

THE DRESS QUESTION AND THE WEARING OF JEWELRY

BIBLE TEXT : Isaiah 3:16-24; 55:2; I Peter 3:3-5; I Corinthians 6:19, 20; 9:25 ; 10:31

LESSON 266 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "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" (I John 2:16).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Isaiah 3:16-24

¹⁶ 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:

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ 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,

¹⁹ The chains, and the bracelets,
and the mufflers,

²⁰ The bonnets, and the ornaments
of the legs, and the headbands,
and the tablets, and the earrings,

²¹ The rings, and nose jewels,

²² The changeable suits of apparel,
and the mantles, and the wimples,
and the crisping pins,

²³ The glasses, and the fine linen,
and the hoods, and the veils.

²⁴ 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 55:2

² Wherefore do ye spend money
for *that which* is not bread? and
your labour for *that which*
satisfieth not? hearken diligently
unto me, and eat ye *that which* is
good, and let your soul delight
itself in fatness.

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

"By Their Fruits"

"Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (Matthew 7:17). The world is expecting to see Jesus in His followers. In the majority of cases one finds Jesus through a person who has been saved; and that being true, it is most essential for every Christian to make sure that he is bringing forth good fruit.

Today great stress is laid upon education, developing the body, the mind, the personality and poise. Fashionable girls and boys receive prominence in school activities and worldly circles. But the Christian admires one who has laid well the plan of his spiritual house and feeds his soul daily on that Bread from Heaven. Certainly the Lord, too, looks with pleasure upon the one whose heart has been cleansed by the Blood of the Lamb and whose adorning is not that outward adorning, but the "hidden man of the heart." Only those who lay aside everything, which might come between them and Christ have His smile upon their life.

Temptation

Satan tempts us through the mind and the eye. We cannot prevent temptation from coming any more than we can prevent the birds from flying over our head; but, as someone has said, "I can prevent them from building nests in my hair." Temptation will come along to try to swerve you from what you know is right. Some may seem to be allowed to do things, which you have learned are unbecoming to a Christian. Satan will say, "If so-and-so can wear extremely short sleeves, why can't you?" But remember, if you pattern after the fashions a little here and a little somewhere else, you soon will look just like the worldly throng. By resisting Satan's suggestions you will be able to overcome. The farther from the borderline of worldliness you walk, the safer you will be. You shall not be tempted above that you are able to bear.

A little child was once asked what she would do if temptation knocked at her door. "Well," she said, "I'd just let Jesus answer the door."

The devil knows how to tempt young people along the lines of pride. He dangles a little tinsel before their eyes, and says: "I'll give you this if you will worship me. I'll make you look like this if you will do as I say." Some girls yielded to temptation along the lines of rouge or lipstick. Miserable, abominable pride is the downfall of many a young girl today. Some girls who have knelt at the altars of prayer have gone away from God's house without receiving His great treasures, simply because they could not part with a few fads or fashions — like bobbed hair, short skirts, sleeveless dresses, rouge, or lipstick. What a cheap price for which to sell out to the adversary of their soul. How about you? Does the thought of being a "glamour girl" or a "tough boy" hold more thrill for you than the hope of being a full overcomer?

Thank God, there are some even among the very young girls who have sacrificed popularity among sinners (if one can call it a sacrifice) to take their humble seat at the foot of the Cross and

1 Peter 3:3-5

³ Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

⁴ But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

⁵ For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

¹⁹ 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?

²⁰ For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

1 Corinthians 9:25

²⁵ And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

1 Corinthians 10:31

³¹ Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

receive the Gospel of Christ into their heart.

An example of a woman who painted her face is found in the Bible. (2 Kings 9:30 ³⁰ And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window.) She was none other than Jezebel, a very wicked woman who died a terrible death. In fact, she was not even given a burial, for the dogs ate her body. Surely her life's story should make one shun the very thought of following such an example in painting one's face. If you must follow an example, follow a good one, and God's Word gives many such; also living testimonies are found in the Church of the Firstborn from those who are shunning all forms of sin.

Conforming to the World

If children and young people — whether at home, at work, or at play — will make decency and modesty of dress their basic rule, they will be in a position to uphold the standard of the Gospel and invite God's smile of approval upon their life. A genuine Christian is going to glorify God in body, and in spirit, which are God's (I Corinthians 6:20).

How true is the proverb: "A word to the wise is sufficient"! Those who are seeking the best that God has for them — if checked up along the line of dress or hairdo — usually say, "I'm so glad you told me." Others who are walking so near the borderline that they have long since ceased to have a tender conscience along the lines of worldliness, are slow to give up a little, trifling, pet indulgence. In the school gymnasium as well as at play in their own yard, children are allowed to dress — or undress — to such an extent that the standard of decency has been cast aside for the love of sunbaths and a little vitamin D. Indecent bathing attire such as midriff and extremely scant swimsuits are certainly not becoming to Christian girls and women. Suntan outfits, too, are indecent, to say the least. Extremely tight-fitting dresses and low necklines are not conducive to godliness.

Men's Apparel Worn by Women

"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).

So, for the sake of decency, shorts, pedal pushers, jeans, dungarees, slacks, and any other clothing designed like men's wear are not to be worn by girls and women. Not only is such apparel contrary to the Word of God but it is also, unladylike. Children who are allowed to wear this type of boy's wear develop a love for it and will no doubt want to continue wearing it as they grow older. Today a great many modern homemakers and mothers wear nothing but such clothes while doing their housework.

