

Defining Modesty

Principles to Live by

Culture

Culture

We must be sensitive to
the culture we live in lest
we stand out
unnecessarily.



Culture

We must be sensitive to customs if we don't want to appear inappropriate in other cultures.



“For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law...I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”

I Corinthians 9:19-22

Circumstances

Circumstances

Weather and Health:
We are counseled to
choose clothes that will
protect our body well.



“Satan invented the fashions which leave the limbs exposed, chilling back the life current from its original course.”

2T 531

Circumstances

Security: We need to wear clothes that are appropriate for the activity we do in order to keep us safe.



"In regard to my wearing the short dress... In the winter I rose early, and putting on my short dress, which did not require to be raised by my hands to keep it from dragging in the snow, I walked briskly from one to two miles before breakfast. I have worn it several times to the office, when obliged to walk through light snow, or when it was very wet or muddy"

IT 464

Circumstances

Occasion: We need to dress appropriately for the occasion.



“Our clothing should be plain and simple, so that when we visit the poor, they will not be embarrassed by the contrast between our appearance and their own.”

EV 673

Circumstances

Modesty: We should not draw undue attention to ourselves.



“Christians should not take pains to make themselves a gazing-stock by dressing differently from the world. But if, when following out their convictions of duty in respect to dressing modestly and healthfully, they find themselves out of fashion, they should not change their dress in order to be like the world; but they should manifest a noble independence and moral courage to be right, if all the world differ from them.”

HL 18

Simplicity

Simplicity

We should not want to attract attention to ourselves.



Simplicity

Our clothes should be simple, yet neat, elegant and tasteful.



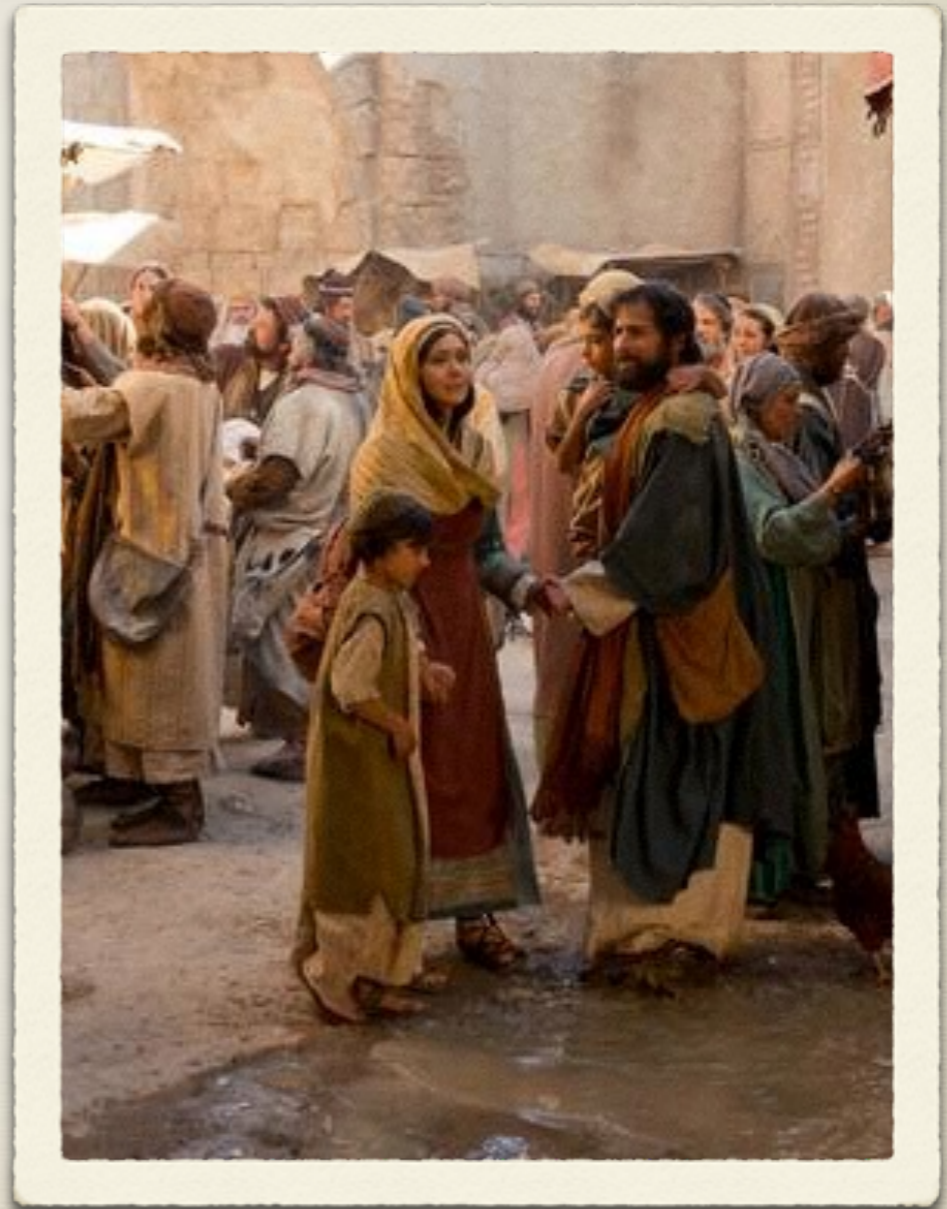
“Any device designed to attract attention to the wearer or to excite admiration, is excluded from the modest apparel which God's word enjoins.”

