

## Modesty of the Transformed

*Romans 12:1-2; 1 Timothy 2:9-10*

### Introduction

1. The Christian is one who has undergone a dramatic change and is undergoing a dramatic change.
2. They are a part of the “called out” – from the world/darkness into the kingdom/light/family of God.
3. This change is described as a transformation wrought by an inward renewal to set us apart from the surrounding world – **Romans 12:1-2**
  - a. This makes discipleship an everyday, practical matter which involves all the choices we make while in the body – regulated by heaven’s decree.
  - b. There is not much that is more of a daily practicality than the choice of our clothing.
4. The transformed Christian is one who exhibits modesty in daily life – inwardly and outwardly.
  - a. A Christian is one who dresses in modest apparel that is distinct from that of the world.
  - b. **“transformed”** – same word used for Jesus being **“transfigured”** – **“His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them.” (Mark 9:3)** – His face changed, but even His clothes changed to reflect His true self.
5. The world poses a tremendous threat to a Christian’s modesty, but by God’s grace we can reach the standard of holiness and modesty He has called us to.
- I. A Biblical Foundation: Inward Renewal Results in Outward Transformation
  - A. The Living Sacrifice
    - a. It is foolish and unbiblical to suggest any part of discipleship is reduced to either outward or inward matters independent of each other.
    - b. God shows that our service to Him is represented in the sum of man’s parts – **1 Thessalonians 5:23**
    - c. Our spiritual service involves our bodies – **Romans 12:1**
      - i. **“spiritual service” (ASV); “spiritual worship” (ESV); “spiritual service of worship” (NASB); “intelligent service” (YLT)**
      - ii. **NEB (New English Bible), ‘the worship offered by mind and heart.’**
      - iii. **“present your bodies” – Romans 6:12-13** – bodies/members to righteousness.
        1. **“mortal body” – Romans 8:11** – directed in spiritual activity of righteousness through guidance of HS.
      - iv. **1 Corinthians 6:13, 19-20** – the body is for the Lord – what we do with it is an integral part of our service to God.
    - d. Bodies presented in acceptable spiritual service is dependent on inward renewal – **Romans 12:2**



the outward conversation.” (R.C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*)

3. “By the use of this word, Paul indicates that the adornment of the Christian woman should be one in which order, not disorder, obtains. And this orderliness must not extend merely to the relationship of the various articles of wearing apparel to one another, but also to the relationship of that apparel to her Christian character and testimony. In other words, the apparel must be congruous with, fitting to, and consistent with what she is, a child of God.” (Wuest Word Studies)
  4. **Cf. James 3:13, 17-18** – the heart containing the meekness of wisdom will find expression in good conduct (outward).
    - a. **(vv. 14-16)** – the heart containing the envy and self-seeking of earthly wisdom will find expression in disorder, and evil.
  - ii. **(v. 9)** – *aidōs* – **“modestly” (NASB)** – “a sense of shame, modesty,” (Vine); “modesty” (BDAG)
    1. **“Shamefastness” (ASV)** – “by ‘shamefast’ that which was established and made fast by (an honorable) shame.” (R.C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*)
      - a. **“modesty which is ‘fast’ or rooted in the character...’** (Davies; Bible English, p. 12)” (VINE)
    2. Ability to blush – **Jeremiah 6:15** (rooted in the heart molded by God’s will/character)
    3. **“modest apparel, with propriety and moderation” (1 Timothy 2:9)**. – i.e. outward (apparel) rooted in inward (modesty).
  - d. **Philippians 1:9-11** – love abounding in knowledge and discernment (inward) results in fruits of righteousness (outward).
  - e. **1 Thessalonians 1:2, 8** – the Thessalonians outward conduct of work, labor, and patience came from graces wrought in the heart.
    - i. By God’s word – **1 Thessalonians 2:13-14** – word works in them through belief, results in imitation in conduct of other brethren.
  - f. **Modesty is the well-ordering of life rooted in the inward man renewed by God’s will and expressing itself in outer conduct which conforms to God’s will, including the apparel of the body.**
- II. The Modest Heart and its Effects
- A. The Pursuit of God’s Favor
    - a. **1 Timothy 2:9-10** – **“not...but”** sentence structure does not prohibit, but seeks to emphasize what is more important. (**cf. John 6:27**)
      - i. **Who?** – Women who profess godliness.
      - ii. **What?** (emphasis) – NOT (merely) outward – physical worth and beauty; BUT (especially) inward – modesty, propriety,

moderation, godliness (outward reflecting such – modest apparel, good works).

iii. **Not that which seeks social attention and acceptance, but rather that which seeks the attention of God, and thus leads the observer to God as well.**

