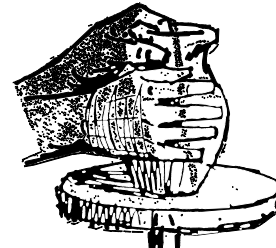


# His Workmanship at Westside

*"For we are His  
workmanship, created in  
Christ Jesus for good works."  
—Ephesians 2:10*



Vol. XXII

June 2, 2013

No. 22

Isaiah 64:8

## Modesty: Virtue Ignored, Part 1, Reason to be Concerned *by Jim Harmon*

*"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." —Matthew 5:8*

This headline marks another nail in modesty's coffin: *"Nudity takes off... The clothing-optional lifestyle is becoming big business, and nobody's blushing."* The CNN/Money article explained that a "relatively affluent customer base" has made nudism a major growth industry. Nude recreation is no longer confined to an isolated "nudist colony" here and there; rather, it offers "a wide variety of activities to a growing audience." Noteworthy in the headline is the phrase, *"and nobody's blushing."* It implies that there was a time when to "blush" or feel embarrassed was a natural response to public indecency. **Fashion reigns.** Nudism packages itself as cutting-edge leisure and entertainment. It coincides with the trend in popular fashion which is, to speak bluntly, toward nakedness. Fashion designers seem fixated on the idea that less is more, vigorously promoting that which is trendy, physically revealing, and sensual, not only for the beach, but for the street and business as well. Their marketing is hip and persuasive, primarily aimed at an eager audience of teens and

young women (e.g., The Express's "Recklessly Sexy Jeans"). It matters not whether a garment is a suitable fit or style for the wearer: it's all about wearing what is popular. It is not surprising that Americans readily accept these styles, 1 Cor 2:14. What is troublesome is that many in the church have bowed to the pied pipers of provocative fashions, as if to say: "What I wear is my business."

To speak of modesty or standards of modesty today is to risk branding ourselves as naïve, impractical, out-of-date, and prudish—and even worse—a meddler. Modesty, says Jeff Pollard in his book, Christian Modesty and the Public Undressing of America, is a *controversial and thorny* issue for the church. Strange, but true. But principles of modesty are woven convincingly throughout Scripture. Through various events and direct instruction, modesty is shown to be one of the character traits that marks God's people. Modesty is akin to the godly qualities of humility, discretion, purity, and self-control, yet it's a topic that remains essentially unattended in the area of instruction. That said, here are some thoughts that frame this commentary:

- Modesty, as addressed in both the Old and New Testaments, is important to understanding the holiness of God.
- Biblical modesty is not a matter of law; it is a state of mind or disposition, ultimately reflecting the "hidden man of the heart," 1 Pet 3:4.
- Considerations of modesty should moderate how Christians speak, behave, and adorn themselves, particularly in public and with the opposite sex.
- Parents who are indifferent to their preteens' or teens' (both boys and girls) desire to dress in many of today's fashions are putting their children at risk for social and spiritual problems later.

It is the clear teaching of Scripture that Christians are not just to acknowledge a higher standard, but to live to the highest standard. It is God's standard of purity and holiness. That standard may be most simply yet powerfully declared in these words: *"You shall be holy; for I AM holy,"* Lev 11:44, 45; 1 Pet 1:16. Also, "Be therefore followers of God, as dear children," Eph 5:1. These are sobering words: they link us

*continued on p. 2*

**""Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed..." —Revelation 3:17-18**

uniquely to God and obviously bear serious, Biblical significance.

Simply explained, God's call is that Christians are to be different—distinguishable from the popular culture in how they think and conduct themselves, Mt 5:16. They are individually and corporately to be a "*peculiar people*" who belong exclusively to God, Tit 2:14; 1 Pet 2:9. This truth emerges in the earliest pages of Genesis, which proclaim God's righteous standards and His gracious limits to our liberty. Christians are to regard themselves as "*strangers and pilgrims*," 1 Pet 2:11, not loving the world nor the things in the world, 1 Jn 2:15. In the sense of Rm 12:1-2, Christians are to be non-conformists, not just a subculture on cruise control, but a counter-culture that by nearly every measure "marches to the beat of a different drummer"—the Lord Jesus Christ.

**A small word with a big meaning.** In our fast-moving, transient society, people often never get connected with important, foundational history. The mid-16<sup>th</sup> century view of modesty, defined by its parts, gives a helpful perspective: "1. humility: unwillingness to draw attention to your own achievements or abilities. 2. sexual reserve: reserve about nudity or sexual matters, especially a preference for clothes that keep much of the body covered. 3. shyness: lack of forwardness when speaking to others or stating opinions, and the tendency to be reticent or withdrawing in company. 4. simplicity: lack of grandeur or ostentation. 5. moderation: moderation in size, scale, or extent."

A modern dictionary defines the word "modesty" similarly: "1. Placing a moderate or low estimate on one's own merits; not forward or boastful. 2.

