

# 1889 Study Guide #15 – Christian Dress

XV – That the Scriptures insist upon plainness and modesty of attire as a prominent mark of discipleship in those who profess to be the followers of Him who was, "meek and lowly in heart," that the wearing of gold, pearls, and costly array, or anything designed merely to adorn the person and foster the pride of the natural heart, is to be discarded, according to such scriptures as 1 Tim. 2:9, 10; 1 Peter 3:3, 4.

1. That the Scriptures insist upon plainness and modesty of attire as a prominent mark of discipleship in those who profess to be the followers of Him who was, "meek and lowly in heart,"

- **Plainness:**

**1828 Noah Webster**

Void of ornament; simple; as a plain dress.

**Matthew 6:28-31** <sup>28</sup>"And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: <sup>29</sup>And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ... <sup>31</sup>Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

**Luke 7:25** But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

- **Modesty:**

**1828 Noah Webster**

MODEST - 1. Properly, restrained by a sense of propriety; hence, not forward or bold; not presumptuous or arrogant; not boastful; as a modest youth; a modest man. 2. Not bold or forward; ... 3. Not loose; not lewd. ... 4. Moderate; not excessive or extreme; not extravagant; as a modest request; modest joy; a modest computation.

*"Modesty" in Scripture, comes from the Greek word, "kosmios", which was also translated as "good behaviour", once. It comes from the word "kosmos", which was most often translated "world" in the AV Bible, but was also translated "adorning" once. You might be wondering what does "world" have to do with adornment or modesty or good behavior? The literal meaning of "kosmos" is, "harmonious arrangement". The inference in the context of the universe would be seen in the universe as an the orderly, harmonious arrangement of the stars, sun, moon, and this world. Looking at it in the context of the world, it would be looking at the world as an orderly arrangement of elements, laws of physics, biological forms of life, etc. When it comes to the context of what a person does, "kosmios", it would be an orderly conduct, and in the context of adornment, an orderly or harmonious arrangement of clothing.*

## Adornment

**Timothy 2:9, 10** <sup>9</sup>“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in *modest* [kosmos] apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or *gold, or pearls, or costly array*; <sup>10</sup>But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.”

**1Peter 3:3** “Whose *adorning* [kosmos] let it not be that outward [adorning] of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;”

### The behavior should be modest as well

**1Timothy 3:2** “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of *good behaviour* [kosmos], given to hospitality, apt to teach;”

### Thought Question(s):

1. What would be a “plain dress” vs one that was not plain, in your estimation?
2. Is modesty something that is culturally defined, or something that can change according to climate, nationality, age, and time? If so, to what degree, and why?
3. Are there any absolutes when it comes to modesty?

2. that the wearing of gold, pearls, and costly array, or anything designed merely to adorn the person and foster the pride of the natural heart, is to be discarded, according to such scriptures as 1 Tim. 2:9, 10; 1 Peter 3:3, 4.

#### • Gold, pearls, costly array:

**Timothy 2:9, 10** (already quoted) <sup>9</sup>“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*; <sup>10</sup>But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.”

**1Peter 3:3** (already quoted) “Whose *adorning* let it not be that outward [adorning] of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;”

#### • designed merely to adorn the person and foster the pride of the natural heart

**1Peter 3:4** “But [let it be] the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, [even the ornament] of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”

*God’s people will be distinguished by their meekness, and their dress will be in harmony with their attitude. In contrast, the wicked woman portraying the false system of worship in Revelation is arrayed in costly apparel and decked with gold, precious stones and pearls. Her attitude is portrayed in her adornment.*

**Revelation 17:4** “And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:”

**Revelation 18:7** “How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.”

**Thought Question(s)**

1. How and to what degree does the outward dress and adornment reflect the inward character?
2. If our clothing is influenced by our character, is it also true that our character can be influenced by our clothing? If so, why and how?