

MODESTY: MORE THAN A CHANGE OF CLOTHES

I. Introduction

- A. When Kent Keller and I wrote our modesty book, we originally entitled it *A Gold Ring in a Pig's Snout*. I still like that title but the publisher had major objections, so we changed it. But what we were thinking was based on Proverbs 11:22

“As a ring of gold in a Swine’s snout so is a beautiful woman who lacks discretion (moral perception).”

- B. For this session, I want to:

1. Define biblical modesty and immodesty.
2. What the Bible teaches about modesty.
3. Practical tips on how *not* to look like a beautiful gold ring all dressed up outwardly to go to a party but in your heart you look to God like you are an ugly pig.

II. Definition of modesty and immodesty

- A. Modesty: An inner attitude of the heart motivated by a love for God that seeks His glory through purity and humility; it often reveals itself in words, actions, expressions, and clothes.
- B. Immodesty: An attitude of the heart that expresses itself with inappropriate words, actions, expressions and/or clothes that are flirtatious, manipulative, revealing, or suggestive of sensuality or pride.

III. What the Bible Teaches About Modesty

- A. God created men and women to be different. Genesis 2:18, 21-25

- B. Along came sin and everything became tainted by sin, not only for Adam and Eve but for all of their children including us. Genesis 3:7
- C. When sin entered the picture so did sexual lust, vanity, sensuality, immorality, and all kinds of associated sins. 1 Cor. 6:9-10
- D. Because God is holy, He had to punish people for their sins one way or another. Basically there are two ways: people take their own punishment and will be punished in hell for all of eternity for their sins or our Lord Jesus Christ took the punishment on Himself that we deserve. 2 Cor. 5:21. God cleanses us from our past, present, and future sins, gives us a new heart that desires Him and wants to please Him, convicts us of our sin, grants us repentance and faith. This is a miracle of God's grace and benevolence to us. It is a 100% work of God. Titus 3:4-7
- E. Because men and women are different, they react to temptation differently. For example, a man can be instantly tempted when he sees a woman dressed immodestly or acting in a sensual manner.
- F. Because a Godly woman would want to show love to God and love to others, she would desire two things:
1. to obey God and that would not be a burden, it would be her joy. 1 John 5:3
 2. to not unnecessarily tempt the boys and men around her to think wrongly when they see how she dresses and acts. 1 Cor. 13:5-6 ["love does not at unbecomingly; it does not seek its own way;... it does not rejoice in unrighteousness"] Matthew 22:35-40
- G. An Old Testament example of the ugliness of the heart's motive of immodesty is in Isaiah. This warning is from God of judgment to come if the Jews did not turn from their idolatry. Listen to the warning and see how ugly our vanity, self-focus, and sensuality is to God.

Isa. 3:16-24

- H. One of immodesty's best friends in the Old Testament is shame. It is interesting that in the Old Testament, nakedness is described as shameful and the person did not have to be completely naked to have that description. The Hebrew word for nakedness can also be translated shame or indecency depending on context. God covered Adam and Eve's shame with clothing. Psalm 109:29
- I. Another of immodesty's best friends in the Old Testament is sensuality in the sense of satisfying or appealing to sexual desires through the five senses. Sensuality expressed in what you say. For example, flirting by hinting sexual themes. Ezekiel 33:31-32. It is also expressed in touch such as front-on hugging of guys.
- J. The New Testament tells us that sensuality one of the ways that we love the world. James warns that "... whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." James 4:1-4. We cannot have it both ways.
- K. We are to be a "living and holy sacrifice, presenting our bodies" in ways that are acceptable to God. In order to do that our thinking has to be transformed thus proving God's will which is good, acceptable, and perfect. Romans 12:1-2
- L. Peter warns us in 1 Peter 2:11-13 to "...abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul."
- M. Peter also exhorts women to have a "gentle and quiet spirit." 1 Peter 3:3-4 This means they accept God's dealings with them as good. It does not make them angry that they cannot dress and act the way they want. They love God and they are precious in His sight. That is their motive and their heart's desire.
- N. Paul tells us we are to dress and behave modestly and discretely. Our adornment is to be shown by our good works. 1 Timothy 2:9-10. This should be our joy to be pleasing to our Lord.

O. Legalists judge people by their own rules and standards. For example, you can only wear skirts, long skirts and blouses with sleeves that button up to your neck. Legalists are like the Pharisees and our Lord Jesus had a very stern warning to them. Matthew 23:13-15, 23

IV. Practical tips on how *not* to look like a beautiful gold ring all dressed up outwardly to go to a party but in your heart you look to God like you are an ugly pig.

1. Enjoy the freedom you have in the Lord to wear makeup and clothing that you like. Styles change. Somebody who is drab in their outward appearance and judging others who do not look just like they do, is probably a Pharisee in their heart.
2. Have as your deepest heart's desire to please God. It should bring you joy. Ask yourself, "Who am I trying to impress? What am I thinking when I choose the clothes to wear today? When I look in the mirror?" Is it thinking about God or how I can be noticed and how many compliments I can get?

3. Some practical tips to go by:

Do a mirror check:

- ** Are my clothes too tight?
- ** Is my neckline too low? Bend over and look. Remember, a lot of times the guys are taller than the girls, so they have a birds-eye view.
- ** Is my shirt or blouse too high at the waist? Raise your hands over your head or bend over and see if skin is showing.
- ** Am I exposing parts of my body that are sensually suggestive?
- ** Do my undergarments show through?
- ** Am I constantly having to adjust my clothing because I feel a little guilty about what I am wearing?
- ** What does the slogan on my clothing say?
- ** Am I dressing like a girl or "one of the guys?"

V. Conclusion

What is in *your* heart? When God looks at you, does He see a woman who is “precious in His sight?” or does He see a woman who is a “harlot in her heart?”