

# The Old Paths

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## “It Is No One’s Business What I Wear!”

Jarrold Jacobs

**I**n this, our fourth article in this series about immodesty, we continue to contrast man’s attitude toward immodest dress with what God has said. In previous studies, we have learned what our attitude should be toward our dress, and how our actions influence others. We also learned that there are two kinds of nakedness, i.e. partial nakedness and complete nakedness. Both are a sin in the sight of God. God expects us to dress in such a way that the world will recognize that we are godly people. As was stated at the beginning of this study, many people will claim, “It’s no one’s business what I wear!” God says otherwise.

### ***A Double-Standard Is Evident In Society***

A double-standard is quite evident in our country when it comes to the subject of immodesty. We see this double-standard when we realize that the majority of people think it is “socially acceptable” for men to wear less clothes than women in certain situations. For a man to be in public situations without his shirt on is considered “normal” by many. Yet, if a woman does the same thing, it is considered an outrage by these same people. Why is this? Why is it OK for a man to go without his shirt at times, but a woman cannot do

so? When we read the Bible, we see that God has no double-standard!

In Genesis 3, after Adam and Eve sinned, and realized they were naked, they hid themselves (Gen. 3:8). While hiding from the Lord, they made aprons/coverings (Hebrew: Hagora - loin cloth, equivalent to athletic shorts, mini skirt, etc.) in a vain attempt to cover themselves (Gen. 3:7). Toward the end of Genesis 3, God clothed the man and the woman (Gen. 3:21). As we read Genesis 3, we find that neither the man nor the woman was “clothed” until God clothed them!

Notice please that both received “coats,” or “tunics” by God in Genesis 3:21. In other words, before this time, both the man and woman were **topless!** Yet, God made tunics/coats for them to wear. Tunics were made of skins which covered from the shoulders to the knees, and rarely to the ankles (Brown, Driver, Briggs, p. 509).

What had God done? He had covered them, not only on the lower half of the body, but also on top! He did not leave the man in the “apron,” and clothe the woman in the “coat,” but clothed both the man and the woman! From this time forward, God expected His people to be properly clothed. Knowing what God’s will is for proper, modest dress, who are we to rebel and do otherwise? Why do “Christians” yield to a double-standard in society when God revealed in no uncertain terms how a

man and woman are to be dressed? (I Pet. 3:1-5; I Tim. 1:9-10)

### ***Immodesty Does Not Always Mean “No Clothing”!***

As was discussed in our last study on immodesty, sometimes the problem is not a failure to “cover” the body, but the way the body is “covered” that results in immodesty. A person may be “fully covered,” but if that covering is so sheer, or so tight that nothing is left to the imagination, we still have a problem.

If you question the point made in the above paragraph, let me ask if you ever heard of a “wet t-shirt” contest? The t-shirts worn may initially “cover” like they should, but do not such “contests” result in immodesty even though the person is still wearing clothes? While most calling themselves Christians would not engage in such a thing, we need to stop being so naïve as to think that immodesty only occurs when people wear no clothes.

During the time of the Roman empire, the historian Pliny talked of clothes people wore that “render women naked” (Robert Walker, East to Cathay, p. 44-46). Other writers talked of clothes “made of glass” (ibid.) in the Roman Empire. This type of clothing produced a lack of modesty! Please keep in mind that these people were “covered,” and yet even people in the world considered them naked!

The Bible discusses people who were naked while wearing clothes. In Exodus 28:42, “linen breeches” were to be made for the priests to cover their nakedness as they climbed the steps. Isaiah 47:2-3 describes women who would “uncover the leg.” Upon doing so, God said “*thy nakedness shall be uncovered.*” Eliphaz the Temanite talked

about stripping the naked (Job 22:6). How can this happen if they did not have clothes?

In the New Testament, God reveals how He wants us to be dressed (I Tim. 2:9-10; I Pet. 3:1-5). In reading these two passages, we find that it was written especially to godly women. This does not excuse the men, however! Just as God did not abide by a double-standard in Genesis 3 concerning modesty, He does not have a double-standard in mind at this time. One reason why these things are directed to the women, is because the majority of the time, it is men who lust after women, rather than the other way around (generally). Make no mistake, both men and women will please God by fashioning their lives and wardrobes by what is said in I Peter and I Timothy! This is what is expected of them.

### ***Common Excuses/ Objections To Dressing Modestly.***

1) ***"The Fashion Industry is responsible for the problem. Women can only buy the clothes that are out there."*** Who made a law that said that the clothes you purchase cannot be altered? (People still sell and use sewing machines!) I know of some women who buy dresses, and then buy some fabric which matches in order to cover the plunging neckline. Others have had to basically wear two dresses in order to get the "coverage" of one. Friends, we can alter our clothing to conform to God's standard and still be "stylish" if we will just be conscious of God's standard and do a little work!

2) ***"Everyone dresses this way, so it has no effect on***

***people. If it were one or two, that would be different, but since so many dress immodestly, then it goes unnoticed these days."*** Really? I guess this is why advertisers use so many barely-clothed women in ads — because "no one notices," right? If the reasoning above were true, then what about those places in the world where the population wears no clothes? Would we go for that, too, since "all" from that culture are doing it? Read Romans 12:1-2 again, and see that God does not want us to "conform" to the world in any way. "Culture" or what is accepted in "society" does not supercede God's will.

3) ***"It's Hot!"*** Though some still use it, this excuse for dressing immodestly is not as common as it once was. Why? For one thing, most people today work and live where the temperature is controlled. Yet, even if one lived without air conditioning, since when does the outside temperature have any bearing on the word of God? In contrast to American attitudes, I think it is interesting to note that in parts of the middle East and similar places, where they endure a "desert" environment, the folks wear robes, hats, etc., to keep the sun off of them! They put clothes on while we take them off! I hope Christians under-

stand that even on days when it is 100 degrees outside, God still says to dress in such a way that is godly and sober, with shamefacedness, reflecting a "meek and quiet spirit" (I Tim. 2:9-10; I Pet. 3:3-5). Some of us need to decide whether we wish to be "hot" now, or hot later!

4) ***"What I Do With My Body Is My Own Business."*** "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (I Cor. 6:19-20) What if your children used such an excuse for their immodest clothing? Would this be acceptable to you? Parents, do you wish for your daughter to dress (or undress) in such a way as to attract the attention of strange men and boys? Do you wish for your son to dress (or undress) in such a way as to attract the attention of strange women and girls (Yes, women lust too - Gen. 39:7, 10; Prov. 7:13, 18, 21). If not, bear in mind that our children watch what we do as well as listen to what we say (Matt. 5:14-16; Eph. 6:4)! Therefore, let us dress modestly for their sakes! Friends, we have a vested interest in how we dress, for our children feel our influence just as much as strangers do. What are we teaching our children? (Eph. 6:4; Titus 2:3-5)

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**Preacher/Editor:** Jarrod Jacobs

**Phone:** (270) 683-5386

**Website address:** [www.southside-churchofchrist.com](http://www.southside-churchofchrist.com) (Updated weekly!)