we stop to think about dress, that is primarily whom we should be dressing for. It is not to cover us from God's eyes; He sees everything. It is not to hide our bodies from ourselves, but to cover our flesh from one another's eyes. God originally covered Adam and Eve for this purpose, not for protection or warmth, as they had been perfectly comfortable completely naked. It was because now they had a sinful nature, more subject than ever to Satan's lustful temptations.

The word-translated **sobriety** is *sophrosune* and means a controlled, sound mind. "It is reason's girdle and passion's bridal."

In summation of these two virtues then, *aidos* is "that shamefastness, or pudency, which shrinks from overpassing the limits of womanly reserve and modesty, as well as from the dishonor which would justly attach thereto."

Sophrosune is "that habitual inner self-government with its constant rein on all the passions and desires."

From these definitions, we see that the Lord is saying that the woman is to dress herself in a prepared, harmonious order by means of modest, full length feminine attire inspired by two godly virtues; one, an inner moral repugnance against all imprudent, shameful behaviour with a concern for reflecting God's holiness and being an example to others rather than a stumbling block and temptation for lust, and the other virtue, sound-minded self-control.

Now Peter adds to Paul's insight on how women are to dress by giving us more virtues with which she is to adorn herself. Peter writes:

“Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, that if any obey not the word, they also may without a word be won by the behaviour of the wives; while they behold your chaste behaviour coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands; even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do good, and are not being fearful, nothing terrifying you.”

(I Pet. 3:1-6 rev.)

First, please notice Peter teaches us about submission, that a wife is to adorn herself, make herself beautiful by a submissive, meek, and quiet spirit. Now these qualities are not emphasized nor taught much in the church today, but God values this spirit very, very highly, and we need to understand this. Peter gives us the example of Sarah, Abraham’s wife, who obeyed her husband and called him “**lord**,” a title of respect and honor, indicating as the scripture says her humble attitude and submission to him as her head. This prized attitude is helped by another virtue Peter mentions and that is “**fear**,” that reverential respect and actual fear of the authority God has placed over her. Paul also mentions this attitude in his letter to the Ephesians (Eph. 5:22,24,33). The Greek word is *phobos* and means “fear, dread, terror” as well as “reverence and respect.” It is watered-down much too much in today’s “ear-tickling” teaching (II Tim 4:3). It is used and translated “**fear**” in reference to God, angels, husbands, man and beast, rulers, slavemasters, storms, death, and torment (II Cor 5:11, 7:1; Lk. 1:12, Eph. 5:33; I Pet. 3:2; Jn. 20:19; Amos 3:8; Rom. 13:3; I Pet 2:18; Mt. 14:30; Heb. 2:15; Rev. 18:15). Oh, how we need the fear of the Lord, and it comes from seeking and asking God for it and from His manifest presence.

We need to mention here that neither Paul nor Peter are saying that women cannot or should not use any jewelry. That is a misinterpretation of these scriptures and a disregard of other ones. We can see this clearly when Peter used the phrase “**putting on of apparel**” together with “**wearing of gold**.” If Peter means a woman is not to use any gold jewelry, he would also be saying she is not to put on any apparel, which is absurd. Rather, these means of adornment that the world craves, emphasizes, and drools over are not what a Christian woman is to set her heart on and use primarily to make herself beautiful, but her primary adornments are to be the spiritual qualities that blossom from her heart. It is not the temporary, fading, and perishable clothing, jewelry, and hair styles of the material realm, but the eternal, incorruptible, imperishable qualities of the spirit that are reflected from one’s countenance that make a woman truly beautiful. However, wearing jewelry is not wrong in itself. Abraham sent his servant with earrings and bracelets of gold, which were presented to Rebecca when she was chosen to be the wife of Isaac (Gen. 24:22, 30, 47, 53). Now, lest anyone think the “**father of us all**” who have faith in our Lord Jesus Christ was in error for the

jewelry he owned and gave as gifts, let us look at what God Himself said He did for His people.

“I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badger’s skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on they neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head. Thus was thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the nations for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which *I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God.* But thou didst trust in thine own beauty and playedst the harlot because of thy renown...”

(Eze. 16:10-15)

The sin you can see is not from using material ornaments, but in trusting in them rather than God. It is similar when man starts to trust in his own wealth, armaments, wisdom, knowledge, his own resources, and not in the God who is the only and true source of all these things. To turn from trusting in God to trusting in God’s provisions is to make idols of what He has so graciously provided.

Now that we have examined many scriptures, what God says, from the time He properly clothed Adam and Eve until the writings of the New Testament apostles, and also studied the definition of modesty, the chief virtue God requires, let us analyze a little more clearly why God says what He does concerning proper dress.

The reason God says what he does about the dress of men and women is because of man’s nature and human sexuality, and because of our spiritual battle against Satan. We must understand first that man’s nature is a “fallen nature,” meaning that *man is not born into the world in the image of God*, the image in which God made man when He made Adam and Eve in His own likeness, spiritual beings, born of the Holy Spirit, living obediently and lovingly in communion with God, innocent of all wrongdoing and Satan’s deceptions. But rather, when man listened to and considered Satan’s deceptive lies and was enticed by the desire of the eyes, the desires of the flesh, and the pride of life, and consequently disobeyed God’s word, he suffered the penalty of his sin as God had warned and that was death (Gen. 3; 2:17). The process of physical death started then, but more importantly, he died spiritually when he disobeyed God. He was then separated from God, “**dead in trespasses and sins**,” alienated from the life of God that had been within him and now he was to walk in this world in the vanity of his mind, having his understanding darkened, living in ignorance because of the hardness of his heart, without the Spirit of God, calloused in feelings and destined to walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air (Satan), the spirit that now is at work in the children of disobedience, having the nature of the children of

wrath, a “fallen,” sinful nature to be inherited as the result of his (Adam and Eve’s) fall into sin, instead of the divine nature as a child of God (Eph. 4:17-19; 2:1-3).

