

1 Timothy Chapter 2C *The Heart of Modesty*

In 1993 I was in a very bad motorcycle accident. I was hit by a drunk driver on my way home from work in Reading. I was thrown about 25 feet from my bike and I lay in the middle of rout 724 during rush hour.

- This may sound funny to you, but when the paramedics arrived at the scene and began to work on me, they informed me that they were going to cut my pants off in the middle of the road.
- Even though my lung was deflated, my ribs were broken somehow the modesty that is deeply ingrained in me raised the strength to say Oh No You Are Not!
- In my mind I thought: There are people everywhere watching!

I remember a Pastor friend teaching on the subject of Modesty from 1 Timothy, he made a statement that I still remember: He said that he thinks that God gave us these bodies to HUMBLE us, not to exalt us.

After all they eventually wrinkle, grow weak and without some serious help they usually don't smell very good.

This morning we are going to return to 1 Timothy chapter 2 for a second look at the subject of modesty.

Paul introduced this virtue in verse 9:

1 Timothy 2:9 *likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, 10 but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works.*

Remember the context: Paul is teaching Timothy “*how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of truth.*”

- IN verse 8 he encouraged men to lead in prayer and refrain from angry quarreling.
- IN Verse 9 – 15 he encourages modesty and submission among the women in the fellowship.

As I said last week, I believe that Paul's instructions are designed to keep the focus of the church's gatherings on the Lord Jesus.

I would like to address this subject of MODESTY in the following ways.

1. The Meaning of Modesty
2. The Moderation of Modesty
3. The Mind and Heart of Modesty

The Meaning of Modesty -

Paul's cry for modesty was NOT simply a cry for women to “cover up” exposed skin. (*While that is included in the idea, it is much more*)

Covenant Eyes: Modesty is a respectable manner of adorning one's body and carrying oneself, born out of a freedom from a worldly definition of beauty and worth, and motivated by a hatred of sin and a desire to draw attention to God. (repeat!)

The word that Paul uses to express “modesty” is used in only 2 places in the N.T. and it encompasses much more than an individual’s dress.

The word that is translated “modesty” (KOSMIOS) is derived from the word (KOSMOS = **the created order / world**) So Modesty carries a meaning orderly or decent. The word expresses a sense of harmonious arrangement. It was used by Plato to describe a citizen who was quiet and orderly.

- It is used in 1 Timothy 3:2 to describe the good behavior of an Elder.

However, one of Paul’s concerns in the church at Ephesus was the adornment and apparel of the women in the church.

When the word modesty is applied to the orderliness of a person’s dress we understand that the context of that dress must be taken into consideration.

- If I was to ask you what you might consider modest apparel for a summer day at the Beach, you might say a one piece bathing suit with an appropriate cover up...
- While that would be considered modest for the Jersey shore it would be considered out of order for a Sunday morning worship service.
- You see there is a contextualization that needs to be considered when the subject of modest apparel is approached.
- If you were attending a worship service in Guatemala this morning any women in attendance who were wearing pants would be considered out of order.
 - The appropriate dress for women in much of Latin America is a long skirt, pants on women are considered unacceptable.

As I said last week: One of Paul’s concerns was the undue attention that is drawn to one’s physical attributes or one’s financial status through a lack of modesty when the church gathered for worship.

- In the context of public worship modesty is the appropriate demeanor for godly men and women. Nothing should distract attention away from the object of our worship, the Lord Jesus.
 - I remember walking into the sanctuary one evening when the church was holding a talent night and seeing many of the men with their heads bowed down. I thought I was walking in on a time of prayer until I looked up to see a woman expressing herself in dance. I realized that the men were simply guarding their hearts by looking away.
 - Paul is desirous that the glory that is on display when the church is gathered for worship is the glory of the Lord.

Just so that you know, there IS a context in which intimate and or expensive apparel is actually quite fitting:

When Isaac was wooing Rebekah he provided her with fine clothing and expensive jewelry.

- Proposals between bride and bridegroom in ancient middle-eastern society were the right context for fine clothing and jewelry.

- Rebekah would be beautifully adorned for her bridegroom.

The bride in the Song of Solomon is well perfumed and fittingly jeweled.

- And her bridegroom found her physical attributes quite pleasurable.
 - Marriage is the ONLY context for the sharing of physical treasures that God has provided to men and women.
 - Revealing those treasures for public display is actually stealing what rightly belongs to your spouse or future spouse and holding those treasures out for public consumption.
- 1 Corinthians 7:4 **For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.**

MEANING: Modesty is a respectable manner of adorning one's body and carrying oneself, born out of a freedom from a worldly definition of beauty and worth, and motivated by a hatred of sin and a desire to draw attention to God.

The Moderation of Modesty

I found it interesting this week as I read through a book on modesty by Tim Challes.

The Muslim religion has strict rules and regulation regarding the proper attire for women, Orthodox Judaism also enforces strict rules and regulations for the attire of both sexes.

- Deeply committed Muslims and Jews find the immodesty of Western Christianity to be very offensive.
- They focus attention on outward regulations which display a form of godliness, BUT their hearts remain unchanged.

True Christianity is a faith that transcends both style and culture. Believers are bought back from the slave market of sin, adopted as children of the Heavenly Father and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise.

