

# The Messenger



“... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans 10:15

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## The Shame of Nakedness

*By Ron Halbrook*

Revelation 3:17-18 pictures a proud church like a poor, diseased man with inadequate clothes. If the church repented, Christ would supply every spiritual need, “that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.” This figurative use of inadequate clothing is based on the concept of the shame of nakedness and on the failure of some people to recognize this shame.

Nakedness may refer to nudity or to inadequate clothing. Adam and Eve were first nude but then partially clothed with “aprons” (girdle, loin-covering; Gen. 3:7). God replaced this inadequate clothing with “coats,” proper and adequate garments “generally with sleeves, coming down to the knees” (v. 21; Gen., *Hebrew & Chaldee Lexicon*, 420). God replaced their shorts with garments covering from the shoulders down to the knees to cover the shame of their nakedness.

To uncover or see nakedness is a euphemism for sexual intercourse (Lev. 18:6; 20:17). Nakedness with its sexual appeal and implications is a blessing in marriage, but a curse and shame when displayed outside marriage. Therefore, in addition to outer robes, the priests wore pants reaching from the waist to the knees – “breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach” (Ex. 28:42). Even heathen women knew the embarrassment of lifting their skirts to cross a river – “make bare the leg, uncover the thigh...Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen” (Isa. 47:2-3). Exposing the thighs reveals the shame of nakedness.

God commanded women to “adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works” (I Tim. 2:9-10). Shamefacedness or shamefastness is an innate sense of honor which “shrinks from overpassing the limits of womanly reserve and modestly, as well as from the dishonor” of such an act (Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, pp. 63-68). It is “a sense of shame” or “modesty which is “fast” or rooted in the character” (Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, IV:17).

Modesty, shamefacedness, and sobriety deeply rooted in a woman's character cause her to shrink back from exposing the shame of her nakedness. This shame is exposed before men by her wearing skirts and shorts above the knees, miniskirts, low cut dresses and blouses (front or back), strapless or backless dresses, swimsuits, tube or tank tops, tight or formfitting attire (leotard, bicycle shorts, etc.), and the generally abbreviated uniforms worn by majorettes, cheerleaders, and flag or drill teams. A man in shorts revealing his thighs and without a shirt exposes the shame of his nakedness to women.

The sin of exposed nakedness is fraught with dangers. It creates temptations for the opposite sex, sears the conscience, and refuses the truth of God's word (Matt. 18:6-7; Jer. 6:15; Hos. 8:12). It weakens the home by causing parents to fail in their duty to their children, or children to rebel against parental leadership (I Sam. 3:13; Deut. 21:18-21). When Christians are guilty, they conform to the world, start down the road of apostasy, set the wrong example, and bring shame on Christ and his church (Rom. 12:2; Judg. 2:10; Matt. 5:13-16; Eph. 5:26-27). Souls will be lost over such sins (Gal. 5:19-21).

Christ can clothe us spiritually and teach us to dress properly when people in the world repent and are baptized to be forgiven through His blood, or when erring Christians repent and pray forgiveness (Acts 2:38; 8:22).



## MOMENTS OF MEDITATION

The story is told of a man who had a canary which sang sweetly. When summer came the man thought it was a pity to keep the canary indoors in its safe and accustomed surroundings, so he decided to hang its cage out in a tree in his yard.

Now, it happened that this tree was frequented by sparrows in great numbers. Before long the canary's song lost much of its sweetness and by the end of summer it couldn't sing like a canary any more at all. All it could do was twitter, twitter, twitter, like an English sparrow. It had spent the summer in bad company and it had become like them, losing its finest gift.

With more free time on our hands it is well for us to think about how we can best spend it. There are ever so many interesting and worth-while things to do. To be busy with interesting things is the best way to keep out of bad company during vacation or leisure time. By doing this we will not only be keeping what is fine and good in our make-up but we will be growing in character. The song of our lives will not then have deteriorated to a mere twitter, twitter.

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### **News and Notes:**

Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

*"...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."* James 5:16