

Modesty from Godly Women?

by Wayne Goff

“In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing,” (1 Timothy 2:9).

The clothing and conduct of Christian women says something about their character. The word “*modest*” is from the Greek word *kosmios*, from which we get our English word “cosmos.” It means “well-arranged, seemly, modest” (*Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the NT*). The idea is very simple: women who profess godliness (respect for God) both **dress** and **conduct** themselves in a manner which reflects that disposition!

Paul teaches that they do this “*with propriety and moderation*” or as the HCSB translates it “*with decency and good sense*.” This is intentionally vague to allow for the ever-changing “styles” and “fashions.” Nobody wants to look like a freak or a social outcast just to be godly. But at the same time, *you can tell who considers God* in their dress and behavior. One can look modest, fashionable, and decent with a little forethought and consideration for the image they wish to portray.

Also note that the word translated “*adorn*” is the *verb form* of *kosmios*, and reflects the same idea of “*arranging*” or “*putting in order*” one’s clothing and behavior. The exorbitant, outrageous dress of some in Hollywood (think Jennifer Lopez or Katie Perry) is not reflective of godliness either. In fact, it screams out “**LOOK AT ME!**” This may fit the disposition of our narcissistic national obsessions, but it is not the mindset of the godly follower of Jesus!

Contrariwise, if you want to attract the attention of the Lord and of His faithful followers, “*adorn*” yourselves with “*good works*” (v. 10)! That is always a beautiful thing.

The “*casual dress*” trend that we see everywhere today only reflects one thing – the world doesn’t give much thought to how they dress or the message it sends. Then again, maybe the message is “I don’t care what anyone thinks!” Christians can and should do a little better than the world.

Godly men, meanwhile, will be praying everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting (2:8). This too, is *reflective* of the necessary godly disposition of men. Those who wish to please the Lord *first*, and the world *second*, will consider what Jesus says in His last will and testament.

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