

Our Appearance Ought to Glorify God

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

All that we are should glorify or honour the Lord.

Our appearance should always be suitable for God’s presence. Proverbs 5:21 reminds us “For the ways of man *are* before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.”

The quality of our clothing can change with circumstances but the quantity must always be decent. This applies to both men and women.

If you would feel ashamed of your appearance if I showed up unexpectedly, then you should feel even more ashamed knowing that God is always present.

All that we are should honour the Gospel

Philippians 1:27 says, “Only let your conversation [conduct] be as it becometh the gospel of Christ. . . .” The word translated “becometh” means “suitable” or “worthy.”

Unbelievers are watching us. Do they see a godly difference in our lives? It would be terrible if our appearance turned someone away from trusting Christ.

Our Appearance Ought Not Be Offensive

“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother’s way.” (Romans 14:12-13)

Immodesty causes men to stumble into lust.

God confronts women’s dress more than men’s because men are tempted more by sight

(Mt 5:28). Jesus said, “But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” (Matthew 5:28)

Every man knows that his thoughts can be on perfectly good things but the moment he sees an immodest woman, he faces a thought battle.

Men must resist lustful thoughts, but women who cause them are guilty too.

Husbands, do right and have an honest talk with your wife and daughters. Tell them what clothing is sensual to a man. Be specific. **Ladies**, you may not understand, but you need to believe him. Low necklines, bare shoulders, bare belly, skirts above the knees, and swimsuits are sensual. Tight, form-fitting, and see-through clothing is just as bad if not worse. Don’t be guilty of causing a man to lust.

We will answer to God if we cause someone to sin.

Every one of us will give account to God for all we do, including the way we dress. “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” (Romans 14:12)

Let’s strive to be a good testimony before those around us so that we might hear the Lord say, “Well done thou good and faithful servant.” (Matthew 25:21)

Our Appearance Ought to Be Modest

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;” (1 Timothy 2:9)

We must thoughtfully plan our appearance.

This is true for men, but it is especially true for women as this verse points out.

This word translated “modest” also means “decent.” The next two nouns tell us how to be modest.

With shamefacedness [shame, bashfulness, or decency]: It’s the feeling that Adam and Eve had in the Garden after they sinned. They wanted to hide nakedness. Don’t lose your sense of shame.

With sobriety [sane thoughts of inner restraint]: The world promotes no restraint.

Modest apparel is the opposite of sensual apparel. That is described by Solomon in Proverbs 7:10. “And, behold, there met him a woman *with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.*” Women who sell their bodies dress to attract men. Someone has rather bluntly stated, “If it’s not for sale, don’t advertise.” God expects decency.

Our appearance must be moderate, not showy.

We should not dress to be showy or to draw attention to ourselves. Someone wisely said, “What you put on should attract others to your character not to your body.”

Jewellery and hairstyles then must be moderate and proper. The rock culture and unisex movement promote piercing, rings, and studs on both men and women. What would Jesus do? Look like a Christian.

Our Appearance Ought to Be Gender Distinct

“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.” (Deuteronomy 22:5)

Men and women’s clothing ought to be visibly distinct.

God desires distinction between



the genders. Men and women ought not to dress alike.

In Bible days both men and women wore robe-like clothing, but it was visibly different.

Some women argue that woman's pants are different from men's. Yes, they are different in cut because our shapes differ, but they do not visibly distinguish the genders. Also, pants on women reveal their shape which is often sensual to a man, especially if the pants are tight.

Others argue that woman's pants are necessary for warmth and sporting activities. Women have only worn pants for about 100 years. Our great-grandmothers found ways to stay warm and proper without wearing pants. It is possible!

Men and women's hairstyles ought to be distinct.

Note what God tells us in 1 Corinthians 11:14-15. *"Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering."*

Men are to wear short hair and women are to wear long hair. How short and how long? Clearly distinct, not like the picture.



Our Appearance Ought to Be Godly, Not Worldly

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15)

Our appearance should not reflect worldly styles.

Rock singers, movie stars, sports heroes, and the drug culture promote worldly styles offensive to Christ.

God tells his children to come out from among the world and be separate (2Co 6:17). Also we are to *"Abstain from all appearance of evil."* (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

Our appearance should reflect conservative holiness.

Instead of looking like the ungodly, we ought to desire to be holy. Desire most of all to please the Lord.

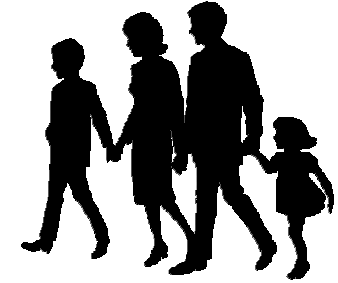
Peter urges us to this end. *"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."* (1 Peter 1:14-16)

Conclusion: God wants us to govern our appearance by these five Bible principles. Many other Bible principles support these principles. I challenge you to study carefully the verses in this article and then use these principles as your guide when choosing your clothing, jewellery, and hairstyles. If you will learn to live by the Bible, God will bless your life and use you for his glory. Your appearance does matter to God and God will judge you according to what he has written in his Word.

Sermon by Pastor Scott Childs, 25 October 2009

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Bible Principles for Appearance



Would it please God if I (as your pastor) came to church looking like a rock singer and my wife came looking like a nightclub woman? NO! Why not? What if we only looked that way when we went to the shops? How about if we only looked like that at home? It doesn't fit the role of pastor and wife. Does it fit the role of any Christian? Christians represent Christ to a lost world.

In Philippians 2:12 we read, *"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."* Each of us must work out our own salvation (Christian life) with fear and trembling. Failure is fearful. The way we appear does matter to God and it does affect our evangelistic outreach. If we are going to please the Lord and be effective witnesses for him, we cannot leave our outward appearance up to fashion, trends, customs, practicality, or personal preference. We need Bible principles that will guide our choices.

In this article, I want us to consider five Bible principles that we should use to govern our appearance.