Now man must be “**born again,**” more accurately translated “**born from above,**” by the Spirit of God and is then “**renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him,**” that is, Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:3; Col. 3:10).

Now, even when man is born from above, he still has the flesh drawing him to yield to it as well as having the new nature of God drawing him to be like Jesus. And the secret of victory is choosing the cross of Christ as the means of victory in every area of one’s life. We must make choices to yield to God and to praise and thank Him in every situation and to die to our own desires. We may pray as Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, “**Father, if it be thy will, let this cup pass from me,**” but we *must* pray, “**nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done**” (Mt. 26:39, 42; Lk. 22:42). Then when this is settled, we must realize that “**our old man was crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed,**” or better translated “*unemployed*” or “*inactivated,*” experienced by faith, “**that henceforth we should not serve sin**” (Rom. 6:6). Then we must “**reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord**” (Rom. 6:11).

Having briefly considered the nature of man, continually subject to Satan’s deceptions as he works constantly in the unbeliever and as he energizes the “old man” of the believer, with the Holy Spirit energizing the “new man,” let us briefly analyze the consequences of the Fall and then some of the aspects of human sexuality.

The scripture says, “**The whole world lies in the evil one**” (I Jn. 5:19). Also, concerning the unconverted, they walk “**according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working in the children of disobedience...living in the lusts of the flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind**” (Eph. 2:2-3). And again, “**If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them**” (II Cor. 4:3-4).

Let me say right here, reader, this glorious gospel of Christ is that God so loves you that He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to live for your example and die for your sins so that you can become a friend of His, receive the Spirit of Christ into your being, and have eternal life, both now and forever. He is right here with you, just open your heart and ask Him to come into your life, turn away from all sin, all wrongdoing, and believe He died for you and was raised from the dead, and then be baptized in His name for the forgiveness of sins and have someone minister to you the Spirit of God (Jn. 3:3; 5; Acts 2:38-41; Gal. 3:5; Acts 8:12-17).

Now then, we were considering the scriptures that reveal to us that all unregenerate mankind worships, that is, serves Satan, either knowingly or unknowingly, and he blinds their minds and deceives them as to the truths of God and

His kingdom. Naturally then, the world dresses like Satan wants, to reveal the flesh and excite lust for his evil spirits to blind and bind men's souls and bodies with sensuality. And Christians must realize that they must not only war against Satan, but they must also "**abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul**" (I Pet. 2:11). This is a primary battle for Christians (Gal. 5:13-26; Rom. 13:13-14; Jam. 4:1-8). The world is continually appealing to our senses, and the sensual, lustful, fleshly attire of today is worse than what the scripture called "**the attire of the harlot**" just yesterday! (Pro. 7:10). How disgraceful and shameful to see Christian men and women deceived by the enemy, living like soulish people who do not have the Spirit of holiness, unmindful of their immoral, indecent, and carnal behavior (I Cor. 2:14; Jude :19). To indicate the enormous problem of sexual sins, let me state that I have found over four dozen words and phrases used in the scriptures concerning them. Some of them refer to what is spoken, some as to how one dresses or undresses, and some refer to various types of sexual acts. The first three works of the flesh mentioned by Paul in Galatians chapter 5 are sexual sins. "**Impurity**" and "**sensuality**" are involved in improper dress and often lead to the third sin, "**fornication**" (Gal. 5:19 NAS and KJV). Truly, it is written, "**that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God**" and again, "**those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires** (Gal. 5:19, 21, 24).

Therefore, we must be equipped with the full armor of God which includes the helmet of the hope of wholeness (salvation) over our minds and ears, and the breastplate of righteousness over our hearts with the back part especially of love and faith protecting us from stabs in the back, being girded about with the truth of God, having the large shield of faith to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one, and having on our feet the stabilizing shoes of the gospel of peace, praying always in the Spirit, especially for each other, concerning this satanic battle, and having the double-edged cutting sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, to be able to stand and do battle against the enemy of our souls (Eph. 6:10-18; I Thes. 5:8). We must deny ourselves our own desires, take up our cross daily and live the crucified life, and follow the Lord Jesus Christ personally if we are to experience the life of victorious faith over the lusts of the flesh, sexual sins being most prominent (Lk. 9:23; I Jn. 5:4; Gal. 5:19).

To better understand this, let us now briefly discuss some of the aspects of human sexuality. God created sex and said in His Word that it was "**very good**" (Gen. 1:31). However, now, after the Fall of man, it is only "good" when experienced in accordance with God's will and intentions as revealed in His Word. When accompanied with love in the marriage relationship, it can bring forth a godly seed, be a source of mutual pleasure and fulfillment, and be a means of bringing two people into a unity that is more profound than any other (Mal. 2:15; I Cor. 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4; Eph. 5:22-33; Mt. 19:4-6). However, *without love and marriage, sex is only lust*, a fleshly desire that offers only temporary satisfaction and eventually a persistent lack of mental, physical, and spiritual fulfillment which ultimately will lead a soul into despair, despondency, depression, and death, both now and forever.

Since sexual arousal, therefore, should only be allowed at the right time within marriage, stimulating sexual passion outside of marriage is wrong, sinful, and to be repented of.

Now, then, what stimulates sexual passion? Unfortunately, most women and men are ignorant, indifferent, or deliberately antagonistic to the answer to this question.

The stimulation of passion comes chiefly through the senses of the body, or the memory of past sensory experience. We have five physical senses. They are seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting. Sexual arousal often involves all five of these sensory perceptions in the course of fulfillment and often in the order just given. Once the passions are aroused, it leads to various degrees of either fulfillment or frustration.

