

The Sins Of Summer

Although it still seems pretty cold outside, the weather will eventually grow warmer. As the weather warms up, we generally wear less clothes and/or lighter clothing. There is nothing wrong with adjusting our clothing to fit the weather, so long as our clothing adequately covers our bodies. The fashion of the world, of course, is to wear scanty, provocative clothing, especially when the weather is warm. Unfortunately, some in the church will be influenced more by the fashion of the world than by the word of the Lord.

Few things are more comforting on a hot summer day than a dip in a pool or a trip to the ocean. There is nothing wrong with enjoying the cool relief of the water. The problem arises when we strip down to almost nothing to do so. It is truly a shame that some claiming to live as a Christian see nothing wrong with such. The account of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 clearly tells us differently. After making "coverings" of fig leaves in vs. 7, "coverings" which could not have covered any less than modern bathing suits, Adam says in vs. 10 that they are still naked, even while they are wearing fig leaves! Vs. 21 goes on to show that God clothed them with tunics of skin. Men, notice that no exception was given for Adam because he was a man, but God said he also was not properly dressed. How embarrassed and ashamed would we feel today if God appeared on the scene and placed more clothes on us because of the way we were dressed?

For the life of me, I cannot understand why some brethren seemingly think God's laws on modesty are suspended in the summer, or are only in force at the church building. Also, I have never been able to figure out the "spiritual logic" which some of my brethren use to justify their immodest apparel. How many so-called "Christians" will lose their souls on judgment day because they refuse to heed God's admonitions about modest dress?

Please do not "cop out" by saying God never defined modesty; only society does that. You better spend more time studying God's word, and less time walking down the beach in short-shorts, for God has clearly defined modesty as having your thighs covered (Exodus 20:26; 28:42), as being "*clothed with a coat*" (Genesis 3:7-21), and as being adorned in modest apparel which will allow you to face the world without shame in all godliness. Paul wrote, "*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; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Timothy 2:9-10). God has spoken. Does that make any difference to you?

Our clothing is modest only if it is becoming (appropriate, suitable, proper) to women and men professing godliness. Brethren, how successful do you think you will be trying to get out of all these definitions of modest apparel?

It is a fact that times have changed, and styles have changed, and society has changed. However, the word of God has not changed, and human nature has not changed. Several years ago, a well-known preacher wrote the following: "What is wrong with mixed swimming? I cannot speak for the ladies, but I can speak for the men. There is not an ordinary man who can look at a woman clad in nothing but a bathing suit for a long time without entertaining evil thoughts. 'But,' some will say, 'it does not bother me.' One who says that, may be so young that passions have not arisen, or he may be so old they have subsided, or he may be so ignorant that he does not know what is going on, or he may not be normal, or he may be lying."

The following survey appeared in the December 1982 issue of Psychology Today. The survey was done in June of the same year. The survey may seem outdated, but if anything the situation has probably gotten worse!

Reasons men go to the beach:

- a. to swim.....14%
- b. to sun.....7%
- c. to watch.....69%
- d. to be watched.....10%

Reasons women go to the beach:

- a. to swim.....11%
- b. to sun.....43%
- c. to watch.....7%
- d. to be watched.....40%

It is indeed true that not all men go to the beach to watch women, and not all women go to be seen by men, but enough admit their reasons to show that the child of God needs to be careful. We must be careful of our intentions when we dress ourselves. Instead of being called "bathing suits," modern day swimsuits could be better described as "baiting suits." Whether done intentionally or not, the way we dress can cause others to lust after our bodies and sin. Matthew 5:27-28 says, "*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*" In order not to leave anyone out, Jesus addresses the one who is enticing another to lust (Luke 17:1-2).

There are many "explanations" for immodest dress, but the real reason most members of the church persist in wearing clothing that is immodest and indecent is simply this: God's will is not important enough for them to yield their own will to Him.

I really do hope that everyone has a great summer. God has blessed us with warm and wonderful weather during the summer. But we just need to remind ourselves of what the word of God says. Keep the Lord first and foremost in your heart and dress appropriately. Your soul depends upon it!

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