- b. **1 Peter 3:1-6** – context: submission of wives to a husband (unbelieving) to win them over to Christ.
- i. **(v. 1)** – won to the word/Christ/God by wife’s conduct observed.
    1. Implied focus of wife on God resulting in outward/observable conduct – attract another to God ultimately.
    2. **“when they observe your...conduct” (v. 2)**
  - ii. **(v. 2)** – **“your pure behaviour in fear” (YLT)**
    1. **Chaste** – *hagnos* – pure – including, but not limited to sexual purity.
    2. **“in fear”** – of God (**1:17; 2:18**) – i.e. the pure/holy conduct is in the sphere of deep reverence for God.
      - a. **Will lead to a reflection of God’s character.**
  - iii. **(vv. 3-4)** – not...but – emphasizing what is precious in God’s sight.
    1. **“hidden person of the heart”** – inward – focused on the spiritual man that God sees and cares about. (Yet, serves God in the body – **Romans 12:1**)
    2. **“gentle and quiet spirit”** – not loud, attention drawing conduct (and dress) – **nor self-willed, but God-willed.**
    3. **“precious”** – *polytelēs*; extremely expensive (STRONG) (**cf. 1 Timothy 2:9** – **“costly clothing”**)
      - a. “They no longer needed the former splendor of outward adornment, because [they were] clothed with the beauty and simplicity of Christ-like character...Their modesty and simplicity were a rebuke to and reaction from the shameless extravagances and immoralities of heathenism.” (ISBE, 1915 Edition, ed. James Orr (Seattle, WA: BibleSoft, 1996.), s.v. “Woman.”)
  - iv. **(vv. 5-6)** – how women of faith adorned themselves before – gentleness, quietness, fear of God, seeking God’s favor, submissive to husbands as God instructs – chaste conduct (modest dress).

B. The Pursuit of Man’s Interests

- a. **Romans 13:8, 10** – the modest heart operates on the principle of love for others.
- b. **Philippians 2:3-4** – the modest heart operates in humility, putting itself behind others’ needs. (NOTE: we say that a humble person is “being modest...”)

- c. **A modest heart seeks God’s favor, but also recognizes responsibility in relationships with man, and operates in the body in a way which would provide for the good of others. (cf. Romans 12:17)**
  - d. **1 Thessalonians 4:3-8** – in pursuit of God’s favor, the modest heart acts with the knowledge of God’s will in sanctification, also understanding the implications such has on the horizontal plane with man.
    - i. **(vv. 3-5)** – separation from sexual immorality through control of bodies (vessel; **cf. 1 Peter 3:7**) in contrast to Gentiles who give themselves to all their desires.
      - 1. **Cf. 1 Peter 4:3** – more than simply fornication, but all that would lead to it – lewdness/lusts (would include modest dress).
      - 2. **(v. 1)** – abound more and more – how if you’re already not promiscuous? – through growth in purity/modesty.
    - ii. **(v. 6)** – the opposite defrauds a brother – through adultery, but also regarding a stumbling block through immodesty.
      - 1. **Proverbs 6:26** – reduced to a crust of bread.
    - iii. **(vv. 7-8)** – to reject this call to outward purity and conduct which is rooted in the inward modesty before God is to reject God.
- III. The Standard of Modest Apparel
- A. Is an objective biblical pattern for modest apparel a necessary reality?
    - a. **There can be no order without a standard:**
      - i. **1 Timothy 2:9-10** – Adorn – *kosmeō* (VERB); Modest – *kosmios* (ADJECTIVE) (BOTH HAVE TO DO WITH ORDERLINESS)
        - 1. *Kosmos* (NOUN) (root) – "a harmonious arrangement or order," then, "adornment, decoration," came to denote "the world, or the universe, as that which is Divinely arranged." (VINE)
        - 2. **Cosmos** – (from same root) – the universe seen as a well-ordered whole.
          - a. Why? Observed order.
          - b. In what way? Natural law. (Discovered, and continued discovery.)
      - ii. **WHERE THERE IS ORDER THERE IS LAW – always!**
        - 1. Apparel – a law/pattern concerning apparel? Yes.
        - 2. “By the use of this word, Paul indicates that the adornment of the Christian woman should be one in which order, not disorder, obtains...In other words, the apparel must be congruous with, fitting to, and consistent with what she is, a child of God.” (Wuest Word Studies)
    - b. **“women to adorn themselves with proper clothing... as is proper for women making a claim to godliness.” (NASB)**