Now, what we simply must realize about our senses is that we are in contact with another person or persons just as much by one sense as another. In other words, we are in contact with the world through our physical senses and, therefore, contact or "touch" others just as clearly through one sense as another. For example, with our hands we contact through the sense of touch, and the nerves relay the information to our brains, and we have a conscious physical experience. With our ears we perceive sounds, a physical contact. With our eyes we perceive light; with our nose, odors; with our tongues, taste; all physical contacts. We must understand that each physical sense organ receives its own particular type of stimuli and, therefore, we are in contact with, we "touch" another, just as much by one sense as another, just as much by the sense of sight as by our sense of touch.

Therefore, it is not only what someone feels by the physical sense of touch on some part of the body, but also what words we hear and what sights we see that we must consider concerning proper sexual behaviour, because we are in contact with others by all of these physical senses.

Next, we must realize which physical parts of the body stimulate sexual desire. They are chiefly the sexual organs themselves, such as the breasts and genital organs, the whole lower torso with emphasis upon the hips and buttocks, and the legs and thighs. Therefore, exposing these parts of the body, or revealing them through tight-fitting clothing is morally wrong. It is allowing your body to be used for lust, actually presenting your body as an instrument of sin instead of an instrument of righteousness which we are instructed to do (Rom. 6:12-13).

Now we need to mention that this matter of what stimulates others is an area where many people deceive themselves, and consequently the influence of their manner of dress helps others to deceive themselves and then dress improperly, and thus all of them are causing others to stumble through lust. I must interject here that to cause a weak brother to stumble is both sin against him and sin against Christ, for it is written, **"By sinning against the brethren...you sin against Christ"** (I Cor. 8:12-13). Jesus said, **"Every one who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for**

your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your body to go into hell” (Mt. 5:28-30 NAS). Notice, Jesus said it would be better for the weak brother who you caused to stumble by your provocative, revealing dress to pluck his eyes out rather than to end up in hell. Jesus also said, **“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have one it unto me”** (Mt. 25:40). Where does this leave you then, my friend? Jesus gives the answer, **“These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous [those who live and dress right] into life eternal”** (Mt. 25:46). Jesus also revealed that after stumbling with the eyes, the next step is with the hands. And then next we have what is so prevalent today, but unrealized by many who are even the cause of their stumbling, actual fornication. Please realize, dressing in a manner that provokes lust in someone means that you are having sex with them. Oh, my friends, when are we going to begin loving one another, not just talking about it, but doing those things that are truly in the best interests of others, truly loving one another!

One might think that it is rather obvious as to what “turns a man on,” but **“the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”** but God and whom He reveals it to (Jeremiah 17:9-10). Breasts and bottoms are particularly stimulating and the way they are revealed today in *tight* blouses, sweaters, skirts, and especially pants, is disgustingly provocative. All the worldly magazines, movies, and multitude of advertisements blast forth the use of sex to sell anything and everything. What is tragic is the apathy, indulgence, and the active participation of most Christians concerning this moral insensibility.

As to the stimulating effect of thighs and legs, just ask any red-blooded, honest human male. I can still remember when hemlines were on their way up, the lusting after girls’ legs when they were only exposed from the mid-calf down. It’s no wonder that God made tunics for Adam and Eve and covered them from head to foot. Anything less is nakedness.

Let me interject here a further revelation concerning nakedness. God told Moses to tell His people:

“None of you shall approach any blood relative of his to uncover nakedness; I am the Lord.”

(Lev. 18:6 NAS)

We then have an entire chapter devoted specifically to warning us against all kinds of nakedness involving family members, one with another. This needs to be thoroughly understood and taught.

The ultimate result of nakedness was having what God was establishing as unlawful sexual relations with family members, but he used the words **“to uncover nakedness”** to emphasize the fact that these unlawful sexual relationships include unlawful contact with the eyes which leads to more serious sexual sins. The case of

King David seeing Bathsheba naked is an excellent example of the consequences of unlawful sexual contact with the eyes. It led to adultery, then murder, and consequently judgment upon David and his children (II Sam. 11-12; Ex. 20:5). We must not allow improper nakedness even between family members, let alone what occurs in public places such as schools, beaches, and on the streets. Little children, boys and girls, must not be allowed to be half-dressed and grow up with nakedness among themselves, or among themselves and father and mother, brothers and sisters. The increase of lust, fornication, and incest is a terrible consequence of the sin of nakedness.

Listen to the prophet Isaiah pronouncing judgment on the heathen daughters of Babylon:

“Thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstone, and grind meal; remove thy veil, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers. Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen.”

(Isaiah 47:1-3)

And then Jeremiah tells us,

“And if you say in your heart, “Why have these things happened to me?” Because of the magnitude of your iniquity your skirts have been removed, and your heels have been exposed.”

(Jer. 13:22 NAS)

I can hear someone now saying, “But I don’t think that revealing your legs is immodest. Just as long as your skirts are two inches below the knees, that’s okay.” The problem, my friend, is that you and your “church” have set the standard and not God. Such carnal thinking comes from the influence of this damnable humanism of our day whereby man sets his own standards or interprets the scriptures to suit himself and ignores or denies God’s standards as revealed in His Word. What right have we, the created, to set our own standards, when God is God and He has set them for us? Only God’s standards are in accordance with the truth. **“Thy Word is truth,”** said Jesus (Jn. 17:17).

“Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As children of obedience, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’ And if you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each man’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay upon earth; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your [church] forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. For He was foreknown

before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you who through Him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for an unhyprocritical love of the brethren, love one another from the heart, fervently.”

(I Pet. 1:13-22 rev.)

Now that we have examined some of the principles involving dress and human sexuality, let us consider their adaptation to all cultures.

