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In the Good Ole' Summertime

By Teresa Hampton

It never ceases to amaze me. Summer temps rise and people begin wearing clothes that leave little to the imagination. In fact, Adam and Eve's fig leaves may have covered more skin.

The first man and woman were as innocent in thought and action as little children. However, immediately following their disobedience in the Garden, the couple's eyes were opened. They recognized their nakedness, felt guilt and shame, and tried to cover themselves with leaves from a fig tree. Even at that, they hid themselves. This establishes a basic truth: if people are old enough to know the difference between right and wrong, they *should* recognize the wrongness of immodest clothing. God was not satisfied with their leafy attire. He made them tunics of animal skin (Genesis 3:21).

Most people would affirm the rightness of wearing clothes. The question then becomes *what is modest and immodest?*

First, we should consider what God desires. He wants women to be clothed in a way that does not draw attention to outward appearance - neither immodest or flashy (1 Tim. 2:9-10). God wants women to be clothed with humility, self-control, and good works (1 Peter 3:3-4). A woman's outward adornment is just a reflection of the character within.

A second thing to consider is the basic difference between men and women. God created men to be visual and tactile (to see and do). He made women to be verbal and emotional (to speak and feel). These differences are perfect in a marriage setting. Young, unmarried women may be naive about this fundamental difference. However, mature women have no excuse. Men are extremely vulnerable when they see us dressed immodestly. God does not want any Christian to be a stumbling block to others (Romans 14:12-13).

Men define immodest dress as:

- low-waist pants or jeans
- midriff showing
- bare shoulders - strapless tops and dresses
- low necklines - showing cleavage
- thin or sheer tops
- tight or form-fitting clothes
- short skirts
- short-shorts
- visible underwear

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Based on their definition, the following questions and mirror test should also help a woman decide what kind of clothing to wear:

Questions -

- Would you wear these clothes if you were meeting Jesus?
- Do you have to tug or pull on this garment?
- Will these clothes help you guard the souls of Christian brothers?
- Could you talk to a man or young man about the Lord?

Mirror test

- Stand in front of a full length mirror (wearing the shoes you have selected)
- Sit in a chair and cross your legs
- Bend over slightly to see if your neckline is too revealing

A woman's immodest clothing can become a major stumbling block to men. It is unfortunate, but true, that some women come to worship wearing garments that cause their brothers to drift toward sin. The church should be a place of shelter for the minds of men. Some women will quickly counter that men are accountable. This is true. But women are accountable, too. Moms are accountable for the example they set for their girls. Moms and Dads are accountable for the clothes they buy for their girls.

Immodest clothing is seen often in the good ole' summertime, but is seen in other seasons, too. It is definitely a cultural problem which has seeped into the church. We cannot control the way women of the world dress and influence our husbands or sons. But, we can control what we wear and what we purchase for our daughters. As Christian women, we can refuse to be part of the problem.

Today's Verse: *Do not let your adornment be merely outward - arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel - rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God (1 Peter 3:3-4).*

Note: A study book written for young women which covers this topic as well as others is *God's Girls*, published by Publishing Designs, Inc. www.publishingdesigns.com

Although I cannot vouch for everything on these websites, you may want to check them out: www.sweetinnocencedresses.com, www.jenclothing.com, www.mikarose.com, www.themodbod.com

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