- ii. “innate moral repugnance to the doing of [a] dishonorable act” (R.C. Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament).
- iii. Shame in nakedness – **Genesis 2:25; 3:7, 10; Nahum 3:5; Revelation 16:15**
- iv. **This sense of shame rooted in modest character manifests outwardly in the covering of nakedness:**
  1. As Adam and Eve – **Genesis 3:7, 10** – yet their covering was insufficient. (GOD WAS THE STANDARD)
  2. **Failure to cover what God defines as nakedness reflects an immodest character, either resistant to God’s will, or ignorant of it.**
- c. **Nakedness defined = modest apparel (coverage) defined:**
  - i. **Exodus 28:42-43** (priests) – trousers to cover nakedness.
    1. Reach – waist to thighs.
      - a. **“From...to”** – expression defining a range from one point to another covering everything in between.
        - i. **“to the”** – ‘*ad*’ – preposition as far as, even to, up to, until, while (STRONG)
      - b. **Numbers 6:4** – Concerning the Nazarite vow.
        - i. *ḥarṣān* (seed) ‘*ad*’ (to) *zāg* (skin)
        - ii. Entirety – anything to do with the grape – “he was not to eat of anything prepared from the vine, ‘from the kernels even to the husk,’ i.e., not the smallest quantity of the fruit of the vine.” (Keil & Delitzsch)
      - c. **2 Samuel 14:25** – Concerning Absalom’s looks.
    2. **Why? To cover nakedness.**
    3. **Thighs** – *yârêk*; from an unused root meaning to be soft; the thigh (from its fleshy softness) (STRONG)
      - a. I.e. *yârêk* from a root word meaning “to be soft” is used for the thigh because of the thigh’s fleshy softness. (**not articulating a part of the thigh, but the thigh as a whole**)
      - b. “the thigh, perhaps so called from softness (see root)” (Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon)
      - c. **Thigh** – part of the leg between the hip and the knee.
    4. **Isaiah 47:2-3** – speaking of the humiliation of Babylon.
      - a. *šôq* – leg, thigh (Brown-Driver-Briggs)
        - i. “the (lower) leg (as a runner)” (STRONG) (**cf. Psalm 147:10-11; Romans 9:16**)
      - b. **“Uncover the leg” (NASB).**
      - c. **“nakedness...uncovered...shame...seen”**

- d. The part of the leg here which corresponds to the shame of nakedness is the thigh – as per **Exodus 28:42-43** (“**waist to the thighs**”)
- e. **What about the veil?**
  - i. Removal a part of the imagery of shame...
  - ii. ...however, not coextensive with the inherent shame of nakedness of flesh. (**cf. 1 Corinthians 11:16** – no such custom of the veil) (**Head not considered nakedness through scripture.**)
- ii. Concerning the sign against Egypt and Assyria – **Isaiah 20:3-4** – buttocks – the backside needs covering as well.
  - 1. *šêṭâ*; from 7896; the seat (of the person): — buttock. (Strong)
- iii. **Genesis 3:10, 21** – they clothed themselves to cover nakedness, but insufficiently, and what God did was sufficiently cover nakedness.
  - 1. **Tunic** – *kuttoneth* – tunic, under-garment; a long shirt-like garment usually of linen. (Brown-Driver-Briggs) (Joseph – “**tunic of many colors,**” **Genesis 37:3** – shirt-like)
    - a. “generally with sleeves, coming down to the knees, rarely to the ankles” (Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon)
    - b. “This garment (ketonet) usually had long sleeves, and extended down to the ankles when worn as a dress coat, and was held in place by a girdle. Hard-working men, slaves, and prisoners wore them more abbreviated – sometimes even to their knees, and without sleeves.” (Zondervan’s Pictorial Bible Dictionary, pg. 225)
    - c. “Men and women wore tunics made of linen or wool; it often hung from the neck to the knees or ankles.” (Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, pg. 311).
    - d. Shirt hanging down from the shoulders (shirt hangs from here) to the knees.
  - 2. NOTE: The text does not make a distinction in the clothing provided for the man and woman – they were both clothed the same. (Men going shirtless...)
  - 3. NOTE: **The tunic itself is not the pattern, any more than the linen trousers for the priests are for us.**
    - a. **The material and style or form is not the point.**