In the scriptures, we do not find commands for one type or style of dress, whether cultural or social, but rather principles of modesty, beauty, and harmony that can be and should be the basis of dress in every culture, while allowing for the diversity of styles found among all peoples in all climates.

As we look at the traditional dress of various countries, we see the influence of the gospel in civilized societies. In early America, we find the long, flowing dresses cut and trimmed to the period with headcoverings to match. Continuing to this day in the State of Hawaii, it is such a delight to see the charming and gracefully modest *muumuu*, an unfitted, loose, floor-length dress which the early missionaries introduced to the native women. It is now both the traditional and the most popular dress in the islands. In a variety of fabrics, from single colors to beautiful, large floral or oriental designs, the basic pattern of godly modesty remains the same, a true influence of the true gospel! Thank God! Think about the traditional dress of England, Scandinavia, Austria, the Mediterranean and Balkan States, the Middle East, Africa, India, and the Orient. From Alaska to Zanzibar, in all these areas we find different styles of dress decorated and trimmed with fabrics suitable to the climate and yet the traditional dresses are all modest, beautiful, colorful, and godly. This has been true for centuries, literally thousands of years, but only in recent years has the prevailing dress, become “**earthly, sensual, and demonic**” (Jam. 3:15). When we Christians succumb to the wiles of the devil, the temptations of the flesh, and the ways of the world, we have been defeated, lost our saltiness, and are good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden underfoot (Mt. 5:13). And that is precisely what has been happening to western Christianity in the last several decades particularly. We have been cast out and trodden underfoot in government, in our schools, in the media, and in all facets of our society. Consequently, judgment is upon the land, our people, and upon the church. It is time, yea, past time to repent and turn to God and become once again the light of the world, shining forth in the darkness of this perverted and adulterous generation (Mt. 5:14).

The principles of God are: godly modesty, colorful beauty, and coordinated harmony adapted to the culture and climate, reflecting the holiness of God, considering the nature of man and the satanic battle for men’s souls.

In our own culture today, one can be in style with God and society by careful and prayerful consecrated commitment to the Lord and His Word. The long skirt, down to the ankle and covering the legs, the very popular maxi-dress of a few years ago, is still

very suitable, beautifully feminine, and distinctively elegant. Fabrics can be selected for the season and occasion, but this style is always appropriate. It's the fleshly nature's desire to conform to the crowd that restrains one's spiritual walk and development. But, **"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil"** (Ex. 23:3). The pleated, mid-calf skirt with boots is also acceptable and very attractive because it completely covers the flesh and is, therefore, modest.

But, what about pants? Dear friends, the problem with most pants on women is not that they are masculine. Certain types of work pants may be, but the skin-tight blue jeans worn by most women today are definitely not masculine! Tell that to a man of the world and he might laugh you back behind the doors of the "church" where you were taught such nonsense! But, tight pants are sensual, purposely designed to be "sexy." Therefore, the problem with pants is that they are so very immodest in their fit, revealing so sensuously the lower torso, leaving just enough to the imagination so as to be especially provocative, and stimulating. Pants are really no more masculine because men wore them first, than sin is feminine because Eve ate the forbidden fruit first.

An important scripture is found in Deuteronomy 22:5 which we must examine closely and accurately. It reads:

"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God."

(Deut. 22:5 KJV)

A more accurate translation of the pertinent portion is:

"A woman shall not wear man's clothing."

(NAS)

What is meant by this passage is that the distinction of the sexes which can be clearly seen in nature, and the scriptures point out the hair as an example, is to be maintained and not mixed or confused as the satanic unisex clothes of today do (I Cor. 11:14-15). Women are not to be masculine in their appearance and, therefore, not to wear men's clothing; and men are not to be feminine and, therefore, wear women's clothing.

But please realize, when this was written, both men and women wore the same type of garment, namely tunics. There was, however, a distinct difference. Women's tunics were worn a few inches longer, covering the ankles, were wider and of generally finer material than the men's. One could readily tell the difference, whether it was a man's or woman's tunic. Now then, there are pants made for men, and pants for women, and they are different. The front opening on a man's and the side or back closure of a woman's are distinct differences, besides the shape. Again, the problem with women's pants or slacks is their tight fit and, therefore, an exhibition of terrible

immodesty. This can be overcome so as to enable a woman to wear clothing more adaptable to certain types of activities and yet be feminine and modest by wearing a tunic top or a dress over pants. As long as the top covers the lower torso, it is modest. Also, when the slacks are made to match the tunic top or dress, it is very smart and is a traditional dress of various Eastern cultures.

If women cannot wear pants because men do, then neither should they wear hats or shirts called blouses, or gloves, and so forth because men do. The important factors are those of modesty and femininity. A long dress is more elegant and formal than even suitable tops over pants and, therefore, preferable for most occasions. Proper tops over slacks are for more casual wear, and I don't believe are appropriate for a typical Sunday morning church service, for example. However, in a home meeting situation, pants legs over a woman's bare legs are more modest and far less distracting than skirts with bare legs which are always in one's line of vision when a woman is sitting. The problem with pants without an appropriate top is when the woman stands up and she is not properly covered. Women ought to want to be feminine and dressed up. It has been proven, people act according to how they dress. So, a woman who looks like a lady will more likely act, be, and stay one. This has been the reason for successful standards in schools and in the military. With the breakdown of the standards prohibiting women from wearing shorts and pants has come the present decline in morality.

Let me conclude this discussion on pants, that there is absolutely no excuse for a woman to be wearing tight, sensual, lustfully revealing slacks or the particularly offensive blue jeans that the world so loves. It is disgusting, repulsive, shameful, lewd, morally base and obscene. And what is worse, this kind of dress is an outright enticement and temptation to sin and, therefore, is sending multitudes to hell! Jesus said it was better to have a millstone hung around your neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea than to cause one of His little ones to stumble (Mt. 18:6). He then said, **“Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is necessary that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that person through whom the stumbling block comes!”** (Mt. 18:6-7).