Perhaps schoolgirls will be asked to wear slacks when playing in a school band. However, there is no need for a Christian to conform to this requirement. If she will discuss this matter with the band leader or principal of the school, he will no doubt permit her to wear a dress instead of slacks. But if not, it would be better to resign from the band. God will reward those who have the spirit in them that will say, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us . . . But if not, we will not serve the god of this world" (Daniel 3:17, 18).

Some girls and women argue that the wearing of certain types of apparel, although designed like men's clothing, is not men's apparel. However, it seems that the very fact that it is designed like men's clothing, would warrant leaving it off.

Jewellery and Hair Styles

Many questions are asked concerning the wearing of jewellery, and about hair styles for girls and women. Shall we turn to God's Word for a few basic rules concerning these things?

"Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?"

"But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her" (I Corinthians 11:14, 15)

"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 a great price" (I Peter 3:3, 4).

"That women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array" (I Timothy 2:9).

So we plainly see that bobbed hair for women and girls of mature age is not in keeping with the standard of God's Word. Less time before a mirror and more time before a Bible and in prayer, putting on the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.": this is commendable in the sight of God. It is high time for Christian youth to cry out against any tendency toward copying today's fashions.

You say, "I can't pay the price." What do you mean? Do you mean that a little lipstick or fingernail paint or a string of pearls means more to you than eternal life? Or does a little gold band on your finger mean more to you than the hope of reaching the City of Gold and walking its golden streets?

Perhaps you will be asked about the wearing of a wedding ring. It might be well for even junior boys and girls to know the answer to this question. Although it is a token of marriage, it still comes under the classification of jewellery. If a wedding ring is permitted, then an engagement ring might be worn. This is often an expensive piece of jewellery, and the wearing of "gold, or pearls, or costly array" is forbidden. (1 Timothy 2:9 ⁹ **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**) If a Christian can wear one kind of ring, another is no worse, and soon those who can afford elaborate rings might be tempted to bedeck themselves in a manner not becoming to children of God.

We do not, however, condemn the use of gold for dental work or other purposes when no other metal can be used, and when it is not for the purpose of adornment.

Defiling the Temple of God

Some boys consider themselves clever if they have a tattoo mark placed upon their body. Often seagoing men who are hardened in a life of sin have such marks on their hands, arms, and chest; and young boys who wish to be considered "tough" have these disfiguring marks put upon them. But God's Word is against such, for we read in it: "Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh . . . not print any marks upon you" (Leviticus 19:28). Those who do such things defile the body which is the Temple of the living God; and the Word declares, "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." This might be one of the "youthful lusts" spoken of in the Bible, and we are told to "flee" these things, or, in other words, run from them, leave them alone, and "follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace." (2 Timothy 2:22 ²² **Flee also**

youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart).

In some lands, too, natives do a great many injurious things to their bodies. Some wear large rings in the nose and ears; others distort their feet; still others painfully mould the heads of newborn babies in order to give them a horrible, unnatural shape. How displeasing to God such things must be!

Pride

In the Bible is a list of seven things that God hates, and do you know what heads that list? "A proud look." If you want to know more of what God thinks of pride, read some other parts of the Bible. (**Proverbs 6:16-19** ¹⁶ *These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:* ¹⁷ *A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,* ¹⁸ *An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,* ¹⁹ *A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.* **Proverbs 8:13** ¹³ *The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.* **Proverbs 16:18** ¹⁸ *Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.* **Proverbs 16:29** ²⁹ *A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good.*) Read also about the great ruler, Nebuchadnezzar, whom God humbled to the extent that he crawled about on his hands and knees and ate grass like the ox. When God in His mercy restored this monarch to his right mind, he said, "Those that walk in pride he is able to abase" (Daniel 4:37). Thirteen terrible sins are enumerated in the Gospel of Mark, one of which is murder and another is pride (Mark 7:21, 22). "All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."

The Prophet Isaiah wrote of the judgements pronounced upon the haughty women of Judah. He decreed baldness instead of well-set hair, and a scab upon their heads. He said he would utterly strip them of their ornaments and changeable suits of apparel, and instead of delicate perfumes there should be a stink (Isaiah 3:16-24).

The styles, fashions, and modes of the world are fast changing, but that does not mean that a Christian need give himself over to the works of the devil and keep pace with the trends. Young girls and women who cut off their hair, their sleeves, the neckline of their clothes, have cut off their connection with Heaven.

When Jesus Comes

A good rule to follow is: "Do nothing that you would not want to be found doing when Jesus comes." He is watching our walk before Him; and those who conform to the world, the flesh, and the devil are going to find themselves ensnared in Satan's net when Jesus comes to catch away His waiting Bride. May God stir our hearts and wake us that we "be not conformed to this world: but . . . transformed" (Romans 12:2) so that when Jesus comes we shall be among those who are translated and rise to meet Him in the air. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:17).

QUESTIONS

1. Tell of the judgements pronounced upon the "daughters of Zion."
2. What kind of adorning is commendable in the sight of God?
3. What is one kind of ornament we are told to wear?
4. What will happen to those who defile their body?
5. How may we overcome temptation?
6. What does God think of pride?
7. What is the rule for women concerning the wearing of men's apparel?
8. Does the Bible condemn the wearing of jewellery?
9. What does the Bible say about bobbed hair?
10. Who shall make up the Bride of Christ?