- b. **The area of coverage necessarily implies the area of nakedness and shows us what must be covered.**
- iv. Objection to using OT?
  - 1. We have not bound the OT.
    - a. NOTE: Nakedness, and God's covering of nakedness was from the beginning. (cf. **Matthew 19:4** – like marriage)
  - 2. We have defined nakedness.
    - a. Nakedness pertains to the creation of God that is the human body.
    - b. This has not changed – God has not changed His view on what portion of the body is naked.
- C. Modest Apparel, Human Sexuality, and Marriage
  - a. ***“Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.” (Hebrews 13:4)***
    - i. **Marriage bed** – euphemism for sexual relation in marriage – honor's marriage.
    - ii. **Fornication/adultery** – all sexual relations outside of marriage – dishonor's marriage.
  - b. **Modesty honors marriage.**
  - c. **Bodies have a sexual function, but that function is limited by God's authority to marriage:**
    - i. **1 Corinthians 6:12-14** – the body has this function, but it is not FOR that, but the Lord. (I.e. within the Lord's will the sexual use of the body is pure – marriage.)
    - ii. **1 Corinthians 7:2-4** – sexual fulfillment only in marriage, involving the body.
      - 1. **Proverbs 5:15-20** – sexual fulfillment only in marriage – not ***“dispersed abroad”***
    - iii. Starts before the sexual act – **Matthew 5:27-28** – concerning the role of the onlooker.
      - 1. However, the other could be the provoker. (though the man would still be guilty)
      - 2. **Proverbs 7:10** – attire of a harlot (she intentionally dressed to allure him)
      - 3. **Isaiah 3:16, 18-23** – more than simply flashy dress, but provocative, sexually alluring dress. (***“wanton eyes,” “seductive eyes” – NASB***)
      - 4. **Nakedness and sexuality go hand in hand – nakedness is only meant for viewing in marriage.**
        - a. Not to be shown to those who aren't your spouse – **Genesis 2:25; 3:7, 10**

- b. Not married? – then not to be shown to any – you must conceal and protect such for the revealing to your future spouse in holy matrimony.
- d. **Modest apparel biblically defined in the revealed pattern of nakedness secures sexual purity by covering nakedness.**
- e. **Are we dressing with propriety (*aidōs*) and moderation (*sōphrosynē*)?**
  - i. **Propriety** – *aidōs* – “a sense of shame, modesty,” (Vine)
    - 1. **“Shamefastness” (ASV)** – “by ‘shamefast’ that which was established and made fast by (an honorable) shame.” (R.C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*)
  - ii. **Moderation** – *sōphrosynē* – soundness of mind, i.e. (literally) sanity or (figuratively) self-control (Strong)
    - 1. “it is that habitual inner self-government, with its constant rein on all the passions and desires, which would hinder the temptation to these from arising, or at all events from arising in such strength as would overbear the checks and barriers which aidos (shamefastness) opposed to it” (Trench Syn. Sec.xx, end).
    - 2. **Shame of nakedness translates into a self-control that regulates one’s apparel – If I am ashamed of nakedness, I will be thoughtful/careful about covering it.**
  - iii. **DRESSING MODESTLY REQUIRES SOUND JUDGMENT (cf. **Philippians 1:9-11**) – Is my dress sexually attractive? (not simply by worldly standard, but according to God’s standard)**
    - 1. Does it expose the thigh, breasts, buttocks, back, midriff?
      - a. split dresses, backless dresses, low-cut tops, dresses revealing cleavage, etc.
      - b. Men – short shorts, tank tops/workout shirts with big armholes, shirtless, tight clothing
    - 2. Does it expose any of these areas that God considers nakedness WHEN YOU MOVE IN DIFFERENT WAYS? – sit down, cross legs, bend over, squat down, reach up, etc.
    - 3. Does it accentuate nakedness instead of covering it?
      - a. Clothing that covers the area with cloth but is made to highlight nakedness.
      - b. Tight, clingy, thin, see through, etc.
    - 4. NOTE: FOR MEN TOO – short shorts, shirtless, sleeveless shirts with big armholes, tight shirts (under armor), etc.
  - iv. Sometimes the world sees this better than Christians do – **cf. Luke 16:8** – WE NEED TO WAKE UP AND REALIZE THE ATTEMPT AT SEX-APPEAL IN THE CLOTHING OF TODAY.
    - 1. Consider the thoughts of a woman from the world – “It’s a new year and I’ve got a new gym membership. I went the other morning. It was 8 degrees outside. And every

woman in there was wearing skintight, Saran-wrap-thin yoga pants... Don't get me wrong. I have yoga pants — three pairs. But for some reason none of them cover my ankles, and as I said, it was 8 degrees outside. So I wore sweatpants...I got on the elliptical. A few women gave me funny looks. Maybe they felt sorry for me, or maybe they were concerned that my loose pants were going to get tangled in the machine's gears. Men didn't look at me at all...We aren't wearing these workout clothes because they're cooler or more comfortable...We're wearing them because they're sexy." (*Why Yoga Pants Are Bad for Women*,” Honor Jones, The New York Times, Feb. 17, 2018)

2. She is not concerned with pleasing God, but recognizes the reason such clothing is worn.

**IV. Part of the transformation by the renewing of the mind is the adherence to the biblical principles concerning modesty (inward to outward) – Romans 12:1-2 – Christians dress differently than the world.**

**Conclusion**

1. God wants us to be modest in all ways before Him – including our dress.
2. The moral degradation of our culture presents a great challenge to us, but we can resist, and bring great glory to God in our lives.