How forcefully the reality of being a stumbling block became to me one night during the Olympic games when a runner fouled another by cutting wrongfully in front of her, causing her to stumble and fall out of the race. The one who stumbled had trained for years, and it was her last race and attempt for the Gold Medal. She had put her whole life into striving for this highest achievement of the world. Another caused her to stumble, and she literally fell out of the race, crying and hurting from the physical and emotional pain of the incident. Immediately the Spirit of God was impressing me with the words of Paul who constantly compared the Christian life to an Olympic race, how we must bring this body under subjection in order to win the crown, not a corruptible crown, but the incorruptible crown of righteousness and life eternal (I Cor. 9:24-27; II Tim. 2:5; 4:8; Jam. 1:12). What a tragedy, what a horrendous sin to cause another to stumble and fall out of the race of life and cry and agonize in the eternal pain of hell because we made them to stumble.

Well did John write the words of Jesus to us about:

“That woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, who teaches and seduces My servants to commit sexual immorality, and to eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the reins [kidneys: the innermost thoughts and feelings] and hearts: and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.”

(Rev. 2:20-23)

Jesus said, **“These things saith the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire and feet like fine brass.”** Although He knows of our work, love, service, faith, and endurance, He has a few things against us because we *tolerate* these Jezebels in our midst, offering up their bodies on the idolatrous altar of sex (Rev. 2:18-20). The original Jezebel was the extremely wicked and treacherous wife of the leader of God’s people who practiced much adultery and witchcraft and who **“painted her eyes and adorned her head”** in her usual seductive manner before she was thrown out of the window of the city wall, trampled by horses, and eaten by dogs in keeping with the prophetic judgment of God (II Ki. 9:22, 30-37). Following her death, her children were also slaughtered in keeping with the Word of the Lord (II Ki. 9:7-10; 10:6-19). This is exactly the same warning Jesus is now giving us. What a holy hatred against sin and such a different picture than the all-permissive and indulgent Jesus we have so often portrayed before us today. He is King of kings and Lords of lords and shall rule the nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 2:27). I have seen many children judged because of various sins of their parents, and many illicit relationships and children born from fornication because parents would not dress properly nor teach their sons and daughters proper sexual understanding and behaviour, and demand that they dress accordingly. May God grant us godly wisdom and holy repentance!

An additional word about pants, and that is that unfortunately they are not only so immodest, but on the bodies of most women, they are so aesthetically unattractive and in many cases outright repulsive. Although many sexually indulgent women use them to cover up the cellulite, varicose veins, and flab from their equally indulgent diets, if they only knew how repulsive and unappealing they were as seen through the eyes of men, they wouldn’t wear them.

Often physical comfort is a primary concern, but godly women report that their proper dresses are more comfortable both summer and winter than slacks or especially skin-tight pants, not only physically, but what is more important, more comfortable when free from guilt mentally, emotionally, and spiritually as well. We need to remember, **“As a jewel of gold in a swine’s snout, so is a fair woman who is without discretion”** (Pro. 11:22).

Now, why do people resist the truth? Because they are bound by sin and Satan, dominated by their fleshly nature and fearful of the consequences of living a holy life. They fear rejection, ridicule, scoffing, the snide remark of a jealous woman or a lustful man. They are without understanding concerning the fiery darts of the wicked one, Satan, coming at them directly into their minds or through their family and friends or fellow church members. They don't want to be different. And yet Jesus has called us to let our **"light so shine before men, that they may see"** (Mt. 5:16). Light is made to be different and stand out in darkness, and given to show people the way! Light is love, the giving of self in the midst of selfishness (I Jn. 1:5; 2:8-11). And yet they believe, "God will bless you if you just don't look like a harlot, and have your skirt at least below the knees. And besides, God looks on the heart, not on the outside."

Now, a word about that lie of the devil, so often heard from apathetic, deceived, and lukewarm Christians trying to justify their lewd dress, and that is the twisting of the Word of God because of the misunderstanding and misapplication of the scriptural truth that **"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart"** (I Sam. 16:7). That, my friend, is precisely *why* we are to dress properly. We are not dressing to hide our bodies from the God who sees everything, but from man who is subject to lustful temptations and satanic attack. That word is a perversion of what God said to Samuel when he was used of God to anoint a king over Israel. The prophet had been judging the selection by how big and handsome the sons of Jesse were and not according to the real character of the heart. God wants obedience from the heart, true holy character in the heart. David was the one who yearned and longed for God, whose soul thirsted after God as the deer thirsted after the water brook (Psa. 42:1). Consequently, it is written, **"I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, who shall fulfill all My will"** (Acts 13:22; I Sam. 13:14). Please realize, you don't have any more in your heart than you are willing to put on your back! Don't deceive yourself. Anyone who uses this perverted excuse is ignorant and willfully deceived.

To help us further understand this, let us examine a scripture by Paul. He had just been writing to the Roman Gentiles how merciful God had been to them by grafting them into salvation through faith, and how severe He had been to the Jews in cutting them off due to their unbelief. He warned the Christians to continue in God's goodness lest they also be cut off, and that one day God would graft the Jews in again because of His mercy (Rom. 11).

Paul then exhorts them, as God now exhorts us:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

(Rom. 12:1-2)

Notice Paul urges, exhorts us, rather than commands us, the Greek word being *parakaleo*, the verb form of *paraclete*, the word used to name the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit you see is the one inspiring us because of God's mercy not to be high-minded as the Jews were but to fear God and offer our own fleshly bodies, these temples that He lives in, as a living sacrifice to God. Many are willing to die for Christ but we are encouraged to live for Him, but yet dead to our own desires and ambitions. Our sacrifice is to be holy, which is what pleases God. This, Paul writes, is the only reasonable, rational, intelligent way to serve God.