- The Grace of God in Jesus Christ makes no immediate demands on hairstyle or dress.
- It captures the heart of sinful people and radically transforms them from the inside out.
- Listen to how Paul describes this transformation to Titus:

Titus 2:11 **For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,**

13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

- It is the GRACE of God that TRAINS us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions.
- By the Holy Spirit we have the fruit of self-control.

It is important that we understand, the grace of God that saves us does not cease to be effective once justification is obtained, it continues to labor in the inner man until the reflection of the Lord Jesus is seen in us.

The orderliness of our lives (in thought, word and deed) is motivated and energized by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

- While there are no “LAWS” that are etched in stone by the finger of God; the Holy Spirit has written his law upon our hearts. (Jeremiah 31:33)
 - Christ rules as Lord in the hearts of those who believe

As we contemplate the subject of modesty I would like you to picture the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus as a road, a rural road having a ditch on either side of the road.

- On the right side of the road is the ditch of legalism (it is the RIGHT side)
 - Legalists operate from the assumption that the Christian faith is performance based like every other religion on the face of the earth.
 - Legalists see adherence to religious restrictions as the right thing to do and when they do the right thing they believe that somehow God is now indebted to them.

Colossians 2: 21 “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch”

22 (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? 23 These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

- When we define modesty with narrow, legalistic rules and regulations (this low, this tight, this long) we neglect the Gospel’s work of true heart transformation and settle for an outward show of godliness. (That is the RIGHT side of the road)
- The left side of the road, (*the license side*) is the lawless side of the road.
 - Because the grace of God is all encompassing and has NO limits, some would say that it really doesn’t matter how you live your life, your morals, your modesty have absolutely no bearing on your relationship with God. (Antinomianism)
 - How would Paul address this kind of excess? He warned against it in Rom.6

Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?

2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

- Lawlessness avoids the Lordship of Jesus Christ completely,
- Legalism avoids the Sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit saying, I can do this myself. (Just show me the rules and I will obey them)

HOW does the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit actually function in the life of a believer?

- Shopping with modesty in mind may take multiple HOURS! And a great deal of discernment.
 - Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes when you look in the mirror. Am I being motivated by pride; a desire to show off a certain part of my body? (JUCY)
 - Am I taking into consideration how my dress will affect other people?

- No PURCHASE IS FINAL UNTIL MOM AND DAD APPROVE.
- Choosing the proper apparel from your wardrobe that will fit the context
 - Are you going to wear this to the beach, to church, to the mall?
- This one is important but very uncomfortable: Allowing other people to give me their honest input about my dress and manner of living.
 - We should have trustworthy friends and family who share our values to help us.

Proverbs 15: 31 **The ear that listens to life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise. 32**
Whoever ignores instruction despises himself, but he who listens to reproof gains intelligence

- Young People, Do you fight with your parents over clothing?
- Does shopping always end in conflict? Who determines the values of your home?
 - Conflict is only an outward symptom of an infirmity that originates in the heart.

3. The Mind and Heart of Modesty.

It is important that we understand, the way that we present ourselves, our dress, our manners, our speech flow directly from what is in our hearts.

- From an immodest heart proceeds immodest fruit.
- From a humble heart proceeds modesty and self-control.

Luke 6: 43 **“For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit,**
44 for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are
grapes picked from a bramble bush.
45 The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out
of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

At its very essence modesty is a manifestation of true humility.

1 Peter 3: 3 **Do not let your adorning be external — the braiding of hair, the wearing of gold, or**
the putting on of clothing — 4 but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the
imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious.

- God is much more concerned with your heart condition than he is your outward appearance.
- Parents: you have a God given responsibility to shape the heart of your children.

Humility is taught in the everyday exchanges of communication in our homes.

Proverbs 29: 23 **One’s pride will bring him low, but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor.**

When rebellion arises it needs to be recognized and dealt with in gentleness with firmness through confession and repentance.

JUST as YOU and I need to appropriate the Gospel for ourselves every day, we need to train our children to take their rebellion to the Lord every day.

This way they will learn to walk in true freedom and their pure heart will produce good fruit.

- Since they are being bombarded every day with the standards of the world, allowing Miley Cyrus to train them in immodesty, they need to have a grace filled home to help them take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

Tough Questions:

Do you believe that a certain style of dress will increase your popularity?

Is your identity based upon a certain look? (Preppy, Goth? Grunge?) (Godly? Pious?)

- Do you really think that a certain look can provide you with or confirm your identity?

In reality, it is your character that is on display for all to see through the way that you present yourself every day.

Do you dress in such a way as to entice or gain attention from members of the opposite sex?

If you know that a CERTAIN person is going to be in attendance do you dress a certain way hoping that he or she will notice you?

I want you to see the slavery of immodesty!

- Many people will define their worth BY their fashion sense, their sex appeal, their image.
- Many women will define themselves by their sweater size, weight, or the brand names she wears.
- This slavery can force a person into deep debt. Living way beyond their means.
- It can cause eating disorders and ruin the precious relationships that God brings into our lives.
- There is NO PEACE in this lifestyle because the human body is constantly aging, breaking down and no measure of exercise or even plastic surgery can stop the enviable.

BUT, through the Gospel of Jesus Christ we have been set free from the slavery of sin and united to Christ our Savior. Jesus provides us with lasting peace:

John 14:27 **Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.**

Friends, through the Gospel you are accepted in the Beloved, loved with an everlasting love, adorned with the righteousness of Christ

Let's be counter-cultural and spend our lives declaring His glorious grace.