

Modest – Why?

Today, more and more women who read God's Word are discovering the principle of modesty. They are appalled by modern society's lack of it, or their own conscience is troubled as God convicts them.

Modesty was defined in Noah Webster's original 1828 Dictionary as "not forward or bold; not boastful; not loose or lewd; not excessive or extreme; moderate; decent; in females it is used synonymously with chastity or purity of manners." Webster reflected Biblical principles that Early American homes, churches, and schools were established on.

The *World Book Dictionary* defines it as "Freedom from vanity; the quality of being shy or bashful; the quality of being decent or chaste, not calling attention to one's body."

Why do we need modesty?

1. God said so.

"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" (1 Timothy 2:9–10).

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation [behavior] of the wives; while they behold your *chaste conversation* [behavior] coupled with fear" (1 Peter 3:1–2).

2. Man's way is not enough.

"They sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Genesis 3:7).

"Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Genesis 3:21).

Adam and Eve made aprons to cover themselves, but God gave them other clothing. Their own was inadequate.

3. We are not to cause others to stumble.

"But I say unto you, That whosoever *looketh* on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matthew 5:28).

If looking has such an effect on a man, then women do them a great disservice by dressing immodestly.

"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is *none occasion of stumbling* in him" (1 John 2:10).

“Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a *stumbling block or an occasion to fall* in his brother’s way” (Romans 14:13).

4. Weights and sins impede our progress in God’s kingdom.

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every *weight*, and the *sin* which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1).

Modesty involves clothing, but is also an attitude, as the definitions showed. We need modesty in both clothing and attitude. Women who desire God’s modesty will reflect it in their dress and actions. How serious it is to impede our progress in holiness or cause someone else to sin because we take our way instead of God’s.

5. God will judge immodesty.

“Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: therefore the Lord will smite with a scab, the crown of the heads of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts... And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty” (Isaiah 3:16–17, 24).

How about you? Are you forward, bold, flirtatious, or boastful? Do you dress in a lewd or tempting, form-fitting manner, or with costly array? Or are you dressing to please God?

“Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies” (Proverbs 31:10).