He then instructs us not to be conformed to this world. The Greek word for **conformed** is *suschematizo*, the root of which is *schema* from which we get our word "scheme" and "schematic." The Greek word means fashion, form, plan, diagram, and figure, yet "comprises everything in a person that strikes the senses [all five], the figure, bearing, discourse, actions, manner of life." Therefore, it is appearance from the outside, what man sees, man's view. This Greek verb is in the middle voice which means it is something done for one self; it concerns the interests of self. The prefix *sus* means a fashion in association with, a fellowship, or participation with this *aioni* or "age," translated **world**. In other words, we are not necessarily to look like the people of this age of time. But we are to be **transformed**, the Greek word is *metamorphoo*, which means a complete change that begins in the inner man and is not complete until it affects our outer man. It is the Greek word from which we get our English word "metamorphosis," the process whereby an earthbound caterpillar is transformed into a heaven-soaring butterfly. It is the change a swamp-bound tadpole goes through in becoming an air-breathing frog. The word is used of our Lord Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration when He was **transfigured**, *metamorphosed*, before their eyes and His countenance changed as His face began to shine as the sun and His garments glowed whiter than humanly possible (Mt. 17:1-19; Mk. 9:1-3). Oh yes, beloved, blessings of holy obedience can bring an amazing anointing whereby our faces shine with the glory of God. Also, did you ever notice how people who are filled with the spirit often choose bright, colorful clothes, but the clothes of this increasingly godless world are becoming more drab, dark, and colorless?

This transformation is to involve first our inner moral character and then affect our outer man completely, and we are to accomplish this by "**the renewing of our minds.**" Lining our thoughts up with God's, living by His words and not those of this world's, and carnal Christians whose minds are "**enmity against God,**" are at war with God, and are not subject to God's Word and cannot please God (Rom. 8:7-8; Jam. 4:4).

When we are thus transformed, we can then prove, test by actual trial, what God's will is. And we will find God's will to be good, this means excelling in every respect, morally free from every evil and lustful characteristic, useful to God. We will find God's will acceptable, agreeable, literally translated "**well-pleasing**" to God. Also, we will find God's will perfect, complete, lacking nothing, the goal of those striving for maturity.

I trust, dear reader, you can now apply these scriptures to your body and its proper covering. Holiness of the heart will change your mind and result in a difference in the way you appear in this age of lust and sexual perversity. But, this will only result when you first give your body to God completely in order to live as a sacrifice for Him.

To continue on now with excuses, occasionally it is said that one cannot afford a change in wardrobe, but this is never acceptable. We always will find a way to afford or obtain what we really want. More importantly, God always provides for the fulfilling of His Word, which is His will. Besides, it is far less expensive not to have a wardrobe that has to be changed every time the hemlines go up or down. Why do you think the designers and retailers change them so often?

As for the excuse, "Just as long as my dress is below the knees, it's okay," please give me the chapter and verse for that standard. God's standard from the beginning was total coverage and He has not changed from Genesis 3:21 where He completely covered Adam and Eve unto Revelation 1:13 where Jesus is "**clothed with a garment down to the foot,**" nor will He ever as He is "**the same yesterday, today, and forever**" (Heb. 13:8). The Lord is coming back for a bride without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, one that is holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:26-27). And that takes washing and ironing -- cleansing, heat, and pressure! Hallelujah!

As to those who say the truth is too extreme, why should God require less of His children than the children of the nations of this world practice when traveling and living abroad such as in the United States. Look, for example, at the women of the Middle East, India, and Africa. They dress in their native attire which is modest, feminine, and decent. Shall we do less? We represent another nation, a holy heavenly nation, chosen to declare the virtues of our God as it is written:

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the excellencies [virtues] of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

(I Pet. 2:9)

Can we do less? Is it any wonder that the Moslem world, whose traditional standard of dress is more protective and restrictive than scripture teaches but decisively modest, calls the United States with its sensual attire, the Great Satan? And they judge us to be a Christian nation! Is it any wonder so few Moslems come to our God through the name of Christ? Truly, it is written, "**The name of God [Jesus Christ] is blasphemed [spoken evil of, cursed] among the nations because of you**" (Rom. 2:24).

Another excuse people use not to meet this holy standard is that they see that God blesses people who do not keep the standard. True. But it is by His mercy and grace in spite of it, and not because of it, and not to the extent He wants. God sends rain on the just and upon the unjust, and makes His sun to shine on the evil and on the good, but His greatest blessings are upon His children that are obedient. We are to love as God loves, everyone, especially our brethren (Mt. 5:3-12, 44-48; Gal. 6:10). If you

want the true and bountiful blessings of God, a meek and quiet spirit which is precious in the sight of God, and profound anointing from on high, you will dress properly. Look at all the women God has used mightily. They all have and do dress with modesty, many with sleeves to the wrists as well as skirts to the ankles.

Please try to visualize some of them or any women “on stage” or out in front of the public and you will surely realize the surpassing feminine elegance of a long dress over a shorter one. When the dress is modest and the legs are covered, the appearance is lovely and pure, but when the legs are revealed, the refined beauty is lost and it is so much less becoming and attractive. That is why throughout all the centuries only a long gown has really looked exquisite.

In addition to the effect that women’s garments make directly on their overall appearance, look at the indirect effect upon their countenances. The faces of women who dress immodestly look shallow compared with the inner beauty shining though upon the countenances of women who are holy inside and out. What a difference the Spirit of God makes! Truly it is written,

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.”