MH 287

Gender Distinction

Gender Distinction

There has always been clear gender distinction in dress among God's people in the Bible.



"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

Gender Distinction

There is not much gender distinction today.



"There is an increasing tendency to have women in their dress and appearance as near like the other sex as possible, and to fashion their dress very much like that of men, but God pronounces it abomination."

1T 457

Gender Distinction

“God designed that there should be a plain distinction between the dress of men and women, and has considered the matter of sufficient importance to give explicit directions in regard to it; for the same dress worn by both sexes would cause confusion and great increase of crime.” (1T 460)



The Reform Dress

Problems with the American Costume

- * Too much like the dress of men
- * Associated with spiritualists
- * Associated with the feminist movement

The Reform Dress

“But three companies of females passed before me, with their dresses as follows with respect to length: The first were of fashionable length, burdening the limbs, impeding the step, and sweeping the street and gathering its filth; the evil results of which I have fully stated. This class, who were slaves to fashion, appeared feeble and languid.



The Reform Dress

“The dress of the second class which passed before me was in many respects as it should be. The limbs were well clad. They were free from the burdens which the tyrant, Fashion, had imposed upon the first class; but had gone to that extreme in the short dress as to disgust and prejudice good people, and destroy in a great measure their own influence. This is the style and influence of the "American Costume," taught and worn by many at "Our Home," Dansville, N.Y. It does not reach to the knee. I need not say that this style of dress was shown me to be too short.”



The Reform Dress

“A third class passed before me with cheerful countenances, and free, elastic step. Their dress was the length I have described as proper, modest, and healthful. It cleared the filth of the street and sidewalk a few inches under all circumstances, such as ascending and descending steps, et cetera.” (3SM 278)



“The dress of our people should be made most simple.... Some have supposed that the very pattern given was the pattern that all were to adopt. This is not so. But something as simple as this would be the best we could adopt under the circumstances. No one precise style has been given me as the exact rule to guide all in their dress.” (3SM 254)