Evincing, or arising from, lack of boldness, presumption, display, etc.; moderate, unpretentious. 3. Observing the proprieties of sex; chaste; decent.

Formal definitions of modesty have remained relatively unchanged. In terms of practical application, the concept has substantially left the public mind. As recent as the early 1900s, modesty was taken seriously and was at the heart of the Biblical concept of "decent" clothing. The first swimsuits for women, for example, consisted of bloomers and black stockings, loosely covering the woman from her neck to her ankles. Styles changed, but a woman's figure was still concealed through the 1800s. When the bikini hit the market in the 1960s, it was apparent that the practice of modesty had been reduced to having the private parts covered. And so it is today.

**Clothes came in with sin.** While some see a concern for modesty as "just another wave of legalism slapping upon the shores of Christian [sic] liberty," the truth is that the necessity and practicality of modesty rests firmly in God—His nature, His grace, and His will. It is first evident in God's response to a disgraced Adam and Eve in the garden. When the first couple recognized that they were naked, they "*were afraid*" and "*hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God*," Gen 3:7-10. In a moment, the naturalness and beauty of their original state became sinful, shameful nakedness. Guilt, shame, and disgrace entered human history.

It is instructive that Adam and Eve's attempt to cover themselves by sewing fig leaves together was not sufficient. But God was gracious; He covered them, providing *coats of skin*, Gen. 3:21. Contrary to the popular

illustrations of Adam and Eve with their fig leaves, God's covering was not a loin skin for Adam and a fur bikini for Eve. Rather, the Greek word for the garments is *kuttoneth*, understood to mean a tunic, coat, or dress—essentially full body covering. Matthew Henry, 17<sup>th</sup> century commentator, explained: "[See] God's care for our first parents, notwithstanding their sin. Like a tender father, He provides coats of skins... Clothes came in with sin. Little reason have we to be proud of our clothes, which are but the badges of our shame. When God made clothes for our first parents, he made them warm and strong, but coarse and very plain; not robes of scarlet, but coats of skin. The beasts whose skins they were must be slain, slain before their eyes, to show them what death is, and that they may see that they themselves were mortal and dying. Thus the first thing that died [was a sacrifice to cover our sins.]"

While there are important exceptions, *nakedness* in the Old Testament often suggests weakness, need, shame, and humiliation, Deut.28:48; Job 1:21; 24:10; Is 58:7; Ezek 23:28-29; Mic 1:11; 2 Cor 5:1-4. The first experience of guilt was expressed as an awareness of nakedness. The marriage relationship is an exception. As a "one flesh" union, God granted that a husband and wife are not only to enjoy and serve one another, but also to stand together before God and one another, naked, open, unashamed.

Some may contend that because the word "modest" does not appear in Genesis, principles of modesty cannot be drawn from it. But Biblical principles and spiritual truths are often revealed and demonstrated through

*continued on p. 3*



Psalm 133:1



### Fill your can- teen in 2013

“May you be filled  
with all the full-  
ness of God.”

—Ephesians 3:19

#### **Modesty**, from p. 2

literal events. In this case, the *extent* to which God covered Adam and Eve establishes a moral principle that is reinforced throughout the Old and New Testament and is to be a moderating influence regardless of cultural trends or changing times.

**Modesty in action.** While our word *modest* appears only once in Scripture, 1 Cor 12:23, different words related to modesty are often used. How they relate to modesty is made clear in their Greek meanings. Consider *kosmos*, *kosmios*, and *kosmeō*. The word *modesty* comes from *kosmos*, which means orderly, proper, decent, modest, respectable. The root word *kosmos*, from which *kosmios* and *kosmeō* are derived, refers to order, adornment, decoration; cf. *cosmetic*. It also signifies the world, or the universe, as that which is Divinely arranged, Mt 13:35; Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 2:15; Jas 1:27. The terms are used in passages from Paul and Peter:

**1 Timothy 2:9-10.** “*In like manner also, that women adorn [kosmeō] themselves in modest [kosmios] apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety [with propriety and moderation]; not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly array; but (which becomes [is proper for] women professing godliness) with good works.*” The context relates to public worship, though the

principles set the standard for other occasions as well. It is apparent that while a woman should not seek to exalt herself or satisfy public expectations with inappropriately expensive or conspicuous, prideful fashions, she need not resort to styles that are plain or outdated. Scriptures picture a moderate policy that considers modesty, what is appropriate for the occasion and, by implication, one’s body. In today’s market, there are still many fashions that would be suitable to this standard. The word *shame-facedness* carries with it the idea of an innate moral quality that causes blushing or a sense of embarrassment or shame concerning that which is dishonorable (e.g., nakedness, immodesty).