(Isa. 60:1-3)

In addition, a word to you, sisters. Don’t allow a husband, father, or church leaders to undress you and our children at home, in church, or in public by teaching or demanding sensual, worldly dress, which is one form of spiritual harlotry, any more than you would allow them to force you into further illicit relationships or actual prostitution as some have (Jam. 4:4).

Now, why do most preachers, pastors, and leaders avoid these truths or teach little or nothing concerning dress, or, if they set standards at all, set standards not supported by the scriptures?

The answer is found in Holy Writ, and that is that the time *has* come when people **“will not endure [hold up under, tolerate] sound [wholesome] doctrine, but according to their own desires [lusts] they heap [pile, accumulate, congregate] up for themselves teachers, having itching ears [wanting to have their ears tickled, hear something pleasing and gratifying to the flesh], and they turn their ears away from the truth, and turn aside to myths [false teaching]”** (II Tim. 4:3-4 lit.). Many men are afraid to teach the truth lest their followers leave them, cut off their financial support, and their “little kingdoms” perish. Men have not learned to live by faith financially and they can’t trust God for their support. Many are bound to a “guaranteed paycheck” and have made themselves hirelings of a sort. Well-meaning and somewhat godly men, ruled by systems of religion, denominational spirits, sectarian congregational concepts and practices are afraid to teach the truth or even to consider it - because of their ministerial

idols. The consequences in their eyes are too horrible to imagine, and they are too fearful of “stepping out in faith.” They are controlled by false teachings and standards founded by the systems they are a part of.

Many pastors, because they are married and have no pressing problems with lust themselves, are indifferent to the sexual pressures of the unmarried (I Cor. 7:1-9; I Thes. 4:1-8). Others feel helpless concerning the raging battles with lust that multitudes of men and women are engaged in, and the immorality that is rampant among the youth. Their perplexity is proportional to their own lack of commitment to God’s way of victory by faith which works through practical, *holy love* (I Jn. 5:4; Gal. 5:6). They either ignore the problems of those around them, or refuse the solutions, sometimes with open hostility, from God’s holy Word. And, thus, the church of God, the household of Jehovah-Shalom, the covenant God of love and grace who is *peace*, the family of the Prince of Peace, which is meant to be a haven of rest and peace for the war-torn soldiers who have been fighting lust in the world, is but another battlefield in which to perish.

Some leaders are lukewarm in their hearts, and often as lustful as the people are. But, Oh! God is going to set many free. Jesus is returning for a bride that has prepared herself. Get ready, saints of God, for Jesus is coming soon! And **“everyone who has this hope fixed upon Him purifieth himself, just as He is pure”** (I Jn. 3:3).

Another reason men do not teach the truth is because they do not believe it, and that is because they are not willing to practice it themselves. One must be willing to practice the truth before one will believe the truth. This is not taught in most seminaries, bible schools, and institutes today, but is so beautifully taught by Jesus in the scriptures when, in John chapter 7, the religiously educated leaders of the day asked this question:

“How has this man become learned, having never been educated?” Jesus therefore answered them, and said, ‘My teaching is not mine, but His who sent me. If any man is willing to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but he who is seeking the glory of the one who sent him, he is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him.’”

(Jn. 7:15-18)

This teaches us that true spiritual education does not come from formal learning, but from the Holy Spirit which Jesus promised to those who obey Him and Who was sent to teach us all things (Acts 5:32; Jn. 14:26). Also, this teaches us that true teachings come from one who does not claim them as his own, but from God. Also, that it is God who sends the teacher, not a religious organization, but God Himself. Then, as we have said, a man must be willing to do the teaching before he will know the truth of it. In the matter we are discussing, *he must not only be willing to practice it himself, but be responsible for the sanctification of his wife and children as well as the body of Christ* (Eph. 5:25-26; Mal. 2:15; I Thes. 4:1-8). Also, one must be seeking only to glorify God and not seeking glory

for one's self. And this is why so many men fail, as the religious leaders did in Jesus' day, when they would not confess the truth, because "**they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God**" (Jn. 12:43). Other men do not teach the truth simply because of their own lack of maturity and growth in holiness and righteousness themselves, and they are not being trained and built upon the foundational ministries of the church, God's *holy* apostles and prophets (Eph. 2:20; 3:5).

Other pastors and leaders take a legalistic stand because it is easier to set a few rules and not teach concepts and principles. Or it is easier to go along with the group they are a part of and not rock the boat. But friends, such a storm is coming that it is going to turn the boat upside down; and it will be of God Who will shake everyone that can be shaken in order that only those which cannot be shaken will remain! The true rulership of God! (Heb. 12:26-29).

It is either *holiness or hell*. The choice is ours. The scriptures warn us "**Pursue holiness, without which no man [one] shall see the Lord**" (Heb. 12:14).

We must not be legalistic in our approach to anything, but spiritual! A legalistic approach is setting rigid standards to be enforced with little if any mercy and grace. Since it is not God's way, it is carnal and therefore usually involves setting standards below God's perfect standards of holiness, in accordance with one's own thinking as influenced by the world or one's religious associates, but adjusted by one's degree of spiritual maturity and insight. Its emphasis is on the outer man and action only, not on the inner man and heart. A legalist is usually very judgmental and unforgiving, and woe be to the person who doesn't measure up to his standard of righteousness, however low and insignificant that standard might be.

But a spiritual approach is setting God's standard at perfection, at the highest, at the top, and dealing with everyone in mercy and grace, and considering the frailty of one's own self and the natures of all men. In a spiritual approach, one too wants to see proper action, but righteousness that comes also from the heart and soul and spirit. One realizes the power of forgiveness in the name of Jesus and the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit and, therefore, people attain to a much higher standard of righteousness than with a legalistic approach.