Chastity

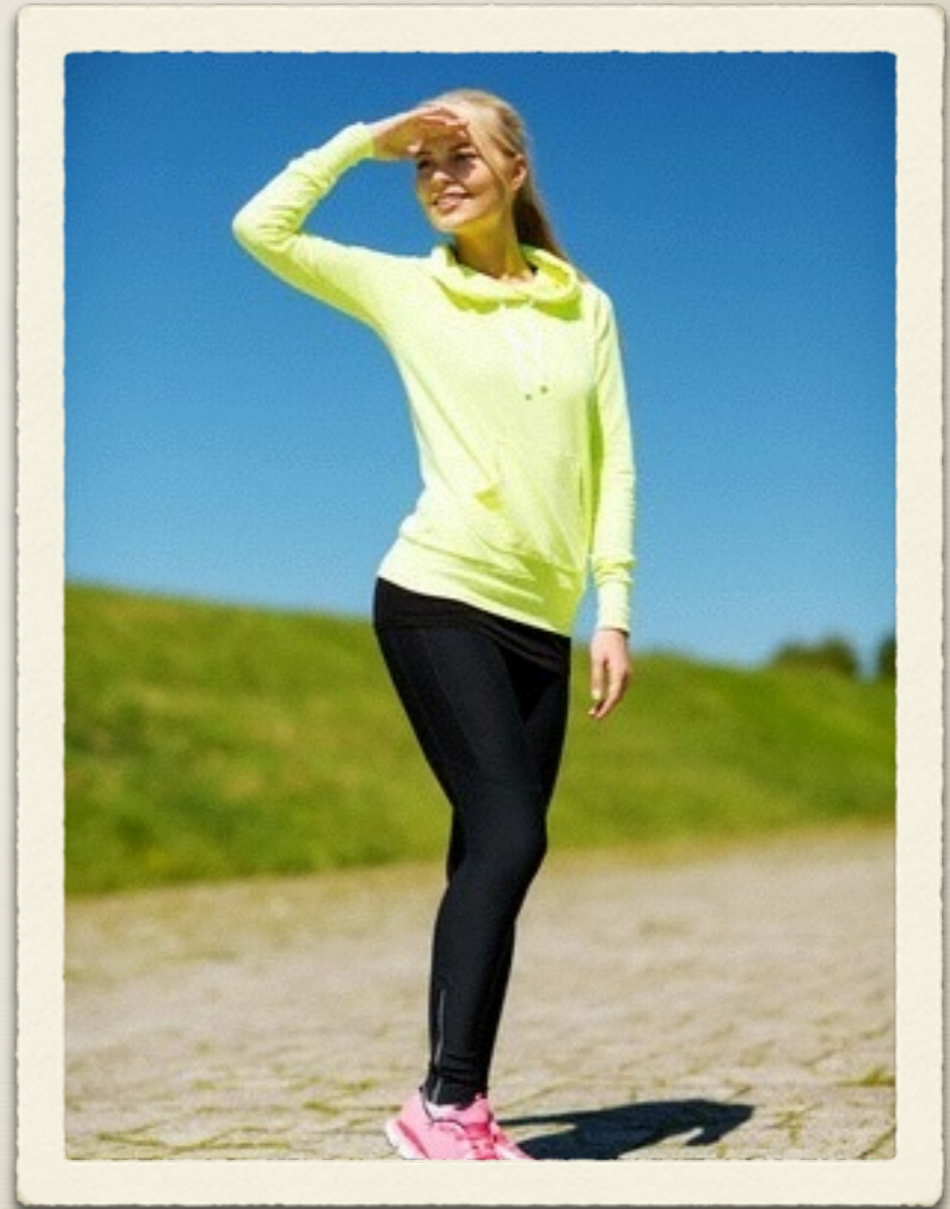
Chastity

Though there is some debate on what is “provocative or not,” in some areas there is general consensus. The Christian should be above average.



Chastity

Something might be culturally acceptable, adapted for the circumstances, and simple, and yet still not best for a Christian.



Chastity

What we wear does not make us moral or not, but it can lead us (or others) to immorality.



“Few temptations are more dangerous or more fatal to young men than the temptation to sensuality, and none if yielded to will prove so decidedly ruinous to soul and body for time and eternity.”