**1 Timothy 3:1-6.** “*This is a true saying, If a man desires the office of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior [kosmios], given to hospitality, apt to teach...*” While there are many who desire to lead in the church, Paul’s high call for church leaders reminds of James’s caution to those who desire to teach, Jas 3:1. Paul carefully lays out high standards, qualities that portray the mature man in Christ. Principles related to modesty are obvious. Though Paul is speaking specifically of church leaders, Scripture as a whole teaches that these qualities should be evident and increasing in every man, though the popular culture around him idolizes an extreme kind of man—independent, bold, daring, and sexy. *continued on p. 4*

**Memory Verse:** “Sing to the LORD, all the earth; proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.”

—1 Chronicles 16:23 (Psalm 96:2)

**Expecting** Marie Carlson—July 1 girl  
Amy Vander Kooi—August, boy

## Discipleship Here At Home

#### **PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here & away**

**Madge Wallace**—lung cancer; at Carmichaels’ house, in hospice; weakening rapidly

**Gary Boyd**—pneumonia, on oxygen

**Judy Sartin**—bronchitis

**Mark Campbell**—in rehab after second head injury; recovering at home

**Matt Reames**—home, great improvement

#### **CHRONIC CONDITIONS**

**Logan Corray; Rocco Sangellino Jr;**

**Addison Tope; Pat Wilkes**—asthma

**Pearl Chapman**—leg pains; pancreatitis

**Nell Free**—new pacemaker, heart; back pain

**Rod Green**—thyroid trouble

**Autumn Hadders**—epilepsy

**Kirk Johnson**—worsening MS; needs help around his house

**Menards**—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes;

**Virginia**, now legally blind from rapid macular degeneration; high BP

**Sandra Perry**—neuropathy from diabetes

**Cheryl Reames**—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia

**Lynda Szymanski**—COPD, lung

**Job concerns** **Andrew Tope, Lorenzo Gonzalez, and Frank Savarese** are seeking jobs.

**Traveling** **Vickie Reingrover** is in NC today to Wed for work. The **Gintchins** are out of town today.

**DeWayne and Kaysha Howell** are touring Europe by car and bike via Eurail pass until 6/8. **Caleb** is in OK today. **Mina Gonzalez** is in TX, NM, and AZ until tomorrow. **Pat Campbell** is in AR caring for her parents; **Larry** joins them Wed.

**REJOICE** **Brennan Blicharski**, who studied the Bible online with **Joel Walker** and **Jonathan Hadders**, was baptized last week. **John McLaughlin**, a co-worker of **Vickie Reingrover**, was also recently baptized and is worshipping at Smoky Hill this morning.

**Modesty: Virtue Ignored, Part 1** from p. 3

**1 Peter 3:1-4.** "Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adorment [kosmos] be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God." The apostle Peter urges modesty in dress and demeanor, emphasizing that what is truly important in one's adorning [kosmos] is the inner life, the "hidden person of the heart." It is the character of the inner life that forms and is expressed in conversation, demeanor, and clothing preferences. Said differently, the way we talk and behave is an indicator of the state of our conscience toward God, Heb 9:14; 1 Pet 2:19. Again, while Peter is specifically addressing wives in this passage, it is obvious from other passages that his instruction has much to say to believers in general.

**Contending with moral indifference.** We are living in a time of moral confusion, and our generation's indifference to moral concerns is reflected in many of today's styles. Christians should be concerned that many fashions, particularly for women, are harlot-like and amount to public undress. In both cut and cloth they selectively expose and emphasize certain areas of the body. Whatever fashion statement the wearer intends to make, it certainly can't be "I've got a secret." Instead of being appreciated for her well-ordered taste and feminine beauty, her "adorning" will more likely arouse an unholy interest, even lust, in the minds of male onlookers. This is a problem that naturally bleeds into the church. It's serious because it brings distraction and confusion, compromising the cause of Christ. Guarding against it does not necessarily bind anyone in some form of legalism. The church that is silent regarding issues like this diminishes its ministry and shortchanges its followers in "*doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness*," 2 Tim. 3:16-17. Modest dress reflects commitment to a Christ-like life and shows respect for self, for fellow men, and for God. Modest dress in our homes and in the church has a positive effect on both self-esteem and behavior. Because the way we dress sends messages about ourselves to others and often influences the way we and others act, Christians dress in such a way as to bring out the best in themselves and those around them. Modesty, to use the vernacular, is "a God thing." It is also an appealing character trait and an effective defense against various forms of immorality. Even if the church doesn't speak to the issue, believers are still personally responsible to be growing in Christ-like character and virtue, rejecting those ideas and practices that are not in harmony with the Scriptures. The apostle Paul focused the subject with some urgency: "*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good*," 1 Thes 5:21.

## *Westside church of Christ*

meets at  
13789 W. 8th Avenue  
Golden, Colorado 80401  
(303) 972-0087

### **Pastors**

Larry Campbell (303) 462-4987  
DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

### **Preacher**

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

## *Assembly Schedule*

### **Sunday**

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

### **Wednesday**

Bible classes	7:30 pm
---------------	---------

This morning: "

*Receiving the Engrafted Word,*"

by Jim Reingrover

This afternoon:

**A Walk in Their Sandals Series**

"Jacob," by Larry Campbell

**Salida evangelism:** Jeff Wilkes is preaching in Salida this morning.