The Pharisees were legalists and were concerned with keeping God's laws by an external standard only, but Jesus said to all, "**Unless your righteous ways surpass those of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of the heavens**" (Mt. 5:20). This requires both imputed and practicing righteousness from the heart!

Further, to be spiritual means that in a spirit of humility and love, we must see that all the laws of God are interpreted according to love -- love for God and love for one another. We must learn love as it affects other people. This kind of love understands the truth about life and it seeks always to affect other people for their best eternal welfare. A spiritual approach teaches the truth according to God's Word, explains the reasons why, interprets and applies practices according to love, is especially gracious and merciful to the immature and unlearned, tolerant of the

uneducated, and yet unwilling to lower the perfect standards of God Almighty, the Holy One of Israel. We all are ever growing into His image and must be considerate of those less mature than ourselves, never esteeming ourselves, however, higher than we ought.

A spiritual approach is one in which we realize we are in the presence of a Holy God and His elect angles, living ever before our Lord Jesus Christ and willing to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with great patience and instruction as well as to minister encouragement, faith, hope, and love.

We must insist on God's standards as He reveals them to us and yet be patient with those to whom He has not. A spiritual approach seeks to set people free in Christ from the bondage of sinful, selfish thinking and acting, have them filled with the Holy Spirit of God, filled with faith and love and the assurance of forgiveness upon confession and repentance.

Our attitude must always be one of love and prayer and obedience, always looking to Jesus, the one who has started our faith, and the one who will perfect and complete it. We must be willing to lay aside every encumbering weight, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and run the race that is set before us, never putting a stumbling block in another person's way as we run together for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We must realize, like Jesus, the joy that is set before us, and therefore endure our cross, actually learning to despise the shame brought upon us, striving constantly against sin even to the point of possible bodily harm and loss of life, appreciating the loving discipline of the Lord, knowing it is for our good in order that we might share in His holiness (Heb. 12:1-10).

Finally, the church will only mature "**as a holy people unto the Lord**" as it receives both specific instruction and example from its leadership (Deut. 7:6; 14:2).

Therefore, I want to give a word to you leaders. Many think because you are being blessed that your standard is acceptable with God. It is not! God's grace accepts *us* where we are, but He does not accept our carnal, worldly behaviour. He is grieved over our worldliness and unsanctified lives. Repent and do your first works. The carnally minded and babes in Christ look to you for their example. They don't see Christ in His holiness as their example. The only Christ they see is the one you let shine through you. Have you been made into His likeness? Are you allowing Him to mold you into His very image? If not, why not? If you can't rule your own house, your wife and children, how can you rule the house of God? (I Tim. 3:5). Repent! Repent! For the kingdom of God is at hand!

Dear Sincere Christian Reader:

I pray for you in the manner as inspired by the Holy Spirit through Paul in Philippians chapter 1.

I thank my God every time I think of you, always praying with joy for you, in view of your participation in the furtherance of the gospel. I am very confident of one thing, and this is that He who started a good work in you will perfect it in holiness until the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of our lovely Lord Jesus, to see you perfected in His holy love. And I pray that your love will increase more and more in really understanding the realities of this message and the moral issues involved. Then you will be able actually to test the truth of it and to make a difference with your life of real eternal value. Also, then you will be pure and never cause another to stumble, but will be filled to overflowing with the fruits of your righteous manner of life which are from Jesus Christ and unto the glory and praise of God. Amen and Amen!

Love always and forever,

John P. Rothacker

About the Cover

Shown are seven examples of godly attire, identified from left to right:

1. Hawaiian muumuu. 2. Vest over full-length dress. 3. Pants-dress. 4. African dress. 5. Blouse with mid-calf length skirt and boots. 6. (Seated) Jacket over blouse with long skirt. 7. (Sitting) Tunic top with slacks.

As they minister together, the operation of “faith” and “the working of miracles” bring wonderful surprises.

The author has published two other works concerning women. The first, *The Public Ministry of Women*, is a book which teaches primarily the biblical role of women in the Body of Christ, and specifically in the assembly, along with many other foundational truths. The second, *A Woman's Headcovering*, is a booklet expounding “a biblical custom practiced faithfully by all godly women from the beginnings of recorded history until our present generations.”

John is also active in various ministries working to preserve our American Christian heritage and regain religious freedom here at home, and promoting unity, revival, and restoration in the Body of Christ world-wide.

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About The Author

A native of Fremont, Ohio, John Philip Rothacker graduated from the College of Dentistry at Ohio State University. After completing an internship in pedodontics at Children's Hospital a year later, he was dramatically converted.

He then practiced dentistry for two years, dividing his time between private practice and working with mentally retarded children at Columbus State School. In 1966 John left to do missionary dentistry for three

months in the summer program of Project Compassion in the West Indies. Following this project, while traveling and working with other missionaries, John entered into the gifts of the Holy Spirit and experienced the power of God in many exciting and miraculous ways.

Then in 1967 he was ordained "by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." (I Tim. 4:14). Although continuing his public speaking he began his many years of home ministry. (Acts 20:20)

In 1976 the Lord Jesus led John out of eight years of part-time dental practice and into a radio ministry where he is "on call" five nights a week teaching and discussing the scriptures over the air. (Acts 19:9) By means of the "Truth for Today" program, John is reaching out through the media of radio, tapes, and literature as part of his calling to "plant the church" in Christ, in His love, faith, holiness, righteousness, and grace, always endeavoring to speak the truth in love.

After having been called to be celibate for many years, the Lord gave him a helpmate to minister with him. God is healing both naturally and supernaturally as John teaches biblical nutrition and his wife, Dulce, is given manifestations of the Holy Spirit such as "a word of knowledge" and "gifts of healings." (Ex. 15:26; I Cor. 12:7-11)

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