MCP_I, 231

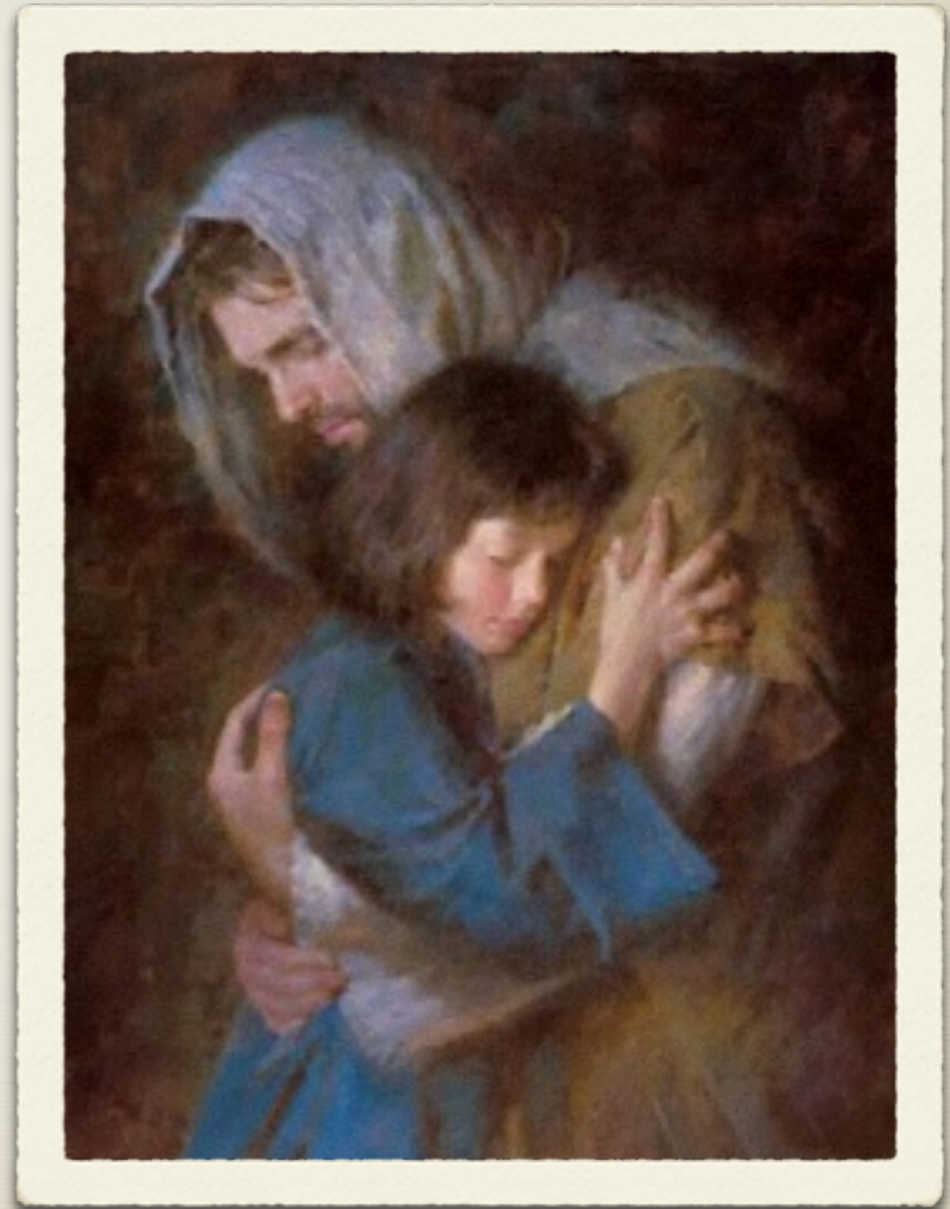
"Flee also youthful lusts"

1 Timothy 2:22

Conversion

Conversion

Ultimately, only Christ can help us bless others and glorify God in our choice of clothes.



“There is no use in telling you that you must not wear this or that, for if the love of these vain things is in your heart, your laying off your adornments will only be like cutting the foliage off a tree. The inclinations of the natural heart would again assert themselves. You must have a conscience of your own.”

OFC 234

Conversion

Remember that there is a cross to bear - making the right choice will not always be the easiest thing to do.



“If any man will come after Me,’ Christ said, ‘let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.’ Matthew 16:24. Self-denial and sacrifice will mark the Christian's life. Evidence that the taste is converted will be seen in the dress of all who walk in the path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord.”

AA 523

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The End