

The Appearance of a Lady

From scripture we know that the Lord is more concerned over the inside of a person's heart than what they wear on their body; nonetheless, the Bible does have a great deal to say about the outer appearance of a woman.

Feminine Clothing

Even as early as the book of Deuteronomy the Bible has something to say about the proper clothing of a woman:

*The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man,
neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for
all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God
...Deuteronomy 22:5*

The Lord feels so strongly about this, in fact, that He refers to a woman wearing a man's clothing an "abomination" -- something that is loathed by God. If our outer appearance was of no consequence to God, why would He use such strong language in the preceding scripture?

So what does this verse mean, "that which pertaineth to a man"?

Since during those times men and women both wore something akin to robes, I believe this verse is highly dependent on the culture of the day. Our culture today accepts pants on both men and women, and pants are made for both men and women. Therefore it stands to reason that a woman wearing women's pants is dressed as a woman, not a man.

However, the item of clothing that truly separates a man from a woman in today's culture is the female dress or skirt. When one draws a stick person, he puts pants on him to make him seem male and a skirt on her to make her seem female.

Hence we know which door to enter for the ladies' restroom.

I do not believe it is wrong for a woman to wear a pair of pants fashioned for a woman, but to be truly feminine... to look the part of a lady... it is infinitely preferable to wear a dress.

A Woman's Glory

*But if a woman have long hair,
it is a glory to her: for her hair
is given her for a covering.
...1 Corinthians 11:15*

Again, the Bible does not command that a woman wear her hair long. Note the verse says, "if". However, it does explain that a woman's hair was given to her for a covering. Long hair is another of the identifiers of a woman and a mark of femininity.

Side note: In our culture it is expected that older women should cut their hair. This is another lie told to us by society. The verse says, "if a woman have long hair," not "if a young woman...". Old women, young women, middle-aged... it doesn't matter. Long hair is a sign of femininity and is beautiful on a woman.

Vanity

*Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair,
and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But
let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible,
even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit,
which is in the sight of God of great price.
...1 Peter 4:3-4*

Here the Bible stresses the manner and inner heart of a woman rather than the outward appearance; however, we can learn from this verse that the Lord would have us dress simply rather than elaborately, which is a sign of vanity. I'm not saying we should not wear all the beautiful colors He has given us or enjoy a pretty bit of lace or ruffle. Rather we should not feel like we have to have the most expensive clothing, elaborate hairstyles, or chests full of jewelry to look beautiful and feminine. A woman is at her most beautiful when she does not seek to call attention to herself through her appearance.

Modesty

*In like manner also, that women
adorn themselves in modest apparel,
with shamefacedness and sobriety;
not with braided hair, or gold, or
pearls, or costly array.
...1 Timothy 2:9*

What some are calling "the third wave of feminism" has ushered in what is probably the most immodest clothing of all time. Young men can scarcely even go to church nowadays without being confronted with a scantily clad young lady. Of course the Bible tells him it is a sin for him to even look upon a woman with lust in his heart (Matthew 5:28), so what is he to do? Go about with blinders on?

Our culture has told women the lie that it is a compliment for a man to look upon her with lust in his heart, when in fact it is a sin to him, and I believe, also to her if she has dressed in a manner to entice him. Any woman who feels it is not her responsibility to dress modestly in order to save a man from sin should study 1 Timothy 2:9.

Though our culture might tell us that showing our bodies is a sign of womanhood, the Bible tells us that modesty is a mark of true femininity.