

DEEPER LIFE BIBLE CHURCH NL | SUNDAY SERMON | 16 NOV 2025

GODLY ATTIRE FOR HEAVENLY CANDIDATES

Bible Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-15

This message is linked to that of last week. Separation follows salvation; it affects our choices, including dressing. We are saved by grace, not by dressing; however, just as God demands good works from us after conversion though we are not saved by works, He also demands appropriate dressing from us after conversion; He does not want us to dress in strange apparel (Zeph 1:8). He has given us principles to guide us in this.

SCRIPTURAL PRECEPTS ON CHRISTIAN DRESSING

God has given us His blueprint in everything, including how we should adorn ourselves. The heaven-bound saint seeks to know and do God's will in everything. What principles should guide our dressing?

1. **Decency** (Gen 3:7,10,21; Exo 28:42): Dressing is to cover nakedness and shield the body. This is for health/wellbeing and to prevent distraction or lust. Transparent or scanty clothing reveals sensitive body parts. God abhors it because it pollutes the heart and promotes lust. Even in the world, people associate scanty dressing (e.g. revealing the cleavage) with seduction!
2. **Modesty** (1 Tim 2:9; 1 Pet 3:1-4): Dressing expresses outwardly what we are inwardly. Modesty is humble inward disposition. God expressly commands women not to put on jewellery; rather, they should develop the inner life. He threatened the daughters of Zion because of immodest dressing (Isa 3:16-26). Pride or vanity, in the guise of "self-expression", is the root-cause; it is of the heart.
3. **Moderation** (Gen 35:1-5; 1 Cor 7:29-31; Phi 4:5): This concerns external outlook. It is avoidance of extremes; it is balance. Extravagant, elaborate dressing is as offensive as outmoded, shabby or awkward appearance. Also, accumulation of low-cost fabric could be as worldly as extravagant clothing!
4. **Distinction** (Deu 22:5): There should be no cross-dressing between men and women. Whether the intention or background is fashion, deceit, idolatry or rebellion, it is contrary to the spirit of holiness.
5. **Seemliness** (Rom 12:16; 1 Cor 10:23,31-33; 13:4,5): The higher principle of love teaches us not to use something just because we can afford it. Rather, as stewards of God, we condescend. We look at how we affect others. Do I help, or confuse, seduce, tempt or discourage them or cause them to stumble?
6. **Reverence** (1 Cor 11:3-13): God specifies acceptable head-dress for prayer and ministry.

SANCTIFIED PRACTICE IN CONTEMPORARY DRESSING

Based on these precepts, God gives us liberty to make choices of dressing in the culture or environment we find ourselves without legalism, hypocrisy, ostentation or bondage. How does that work out practically?

1. **Geographical or cultural factors** (Pro 31:21-23; 1 Cor 9:19-23; 2 Tim 4:13): Climate, intertwined with culture, affects dressing. Use fitting covering for the cold. When it is warm, choose breathable fabric rather than exposing your nakedness. Also, as immigrant believers, our dressing should not make us look like a cultural enclave; that could limit our impact in outreach. Dress to fit your environment (you are a soul-winner) and do that within God's precept (you are His ambassador).
2. **Occupational or formal factors** (1 Sam 17:4-5; Eze 44:17-19; John 21:7): Some jobs require uniform. Delicate or hazardous jobs have their rules. Keep to them within God's precept. If your job requires rigorous movement or activity, take precautions (e.g. as a lady) so you are not indecently exposed.
3. **Preferential or peculiar factors** (Rom 14:13): God's precepts are enough for you; there should be no extra burden based on another person's taste. Comfort/regular/body/modern fit, colours, etc., are personal preferences. You choose your haircut as a man; but it should not be effeminate or become a distraction. It is your choice to be bearded or clean-shaven. Male or female, the height of the heels of your shoes, e.g., is not specified in the Bible; yet you should be modest; do not copy seducers or pleasers of the flesh. Your personal peculiarity (health, perspiration level, etc.) could affect your choice of fabric or design. Etc. God has given you His precept; let that guide your choices. Keep close to God and He will teach you to be decent, modest, moderate, distinct, seemly and reverent.

Your dressing is a visible expression of your inner life. As God's ambassador, let your appearance convey the dignity of a heavenly pilgrim. Moreover, "**condescend to men of low estate**" and be your brother's keeper!

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" – John 13:17