

Sermon or Lesson: 1 Timothy 2:9-10 (NIV based)
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: Good Deeds Rather Than Outer Beauty

INTRO: Have you ever gone to an event, and upon arrival you discovered that you dressed up way too fancy and now you look completely inappropriate and out-of-place? How did that make you feel? Embarrassed and you wanted to go hide?

Today in our passage of study, we are going to see the importance God places on how we dress, particularly for women.

READ: 1 Timothy 2:9-10, with vv.1-2,8 for context

BACKGROUND:

- - Believers are to be interceding in prayers for others and live peaceful and godly lives among our authority and community people, which pleases God and serves purposes in the furthering of His Kingdom. (vv.1-4)
- - Men are to be men of prayer, with personal holiness, calmness, and peacefulness. (v.8)
- - God also has specific intentions for what women are to be.

v.9 - READ

[Lesson Question: Why does God want women to dress in the way described in this verse?]

SECTION POINT: God has a problem with women who do not dress and adorn themselves modestly.

- - In the same way as stated in verse 8 that men are to conduct themselves with godliness, so also women are to "likewise" conduct themselves with godliness. (Strong's #5615 (omitted in the NIV); cf. v.2)
- - For the men, as stated in verse 8, the emphasis is on how the men get along with others; and for the women, as stated in verse 9, the emphasis is on how the women dress and "adorn" themselves. (Strong's #2885)
- - These topics are being raised here in verses 8 and 9 because they naturally are a problem issue for that particular gender.
- - According to this verse 9, God has a problem with the way women tend to dress and adorn themselves - even though men are naturally attracted to and enjoy looking at fancy-dressed adorned women.
- - By dressing fancy and adorning themselves "with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes", women are drawing the attention of others to themselves - to how they look and their outer beauty.
- - This diverting of attention is distracting people away from what God wants the focus to be on, and thereby it is counterproductive to God's program.

- - Another problem is that men can easily stumble and fall into the sins of lust or sexual desires when a woman's clothing is too revealing, not being "modest, decent, and proper". (Matthew 5:28)
 - - In the same way that false doctrines and myths can lead people astray in the faith, so can visually-incited sexual desires and temptations. (vv.1:3-4,6)
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v.10 - READ

[Lesson Question: What is God saying in this verse in relation to the content of previous verse 9?]

SECTION POINT: God is pleased with women who do good deeds, which matches their worship of Him.

- - Women who are unbelievers, new believers, and immature believers may be spiritually-blinded and not aware that how they dress and adorn themselves is hindering God's people from effectively doing God's work. (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Timothy 1:4)
 - - Godly women, on the other hand, consistently maintain carefulness to always dress modestly because their priority is to please God rather than please men or themselves. (1 Thessalonians 2:4)
 - - Godly women have a spiritually-mature heaven-ward orientation, which features, highlights, and spotlights God through their godly lives and good deeds for His purposes. (Matthew 5:16)
 - - They verbally "profess to worship God", which is to be matched by their good deeds, by their "devout piety", and by how they always look and dress modestly. (Strong's #2317 - "worship God")
 - - The objective, therefore, is for all women to establish the priority practice that develops godly, "pure, and reverent" character or inner "unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit", while extinguishing the displaying of physical or outer beauty. (from 1 Peter 3:1-4)
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IMPLICATIONS:

- - The content of these verses is a directive from God, so therefore God considers it a sin for women to be dressed immodestly, indecently, or inappropriately in public.
 - - And likewise God considers it a sin for women to be extravagantly dressed and adorned.
 - - Note: This clearly is what God is saying in His Word here, so don't shoot the messenger if you don't like the message.
 - - On a side note though, the intent of these verses does not forbid godly women from dressing fancy or immodestly only for their husbands in private.
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BIG IDEA: God wants women to focus their efforts on developing their inner spiritual beauty with matching good deeds rather than on displaying their outer physical beauty.

APPLICATIONS:

In order to put into practice all of the virtues cited in chapter 2 so far, women will need to establish the following practices or disciplines in their lives:

- - Ladies, are you willing to develop and maintain personal integrity and purity, "living peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness"? (v.2:2)
- - Are you willing to be devoted to "praying for everyone, with requests, intercession and thanksgiving"? (v.2:1)
- - Ladies, are you committed to exerting focused energy, resources, time, and efforts on serving God with good deeds and ministering to others?
- - And to match these godly disciplines and practices, are you henceforth going to shift away from trying to impress others with your outer adornment, or by attracting attention, or by making yourself feel good about yourself through how you look?
- - Ladies, can you make it a permanent habit to always dress modestly and to skip the adorning of yourself?

- - All of these virtues and practices have "great worth in God's sight", and great potential for positive impact upon others. (from 1 Peter 3:1-4)
- - Certainly, God will bless you godly women if you establish these virtues and engage in these practices with excellence.
- - "Make the teaching about God our Savior attractive" rather than yourself. (v.10b in Titus 2:9-10)

- - God wants you women to focus your efforts on developing your inner spiritual beauty rather than on displaying your outer physical beauty. (repeat of BIG IDEA:)

[Additional Lesson Questions to ponder (optional, if time allows):

- - To submit to v.9, how much should godly women dress up for church events, especially for dress-up formal events like banquets, and etc.? What general guidelines should they follow? Should they dress like Amish women or Mormon women? What about for other kinds of events?]
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Works Cited:

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

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File name: 1Timothy2_9-10-SermonOrLesson.____ (.htm, .doc, .pdf)
Translation used: NIV, quoted or referred to in various places within this document
Source: www.BelieverAssist.com
Updated: September 26, 2016