

ADORNING THE TEMPLE

The Scripture Speaks About Personal Appearance

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s”
(1 Corinthians 6:19, 20)

The Bible speaks about personal appearance and in some cases gives specific commands in regard to appearance. It establishes a broad base of godly principles to guide us in dress matters. The Bible and our own observations teach us that our appearance projects an image, gives a testimony, and affects others. Our personal appearance is an essential part of our relationship with God and man. For this reason, we need to know what the Bible says on the subject.

First Peter 3:1-4 illustrates how proper personal appearance is a part of godly character that glorifies God and blesses others: “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 [conduct] of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation [conduct] coupled with fear [respect]. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”

Let's look at five foundational principles:

PRINCIPLE

1

CLOTHING IS TO COVER NAKEDNESS.

Because of sin, nakedness is shameful and needs to be covered. Before sin came into man's experience, nudity was not shameful: “They were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not

ashamed” (Genesis 2:25). But what a difference after sin! “The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself” (Genesis 3:7-10).

Scripture shows the shamefulfulness of public nakedness. “Take the millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers. Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man” (Isaiah 47:2, 3). “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see” (Revelation 3:18).

Adam and Eve's efforts at clothing design, making aprons out of leaves, did not adequately cover their nakedness. God intervened directly to properly clothe them. Genesis 3:21 says, "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them." God wants people to be properly clothed out of respect for His holiness and to preserve decency and modesty within the human race.

PRINCIPLE

2

**GOD DESIRES THAT WE USE OUR BODIES
FOR HIS GLORY, NOT OUR OWN GLORY.**

God's will and man's sinful desires conflict with each other. Fallen man wants to display his pride of life, his height of station, and the value of his "wallet" by expensive clothing, costly jewelry, or a well-styled haircut. God wants His children to shine with spiritual beauty flowing from inner holiness. Flashy personal appearance mars this inner beauty and focuses people's attention on

flesh rather than on spirit.

Even in Old Testament times, when God overlooked some jewelry and other unnecessary adornments, God showed His distaste for “extras” that displayed pride. When God wanted the Israelites to humble themselves in His presence, He asked them to lay aside their ornaments: “Therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb” (Exodus 33:5, 6).

Later in Israel’s history, God denounced their pride and pointed out the vanity of their many ornaments: “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 . . . the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings, and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the cringing pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the vails. And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet