

AM I DRESSING FOR JESUS or DRESSING FOR THE WORLD?

How Important is Dress Reform?

Dress questions have been possibly the most sensitive area in which to draw lines based on Bible rules. Some of our pastors or elders are troubled by angry charges of being evil-minded when they have broached the subject of modesty. In reality, are they seeking to bring souls to our Savior where we can be saved from eternal loss? If we fail to be transformed by grace, that is where the devil, self and this reprobate generation will lead to.

Do we need to consider the question of dress in the Christian life? Has it been overemphasized? How many books on correct principles of dress have been rolling from our presses and how many sermons of warning, appeal and entreaty have you heard on the topic lately? Does love of fashion actually cause trouble?

“Obedience to fashion is pervading our Seventh-day Adventist churches and is doing more than any other power to separate our people from God. I have been shown that our church rules are very deficient. All exhibitions of pride in dress, which is forbidden in the word of God, should be sufficient reason for church discipline. If there is a continuance, in face of warnings and appeals and entreaties, to still follow the perverse will, it may be regarded as proof that the heart is in no way assimilated to Christ. Self, and only self, is the object of adoration, and one such professed Christian will lead many away from God. There is a terrible sin upon us as a people, that we have permitted our church members to dress in a manner inconsistent with their faith. We must arise at once and close the door against the allurements of fashion. Unless we do this, our churches will become demoralized.” 4T 647. This is a most solemn and fearful warning from our loving God that we do well to memorize and take to heart.

Let's look at things honestly and objectively. If probation

Many ideas in this section have been drawn from Joe Crews' book, *Creeping Compromise*.

should close before we are cleansed of such things, we are lost eternally. Could our salvation hinge on just a little thing like dress? Yes, Eve found that just a piece of fruit got us all into the miserable situation we are in. “Fashion is deteriorating the intellect and eating out the spirituality of our people.” HL 121.

“One of the points upon which those newly come to the faith will need instruction is the subject of dress. Let the new converts be faithfully dealt with. Are they vain in dress? Do they cherish pride of heart? The idolatry of dress is a moral disease. It must not be taken over into the new life. In most cases, submission to the gospel requirements will demand a decided change in the dress.” 6T 96.

Does the Lord's messenger have guidance for us regarding dress? Yes, but.... “The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. ‘Where there is no vision, the people perish.’ Prov. 29:18. Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony.” FLB 296. If we were willing and obedient to all God's counsel, we would not be in the terrible condition we are in spiritually. Do we love and trust God enough to obey? Do we truly hunger and thirst for righteousness? Do we aim to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God?

Not One in Twenty

“Not one in twenty of the sisters who profess to believe the Testimonies has taken the first step in the dress reform.” 1T 465.

“I saw that there is not one in twenty who knows what experimental religion is. I was shown that the youth must take a higher stand and make the word of God the man of their counsel and their guide.” 1T 497.

“Not one in twenty of those who have a good standing with Seventh-day Adventists is living out the self-sacrificing principles of the word of God.” 1T 632. “There are many who are unprepared to meet Christ, because they are not doers of the Word.” GCB, July 1, 1900.

“It is a solemn statement that I make to the church, that not one in twenty whose names are registered upon the church books are

prepared to close their earthly history, and would be as verily without God and without hope in the world as the common sinner. They are professedly serving God, but they are more earnestly serving mammon. This half-and-half work is a constant denying of Christ, rather than a confessing of Christ. Living as sinners, claiming to be Christians. Those who claim to be Christians and will confess Christ should come out from among them and touch not the unclean thing, and be separate.” GCDB, February 4, 1893.

Clothing for Adam and Eve

Adam and Eve were originally clothed in a covering of light or glory, rather than artificial garments. No clothing was needed until sin caused the glory—their robes of light—to depart and they sensed that they were naked, shameful and chilly. Quickly, they gathered fig leaves and began sewing to make themselves aprons with which to cover their nakedness. Due to their conscious guilt and embarrassment they hid among the trees of the garden when God came looking and calling for them.

God did not make better aprons for fallen man. He provided them with coats of skins. These long, flowing garments with long sleeves were conducive to health and modesty, and were given as an example of God’s will for fallen man. Animals had to be slain to produce these garments, representing Jesus’ death as the Lamb of God, that we might be provided with the robe of Christ’s righteousness. These robes were given in mercy because of their sinful condition.

From this, it is clear that the original purpose of clothing was not merely for protection from heat or cold, but as a covering for the shame of nakedness caused by sin. All clothing worn since then is a reminder that we are sinners and deeply in need of repentance and the Savior. Clothing should be protective physically, mentally and spiritually.

Satan’s Sidetrack

But Satan conceived a plan to change all this. Turning man’s mind to self-esteem and pride, he said, “I will help you arrange garments that will make you beautiful. You can be proud of yourself

and have no shame. You have done nothing wrong. The fall was just a step in the right direction. In fact, it does no harm if you do not cover the body, because you have no sin and nothing to be ashamed of. You should exhibit the beauty of your body if you wish. You have nothing to hide.”

God and Satan have opposite principles. You must choose whom you will believe and serve. Is our clothing worn to cover the shame of nakedness because we are sinners? Is it to protect us from the effects of sin? Or is it to adorn and exhibit these fallen images of the Creator, by fostering pride and making a show of nakedness, repudiating the thought that we are sinners in need of a Savior?

The Problem of Pride

“The desire for outward show proceeds from the pride and vanity of a corrupt heart, and will perish with the user. The inward adorning is as enduring as eternity.” RH, February 28, 1907. “Pride and vanity are manifested everywhere; but those who are inclined to look into the mirror to admire themselves will have little inclination to look into the law of God, the great moral mirror. This idolatry of dress destroys all that is humble, meek, and lovely in character. It consumes the precious hours that should be devoted to meditation, to searching the heart, to the prayerful study of God’s Word. No Christian can conform to the demoralizing fashions of the world without imperiling his soul’s salvation.” CG 433. “Pride and extravagance in dress is a sin to which woman is especially prone.” MYP 355. Pride is the root of sin out of which all other sins grow. It is covetousness—transgression of the law of God. Sin began with the indulgence of pride.

Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because **thine heart is lifted up**, and thou hast said, **I am a God, I sit in the seat of God**, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God: Behold, thou art **wiser** than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee: With thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee **riches**, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures: By thy great wisdom and by thy traffic hast thou increased thy riches, and **thine heart is lifted up** because of thy riches: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast **set thine heart as the heart of God**; Thus

saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, **full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty**. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; **every precious stone was thy covering**, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and **thou hast sinned**: therefore I will cast thee as **profane** out of the mountain of God. **Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty**, thou hast **corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness**: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Ezekiel 28:2-6, 13-17.

Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou **fallen** from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For **thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High**. Isaiah 14:11-14.

What follows pride and a haughty spirit? A fall, spiritualism and destruction. The problem with pride is that it feels no need. Pride asserts that we have no sin and there is no judgment. If there is no sin and we are all right, why do we need a Saviour? Before it is too late, let us humble ourselves and accept Jesus as our Portion!

Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the **proud**. Proverbs 16:18, 19.

For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth. The wicked, **through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God**: God is not in all his thoughts. Psalm 10:3, 4.

The fear of the LORD is to **hate evil: pride, and arrogancy**, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate. Proverbs 8:13.

When **pride** cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom. Proverbs 11:2.

Only **by pride cometh contention**: but with the well advised is wisdom. Proverbs 13:10.

A man's **pride shall bring him low**: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit. Proverbs 29:23.

“I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people.

“I saw that the testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance; all who truly receive it will obey it, and be purified.” CET 176. Laodicea's problem is pride—feeling that “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Revelation 3:17. Pride feels no need and therefore worships and serves “the creature more than the Creator.” Romans 1:25. This is why the testimony of the True Witness is unappreciated.

God loves us, but such attitudes make Him very sad. Jesus says, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.” Revelation 3:20. Must He wait many more years for a people who will serve Him unconditionally, instead of serving self? He is pleading for us to repent. “This union with Christ is to be formed by those who are naturally at enmity with Him. It is a relation of utter dependence, to be entered into by a proud heart. This is close work, and many who profess to be followers of Christ know nothing of it. They nominally accept the Saviour, but not as the sole ruler of their hearts.” FLB 135.

“The evil tendencies of mankind are hard to overcome. The battles are tedious. Every soul in the strife knows how severe, how

bitter, are these contests. Everything about growth in grace is difficult, because the standard and maxims of the world are constantly interposed between the soul and God's holy standard." Ibid. Pride is idolatry. Idolatry puts an idol on the throne of our heart where the God of Heaven should be. Pride comes between us and God.

"We must gain the victory over self, crucify the affections and lusts; and then begins the union of the soul with Christ.... After this union is formed, it can be preserved only by continual, earnest, painstaking effort.... Every Christian must stand on guard continually, watching every avenue of the soul where Satan might find access. He must pray for divine help and at the same time resolutely resist every inclination to sin. By courage, by faith, by persevering toil, he can conquer. But let him remember that to gain the victory Christ must abide in him and he in Christ." FLB 135. Unwillingness to hear, seek and obey God's counsel is pride that prevents victory.

After this manner will I **mar the pride** of Judah, and **the great pride of Jerusalem**. This evil people, which **refuse to hear my words**, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after **other gods**, to serve them, and **to worship them**, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing. Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. But if ye will not hear it, **my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride**; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because **the LORD's flock is carried away captive**. Jeremiah 13:9-10, 17.

And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, **out of the heart of men, proceed** evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, **pride**, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and **defile** the man. Mark 7:20-23.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the **lust of the flesh**, and the **lust of the eyes**, and the **pride of life**, is not of the Father, but **is of the world**. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. 1 John 2:15-17.

Contentment

But **godliness with contentment is great gain**. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. 1 Timothy 6:6-8.

Choosing to be thankful and content with God's simple and complete way of dressing, leads to obedience and harmony with Him. The pride of life is closely associated with the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes. Self-serving is of the world and will all pass away.

If you have given yourself to the service of God, you are focused on proving and living out what is acceptable to God. You need not worry about the consequences. You are then depending on God's wisdom, believing that He loves you and your will is swallowed up in the will of God. Only today is yours and it is your privilege to live this day for God.

"If you will seek the Lord and be converted every day; if you will of your own spiritual choice be free and joyous in God; if with gladsome consent of heart to His gracious call you come wearing the yoke of Christ,—the yoke of obedience and service,—all your murmurings will be stilled, all your difficulties will be removed, all the perplexing problems that now confront you will be solved." MB 101. Thank God!

Obedience to the will of God, as given in the Bible will produce a character formed after the divine pattern and is the only thing that will endure. All who humble their hearts before God will be taught of God.

"The mother should have less love for the artificial in her house and in the preparation of her dress for display, and should take time to cultivate, in herself and in her children, a love for the beautiful buds and opening flowers. She can lead their minds up to their Creator, and awaken in their young hearts a love for their heavenly Father, who has manifested so great love for them." CT 79.

Zion's Daughters

Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are **haughty**, and walk with stretched forth necks and **wanton** eyes, walking and **mincing** as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: Therefore the

Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their **cauls**, and their round **tires** like the moon, the chains, and the bracelets, and the **mufflers**, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the **tablets**, and the earrings, the rings, and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the **wimples**, and the **crisping pins**, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the **hoods**, and the veils. And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a **stomacher** a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty. Isaiah 3:16-24.

“The prophecy of Isaiah 3 was presented before me as applying to these last days, and the reproofs are given to the daughters of Zion who have thought only of appearance and display.” 1T 270.

Enlightening definitions from the *Hebrew Lexicon* that apply to some of the words in bold print above, are given below, along with *Webster's Dictionary* definitions.

Haughty: 1. To soar, 2. To be lofty 3. To be blatantly and disdainfully proud. 4. To make higher 5. To lift up.

Wanton: 1. Hard to control: undisciplined, unruly 2. Playfully mean, cruel: mischievous 3. Lewd or lascivious. Bawdy: causing sexual excitement: lustful, sensual 4. Merciless, inhumane, having no just provocation or foundation: malicious 5. Being without check or limitations as: luxuriously rank, unduly lavish: extravagant 6. A pampered person: pet 7. A lewd or lascivious person 8. To suspend, poise, balance, deceive.

Mincing: 1. Affectedly dainty or delicate. 2. To trip with short steps coquettishly.

God, who sees the heart, has given a vivid description of the “daughters of Jerusalem.” They are obsessed with self and artificial decorations. Embellishments are consistent with their wanton attitudes—prideful, rebellious, malicious, coquettish and lewd. “Many today have veils upon their faces. These veils are sympathy with the

customs and practices of the world, which hide from them the glory of the Lord. God desires us to keep our eyes fixed upon Him, that we may lose sight of the things of this world.” 6T 146.

Instead of sympathy with worldly customs and practices, Jesus would have us adorn ourselves in modesty and sobriety with the added beauty of good works.

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.

When We Stop Being a Child of God

“As soon as any have a desire to imitate the fashions of the world that they do not immediately subdue, just so soon God ceases to acknowledge them as his children.” 1T 137.

“I saw that unless parents awake to the eternal interest of their children, they will surely be lost through their neglect. And the possibility of these unfaithful parents' being saved themselves is very small. Parents, I saw, should be exemplary. They should exert a holy influence in their families. They should let their dress be modest, different from the world around them. You should rebuke pride in your children, if you value their eternal interest. Faithfully rebuke this pride, and encourage it not in deed or word. I saw that this pride must be torn out of our families. Oh, the pride that was shown me of God's professed people. It has increased every year, until it is now impossible to designate professed Advent Sabbath-keepers from all the world around them.” 4bSG 21.

In order for the gospel to save men from sin, it must have power to root out pride. The last church must encourage principles that curtail pride. If a church has no discipline against pride of dress, it is unworthy of the name Christian. The last church must be totally consecrated to follow Jesus, or the door of mercy will be shut to her.

We should thank God for the cross of dress reform to help us know our own hearts and experience victory over pride of appearance. When we lift the cross, we find it lifts us. Victory in one area will help us gain victory over pride in other areas such as pride

of our race, possessions, talents, position, opinion, learning or spirituality. Oh, that we could thoroughly loathe our sins of pride and by diligence and prayer, expel them forever from our hearts, homes and churches! Purity of heart would make room for us to enjoy open, uninterrupted communion with our personal Savior.

“Circumstances cannot work reforms. Christianity proposes a reformation in the heart. What Christ works within, will be worked out under the dictation of a converted intellect. The plan of beginning outside and trying to work inward has always failed, and always will fail. God's plan with you is to begin at the very seat of all difficulties, the heart, and then from out of the heart will issue the principles of righteousness; the reformation will be outward as well as inward.” CD 35.

“None need fear that I shall make dress reform one of my principal subjects as we travel from place to place. Those who have heard me upon this matter will have to act upon the light that has already been given. I have done my duty; I have borne my testimony, and those who have heard me and read that which I have written must now bear the responsibility of receiving or rejecting the light given. If they choose to venture to be forgetful hearers, and not doers of the work, they run their own risk and will be accountable to God for the course they pursue. I am clear. I shall urge none and condemn none. This is not the work assigned me. God knows His humble, willing, obedient children and will reward them according to their faithful performance of His will. To many the dress reform is too simple and humbling to be adopted. They cannot lift the cross. God works by simple means to separate and distinguish His children from the world; but some have so departed from the simplicity of the work and ways of God that they are above the work, not in it.

“I was referred to Numbers 15:38-41: "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue: and it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring: that ye may remember, and do all My commandments, and

be holy unto your God. I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the Lord your God." Here God expressly commanded a very simple arrangement of dress for the children of Israel for the purpose of distinguishing them from the idolatrous nations around them. As they looked upon their peculiarity of dress, they were to remember that they were God's commandment-keeping people, and that He had wrought in a miraculous manner to bring them from Egyptian bondage to serve Him, to be a holy people unto Him. They were not to serve their own desires, or to imitate the idolatrous nations around them, but to remain a distinct, separate people, that all who looked upon them might say: These are they whom God brought out of the land of Egypt, who keep the law of Ten Commandments. An Israelite was known to be such as soon as seen, for God through simple means distinguished him as His.

“The order given by God to the children of Israel to place a ribbon of blue in their garments was to have no direct influence on their health, only as God would bless them by obedience, and the ribbon would **keep in their memory the high claims of Jehovah** and **prevent them from mingling with other nations**, uniting in their drunken feasts, and eating swine's flesh and luxurious food detrimental to health. God would now have His people adopt the reform dress, not only to distinguish them from the world as His "peculiar people," but because a reform in dress is essential to physical and mental health. God's people have, to a great extent, lost their peculiarity, and have been gradually patterning after the world, and mingling with them, until they have in many respects become like them. This is displeasing to God. He directs them, as He directed the children of Israel anciently, to come out from the world and forsake their idolatrous practices, not following their own hearts (for their hearts are unsanctified) or their own eyes, which have led them to depart from God and to unite with the world.

“Something must arise to lessen the hold of God's people upon the world. The reform dress is simple and healthful, yet there is a cross in it. I thank God for the cross and cheerfully bow to lift it. We have been so united with the world that we have lost sight of the cross and do not suffer for Christ's sake.

“We should not wish to invent something to make a cross; but if God presents to us a cross, we should cheerfully bear it. In the acceptance of the cross we are distinguished from the world, who love us not and ridicule our peculiarity. Christ was hated by the world because He was not of the world. Can His followers expect to fare better than their Master? If we pass along without receiving censure or frowns from the world we may be alarmed, for it is our conformity to the world which makes us so much like them that there is nothing to arouse their envy or malice; there is no collision of spirits. The world despises the cross. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." 1 Corinthians 1:18. "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Galatians 6:14." 1T 525.

Jesus, Our Example

Let us turn our attention from our problems to the Solution. Jesus came to be our example, but “not with outward show.” Luke 17:20, margin. To world-loving hearts there was “no beauty that we should desire Him.” Isaiah 53:2. He was born in a rude manger, lived in poverty, and followed a lowly occupation. His attire was plain and simple.

“The Jews had refused to receive Christ, whose garments, coarse and often travel-stained, covered a heart of divine love.” AA 150. If we submit ourselves to Jesus’ wise guidance and love, and casting ourselves on His mercy cry, “Lord, save me, I perish,” He will help and save us from rejecting Him for His appearance.

“The contrast between Jesus and the high priest as they talked together was marked. The proud dignitary of the temple was clothed in rich and costly garments. Upon his head was a glittering tiara. His bearing was majestic, his hair and his long flowing beard were silvered by age. His appearance awed the beholders. Before this august personage stood the Majesty of heaven, without adornment or display. His garments were travel stained; His face was pale, and expressed a patient sadness; yet written there were dignity and benevolence that contrasted strangely with the proud, self-confident,

and angry air of the high priest. Many of those who witnessed the words and deeds of Jesus in the temple from that time enshrined Him in their hearts as a prophet of God.” DA 594.

“His garments were dusty and travel-stained, and his appearance was uninviting.” GW p. 393. “He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.” Isaiah 53:2.

No man can see Jesus and His simple life and choose to follow Him, and at the same time desire to make a show of himself by displaying body, attire, ornaments, talents or any other thing. “My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.” Psalm 34:2. The spirit of Christ and the spirit of pride and display are direct opposites. Our only boast should be of God and His precious truth. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Philippians 2:5-8. If we fail to have the same spirit, we are not His. “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” Romans 8:9.

When we walk into His presence we instinctively feel that pride is out of place. Only humility is appropriate. When we live as in His presence by faith, we will feel our sin and degradation. Indecent exposure will be seen and felt as totally inappropriate. Beholding Jesus will take the love of these things out of our hearts. All things that are not like Him must be given up and willingly surrendered. Our attitude toward vanity shows to what extent we have comprehended our sinful condition and how far we have gone in accepting Christ.

When you spend precious time trimming and embellishing your apparel, remember that the King of Glory wore a plain seamless robe. You who weary yourselves in primping, perming, painting, powdering and decorating yourselves to please the eye, please bear in mind that Jesus spent whole nights praying for you. He felt the

weaknesses of your natures to resist the temptations of the enemy upon the very points upon which you have been overcome.

John the Baptist—A Type of God’s People at the End

John the Baptist’s message of repentance was a type of the message to be given just before Jesus’ second coming. John the Baptist was clear and decisive because those who knew Christ when He walked on earth were deciding their eternal destinies by how they responded to the Light that shone on their pathway. He laid the ax “unto the root of the trees.” Matthew 3:10. Today, our message must be even more pointed and urgent.

“My message will become more and more pointed, as was the message of John the Baptist, even though it cost me my life. The people shall not be deceived.” SpTA12 14. “When the Spirit of God, by message of reproof, declares this to be his condition, he cannot see that the message is true. Is he therefore to reject the warning? No. God has given sufficient evidence, so that all who desire to do so may satisfy themselves as to the character of the Testimonies; and, having acknowledged them to be from God, it is their duty to accept reproof, even though they do not themselves see the sinfulness of their course. If they fully realized their condition, what would be the need of reproof?

“Because they know it not, God mercifully sets it before them, so that they may repent and reform before it shall be too late. Those who despise the warning will be left in blindness to become self-deceived; but those who heed it, and zealously go about the work of separating their sins from them in order to have the needed graces, will be opening the door of their hearts that the dear Saviour may come in and dwell with them. Those who are most closely connected with God are the ones who know His voice when He speaks to them. Those who are spiritual discern spiritual things. Such will feel grateful that the Lord has pointed out their errors.” 5T 682.

Human probation will very soon close. Before the second-coming of Christ everyone on planet earth will have come to the final decision and none of us know how soon. Our only safety is to be right with God today.

“In the time of John the Baptist, greed for riches, and the love of luxury and display had become widespread. By his abstemious life and plain dress he was to rebuke the excesses of his time.” DA 100.

“They had listened to him day after day as he reproved their sins, and daily the conviction that he was sent of Heaven had strengthened. But who was this One greater than John the Baptist? In His dress and bearing there was nothing that betokened rank. He was apparently a simple personage, clad like themselves in the humble garments of the poor.” DA 137.

“John separated himself from friends, and from the luxuries of life. The simplicity of his dress, a garment woven of camel’s hair, was a standing rebuke to the extravagance and display of the Jewish priests, and of the people generally.” CD 71. John’s garments are often pictured by artists as a small, shaggy, apron-sized garment slung over one shoulder. This is a gross misrepresentation. John wore a robe of woven camel’s hair. Wool was the fiber most often used in Jewish dress and camel down is a soft, light-weight wool of superb quality. His belt was made of skins, or leather. See Mark 1:6.

“The prophet Malachi declares, ‘Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.’ Here the prophet describes the character of the work. Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ, are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ’s first advent.” Ibid. “In this fearful time, just before Christ is to come the second time, God’s faithful preachers will have to bear a still more pointed testimony than was borne by John the Baptist.” GW92 90.

Fathers and husbands, you, like Elijah, have a special duty toward your family, to lead them to obey the way of the Lord by example and instruction. Adorn the gospel of Christ by appropriate simple dress. Before we are ready for Jesus to come, your heart must be turned in true love and faithfulness to your wife and children, and their hearts must respond in willing obedience and cooperation to obey the will of God through intelligent leadership and instruction in right principles. We need your help! Of faithful Abraham it was said, “For I know him, that he will command his children and his

household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.” Genesis 18:19. Abraham was faithful to give a right example and to command his household to keep the way of the Lord. Are you decided? Will you dress for Jesus or for the world? By His grace, I want to keep the way of the Lord by dressing for Jesus. He says, “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” 2 Cor. 12:9.

“Satan is now using every device in this sealing time to keep the minds of God's people from the present truth and to cause them to waver. I saw a covering that God was drawing over His people to protect them in the time of trouble; and every soul that was decided on the truth and was pure in heart was to be covered with the covering of the Almighty. Satan knew this, and he was at work in mighty power to keep the minds of as many people as he possibly could wavering and unsettled on the truth....

“Some of these agents of Satan were affecting the bodies of some of the saints--those whom they could not deceive and draw away from the truth by a Satanic influence. Oh, that all could get a view of it as God revealed it to me, that they might know more of the wiles of Satan and be on their guard! I saw that Satan was at work in these ways to distract, deceive, and draw away God's people, just now in this sealing time. I saw some who were not standing stiffly for present truth. Their knees were trembling, and their feet sliding, because they were not firmly planted on the truth, and the covering of Almighty God could not be drawn over them while they were thus trembling.

“Satan was trying his every art to hold them where they were, until the sealing was past, until the covering was drawn over God's people, and they left without a shelter from the burning wrath of God, in the seven last plagues. God has begun to draw this covering over His people, and it will soon be drawn over all who are to have a shelter in the day of slaughter. God will work in power for His people; and Satan will be permitted to work also.” EW 43, 44.

“Let the ingenious inquirer, and the one who would know for himself what is truth, exert his mental powers to search out the truth as it is in Jesus. Any neglect here is at the peril of the soul. We must

know individually the prescribed conditions of entering into eternal life. We must know what is the voice of God, that we may live by every word that proceeds out of his mouth. We cannot allow these questions to be settled for us by another's mind, or another's judgment. We must search the Scriptures carefully with a heart open to the reception of light and the evidences of truth. We cannot trust the salvation of our souls to ministers, to idle traditions, to human authorities, or to pretensions. We must know for ourselves what God has said....The Lord positively demands of every Christian an intelligent knowledge of the Scriptures.” RH, March 8, 1887 par. 1.

“Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman.” CET 191.

MODESTY AND CHASTITY

While we do not wish to quibble over every article of dress and be judge as to whether it is modest, we do know that whatever hurts our fellow man is wrong for a Christian. And any type of dress that unnecessarily provokes our fellowman to commit sin must be classed as wrong. Immodesty of behavior and dress is one of these issues. What is modesty?

Modest: 1. To cover the body adequately and properly. 2. Having or showing a moderate estimation of one's own talents, abilities, and value: humility. 3. Having or proceeding from a disinclination to call attention to one's self; retiring, diffident, or shy. 4. Observing conventional proprieties in speech, behavior or dress: proper. 5. Free from showiness or ostentation: unpretentious or plain. 6. Moderate or limited in size, quantity, or range: not extreme. 7. Keeping to the appropriate: orderly, systematic or decorous. 8. Handsome: seemliness or beauty.

Chaste: 1. Pure from all unlawful commerce of sexes. Applied to persons before marriage, it signifies pure from all sexual commerce, undefiled; applied to married persons, true to the marriage bed. 2. Free from obscenity.

While they behold your chaste conversation. 1 Peter 3:2.

3. In language, pure; genuine; uncorrupt; free from barbarous words and phrases, and from quaint, affected, extravagant expressions.

Women may brush aside criticism of their immodest dress by blaming everything on the “dirty men with their evil thoughts.” But is that the only fault? God made men with their basic nature, and he desires them to keep it all in subjection to His law. The men who are striving to serve God appreciate the help that modest dress affords.

One young man said, “If they don’t want anything to show, as they pretend, if they really want to be modest, tell them to buy a skirt with some material in it. They pretend insult if I pop an eyeball, but the reason why they go half naked is because they want to create a little unrest. Tell them that act should have been cancelled when they accepted the hike of the hem and said ‘to _____ with decency.’” Why does this young man express such anger? Is he outraged without a cause, or should we ladies put more material in our skirts?

Every man, woman, and child in the world has a carnal nature by birth. But the male struggle to keep the thoughts straight is based upon more than fleshly nature. It is rooted in the fact that God created men with a completely different sexual makeup than women.

God created man with a very sensitive sexual nature that could be quickly aroused by the SIGHT of female nudity or even partial nudity. Woman, on the other hand, has a sexual nature that is more responsive to touch and tenderness.

I have heard the question from young men, “If it isn’t for sale, why advertise it?” They mean, “If your body is not for them, why do you dare expose it to tempt and tantalize them?”

God gave man his emotional nature to make marriage more pleasurable and happy. The husband was to be the aggressive one in the relationship. In the beautiful plan of a godly marriage the sex instinct of both husband and wife could be lawfully stirred. But mark this: God never intended for man’s sex emotions to be stimulated outside the marriage chamber. For man’s protection, God placed in woman a delicate sense of modest reserve, so that she would not expose her body except to her own husband.

As an illustration of His ideal, God has given the sanctuary.

Consider the meaning of the increasing privacy provided by the court yard curtain, illustrating the sacred circle of the church; the Holy Place curtain, symbolic of the sacred circle of the family, and the Most Holy Place veil, representing the privacy of the marriage relationship. Each curtain has a lesson to teach regarding the behavior and dress that safeguards these relations.

The plan was perfect. Unfortunately, Satan has managed to break down and destroy to a very great extent that inherent modesty with which the Creator endowed woman. Under the growing curse of sin, woman has cast off moral restraint. Nudity and half-dress have become the norm. On every side, Christian as well as non-Christian is forced to look upon scenes of immodest display and pretense which are completely foreign to the Creator’s plan.

When Christian men are engaging in business with worldly people, they expect to be confronted with scenes of immodesty and brace themselves for the temptation, and rightly so. But in the church family, they ought to find relief from the temptation of constant sensual allurement. Sad to say, the professed sisters “in the faith” glibly parade the same glamour as the “strange woman” right in our churches. Where can our brothers find a helpful, pure, restful atmosphere for growth in the knowledge of God? Does anyone care for their souls? What is the church for? What responsibility do professed Christian women have who dress in such a way that they unnecessarily stimulate the thinking of evil thoughts?

Through submission to God and prayer any man can claim the power of a pure mind, but provocative styles of dress make it a much more difficult struggle. For the carnal man, who has no power of the gospel in his life, there is no chance whatever to resist the temptation. Every indecent or indiscreet exposure triggers the mind to think the most debased thoughts. Christian women should have no purposeful part in this sinful enticement. It is indeed a violation of the commandment to “love thy neighbor as thyself.” It is not true love to cause our neighbor to sin against himself, against his wife and against God.

We are to deal with our own actions that cause others to sin. This is a moral issue. “We must open no door that will give Satan access to the mind of one human being formed in the image of God.”

5T 360. “No one can act like a worldling without being carried down by the current of the world. Individual vigilance is the price of safety. Satan is playing the game of life for your soul. Swerve not to his side a single inch, lest he gain advantage over you.” 6T 147. Through the same submission to God and prayer, a Christian woman can claim the power to dress in pure and modest clothing, although ridicule and disdain make it more difficult.

Because the female reaction to nudity is so different from that of the male, women often minimize or totally discount the spiritual problem that it causes. The male nature cannot be reversed or changed by any human effort—determination or power of self-control to stifle mental images. Many women fail to grasp the major difference that God put in the male nature. But Christian women will understand and cooperate in closing the door of temptation by thoughtful modesty in dress and behavior.

To better understand Satan’s attack on our lives today we refer to his final attack on Israel before entering the Promised Land. They became shamefully involved in lewd, illicit sexual behavior, tempted by the seductive beauty and wiles of immoral, pagan women. Twenty-four thousand were destroyed in this one episode. Twenty-four thousand who were nearly into the Promised Land! Is there not a striking parallel with what we see among God’s professed people today? Will it keep us out of the heavenly Promised Land for many more years? It is one of Satan’s last efforts to subvert the moral integrity of the remnant church. May God help us!

How many today are enamored and destroyed by fleshly lusts that war against the soul? “All these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” 1 Corinthians 10:11, 12.

Worldly society is so degraded that pornography has been legitimized and rank lewdness fill TV channels and advertising. Modern man seems obsessed with the subject of sex, and even homosexuality has been given recognition by psychiatrists, schools and even churches as an acceptable, normal life style!

All the dazzling allurements of nudity in full color television have invaded too many of our professed Christian homes. Many who

think they are Christians are already compromised and do not know it. The undress parade has overpowered the spiritual defenses in the professed church. Only the great judgment day will reveal how many minds have surrendered the love of truth for sensual gratification.

Mary Quant, the inventor of the mini-skirt, said, “Mini-skirts are symbolic of those girls who want to seduce a man.” Clothing catalogs advertise their merchandise for women as “flirty” or “sexy.” One says, “Yesterday’s underwear—today’s outer wear.”

One of the first evidences of Satan’s control is the removal of clothing. “There met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes.” Luke 8:27. Later, after Jesus had delivered him from the demons it says, “Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind.” Luke 8:35. The implication is that only someone not in his right mind will go around naked. If we have not yielded ourselves fully to serve Jesus, we are not thinking soundly, and the devil has access to and a deceptive hold on our mind.

The present-day mad craze for nudity must be a form of demon possession. The statistics on mentally and emotionally ill persons support this conclusion. Statistics show that short skirts and other revealing, immodest clothing invite sex crimes. Forcible rape crime shot up in proportion to use of abbreviated costumes. Immodest dress alone, but especially when combined with sensual rock or so-called Christian contemporary music, has a direct bearing on crime incitation, no matter how innocent or naive the motives of the wearer may be. Our safety is in obeying the Holy Spirit’s teaching in the Word of God.

Do you believe in situational ethics? Does a situation—like a swimming pool or beach nearby—change nakedness to modesty or the Law of God? No. “Thou God seest me.” Gen. 16:11. We must be willing to sacrifice pleasure in order to be right. There are costumes that can allow us ladies to swim and yet cover us adequately, but they will not be in fashion near or away from water. We must dare to be different. Since water can cause garments to cling to the skin, this factor must be considered when designing modest swim suits.

If, in our past experience, we have mindlessly followed

worldly customs we may assume that our spiritual perception is blunted as to the sin of immodesty. Then let us press our way to the throne of mercy and plead for the True Witness to anoint our eyes with eye-salve that we may discern our true condition and find grace to walk in the light He provides. Probationary time is always short and Jesus wants us to prepare so He can come.

Heart and reforms are progressive as truths are impressed on our hearts and we accept and practice them. “As the truth is brought into practical life, the standard is to be elevated higher and higher to meet the requirements of the Bible. This will necessitate opposition to the fashions, customs, practices, and maxims of the world. It will require moral courage to do this, and those whose souls are not riveted to the eternal Rock will be swept away by the worldly current. We can stand firm only as our life is hid with Christ in God. Moral independence is wholly in place when opposing the world. By conforming entirely to the will of God, we shall be placed upon vantage ground, and shall see the necessity of decided separation from the customs and practices of the world. We are not to elevate our standard just a little above the world's standard, but we are to make the distinction decidedly apparent.” 6T 146.

“There is **not one in a thousand** married or unmarried, who realize the importance of purity of habits, in preserving cleanliness of the body and purity of thought.” KC 45. As followers of Jesus, we need pure, modest, dressing habits to help in preserving purity of thought. Sadly, not even one person in one thousand realizes this! Unless the professed church learns the importance of purity and strives to attain it, she is not showing the love of Christ to others.

Tight, Form-Fitting Clothing

The whole world is aware that tight dresses and blouses that snugly outline the figure are provocative and tempting to the eyes of a man—everyone, it seems, except for professed Christian women and evil men and seducers who wish to deny it. Can we not bear the reproach that being a true Christian requires? What if we are called to die for Jesus? Jesus wants us to live for Him now.

Today many types of immodesty are displayed, but it seems

that our Christian sisters are not aware of the contradictory message conveyed when they wear tight, slinky clothing. This is a most common form of immodesty among God's people, just as it is in the world. How has this happened?

The world calls this type of dress “revealing” because it exposes too much of the form rather than concealing it. Too close-fitting garments often appear almost like a second skin. This violates God's purpose in clothing us. Our clothing should set on us easily with a little room between the body and the garment in many places. This is where a somewhat stiff fabric is helpful. Garments that cling too closely are usually made of soft, drapy fabric or stretchy knit. But a tight blouse of woven fabric stretched too snugly across the breasts, or a tight skirt pulled around the hips and cupping under the seat will give the same evil appearance. Skirts with slits up the leg to allow freedom in walking are generally too narrow in the stride and tantalize by appearances of the leg through the slit. If the skirt is full enough to walk comfortably without a slit, the slit should be sewn up to avoid unnecessary exposure.

Our dress should fit at certain points—shoulder width, waist length, sleeve length, skirt length and at the base of the neck. All the body circumference measurements should have adequate ease for breathing and other movements. A neat, attractive fit is pleasing to God, rather than a strained, tight fit.

However, garments made of knit fabric should be assessed for modesty because freedom of movement and “fit” is possible even in overly revealing T-shirts, sweaters, tube dresses or knit skirts. Non-stretchy fabric, with its normal body, is more concealing. When someone looks at us, they should not be attracted to our bodies and its curves due to tight garments. Joyful faces of Christians should attract people to Him who gives life, peace and joy.

Many women are able to find or make knit sweaters, sweat shirts or T-shirts that are not too revealing. A small-busted woman especially can find sweaters that are loose enough to modestly conceal her shape, but the larger the bust the more difficult this becomes. If a large busted woman needs to wear a sweater for warmth, try covering a snug sweater with a loose blouse of woven fabric, or wear a loose sweater over a woven blouse. Ladies that are

overweight often find this suggestion offensive. They like to wear clothing that would properly fit them if they were twenty or thirty pounds lighter. But it is foolish pride that causes the heart to not choose a large enough garment to be modest.

“My sisters, avoid even the appearance of evil. In this fast age, reeking with corruption, you are not safe unless you stand guarded. Virtue and modesty are rare. I appeal to you as followers of Christ, making an exalted profession, to cherish the precious, priceless gem of modesty. This will guard virtue. Chaste simplicity in dress, when united with modesty of demeanor, will go far toward surrounding a young woman with that atmosphere of sacred reserve which will be to her a shield from a thousand perils.” CG 417.

Our dress should not detract, but frame our face. It is a shame to wear clothing that is too short, too low or skimpy. May we resolve with God’s help that we will not follow worldly trends. Then God will be able to bless and protect us, and others through us.

When the truth is brought into our hearts, we will die to self and come alive to God. If we are dead to self we will not say, “I will not wear this and I must have that to wear,” but the heart language will be the earnest inquiry, “What does God want me to wear? How can I best glorify Him? Would this garment please Him? Is this garment convenient, modest and healthful?” Our wills should be swallowed up in the will of God. Stubbornness and lack of consecration stand directly in the way of sinners being converted. We must either repent and follow our Pattern or the blood of souls will be upon our garments.

I appeal to my sisters in the church to accept the teachings of Jesus given in the Word of God. We profess that we are preparing for Jesus’ coming and for heaven. Where is the evidence? Will we argue over doing as we please in ignoring God’s standards of modesty? Will we rebel and murmur, “It is not possible for me to do *that!* I would look ugly. I do not like it,” referring to dress reform, sewing duties or other correct principles that we naturally dislike. “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.” Mark 9:23. “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:13. Our hope in Christ for the future is for Christian ladies and mothers to courageously do right and give their and

daughters a correct example and instruction, taking God at His word. Even if your daughters are grown, they will notice the differences.

Modesty is a heart matter and must affect behavior as well as dress. Wives and daughters need modest dress and behavior. Exalting our own reasoning and judgment in any way that discredits any statement of truth from God’s word, will blind us regarding what God means. How important that we lay down our opinions at the door of sincere investigation!

Girls and women must guard their behavior carefully. If you are Christ’s you will be careful that you do not enjoy laughing with and teasing boys or men. You may be kind, helpful and polite, but be careful not to act unbecomingly. Study to be quiet and appropriately reserved around the opposite sex.

A True Woman

“The one who is simple and unpretending in her dress and in her manners shows that she understands that a true woman is characterized by moral worth. How charming, how interesting, is simplicity in dress, which in comeliness can be compared with the flowers of the field.” CG 413.

We need to spend more time thinking of God’s ideals for us. The world is ever near, and our struggling hearts are tempted with pride, sensuality and slothfulness. But if we look to Jesus long enough, and dwell on the beauty of holiness, the accumulated light of truth, these earthly things will become dim. In John 12:32 Jesus says, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.”

Satan has managed the world’s fashions and we are not safe following them. The enemy sees to it that every fashion he invents has at least one detail that will cause us to dishonor God. His standards and His word must be our guide in all things. He wants us to have the joy, flexibility and the peace modesty gives in whatever situation we may be placed.

The issue is not just how big or small the thing is. It is our attitude. Are we giving ALL to follow Jesus in EVERY THING? He requires the whole heart and total obedience. Just a little more insubordination and we may have to stay here many more years.

Everything in the world is set for final events. Do you, do I, really want Jesus to come? He must cleanse and seal us before that awful day or we will be left with the wrong group, but how can Jesus seal us while we are fluctuating between Him and the world? Obedience and loyalty in little things shows our love for Jesus.

“Few receive the grace of Christ with self-abasement, with a deep and permanent sense of their unworthiness. They cannot bear the manifestations of the power of God, for this would encourage in them self-esteem, pride, and envy. This is why the Lord can do so little for us now. God would have you individually seek for the perfection of love and humility in your own hearts. Bestow your chief care upon yourselves, cultivate those excellencies of character which will fit you for the society of the pure and the holy.” 5T 50.

“There are many represented to me in the church who seem just like drowning men engaged in a desperate struggle to keep their heads above water. They have not in their religious life ever died to self. Self is their idol; they worship at its shrine. Weakness and a fluctuating experience open the way for Satan's temptations and they will be easily overcome. A faithful waiting upon the Lord will renew their strength. Trials of faith will come, but love, patience, and constancy will be weighed by the golden scales of the heavenly sanctuary.” DG 137.

“When the joy of the saving power of Christ's righteousness is rightly understood by experimental knowledge, there will be vital interest in the church, there will be those who will teach transgressors God's ways, and sinners will be converted to the truth as it is in Jesus. It is the professors of religion that need converting; for Satan has brought his deceptions to bear upon their souls.” YRP 83.

“Every individual soul, if he would receive the seal of the living God, must hear the Word of the Lord, and do it with exactitude.” FLB 288. “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:” Matt. 7:24. “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Rev. 22:14.

“God has shown me that at the very time that the signs of the times are being fulfilled around us...they have refused to let go the

filthy garments; they have clung to them as if they were of precious value. They will lose heaven and an eternity of bliss on account of them.” TM 446.

If we were conscientiously following the Bible, we would be a purer, happier people than the world. “The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with his glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, whole-hearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of his Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God. God cannot pour out his Spirit when selfishness and self-indulgence are so manifest; when a spirit prevails that, if put into words, would express that answer of Cain,— ‘Am I my brother's keeper?’ ” RH July 21, 1896.

“Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” Matthew 5:28. Why are our professed Christian and especially SDA churches plagued with similar sexual perversions and sins as the world? If we ladies can help encourage purity of thought and action by modest dress and behavior, we are being God's helpers. We are doing a good work for the salvation of souls and the honor of God.

“In dress, as in diet, plain living is indispensible to to high thinking....A person's character is judged by his style of dress. A refined taste, a cultivated mind, will be revealed in the choice of simple and appropriate attire.” Ed. 248.

Pants and the American Costume

Making a difference between men's and women's clothing is a parallel principle to that of making a difference between men's and women's roles. Failure to appreciate and obey these principles has resulted in confusion and a drastic lowering of morality—homosexuality, Sodomy—and the degradation of womanhood .

“From the light God has been pleased to give, we should conform to the customs as long as they do not conflict with God's principles of dress—the Bible standard. But, “There is an increasing tendency to have women in their dress and appearance as near like

the other sex as possible, and to fashion their dress very much like that of men, but God pronounces it abomination. 'In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety.' 1 Timothy 2:9." CG 427.

The American costume was originally a woman's outfit accompanying the women's rights movement, that consisted of a dress that was about knee-length with pants underneath. It was designed by worldly people to be health-promoting, without the Lord's counsel. The pants stood out conspicuously. Within a decade this costume degenerated into a thigh-length top with pants underneath. See 1 T 462-465.

If pants with a knee-length or thigh-length top are immodest and completely unfit for a follower of Jesus, are pants with only a T-shirt or short blouse more modest and distinctly feminine? Do we have more or less sexual perversion and masculine-looking or provocative women's clothing today than they had in the 1800's?

Have you ever seen an individual in pants and plaid shirt and wondered to yourself, "Is that a man or a woman?"

The message has come from the Lord, "No occasion should be given to unbelievers to reproach our faith. Some who believe the truth may think that it would be more healthful for the sisters to adopt the American costume, yet if that mode of dress would cripple our influence among unbelievers so that we could not so readily gain access to them, we should by no means adopt it, though we suffered much in consequence. But some are deceived in thinking there is so much benefit to be received from this costume. While it may prove a benefit to some, it is an injury to others." 1 T 457. Today, many believe that following the custom of wearing pants is more healthful or beneficial than dresses.

"Christ does not say that man will not or shall not serve two masters, but that he cannot....Just where the conscience of the Christian warns him to forbear, to deny himself, to stop, just there the worldling steps over the line, to indulge his selfish propensities. On one side of the line is the self-denying follower of Christ; on the other side is the self-indulgent world lover, pandering to fashion, engaging in frivolity, and pampering himself in forbidden pleasure. On that side of the line the Christian cannot go." MB 93.

But how do we know what will bless and give truth access to people's hearts? Access to honest hearts is not dependent on being just like them nor necessarily in being different from them. A right access to hearts is only found through the Holy Spirit's power in following God's way. If Christian women wear pants, how can their dress distinguish them clearly from feminists, homosexuals and spiritualists? How can we best reveal the "marked difference" and the "plain line of distinction" between the worldling and God's women?

"Those who feel called out to join the movement in favor of woman's rights and the so-called dress reform might as well sever all connection with the third angel's message. The spirit which attends the one cannot be in harmony with the other...."With the so-called dress reform there goes a spirit of levity and boldness just in keeping with the dress. Modesty and reserve seem to depart from many as they adopt that style of dress. I was shown that God would have us take a course consistent and explainable." 1 T 457, 458.

Women contend that they will not wear men's pants; they wear only women's pants. And in Bible times, both men and women wore robes. But it is also a fact that the men's robes were fashioned in a distinctive masculine style, while women's robes were fashioned and worn differently. Robes, like coats, are not form fitting. There was a clear distinction that could be readily recognized in a glance. But with the present styles, is confusion not created? At this time God has said He needs women whose appearance will give a clear message that says, "I am a woman." He is dishonored if we conform spiritualistic fashions by lending our influence to unisex or transvestite styles.

"I was shown that some of the people of God imitate the fashions of the world, and are fast losing their peculiar, holy character, which should distinguish them as God's people. I was pointed back to God's ancient people, and then was led to compare their apparel with the mode of dress in these last days. What a difference! What a change! Then the women were not so bold as now....In these last days fashions are shameful and immodest....If God's professed people had not departed greatly from him, there would now be a marked difference between their dress and that of the world.... The inhabitants of earth are growing more and more corrupt,

and the line of distinction must be more plain between them and the Israel of God, or the curse which falls upon worldlings will fall upon God's professed people....Many, I saw, were flattering themselves that they were good Christians, who have not a single ray of light from Jesus. They know not what it is to be renewed by the grace of God." 2SG 227, 228.

Culottes and split skirts are what some ladies have adopted for engaging in certain types of activities, such as horse or bicycle riding. Split skirts look like a loose skirt and hang like a skirt, except that they have divided legs. They are pretty made from soft fabrics, but are not the best for outdoor work. Culottes are somewhat like bell-legged pants, but amazingly, a very small pleat over the center front and back can make them look like a skirt while being less bulky than a split skirt. Culottes are appropriately made from denim, poplin, corduroy, twill and other heavy fabrics. Personally, I find that I prefer to do outdoor activities in a long, flared skirt, which is part of a denim or twill dress. For ladder climbing, ruffled knee-length bloomers under the skirt provide extra covering along with leggings and socks I am already wearing.



It is my opinion, from my study and experience, that women in our culture should avoid wearing long pants under a knee-length or shorter dress or tunic. Such an outfit is very much like the American Costume. The American Costume, such as Miss Dr. Austin wore (elaborate knee-length dress with masculine pants and jacket worn in 1851). We, as Christian women, were counseled to “never imitate” this style. See 5MR 380. Why? Such outfits make the women who wear them gazing stocks in our Western culture, presenting a double-dressed and odd appearance. I believe there are better ways to keep our legs warm and appear more

feminine. Besides, a knee-length dress is what the Lord calls an extreme—the extreme short dress. We want to be balanced.

If we make our dresses a little longer they will cover warm pants. Pants with a tapered, zippered lower leg, can be worn inconspicuously. Longer dresses go well over warm tights, long underwear with socks or leggings with socks. High-top boots are a tasteful addition to one’s wardrobe to cover the lower part of leggings.

It is helpful to be particular to have pants made of either the same fabric as the skirt or a color to make them unnoticeable, in cases where they might be minimally visible during action. Slips are best if color-coordinated with the skirt, too.

Some women, trying to be neat and tasteful in cold weather, carry too large a concern about the appearance of the little bit of leggings that show below their dress. Some feel it must be perfectly smooth at all times, tightly suspended, and in no case slouch around the ankle or make the ankles look “thick.” Pardon my concern on this minor point, but it has prevented women I know from keeping themselves warm, which is unfortunate and sad.

It is a fashionable idea, certainly not common sense, that causes the concern. Is this not an artificial, unrealistic expectation for a thick, multi-layered area of the outfit? We are clearly instructed that the ankles are to be thoroughly clothed, because the limbs and feet are far from the heart. Jeans and dress pants often get a wrinkle in them where they meet the shoe. Some ladies purposely wear a slouchy fashionable style of socks. The ankle is a joint, and like the elbow or shoulder, the covering that is over it may at times wrinkle with movement. Bare ankles simply are smaller in circumference than ankles that are warmly and modestly clothed. Foolish vanity must not control us. After doing our best to be tidy, tasteful and warm, let us rest in the blessings of healthful, modest dress and thank God and cheerfully accept whatever cross is involved.

“Let their dress be simple, loose, and comfortable; clothe their limbs, and especially the ankles, warmly and evenly; then let them go out and exercise in the open air, and live to enjoy health and happiness. It will take moral courage to break away from the chains of fashion, and dress and educate your children with reference to health; but the result will abundantly repay all the self-denial and inconvenience occasioned....Christ requires none of his followers to

lift so heavy a burden as that to which they subject themselves as slaves of fashion.” CTBH 91, 92.

“...Females should clothe their limbs as thoroughly as the males. This may be done by wearing lined pants gathered into a band and fastened about the ankle, or made full and tapering at the bottom; and these should come down long enough to meet the shoe. The limbs and ankles thus clothed are protected against a current of air. If the limbs and feet are kept comfortable with warm clothing, the circulation will be equalized, and the blood will remain healthy and pure, because it is not chilled or hindered in its natural passage through the system.”--How to Live, No. 6, pp. 57-64. 2SM 478.

“Mothers...dress the upper part of their limbs with muslin pantalettes [split-crotch bloomers], which reach about to the knee, while the lower part of their limbs are covered with only one thickness of flannel [wool] or cotton, while their feet are dressed with thin-soled gaiter boots....The heart fails in its efforts, and the limbs become habitually cold; and the blood, which is chilled away from the extremities, is thrown back upon the lungs and brain, and inflammation and congestion of the lungs or the brain is the result.

“Parents may give up the expectation of their children's having health while they dress them in cloaks and furs, and load down those portions of the body with clothing where there is no call for such an amount, and then leave the extremities, that should have especial protection, almost naked. **The portions of the body, close by the life springs, need less covering than the limbs** which are remote from the vital organs. If the limbs and feet could have the extra coverings usually put upon the shoulders, lungs, and heart, and healthy circulation be induced to the extremities, the vital organs would act their part healthfully, with only their share of clothing.” 2SM 469, 470.

Little girls and babies do well to wear pants or long underwear under their dresses, especially in cold weather, but even in warm weather, pants or tights (not too tight!) will provide protection and comfort. “Your girls should wear the waists of their dresses perfectly loose, and they should have a style of dress convenient, comfortable and modest. In cold weather they should wear warm flannel [wool] or cotton drawers, which can be placed

inside the stockings. Over these should be warm lined pants, which may be full, gathered into a band, and neatly button around the ankle, or taper at the bottom and meet the shoe. Their dress should reach below the knee....The shoes should be thick-soled, and perfectly comfortable. With this style of dress your girls will be no more in danger in the open air than your boys. And their health would be much better, were they to live more out of doors, even in winter, than to be confined to the close air of a room heated by a stove.” 2SM 471.

What Was the Reform Dress?

The reform dress Ellen White designed she said perfectly accorded to the light given to her. It was a long dress--by today's standards--about 8-10 inches from the floor. It had a high-necked bodice with long sleeves and a full pleated or gathered skirt that buttoned to the bodice, suspending the weight from the shoulders. Over this dress a long-sleeved bolero jacket or sacque was worn. A collar was optional. Slips were buttoned to their under-bodice. Next, warm long underwear [drawers] and socks were covered with pants (lined pants in cold weather) that either gathered into a cuff that buttoned at the ankle, or tapered neatly to meet the shoe. Split crotches (pantalettes) were common in this era of long, cumbersome skirts. This Reform Dress was a precise style of dress that was to be made according to an approved pattern for women of all ages, as well as for girls five to fourteen years of age. See RH, April 14, 1868 par. 32.

Although this now-old-fashioned dress style was laid aside, because of opposition toward it from many professed sisters in Christ, and unwillingness to follow the pattern precisely, it still reveals right principles. We do well to give thoughtful consideration to *how* it provided for convenience, femininity,



modesty and health. It also shows that our dress is not necessarily wrong simply because others shun the cross of being different. Our dress will have to be different from fashion in some respects to be right.

This particular style of reform dress was laid aside and ceased to be advocated. See why in 4T 635, 636. Today we can apply the same correct principles while modifying style details to our dresses that reflect the general customs at the present time and our personal taste. Ellen White's design carried styling details which reflected the common styles of her day. Is it any easier for us to clothe our limbs properly today, in the face of contrary fashions, than it was in her day?

“Many will immediately exclaim, ‘Why such a style of dress would be old-fashioned!’ What if it is? I wish we could be old-fashioned in many respects. If we could have the old-fashioned strength that characterized the old-fashioned women of past generations it would be very desirable. I do not speak unadvisedly when I say that the way in which women clothe themselves, together with their indulgence of appetite, is the greatest causes of their present feeble diseased condition. There is but one woman in a thousand who clothes her limbs as she should.” 2SM 478.

Does God give specific instructions on how much of the body should be covered? What example has Jesus given?

“And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.” Revelation 1:13.

It is not wrong to observe that everyone has arms, feet and legs, or torsos, but neither the bare upper arms, legs or more private parts of the body should be displayed to public view. Our hands, necks, faces and perhaps our lower arms and feet must be exposed for practical purposes which are symbolic of service and character—communication, action, observation, intelligence, honesty, and compassion, and this is right.

Modesty of dress in a Biblical sense includes covering the legs. Partial nakedness is called nakedness in the Bible. Exposure of the priests' legs was forbidden, therefore they used a ramp, not steps, to

ascend to the altar of sacrifice. “Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.” Exodus 20:26.

“The most common exposure is seen upon the streets in light snow, or wet and mud....It is a common thing to see the dress raised one-half yard, exposing an almost unclad ankle to the sight of gentlemen, but no one seems to blush at this immodest exposure. [This was in an era when wearing a very full, long, hoop-distended skirt was the fashion. The exposed ankle was about all that could be seen by the gentlemen in many instances.]...No outcry of immodesty is heard, although it is so in the fullest sense.” The Health Reformer, May 1, 1872. If this temporary exposure of the ankle was worthy of an outcry of immodesty, what does God think of the exposure caused by the sisters wearing skirts with slits up to the knee or thigh today? Or knee-length dresses with bare legs or only panty hose? Do these not cause more frequent and extensive exposures when walking or bending over?

“Among these pernicious fashions were the large hoops, which frequently caused indecent exposure of the person. In contrast with this was presented a neat, modest, becoming dress, which would dispense with the hoops and the trailing skirts, and provide for the proper clothing of the limbs. But dress reform comprised more than shortening the dress and clothing the limbs. It included **every article of dress** upon the person. It lifted the weights from the hips by suspending the skirts from the shoulders. It removed the tight corsets, which compress the lungs, the stomach, and other internal organs, and induce curvature of the spine and an almost countless train of diseases. Dress reform proper provided for the **protection and development** of every part of the body.” CH 599.

“It is a sin in the sight of Heaven for parents to dress their children as they do. The only excuse that they can make is, it is fashion. They cannot plead modesty to thus expose the limbs of their children with only one covering drawn tight over them. They cannot plead that it is healthful, or really attractive.” 2 SM 471. Again, I have asked myself, What purpose is there in wearing thin nylon hose? Only fashion. Panty hose are not really modest—nor comfortable, healthful, practical, economical or durable; panty hose are often too tight,

restricting the circulation; the fabric is usually not a natural fiber.

“The people of the world are worshiping false gods. They are to be turned from their false worship, not by hearing denunciation of their idols, but by beholding something better. God's goodness is to be made known.” COL 299.

What is a good, modest and practical dress length?

Modest, chaste clothing requires that the dress be long enough to cover our legs, but it should clear the ground. When we bend over or sit down, the front of a full skirt naturally hangs lower, covering more of our legs. But the back of the skirt will be drawn up, exposing more to the view of those behind us. To be safe, we need to check to see that our dress covers our legs well below the knees in all our regular movements.

“My views were calculated to correct the present fashion, the **extreme long dress**, trailing upon the ground, and also to correct the **extreme short dress**, reaching about to the knees, which is worn by a certain class. I was shown that we should shun both extremes. By wearing the dress reaching about to the top of a woman's gaiter boot [about six to ten inches up from the floor] we shall escape the evils of the extreme long dress, and shall also shun the evils and notoriety of the extreme short dress.” 1T 464. The American Costume was the extreme short dress, that Sister White was falsely accused of wearing. See 1T 463. She never wore her dresses that short. We should avoid dressing in the extremes.

The longer length of approved-dresses may be more functional for appearing in public and for sedentary occupations because it makes the leggings, long underwear and/or pants less conspicuous. A somewhat shorter dress is better for housework and outdoor activities. Young girls, especially when the weather is wet or if the skirt is full, usually benefit from a shorter dress. Little girls do well to have their dress length mid-calf to just below the knee to facilitate their playful activities. But their legs should not be bare. They should be clothed in pants, long underwear and/or substantial leggings in addition to their dress.

“Our dresses according to my idea should be from four to six inches shorter than now worn and should in no case reach lower than

the top of the heel of the shoe and could be a little shorter even than this with all modesty.” 5MR 380. The length “now worn” refers to the floor-length or street-sweeping length generally worn by older girls and women. The fashion at the same time for little girls was knee length.

“Your girls should wear the waists of their dresses perfectly loose, and they should have a style of dress convenient, comfortable and modest....Their dress should reach below the knee. With this style of dress, one light skirt [slip], or at most two, is all that is necessary, and these should be buttoned to a waist [bodice].” 2SM 471.

Is it immodest to braid the hair?

“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.

Broided: 1. A plait of hair: broided hair 2. To twine or braid.

In Africa, it is a common practice at the beauty parlors to braid or plait the hair. The hair is divided into approximately one-inch squares and then each tress is wound with black thread or braided. While braiding or wrapping, the beautician often weaves ornaments into the braids. The artists sculpt these braids into large and fanciful shapes. Thankfully, our Christian sisters do not fix their hair in these fancy hair-dos, but they do occasionally divide and wrap their hair in plain black thread.

“The hair should be carefully arranged.” BTS, May 1, 1908. Simple braiding of hair for neat control is beautiful and modest. It need not be confused with immodest, showy and extravagant hair-dos. I believe the same principle applies as with collars and ribbons. “Some have taken the extreme meaning of what I have written about collars, and have maintained that it is wrong to wear one of any description. I was shown expensively wrought collars, and expensive and unnecessary ribbons and laces, which some Sabbathkeepers have worn, and still wear for the sake of show and fashion. In mentioning collars, I did not design to be understood that nothing like a collar should be worn, or in mentioning ribbons, that no ribbons at all should

be worn.” CG 422. “This [1 Timothy 2:9] forbids display in dress, gaudy colors, profuse ornamentation. Any device designed to attract attention to the wearer or to excite admiration is excluded from the modest apparel which God's Word enjoins.” CG 423.

Why are we advised not to wear small bonnets?

“If God's professed people had not greatly departed from Him, there would now be a marked difference between their dress and that of the world. The **small bonnets**, exposing the face and head, show a lack of modesty.” 1T 188.

What were these small bonnets that are condemned? History reveals that these “bonnets” were head decorations or small head pieces or hats that were profusely ornamented with artificial flowers, ribbons, beads, embroidery, lace, or other embellishments. They were too small or impractical to serve a utilitarian purpose—such as to protect from sun or cold—and, although they may have served to hold the hair in place, the display of artificial decorations made them immodest. A simpler hair fastener would have been fully adequate for the purpose. Here is an example of how the small bonnet was causing a problem.

“The trimming of ladies' hats with high-standing bows is a needless expense, and it is unbecoming to a Christian. In the house of God the overtrimmed hats are a positive annoyance. The congregation desire to see the face of the speaker as well as to hear his voice; but the ladies' hats with their high-standing ribbons and bows, obscure the view. Many in the congregation may be seen peering this way and that to get a glimpse of the speaker; but often their efforts are in vain. Their enjoyment of the service is marred, and the minister, who observes all this, is disturbed.” 6MR 160.

Are slips necessary for modesty, or is it fine to wear a dress without a slip?

Women have been wearing pants for so long now that many have forgotten or have no idea how a dress is supposed to be worn. Yes, a slip is necessary for modesty with most dresses or skirts.

It is shameful to see a woman dressed in a long see-through or thin dress without a slip. If she passes through a doorway in such a

dress of thin, unlined dress without a slip, her whole form is visible. Please, sisters, if you wear a dress be sure to wear a slip—unless the dress is made of very heavy fabric.

“Our sisters need not wear many skirts [slips or petticoats] to distend the dress. It appears much more becoming falling about the form naturally over one or two light skirts. Moreen is excellent material for outside skirts [slips]; it retains its stiffness and is durable. If anything is worn in skirts [slips or petticoats], let it be very small. [This was written when the fashion or custom was very long and puffy skirts and hoops.] Yet I frequently see them worn, and sometimes hanging a trifle below the dress. This gives it an immodest, untidy appearance. White skirts [slips], worn with dark dresses, do not become the short dress [8-10 inches from the floor]. Be particular to have your skirts [slips] clean, neat, and nice; make them of good material and in all cases at least three inches shorter than the dress.” 1T 523.

It is most becoming if the slip is close to the same color as the skirt, so that when bending, it will not shine out from under the dress. Slips may well be fit a little snugger and be shorter, than the outside dress so that they can fit inside the dress easily. Each layer, as illustrated by an onion, is a little smaller than the one outside. A slip may be made with a low neck so that the slip neckline will not peek out of the dress neckline, giving an appearance of untidiness when dresses have slight neckline differences.

Sleeves may be sewn into slips optionally for to clothe the arms warmly and evenly with the body trunk. Warm sleeves offset the balance of clothing onto the extremities, whereas jumpers and vests often do the opposite. Sleeves cut out of a matching color of soft knit wool (sweater) are wonderfully warm, sewn into a slip, but require special washing consideration. Other more easily washed fabrics work well too, like cotton fleece and flannel or broadcloth for moderate weather. If using a woven fabric, cut the sleeve on the bias to add a little stretch. Linen also makes excellent slips. A nine-inch zipper at the waistline will allow firm fabrics to be used for slips.

Would it be right to wear a shapeless, baggy dress with pants that simply covers my body and hides my form? Then I would not need

to worry about being proud, showy or tempting anyone.

God does not want us to dress in a manner that takes pride in voluntary humility. Careless or slovenly clothing is immodest. Remember, two definitions of modesty are: 7. Keeping to the appropriate: orderly, systematic or decorous. 8. Handsome: seemliness or beauty.

“Sisters, when about their work, should not put on clothing which would make them look like images to frighten the crows from the corn. It is more gratifying to their husbands and children to see them in a becoming, well-fitting attire than it can be to mere visitors or strangers. Some wives and mothers seem to think it is no matter how they look when about their work and when they are seen only by their husbands and children, but they are very particular to dress in taste for the eyes of those who have no special claims upon them. Is not the esteem and love of husband and children more to be prized than that of strangers or common friends? The happiness of husband and children should be more sacred to every wife and mother than that of all others.” AH 252.

“Wear clothing that is becoming to you. This will increase the respect of your children for you. See to it that they, too, are dressed in a becoming manner. Do not allow them to fall into habits of untidiness.” AH 253.

“I would advise those who prepare for themselves a short dress [the short dress was a finger-length shorter than the longer dress which cleared the filth of the street—not a mini-skirt] for working purposes to manifest taste and neatness in getting it up. Have it arranged in order, to fit the form nicely. Even if it is a working dress, it should be made becoming, and should be cut after a pattern.” 1T 165. “The dress should reach somewhat below the top of the boot [a variety of women’s boots, according to an old catalog at the time this was written, were about 6-10 inches tall]; but should be short enough to clear the filth of the sidewalk and street, without being raised by the hand. A still shorter dress than this would be proper, convenient, and healthful for females, when doing their housework, and especially, for those women who are obliged to perform more or less out-of-door labor.” 2 SM 478.

“Mothers, make yourselves attractive, not by wearing

elaborately trimmed garments, but by wearing those that are neat and well fitting. Let your appearance teach a lesson of neatness. You cannot afford to lose the respect of your children.” CH 102.

“Where the dress is represented as it should be, all candid persons are constrained to admit that it is modest and convenient. It is a great injury to the dress reform to have persons introduce into a community a style which in every particular needs reforming before it can rightly represent the reform dress. Wait, sisters, till you can put the dress on right.” 1T 521.

Trim 1. Well arranged, suitably adjusted. 2. Free of excess or extraneous matter. 3. Pleasant, fine. 4. Suited for service, action or use. 5. Exhibiting neatness, good order and compactness of line or structure.

Fit 1. To be suitable for; harmonize with. 2. Correctly adjusted and shaped for: to make place or room for. 3. To adjust to a given set of points. 4. To be seemly, proper or suitable. 5. To conform to a particular shape or size. 6. To belong to.

We need correct principles of dress. When we know and submit ourselves to accept all that God holds up as His high ideal and put forth every effort to reach that standard, the evil fashions will drop off in the process. “No man [or woman] can serve two masters.” Matthew 6:24. Our only safety is to overcome evil with good. Switching from one extreme to another is not desirable. We want to understand truth which will lead into a consistent, balanced course.

“There is a class who are continually harping upon pride and dress, who are careless of their own apparel, and who think it a virtue to be dirty, and dress without order and taste; and their clothing often looks as if it flew and lit upon their persons. Their garments are filthy, and yet such ones will ever be talking against pride. They class decency and neatness with pride.

“Those who are careless and untidy in dress are seldom elevated in their conversation and possess but little refinement of feeling. They sometimes consider oddity and coarseness humility.” CG 415.

“Some appear with white muslin pants, white sleeves, dark delaine dress, and a sleeveless sack [vest] of the same description as the dress....Be particular to have the pants and dress of the same color and material, or you will appear fantastic.” 1T 522. The pants and leggings worn under dresses should not contrast because they should be inconspicuous. Good taste forbids making a show of the pants or sleeves in contrast to the dress.

“Many need instruction as to how they should appear in the assembly for worship on the Sabbath. They are not to enter the presence of God in the common clothing worn during the week. All should have a special Sabbath suit, to be worn when attending service in God's house. While we should not conform to worldly fashions, we are not to be indifferent in regard to our outward appearance. We are to be neat and trim, though without adornment. The children of God should be pure within and without.” CG 531.

HEALTHFUL DRESS

What characteristics make something healthful?

Healthful: 1. Conducive to good health, being well, vigor, making robust. 2. Salutory, healthy, effecting or designed to effect an improvement, remedial. 4. Favorable to health, wholesome. 5. Sound, rational thinking.

How can we make our dress healthful?

“In order to secure the most healthful clothing, the needs of every part of the body must be carefully studied. The character of the climate, the surroundings, the condition of health, the age, and the occupation must all be considered.” MH 293.

- Climate
- Surroundings
- Condition of health
- Age
- Occupation

Keep Extremities Warm—Evenly Clothed with the Body

“Perfect health depends upon perfect circulation. Special attention should be given to the extremities, that they may be as thoroughly clothed as the chest and the region over the heart, where is the greatest amount of heat. Parents who dress their children with the extremities naked, or nearly so, are sacrificing the health and lives of their children to fashion. If these parts are not so warm as the body, the circulation is not equalized. When the extremities, which are remote from the vital organs, are not properly clad, the blood is driven to the head, causing headache or nosebleed; or there is a sense of fullness about the chest, producing cough or palpitation of the heart, on account of too much blood in that locality; or the stomach has too much blood, causing indigestion.

“It is the lack of harmonious action in the human organism that brings disease. The imagination may control the other parts of the body to their injury. All parts of the system must work harmoniously. The different parts of the body, especially those remote from the heart, should receive a free circulation of blood. The limbs act an important part and should receive proper attention.”--SpT Series B, No. 15, p 18, Apr 3, 1900. (CH 587.) {2MCP 374.3}

“In order to follow the fashions, mothers dress their children with limbs nearly naked; and the blood is chilled back from its natural course and thrown upon the internal organs, breaking up the circulation and producing disease. The limbs were not formed by our Creator to endure exposure, as was the face.

“The Lord provided the face with an immense circulation, because it must be exposed. He provided, also, large veins and nerves for the limbs and feet, to contain a large amount of the current of human life, that the limbs might be uniformly as warm as the body. They should be so thoroughly clothed as to induce the blood to the extremities.” DG 152. If the extremities are chilled, the heart has double labor to force the blood through the contracted blood vessels. Poor circulation then results in impure blood which causes disease. The heart itself will eventually fail in its efforts. See 2SM 470.

“Satan invented the fashions which leave the limbs exposed, chilling back the life current from its original course. And parents bow

at the shrine of fashion and so clothe their children that the nerves and veins become contracted and do not answer the purpose that God designed they should. The result is, habitually cold feet and hands. Those parents who follow fashion instead of reason will have an account to render to God for thus robbing their children of health. Even life itself is frequently sacrificed to the god of fashion.” 2T 531.

How are we in danger of sacrificing to the idol, Molech, today? “Sisters and mothers, we have a higher aim, a more noble work, than to study the latest fashion, and form garments with needless adorning to meet the standard of this modern Moloch. We may become its slave, and sacrifice upon its altars our own and the present and future happiness of our children.” DG 152.

“Worldlings teach their children to love display, and to bow to the idol of fashion. They sacrifice themselves and their children upon this altar of Moloch. But Christians who profess to be seeking the heavenly Canaan, should obey the instructions of the Bible.” ST, May 26, 1881.

“There is but one woman in a thousand who clothes her limbs as she should. Whatever may be the length of the dress, females should clothe their limbs as thoroughly as the males. This may be done by wearing lined pants gathered into a band and fastened about the ankle, or made full and tapering at the bottom; and these should come down long enough to meet the shoe. The limbs and ankles thus clothed are protected against a current of air. If the limbs and feet are kept comfortable with warm clothing, the circulation will be equalized, and the blood will remain healthy and pure, because it is not chilled or hindered in its natural passage through the system.”--How to Live, No. 6, pp. 57-64. 2SM 478. [We might say, As thoroughly as men clothed their limbs in EGW’s day.]

“Children who are accustomed to remain in close, heated rooms cannot have health. They are like hot-house plants. Parents should give especial attention to their children’s dress. They should clothe their limbs comfortably, and then should have them spend some time in active, cheerful exercise in the open air each day, in winter as well as in summer. Little girls should not be deprived of the means of health because they are girls. There is just as much necessity for your girls to have constant and abundant supplies of fresh air, in order to

have good blood and a sound constitution, as your boys.

“Provide your little girls with sleds and with varied amusements which will encourage them to go out of doors. If parents or children sit long in rooms heated by air-tight stoves, they will be dull, stupid, and irritable. Children cannot explain why they feel peevish and unhappy; but let them go out into the fresh air, and, what a change! The querulous voice is exchanged for the merry laugh and joyous shout. All languor is gone, for the invigorating air with brisk exercise has quickened the sluggish blood, and sent it bounding through the veins, vitalizing the entire system. Money that parents now expend to clothe their children fashionably, which only results in sickness, and doctor’s bills, and premature death, might be used in purchasing books for physical, mental, and moral improvement. Parents and children should become intelligent upon the subject of health, which bears so close a relation to their happiness in this life and their future immortal life. Your means could not be used to better advantage than in providing a workshop furnished with tools for your boys, and equal facilities for your girls. They can be [taught] to love labor.” HR, January 1, 1873.

“You should clothe the limbs of your girls as warmly as you do your boys’, thus inducing the blood to the extremities. They should be clothed with warm, lined pants, meeting the instep. In no case should the pants be formed so as to be pulled up out of sight by the children, leaving any part of their limbs exposed. I inquire, Is it reasonable, or even modest, to see the limbs of your daughters exposed, to the bend of the knee, without any covering, except a cotton stocking in summer, and flannel, in winter? Why should not mothers clothe their daughters sensibly, modestly, and healthfully, irrespective of prevailing fashions? **Your children are what you make them by your own instruction and example.** You are teaching them to be creatures of circumstance, by dressing them according to the customs and fashions of the day. As the result, you see them with minds querulous, peevish, ill-balanced, and they lacking physical, mental, and moral strength. Many die prematurely. Mothers, do not charge the result of your cruel work to Providence. You can, by properly instructing your children in regard to the relation their own habits of eating, dressing, and exercise, sustain to health, make them,

not children of circumstance, but of God's gracious providence. The course professed Christians generally pursue, in following fashion irrespective of health and of life, brings upon them a train of evils which they charge back upon Providence, and place arguments in the mouths of infidels, wherewith to assail Christianity." HR, November 1, 1870.

"Another evil which custom fosters is the unequal distribution of the clothing, so that while some parts of the body have more than is required, others are insufficiently clad. The feet and limbs, being remote from the vital organs, should be especially guarded from cold by abundant clothing. It is impossible to have health when the extremities are habitually cold; for if there is too little blood in them there will be too much in other portions of the body. Perfect health requires a perfect circulation; but this cannot be had while three or four times as much clothing is worn upon the body, where the vital organs are situated, as upon the feet and limbs."

"Hours each day should be spent walking or working in the open air when the weather will admit." Health Reformer, 71.

"It is not conducive to health to have many coverings over the abdomen and small of the back, while the extremities are left almost destitute of clothing. Reason teaches that the parts of the body which have the most clothing will have the greatest amount of heat. At every pulsation of the heart, the blood should be propelled to the extremities quickly and easily in order to have health. We plead for the warm, lined pants in winter, that the blood may be induced to the extremities, that they may not by scanty clothing be robbed of their due proportion of blood. The current of human life is struggling to go its accustomed rounds and should not be hindered in its circuit through the body by the imperfect manner in which women clothe their limbs. We cannot see wherein the reform dress we recommend is unbecoming. True, it is not fashionable. But what of that? Fashions do not always come from Heaven. Neither do they always come from the pure, the virtuous, and the good." HR, May 1, 1872 par. 16.

"God clothed them [Adam and Eve] with coats of skins to protect them from the sense of chilliness and then of heat to which they were exposed." SR 46. This teaches us that clothing is needed not only to keep us warm, *but to keep us cool by preventing*

congestion of heat in the head and body trunk! The popular idea of undressing more for every increase in temperature is not based on a correct understanding of physiology. Chilling of the skin by evaporation from air passing over sweaty arms and legs, causes the pores on the extremities to clamp shut, reducing their ability to radiate heat. Granted, the extremities feel clammy cool (if you can still sweat) because of the chilling factor, but the blood is driven to the head and trunk of the body, causing further imbalance that may more easily cause heat exhaustion. Perfect health depends upon perfect circulation. A light or moderate and even covering over the whole body is best for hot weather. Just remember, two layers on the trunk of the body means two layers are needed on the limbs.

How many layers of fabric are you wearing over your chest and abdomen just now and how thick or warm are they? Do you have an equal or greater number of layers and warmth over your arms and legs as over the trunk of your body? If not, it is very likely that your heart is stressed, your pores are not open and properly operating or your circulation is impaired. Even if you feel warm to the touch on your extremities, your pores may be inactive and your head and trunk congested with more than their share of blood. I have become convinced that inability to endure heat is largely due to the blood being congested in the head and trunk, the natural result of people undressing to the fullest extent they dare. To be physiologic, it is better to dress the extremities lightly and cool the head and trunk in hot weather.

We should not overdress by wearing many layers in hot weather, but the arms, legs and feet should always have their due proportion, whatever the weather conditions. "Most of us wear clothing enough, but many fail to give every part of the body its due proportion. If any part of the body should be favorable with extra coverings, it should be the limbs and feet, which are at a distance from the great wheel of life, which sends the blood through the system." MH 293. Colds, coughs and pneumonia are not caused by lack of clothing about the chest, but from the extremities not being well clothed. Along with proper clothing, vigorous exercise is also essential to maintain a balanced circulation.

"Exercise in the invigorating air of heaven is necessary to a

healthy circulation of the blood. It is the best safeguard against colds, coughs, and the internal congestions which lay the foundation of so many diseases. True dress reform regulates every article of clothing. If those ladies who are failing in health would lay off their fashionable robes, clothe themselves suitably for out-door enjoyment, and exercise in the open air, carefully at first, increasing the amount as they can endure it, many of them might recover health, and live to bless the world with their example and the work of their hands.

“It is not the will of God that men and women should die prematurely, leaving their work unfinished. He would have us live out the full measure of our days, with every organ free to do its allotted work. Many complain of the providences of God when disease and death remove members of the household; but it is unjust to charge God with what is but the sure result of their own transgression of natural laws.” CTBH 89, 90.

One dear lady I know found herself very vulnerable to respiratory infections and often suffered from colds and pneumonia. When she changed her dress by always covering her arms and legs year round, day and night, regardless of how “hot” she felt, her susceptibility to these infections drastically diminished.

The easiest time of year to begin keeping your arms and legs properly covered is fall. By spring the body has adjusted somewhat and with continued consistency and an intelligent understanding of what you are doing, learn to manage your summer clothing for health and comfort in your part of the country. Thin, loose, cotton, linen and wool garments are best for hot weather. Although wool is warming, wool is also cooling because it is insulative from direct heat.

Choice of Fibers and Fabric

One summer day, a charming elderly lady, Billie Calhoun, visited our home. We were working with wool and she soon struck up a conversation regarding it. Noticing that she was wearing a lovely wool cardigan and wool socks, even though it was a warm day, led us to comment on her apparent love of wool clothing. She told us an interesting incident in regard to wearing wool. I will share the story as I remember her telling it.

At the time it happened, Billie’s husband was working for a pit

mine operation in the Nevada desert. In the summertime, the heat could become extreme and almost intolerable for the machine operators down in the pit mine. One employee after another became very ill from heat exhaustion and several died of heat stroke. The managers became alarmed, but did not know what to do. They always supplied plenty of drinks and encouraged the men to drink liberally to maintain hydration at normal levels. Eventually, they noticed that one employee never got heat exhaustion and he had worked there for years and was still going. They decided to interview this man, who had survived the heat when others could not, to learn his secret.

After thorough questioning, the only thing that they discovered as the secret of his survival under extremely hot conditions was the wool underwear that he always wore. As a result, they required all the machine operators to wear a full suit of light wool long underwear. Heat exhaustion soon dwindled and no more of their men died from heat stroke.

This story, as well as experience, reveals that even when a person feels very hot, wool protects from heat. It helps equalize the circulation, supporting the body’s natural cooling and moisturizing system. Our skin was made to sweat, whether sensibly or insensibly. “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground.” Genesis 3:19. Though sweat, like hard work, may seem unpleasant it helps purify our bodies. The skin is an important part of our elimination system.

Wool is a wonderful protection from heat as well as cold. Cotton and linen are protective, absorbent and durable fabrics that are cooling when damp and warming when dry. Wool is warm and protective when dry, but also warming when damp or wet. Silk is another natural, healthy fiber that is surprisingly strong and warm even when very thin. Synthetic fibers, like nylon and polyester, are generally not good fabrics to wear next to the skin, because they have a suffocating effect. If worn as looser outer garments over natural fiber undergarments, they are not necessarily detrimental. But if all our skin were totally and tightly covered by a non-breathable substance such as plastic wrap or water-proof paint, we would die. We must be cautious in choosing non-breathable fabrics because they can stress the body. Absorbent and breathable natural fibers are best.

Some people who agree with these theories regarding the best fibers as well as encouraging blood to the extremities, cannot bring themselves to practice them because they feel “hot” or “sweat” without long sleeves where others are very comfortable with long sleeves. How, they reason, could they bear long sleeves?

Once a group of hikers, some with short, and others with long sleeves went out to hike on a comfortably warm day. Those in the long sleeves appeared more comfortable and had more stamina than those in short or sleeveless outfits. On this hike, it was the woman in shorts and camisol who suffered from heat exhaustion when the sun beat down, as she explained “I cannot sweat.” The several individuals in long sleeves took the heat with ease and helped her back.

It is largely a matter of adaptation. If you are accustomed to wearing short sleeves whenever the temperature rises above chilly, your body has learned to compensate to some degree. Many people have never even thought of the benefits of long sleeves and have simply followed custom without consideration to physiology. If a person has never purposely worn long sleeves year round, they are not in a position to judge the matter because they have never had opportunity to adapt. We cannot expect our skin to relax and open its pores to breathe when a chill feeling might pass over it at any moment without any protection.

A parallel might be in diet. We cannot eat a largely meat-based diet, then suddenly change to a vegetarian diet and expect our tastes to be completely adjusted and our health problems to be corrected (those health problems that a vegetarian diet is known to help heal) by the following day or even in two weeks. And another point is, Do I think the vegetarian diet is inadequate or that it will hurt me? The same is true with long sleeves in hot weather and other correct principles in dress. The mind has a profound influence on the body, and if we think our diet or dress will hurt us, it likely will.

It is more physiologic to undress or otherwise cool the trunk of the body and the head when the temperature rises than to go bare-legged or sleeveless. But for modesty, it is best to keep both trunk and limbs clothed.

Suspended from the Shoulders, Not Hips, and Loose

“Tight bands or waists hinder the action of the heart and lungs and should be avoided. No part of the body should at any time be made uncomfortable by clothing that compresses any organ or restricts its freedom of movement. The clothing of all children should be loose enough to admit of the freest and fullest respiration, and so arranged that the shoulders will support its weight.” CG 426.

And as previously mentioned, bras are not loose garments. Tight belts, waistbands and tight panty leg-bands also press against the nerves and blood and lymph vessels and often cause indigestion and other internal abdominal diseases, especially when combined with chilling of the extremities.

“Many females drag down the bowels and hips by hanging heavy skirts upon them. These were not formed to sustain weights. In the first place, heavy quilted skirts should never be worn. They are unnecessary, and a great evil. The female dress should be suspended from the shoulders. It would be pleasing to God if there was greater uniformity in dress among believers.” 2SM 473.

“Our skirts [slips] are few and light, not taxing our strength with the burden of many and longer ones. Our limbs being properly clothed, we need comparatively few skirts [slips]; and these are suspended from the shoulders. Our dresses are fitted to sit easily, obstructing neither the circulation of the blood, nor natural, free, and full respiration. All these things are necessary to health.” HR, September 1, 1868.

“Your girls should wear the waists of their dresses perfectly loose, and they should have a style of dress convenient, comfortable and modest...With this style of dress, one light skirt [slip], or at most two, is all that is necessary, and these should be buttoned to a waist [bodice].” 2SM 471. What EGW called a “waist” is similar to what we call a vest or sleeveless bodice, except it is one layer, rather than being lined. Skirts or slips may be buttoned to it, thus suspending them from the shoulders. It is not a waistband.



See the *Freedom Waist with Skirt* illustration from an old J. H. Kellogg's book on women's health.

Now, good slips can be made without so many buttons because of the zipper invention. The princess-line pattern makes a fine slip. To economize on fabric, the princess-line bodice may be cut off between the thigh and waistline and a rectangular gathered skirt or a flared skirt may be sewn on. Using a slick fabric for the lower skirt will keep skirts from hiking up on the slip.

“Every article of dress should fit easily, obstructing neither the circulation of the blood nor a free, full, natural respiration. Everything worn should be so loose that when the arms are raised the clothing will be correspondingly lifted.” MH 293.

“The compression of the waist will not allow free action of the muscles.” HL 127.

Bras are another popular fashion, though uncomfortable and constrictive. Bras restrict lymph flow, especially in the part of the chest and underarm area where a woman has an immense lymph system to purify food for her baby. Some women are concerned that if they don't wear a bra they will sag. It is all right if your breasts sag. Remember that sagging is in no way unhealthy; it can be accommodated for in your basic pattern by putting the bust darts in the correct place for you. Slips with zippers may be fashioned to give some support for the large-busted woman without constriction.

“Because it is the fashion, many females place over their breasts paddings, to give the form the appearance of well-developed breasts. These appendages attract the blood to the chest, and produce a dry, irritating heat. The veins, because of unnatural heat, become contracted, and the natural circulation is obstructed. These appendages, in connection with other bad habits of dressing and eating, result in obstructing the process of nature, making a healthy development of the breasts impossible. And if these become mothers, there cannot be a natural secretion of the fluids, to have a sufficient supply of nourishment for their offspring.” Health Reformer, September 1, 1871 par. 4.

It has been proven that restricting lymph flow by wearing bras, causes cancer. Pooling of lymph occurs due to the pressure from the bra straps, creating toxic build-up in the lymph ducts and nodes.

In turn, the toxins irritate the surrounding area, eventually resulting in breast cancer. The connection between bras and breast cancer has been documented in the book, *Dressed to Kill*, by Sydney Ross Singer. A study was conducted on 4,500 women, half of whom had breast cancer and half who did not. Of the women who did not wear bras, only one out of 168 got breast cancer. Of those who wore a bra twelve hours a day but not at night, one out of seven developed breast cancer. Of those who wore a bra twenty-four hours a day, three women out of four developed breast cancer!

Breast cancer is a major cause of cancer deaths in women today. Why? Almost indisputably, one factor is the bra, especially in America. When are we ladies going to have strength of will to throw off this tyrant and come up with practical solutions in the fear of God and in face of social disdain? Let us be resourceful! Please share if you find ideas for healthful, non-constrictive means of support. But simple, adequate covering is not difficult.

Shoes also should be good-sized, allowing the toes room to move and abundant socks in cold weather. “The limbs should ever be clothed with a warm covering to protect them from a chill current of air. If the feet are clothed with good-sized, thick-soled, warm boots or shoes, for comfort rather than for fashion, the blood will be induced to circulate freely in the limbs and feet, as well as other portions of the body. If we give the lungs and feet ample room to do the work God designed they should, we shall be rewarded with better health and a clearer conscience.” HL 124.

Summary on Healthful Clothing

In summary, healthful clothing should include equal distribution of clothing for perfect circulation, breathable fabrics especially for underclothing that directly touches the skin should be kept scrupulously clean. Loose clothing will not interfere with physical movements, the circulation of blood, lymph, digestion and nerve impulses. Clothing should be suspended from the shoulders and be comfortable. Appropriate styles for the work in which one is engaged must be considered. Fabrics that protect from heat and cold encourage the skin pores to remain active and open. Our skin is our largest body organ and deserves special care. Active pores bring

oxygen into the system, while the sweat moisturizes the skin and expels wastes; and oil glands lubricate the skin. Loose, well-suspended, breathable clothing allows the blood, the nerve impulses and the lymph to circulate freely, inviting perfect health. A free conscience, happy trusting and serving God, makes us healthy.

MAKING GARMENTS

Is it a Christian duty for girls and women to learn to sew their own clothing? What is God's desire for us and why?

“Those who are unable to buy new cloth must do the best they can to exercise taste and ingenuity in fixing over old garments, making them new again. Be particular to have the pants and dress of the same color and material, or you will appear fantastic. Old garments may be cut after a correct pattern and arranged tastefully, and appear like new. While there are correct patterns and good tastes, there are also incorrect patterns and bad tastes.” 1T 522.

“There are very many girls who have married and have families, who have but little practical knowledge of the duties devolving upon a wife and mother. They cannot cut and make garments, for they never learned how. They considered these things unessential, and in their married life they are as dependent upon some one to do these things for them as are their own little children. It is this inexcusable ignorance in regard to the most needful duties of life which makes very many unhappy families.” FE 41. The Lord would have us all happy and obedient, using the talents He has given us and developing more talents.

“Let girls be taught that the art of dressing well includes the ability to make their own clothing. This is an ambition that every girl should cherish. It will be a means of usefulness and independence that she cannot afford to miss.” Ed. 248. God's will is for us to enjoy all the benefits and satisfaction that designing and making our own clothing gives.

“Had there been agricultural and manufacturing establishments connected with our schools, and had competent teachers been employed to educate the youth in the different branches of study and

labor, devoting a portion of each day to mental improvement, and a portion to physical labor, there would now be a more elevated class of youth to come upon the stage of action to have influence in molding society. Many of the youth who would graduate at such institutions would come forth with stability of character. They would have perseverance, fortitude, and courage to surmount obstacles, and such principles that they would not be swayed by a wrong influence, however popular. Young girls should have been instructed to manufacture wearing apparel, to cut, make, and mend garments, and thus become educated for the practical duties of life.” FE 40.

Since we are instructed that every woman should cherish the ambition of making her own clothing and young girls should learn to manufacture wearing apparel, it seems surprising to hear Christian mothers asserting that it is “much more economical” to buy things at the second hand store or perhaps even to buy new clothing than to try to sew, as if this is a valid excuse. Even if a garment is second-hand or new, what if it needs adjusting? I have met several women who do not know how to sew on a button, apply a patch or take a hem down. Even a small amount of sewing ability is of value.

“If these elder members of the family would become learners with the children new ideas would be suggested and the hours of study would be a time of decided pleasure as well as profit.” Educational Messenger, July 31, 1908.

God has many important advantages for us in learning to sew our own clothing. “The woman who sews, her fingers are gold.” Why do we spend money on education?

Industrial education always costs something—effort, thought, cash and supplies—but the result is economy. However, saving souls is the truest economy. Who can estimate the value of a soul saved for eternity? Dress reform is an area in which we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, and God blesses the effort to be “our brother's keeper,” as well as improving our own health and therefore ability to serve God in other areas. God wants each woman and girl to be a laborer together with Him.

Industrial education according to God's instructions is a preparation for missionary endeavor. A well-rounded godly education is possible only through manual labor. Should not mending, designing

and sewing be combined with other types of manual labor? Only those who truly serve in some capacity are a benefit to society.

“The objection most often urged against industrial training in the schools is the large outlay involved. But the object to be gained is worthy of the cost. No other work committed to us is so important as the training of the youth, and every outlay demanded for its right accomplishment is means well spent. Even from the viewpoint of financial results, the outlay required for manual training would prove the truest economy. Multitudes of our boys would thus be kept from the street corner and the groggery; the expenditure for gardens, workshops, and baths would be more than met by the saving on hospitals and reformatories. And the youth themselves, trained to habits of industry, and skilled in lines of useful and productive labor—who can estimate their value to society and to the nation?” Ed 218. This outlay is not only in the form of workshops, supplies and cash. It is an outlay of time and energy in using the facilities that make them of value.

Some of us may be so busy “doing the Lord’s work” that we have no time to sew. Jesus served God just as much at the carpenter’s bench as when teaching or working miracles. See DA 74 and AH 290. “The parents of Christ were in very humble circumstances, and the Prince of Life labored with His own hands at the carpenter’s bench, that He might help to meet the wants of the family. He took His place in the world as a common day laborer, and He has the tenderest sympathy for those who are struggling to obtain knowledge under difficulties. If those who can not have advantages such as they would desire will but look at the experience of hardship, poverty, and humiliation that Christ endured for their sake, they will see that they have no need to be sad or discouraged. Let those who would work for God trust implicitly in Him; for through the influence of the divine Spirit, through simple, living faith in God, men and women, however humble, may become powerful agents in His hands, to win souls to Christ; for genuine experience in the things of God is not gained through natural means.” TSS 75.

We should give serious thought to our priorities and consider what the Lord’s work for us truly is. “A spirit of hurry has driven away the sweet spirit of Christ....God is never in a hurry.” PH043 35.

“Impatience, then, is the result of a lack of faith....Patience is a plant that will make rapid growth if carefully cultivated.” ST, September 29, 1887. “The Lord gave you your work, not to be done in a rush, but in a calm, considerate manner. The Lord never compels hurried, complicated movements.” Ev 146.

Is it possible for us to pursue a course of noncompliance, and think that we are actually honoring God? “We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ’s sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action.” Ev 696. “When you gather up the rays of light which God has given in the past, then will He give an increase of light.” 5T 666.

“Every true reform has its place in the work of the third angel’s message.” CH 433. God has asked us to reform by giving sewing instruction, in manufacturing clothing and dress reform, as well as many other areas of practical knowledge. Does God expect us to learn the sewing skills, or will He abandon His plan and return the second time with His women in worldly garments, before we obey? What am I doing to help hasten His coming in this area?

In Proverbs chapter thirty-one, look through the twenty-one verses describing the virtuous woman. Six verses deal specifically with clothing and making cloth. Is clothing production an essential in God’s plan, especially for women and girls? How can we raise our girls to be virtuous women?

“Children are coming up all over our land without self control, with no fixed principles, no stability, and no religion...Oh, that parents would arouse to a sense of their dangerous negligence toward the children that God has given them to rear to his glory.... Oh, that they would realize of how little importance is the amassing of wealth, the friendship of the world, the dictates of fashion, compared with the sacred duty of rearing their children in the fear of God, and to take their places on the side of Right and Reform.” HR, February 1, 1878.

“Young girls who wear the reform dress are shielded from many temptations. They are continually learning to think and act for themselves independent of what others may say or do. They are learning to have true moral courage to do right, and choose the right.”

although there is a cross in so doing.” PH123 61.

God is not limited in ways and means for supplying our needs, but the most natural, direct, back-to-basics way He uses to supply our clothing needs is for us to sew. How does He feed the birds? He does not drop food into their beaks. They have to go out and gather it, and they do so cheerfully. We should not ask Him to do for us what He has given us power to do. Once you have a good pattern and learn to use it, a modest, durable dress can be made quite quickly. Knowing how to be self-reliant in making your own clothes and in every other line of practical work is needed now more than ever before. God wants us to be missionaries, prepared for any circumstance or eventuality and to be able to take advantage of opportunities. If there is no waste, there will be no want in the cause of God.

Excuses I have heard for wearing immodest clothing is that “it cost so little” and “this is just the way the garment is” or “I can’t help it because I don’t sew.” If God wants us all to learn to sew, there are good reasons. We won’t find ourselves helplessly stuck with a short, tight skirt. We can at least add a pleat, gusset or ruffle to enlarge it. A low-cut neckline can be built up. Most often, being “stuck” in an immodest garment is more a matter of heart than of material or skill. Nevertheless, God wants us to sew. He will help remove every hindrance when we put our whole energy toward obedience.

Wherever we start, all of us should aim to constantly improve, progress, learn and find something better. We can expect to make mistakes, but they can be turned to warnings and stepping stones. This is how true education works. As the Lord teaches us, we can in turn use and share that knowledge with those in our circle of influence; then blessings will be multiplied. The best way to learn to do something well, is to study to do it well, then teach it to someone else. A “finished education” is a worldly notion that is simply not true. We should always be learning and sharing, now and in eternity.

We are told that the Reform Dress advocated by the Lord’s messenger took much work to prepare. We cannot expect sewing to be effortless. People are not “born” seamstresses or tailors, though some have more natural talent or advantage. Perseverance and energy, coupled with even mediocre talent and God’s help, will succeed.

How do people learn to sew? There are many different

approaches. Some begin by following directions found with purchased patterns or by adjusting ready-to-wear garments. Others make small projects like bags, hot pads, dish towels, a sewing sampler of hand stitches and simple stuffed toys. We made aprons for the kitchen, doll and baby dresses, dishtowels and curtains. Some begin by making their own patterns.

“There are families without number whose happiness is wrecked by the inefficiency of the wife and mother. It is not so important that our daughters learn painting, fancywork, music, or even ‘cube root’, or the figures of rhetoric, as that they learn how to cut, make, and mend their own clothing, or to prepare food in a wholesome and palatable manner. When a little girl is nine or ten years old, she should be required to take her regular share in house-hold duties, as she is able, and should be held responsible for the manner in which she does her work. That was a wise father who, when asked what he intended to do with his daughters, replied, ‘I intend to apprentice them to their excellent mother, that they may learn the art of improving time, and be fitted to become wives and mothers, heads of families, and useful members of society.’ ”AH 91.

Shopping for fabric often takes less time than shopping for various garments. It does not take long to select half a dozen pieces of lovely fabrics in appropriate colors when you know what you are looking for. It takes 3½- 4½ yards for most dresses, with full skirts and long sleeves. The balance of time not spent in shopping, can be used to develop and refine sewing skills.

Garment construction requires a different type of analytical thought than shopping for ready-made clothing. To select a style, I ask:

1. What type of garment is needed and for what purpose will it be used? Or, if you have a piece of fabric to use, ask, What type of garment will be most appropriate for this fabric? These choices give time to seek God’s will and surrender ours; and then make a plan.

2. If the garment is a dress, consider the season when it will be worn and what type of work it will be used for. Which style will be most comfortable and becoming? Choose a neckline finish [collar, binding, or shape of neckline]. Decide where the garment will open and how [front, back or side; buttons, snaps or zipper, pull-over, etc.]

Sleeve and bodice lengths and shapings [fitted, full, cuffed;], [darted, princess-line, yokes, etc.] Decide on a skirt shaping, fullness and length [gathered, smooth, flared or pleated].

3. Once these details are selected, draw a picture of the design, front and back views including all the details. Onion skin paper laid over a drawing of a lady's outline helps in drawing the design in proper proportion. This drawing shows your tentative design with all the details combined. If it fails to look coordinated, alter some details until it looks balanced and tasteful.

4. Now trace your basic pattern (without seam allowances) onto fresh paper and make the needed styling changes. Examining table paper (found at a medical supply store), wrapping paper, butcher paper or brown paper bags, make inexpensive pattern paper. After all the design changes are made, retrace the pattern where necessary, and add seam allowances. Two pencils rubber-banded together with popsicle sticks between to space the pencil tips to 5/8 inch or desired seam width works well as a tool to add seam allowances.

5. Then cut the pre-shrunk, pressed fabric according to the pattern, pin, sew, press, etc....and soon the garment is made. In spite of mistakes in judgment, the basic pattern pretty well guarantees that the garment will fit well enough to wear. A well-fit basic is the most useful sewing tool any girl or woman can have to make her own neatly fitting garments of any style or garment type, economically and with ease.

What are some guidelines for a good basic fit? Which points on the body should the pattern be adjusted to fit?

Five Guidelines for a Well-Fit Basic Dress

1. Ease. A well fitted garment feels comfortable and appears graceful. It is neither too loose nor too tight. Ease means the difference between your body measurements and the garment measurements. See an ease allowance chart to help estimate reasonable ease allowances.

2. Line. Shoulder seam—straight from neck to top of armhole, inconspicuous either from the front or from the back, but usually slightly forward or centered between front and back of neck.

Side seam—divides the figure becomingly. Near perpendicular,

inconspicuous from either front or back.

Neckline—fits from vertebrae at Center Back along the base of the neck to Center Front hollow.

Waistline—becoming to the figure. Should generally look parallel to the floor, or may dip slightly in Center Back. Some waist lines are slanted from front to back.

Darts—dart seam lines lead toward and taper toward the fullest parts of the body.

The Hemline should hang parallel to the floor.

3. Grain. Lengthwise—Center Back and Center Front of the bodice, the skirt and the lengthwise grain on the sleeve from shoulder to elbow should be perpendicular to the floor.

4. Set. A well-fitted garment sits smoothly on the body. It is free of wrinkles. Small wrinkles due to slight variations in left and right sides of the body may be ignored. If a body is quite uneven, a left and right pattern should be made.

Crosswise wrinkles occur possibly by too tight a circumference above or below. Wrinkles from the arm hole extending toward the bust may be caused by too small a bust dart or total bust circumference. A pooch at the tip of darts may mean too large a dart.

5. Balance. The neckline should fit the neck at all points. The skirt should hang straight down so that it extends approximately the same distance out from the legs on all sides at the hemline—front, back, left and right. Raise or lower the skirt waist line to adjust the balance in how the skirt hangs.

Is it easy to make your own patterns and clothing?

It is not usually easy when you are beginning, but it is do-able and becomes easier with practice. Each individual is different and our bodies are wonderful, moveable works of God. To ease the process, break patternmaking down into small projects and goals and do it step-by-step. Our children should start learning to sew early in life while time is to their advantage, with hand and machine sewing of small, simple projects. Every effort makes the next easier. Very simple garment patterns, like a gathered skirt, kimono dress or shirt, are good starters for simple pattern work.

There are rewards for learning to sew. Tell yourself, "I am

working with Jesus' help to bring my clothing into obedience to every specification given in His word. I have time for reflection in the process." We usually get out of something what we put into it. If all our sisters went through the process of planning and making their own garments, allowing every right principle to have its full weight, their dress would be a blessed light in the world drawing souls to Jesus.

Simple, becoming, plain dress is easier to make than if it were full of embellishments! "Try your talent, my sisters, in this essential reform. Let our sisters dress plainly, as many do, in having the dress of good material, durable, modest, appropriate for the age; and let not the dress question fill the mind." HL 119. The sooner we understand and obey right principles in regard to dress, the sooner we can lay the dress question to rest, because we will already be appropriately and comfortably dressed and the topic will not frighten or distress us.

"I was shown that some of the people of God imitate the fashions of the world, and are fast losing their peculiar, holy character, which should distinguish them as God's people. I was pointed back to God's ancient people, and then was led to compare their apparel with the mode of dress in these last days. What a difference! What a change! Then the women were not so bold as now. When they went in public they covered their face with a veil. In these last days fashions are shameful and immodest. They are noticed in prophecy. They were first brought in by a class over whom Satan has entire control, who "being past feeling (without any conviction of the Spirit of God), have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness." If God's professed people had not departed greatly from him, there would now be a marked difference between their dress and that of the world. The small bonnets, exposing the face and head, show a lack of modesty. The hoops are a shame. The inhabitants of earth are growing more and more corrupt, and the line of distinction must be more plain between them and the Israel of God, or the curse which falls upon worldlings will fall upon God's professed people." 2SG 227.

"Will not those who profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus clothe themselves in modest apparel, adorning themselves with good works, as becometh women professing godliness? Do not say, "After I have worn out this garment, I will make the next plainer."

What zeal, what earnest effort, what skill, what patience, you manifested in fashioning that garment according to the prevailing style; and can you not now manifest just as much zeal in refashioning it to meet the approval of God? Can you not work as hard to conform to God's order as you did to conform to the order of fashion? You could afford time, effort, and money to place yourself in harmony with the world, and can you not now manifest zeal in seeking to stand upon the Bible platform?" RH, June 2, 1891. God's "yoke is easy" and "His burden is light." Your efforts, by the grace of God, will be pleasing to Him even when the world does not appreciate them.

I know how to sew, but haven't found a pattern that fits. What can I do?

Some women who have a symmetrical common shape and size and can find patterns that fit or that can be easily adjusted. Many of us are not so easy to fit. Often I hear women remark, "If I could make my dress according to what I think is best, I would make my garment in such and such a style. But I have not found a modest pattern." Or they may say, "I tried to sew and I couldn't make it fit. I had to rip and rip and never could get it right." These sisters need to find a different way of acquiring a good pattern—the methods women used in olden days before we tried to depend on ready-to-wear clothing and commercial patterns. Commercial patterns are only a guide at best and are intended to be adjusted. Your own body is the standard for your clothing. As we pray for God to help us be resourceful, and if we share ideas and persevere, He will teach us how.

My friend, Jinni Nastiuk, who is a clothing engineer and master patternmaker, is a source of knowledge and a constant inspiration. She says that the patterns available on the market, from her thorough research, are often inconsistent in proportion and fit. She says we can't do much worse, and likely can do much better for ourselves! If you wish to fit a commercial pattern or check its fit, compare your measurements with the pattern and make any obviously needed adjustment for length or width. Cut it out of muslin with extra seam allowances if desired, but no facings, hems or closures, marking the pattern sewing lines onto the fabric. Sew accurately with a long stitch and press carefully. Put it on and pin the opening shut. Adjust

and transfer any changes to the paper pattern until it fits. Check all areas listed above under “Five Guidelines for a Good Fit.”

Or try making your own pattern directly from your own measurements! Jinni has written two books on personal pattern making. The first book teaches how to measure, draw and fit a basic pattern. The second teaches how to work from that basic pattern to design any garment or style you need. She recommends measuring the body and studying the body lines. The pattern is then drafted on paper according to the measurements and observations, using a ruler, tape measure and curves. Seam allowances are added where needed after the pattern is drawn. Two #2 or mechanical pencils rubber-banded together with popsicle sticks between the pencils to space them apart until the tips measure 5/8 inch apart, makes a fine tool for adding seam allowances. A test shell (dress or toile) is made of muslin or other firmly woven fabric. Again, any needed changes are transferred to the paper pattern.

For those homeschoolers who are looking for some practical math for your later grade school to high school age youth, Jinni’s books, and sewing in general, give wonderful opportunities. It has a built-in checking system—does it function and fit! Some of the processes used are measuring, dividing, fractions, adding, estimating, subtracting, multiplying, geometric shapes, designing, drafting, balance, etc. We have challenged ourselves to make algebraic equations to calculate a few designs. Boys may wish to become tailors, so don’t exclude them!

Jinni is also working on a new computerized pattern making method. You may contact her regarding her computerized pattern making or books at:

Virginia “Jinni” Nastiuk
19030 - 92nd Ave. NW
Stanwood, WA 98292
(360) 652-9252

An old-time method is to use the draping method to develop a pattern. To fit a bodice, take a plaid or checked piece of fabric and lay it across the woman’s back or chest over her undergarments. Pin the vertical grain lines of the fabric to the center front and center back of the model, and the horizontal lines across the bust level, front and

back. Pin the shoulder lines together, clipping the fabric to fit around the neck and armholes. Pin out and mark tucks for darts in the back shoulder and waistline area toward fullest part of the shoulder blades. Pin out and mark tucks for the front bodice waistline darts and side bust darts aimed toward the fullest part of the bust. Using a felt-tip marker, mark the shoulder lines, neckline, armholes, waistline and side seams. After removing the fabric from the model, trace these fabric patterns and refine the lines as you do so, by overlaying with pattern paper, add seam allowances and make a test garment cut by your new paper pattern. Make adjustments as needed to the garment and transfer them to the paper pattern. Make another test garment by the paper pattern (and another) until you are satisfied.

Or take a dress that fits well in the bodice, and copy it onto paper. It can be copied quite accurately by folding symmetrically—down the center front and back, etc. Without ripping the garment apart, lay the folded part on paper and mark the seam lines by poking pins through the garment and into the paper all around on the seam lines, then connect the pin pokes with a pencil. (You may need to compensate a little where the fabric stretched on the bias, and for pleats or gathers.) Noting the center line, flip it over and mark around the seam lines on the opposite side. Smooth the lines and curves with a ruler or curve stick and add seam allowances.

Nearly everyone can find some way she can manage to make a workable basic pattern for herself or her children. And ask Jesus to help you! He will give wisdom. If you have one simple, basic pattern for a comfortable, well-fit dress for each girl in the family, you have a treasure. Pants can be made also. With growing girls there is plenty of room for practice year after year. When you are learning, you must expect to make mistakes, but do not become discouraged. Try to learn all you can from each mistake and persevere.

“Turn away from the fashion plates, and study the human organism.” HL 118. This is the best pattern making counsel! All the dress patterns that can be purchased are at best based on a few basic styles. You can learn to make variations in flat pattern to fashion any desired garment—once you get your basic pattern made. Try Jinni’s second book on flat pattern. There are many books in libraries on pattern making and flat pattern.

“We do not go deep enough in our search for truth....They must be converted men and women. God can teach you more in one moment by His Holy Spirit than you could learn from the great men of the earth.” TM 119. “And God is able to make **all** grace abound toward you; that ye, **always** having **all** sufficiency in **all** things, may abound to **every** good work.” 2 Corinthians 9:8. Can you comprehend these promises?

Today, dear sisters, study and make a list for yourself of every right principle that God has given us. Study your own body needs. You can take a paper and start thinking and drawing a picture of a style for yourself or your child that you think appropriate. After you have done your best, prayerfully go through the principles again and see if the design conforms to them. I cannot tell you how to style your clothing, because I do not know your needs. God will give you ability to do it. It may take a little time and practice, but you may be surprised to find that you will enjoy the process after a while if not at first. Duty becomes a delight.

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS

Is not our heart (spirit, thoughts and feelings) more important to God than our dress? Which are the most beautiful dress and adornments that He would have us wear?

Yes, that is why this booklet is about the physical, mental and spiritual dimensions of dress reform. If you have not given your heart to Jesus, won't you please do it now? We should give Him our heart and our will anew each morning. Then you won't wonder about all the “do's and don'ts.” You will know that you are doing or avoiding them for Jesus. When we love Jesus it is a joy to please Him. Study to learn what He would have you do. Be honest with your own soul.

“In order to prepare for entrance into the beautiful city Jesus is preparing, we must now be clothed with the wedding garment— with the robe of Christ's righteousness. We must stand before Him without spot or wrinkle or any such things. You have not been appointed to talk about others' faults. While probation still lingers, every soul ought to be washing his own robe of character, and preparing for

translation.” 1SAT 371.

“Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. ‘I counsel thee,’ He says, ‘to buy of Me . . . white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.’ Rev. 3:18. This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us.” COL 311.

“But let it be the hidden man of the heart,...even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” 1 Peter 3:4. The world cannot manufacture this ornament for us. A noble character is earned by hard, stern conflicts with self. Through faith, through Jesus' merits, a noble character is formed. As in the physical, so in the spiritual. All physical needs and temporal work has its parallel in spiritual work. We need the practical experiences to understand spiritual things.

“The religion of Jesus Christ never degrades the receiver. If it finds men and women earthly, common, coarse, unkindly in words, harsh in speech, selfish and self-caring, truth received in the heart commences its purifying, refining process. In words, in dress, in all our habits, there is seen reformation and those things that please God. Then all the world may see its influence in the transforming process. Truth refines the taste and sanctifies the judgment. It elevates and ennobles, and is silently and constantly doing its leavening work till the whole being is cleansed and made a vessel unto honor, under the operation of the Holy Spirit, to make the receiver of truth fit for the society of pure and sinless angels.” OHC 34.

“Of how little value are gold or pearls or costly array, when compared with the meekness and loveliness of Christ! Physical loveliness consists in symmetry -- the harmonious proportion of parts; but spiritual loveliness consists in harmony with Christ -- the likeness of our souls to him. The grace of Christ is indeed a priceless adornment. It elevates and ennobles the possessor; and it also has an influence upon others, attracting them to the Source of light and blessing.

“Christian sisters, labor far less to grow into the ever-changing fashions of this age. Study rather the great pattern, Jesus Christ, that you may not grow apart from him. Manifest a determined purpose to abide in the Vine. If you abide in Christ, you will bear much fruit. But as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, ‘No more can ye,’ says Christ, ‘except ye abide in me.’ [John15:14.]” CTBH 94.

“The working of the Spirit of God inwardly will show a change outwardly. Those who venture to disobey the plainest statements of inspiration will not hear and receive and act upon all the human efforts made to bring these idolaters to a plain, unadorned, simple, neat, proper dress that does not in any way make them odd or singular. They continue to expose themselves by hanging out the colors of the world.” 3SM 254.

“Will not those who profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus clothe themselves in modest apparel, adorning themselves with good works, as becometh women professing godliness? Do not say, ‘After I have worn out this garment, I will make the next plainer.’ What zeal, what earnest effort, what skill, what patience, you manifested in fashioning that garment according to the prevailing style; and can you not now manifest just as much zeal in refashioning it to meet the approval of God? Can you not now manifest zeal in seeking to stand upon the Bible platform?” RH, June 2, 1891.

“Pure religion has to do with the will. The will is the governing power in the nature of man, bringing all the other faculties under its sway. The will is not the taste or the inclination, but it is the deciding power which works in the children of men unto obedience to God or unto disobedience.

“It is for you to yield up your will to the will of Jesus Christ; and as you do this, God will immediately take possession and work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. Your whole nature will then be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ, and even your thoughts will be subject to Him. You cannot control your impulses, your emotions, as you may desire; but you can control the will, and you can make an entire change in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, your life will be hid with Christ in God and allied to the power which is above all principalities and powers. You will have

strength from God that will hold you fast to His strength; and a new life, even the life of living faith, will be possible to you. But your will must co-operate with God's will. Will you not say, "I will give my will to Jesus, and I will do it now," and from this moment be wholly on the Lord's side? By steadfastly keeping the will on the Lord's side, every emotion will be brought into captivity to the will of Jesus. You will then find your feet on solid rock. It will take, at times, every particle of will power which you possess; but it is God that is working for you, and you will come forth from the molding process a vessel unto honor. If you fight the fight of faith with all your will power, you will conquer.” 5T 513.

I’m afraid of becoming fanatical in dress, which would reproach the truth and dishonor our Lord. What are signs of fanaticism and how can I guard against extremes?

“I was shown and told them this, that the Word of God contained close tests and duties which were of a character to elevate, and recommended them to the good judgment and consciences of His sincere children. But these acts of voluntary humility taken up by some inconsistent fanatical ones, who were ever going to extremes, had a bad influence upon honest souls who wanted to be right and humble and who submitted to groveling acts, which brought a reproach upon the cause of God. Duties were made by men, tests manufactured that God had never required, and which found no sanction in His Word. Because I would not condescend to these fanatical, man-made tests to humble us, I was accused of being proud and like the world, shunning the cross, not willing to humble myself.” 8MR 229.

“I might mention very many instances where I was pressed and urged, wept over and prayed for by zealots to come to these manufactured tests and crosses. I utterly refused to submit my judgment, my sense of Christian duties, and the dignity we should ever maintain as followers of Jesus Christ, who were expecting to be translated to heaven by receiving the finishing touch of immortality. Had I united with those who were engaging in these fanatical acts, there would have been no separation in the feelings from me. They who had once rejoiced as they listened to the message which God had

given me for them, turned from me, because I stood firmly against their fanatical movements.” 8MR 230. “Those whose moral faculties are beclouded by disease, are not the ones rightly to represent the Christian life, to show forth the joys of salvation or the beauties of holiness. They are too often in the fire of fanaticism or the water of cold indifference or stolid gloom.” HL 55. We should do all we can to be healthy and preserve our health if we would avoid fanaticism. Then we trust Jesus to keep us balanced.

“We as a people do not believe it our duty to go out of the world to be out of the fashion. If we have a neat, plain, modest, and comfortable plan of dress, and worldlings choose to dress as we do, shall we change this mode of dress in order to be different from the world? No, we should not be odd or singular in our dress for the sake of differing from the world, lest they despise us for so doing. Christians are the light of the world, the salt of the earth. Their dress should be neat and modest, their conversation chaste and heavenly, and their deportment blameless. I should ever bear in mind that I must be an example and therefore must not run into this or that fashion, but pursue an even and independent course and not be driven to extremes in regard to dress. There is a medium position in these things. O that we all might wisely find that position and keep it.” CH 604.

“The reason we have had so little influence upon unbelieving relatives and associates is that we have manifested little decided difference in our practices from those of the world. Parents need to awake, and purify their souls by practicing the truth in their home life. When we reach the standard that the Lord would have us reach, worldlings will regard Seventh-day Adventists as odd, singular, strait-laced extremists. ‘We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.’ ” FE 289. But does that make us extremists? No, we are different with reason.

“Some were making the matter of dress of first importance, criticizing articles of dress worn by others, and standing ready to condemn everyone who did not exactly meet their ideas. These one-idea men can see nothing except to press the one thing that presents itself to their minds. If they had acted conscientiously, they should be satisfied to let the matter rest where it was. But they ought not to require others to do as they had done. They should not endeavor

to be conscience for their brethren and sisters.” Ev. 215.

“The word of God broke the spell of fanatical excitement. The power of the gospel brought back the misguided people into the way of truth.” GC 190. “All who believe that the Lord has spoken through Sister White and has given her a message will be safe from the many delusions that will come in these last days.”--3SM 83, 84 (1906).

What does Jesus appreciate and prefer in our dress?

“There should be no carelessness in dress. For Christ's sake, whose witnesses we are, we should seek to make the best of our appearance. In the tabernacle service, God specified every detail concerning the garments of those who ministered before Him. Thus we are taught that He has a preference in regard to the dress of those who serve Him. Very specific were the directions given in regard to Aaron's robes, for his dress was symbolic. So the dress of Christ's followers should be symbolic. In all things we are to be representatives of Him. Our appearance in every respect should be characterized by neatness, modesty, and purity. But the Word of God gives no sanction to the making of changes in apparel merely for the sake of fashion,—that we may appear like the world. Christians are not to decorate the person with costly array or expensive ornaments.

“The words of Scripture in regard to dress should be carefully considered. We need to understand that which the Lord of heaven appreciates in even the dressing of the body. All who are in earnest in seeking for the grace of Christ will heed the precious words of instruction inspired by God. Even the style of the apparel will express the truth of the gospel.” Ev. 268, 269.

And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying,...Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Matthew 6:28-33.

Our heavenly Father knows we need clothing. But how are we to get it? By seeking for it directly? No. We are to ask God to teach us what is best and right at each step. When we ask according to His will, it “shall be added unto you.” “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” James 4:3.

“Teach the young converts that dress is a talent. Good taste should be exercised in the selection of appropriate colors. Our dress should be tidy and well fitting. The hair should be carefully arranged. Our appearance in every respect should be characterized by neatness, modesty, and purity. But the word of God gives us no sanction in making changes in our apparel merely for the sake of fashion,—that we may appear like the world. When the desire for display in dress absorbs the mind, vanity is manifested. All this must be put away.” BTS, May 1, 1908. The plainest dress, according to His plan, will give you a charm like the flowers. “In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people.” Isaiah 28:5.

“We must present the principles of truth, and let them work upon the hearts of the people. We may pick the leaves from a tree as often as we please, but this will not cause the tree to die; the next season the leaves will come out again as thick as before. But strike the ax at the root of the tree, and not only will the leaves fall off of themselves, but the tree will die. Those who accept the truth, in the love of it, will die to the world, and will become meek and lowly in heart like their divine Lord. Just as soon as the heart is right, the dress, the conversation, the life, will be in harmony with the word of God.” HS 123.

BLESSINGS I HAVE FOUND IN DRESS REFORM

1. My mind is at rest with what God thinks about my wardrobe selection. I am not self-condemned. The dress question does not fill my mind.
2. I do not find myself pre-occupied with shopping for clothing, matching this or that or feeling guilty for buying excess things. I do not need a large assortment of purses and shoes to match various outfits.
3. My dress generally commands the respect of the men and boys and often the appreciation of the women. Others treat me as a lady.
4. It helps me be more feminine and lady-like. Feminine dress helps me appreciate and understand my role in the family.
5. Simple modest attire says “I’m approachable,” and others do not envy my dress. This helps me in relating to my sisters. There is simple charm in plain dress when it is neat and clean.
6. Covering my arms and legs for years has improved my health—better circulation and comfort. Chilliness or discomfort due to lack of covering is seldom a problem.
7. It helps me to be socially comfortable. I do not have to be embarrassed or ashamed because of indecent clothing or worry about who is looking, because I’m covered. Revealing garments are gone.
8. Generally, I do not worry about biting insects, sunburn, heat exhaustion or scratches while outdoors, because my clothing is protective.
9. A simple organization in my wardrobe helps with washing, pressing, preparing for the Sabbath or traveling.

10. It is a financial saving to sew my own clothing as well as a satisfying accomplishment, giving me opportunity for creativity and expression of my individuality.

11. When people see one consistently dress in modest, healthful clothing, they realize you are serious about doing what you believe, although it is different. When you look and act like a Christian, they trust you are.

12. Distinctively feminine dress has helped my children better understand themselves and their sexual identity.

13. My clothes are suited for service, so they help me forget self and think of the other person and how I can help them.

14. Simple dress helps me deal with pride in my own heart, because dress reform calls for surrendering certain areas of pride to the Lord. It also develops faith, independence from peer pressures, courage and hope, knowing that whatever God asks He is able to do for and through me. If I need to obtain fabric, He is my Provider. Even if I am “older” or “younger” and need to learn to sew, but lack a teacher, He will be my Teacher.

15. I used to see many irreconcilable contradictions in God’s word regarding dress principles, because I was studying with erroneous, preconceived ideas. What a relief when I found that those things were only “commandments of men” and I could safely ignore them! Now, all those seeming contradictions are resolved and I see a beautiful unity and consistency in all God’s counsels on dress. God is practical and reasonable.

16. Dress reform helps me toward a more total consecration to Christ and a closer walk with Him. I am letting Jesus sort out my wardrobe and exchange what He knows is best for me. I choose to give up what I think is all right to wear (my filthy rags) and accept what He reveals to be His choice for my garments (His robe of righteousness)!

Only Two Ways

There are two ways for travelers, only two ways:
One’s a hill pathway of battle and praise;
The other leads downward; though flowery it seems,
Its joy is a phantom, its love is a dream,
Its love is a dream, ‘tis only a dream.

There are two guides for travelers, only two guides:
One’s the Good Shepherd, even thro’ the death tides;
The other, –the serpent, beguiling with sin,
Whose beauty external hides poison within,
Hides poison within, death poison within.

Quickly enter the strait way, leading to life;
Shun the wide gateway of folly and strife.
The Spirit invites you this moment to come;
The Saviour is waiting to welcome you home;
To welcome you home, to welcome, you home.

– F. E. Belden