**HOW ADVENTIST WOMEN SHOULD DRESS**

BY PASTOR OWEN E. JACK

There has been growing concern about the decline in dress standards among Adventist women. This article seeks to remind us of what God has to say on the subject of dress.

“In dress, as in all things else, it is our privilege to honor our Creator, He desires our clothing to be not only neat and healthful, but appropriate and becoming.” (Education’ p. 248)

1 Timothy 2:9, 10 says “I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to be worshipping God” (NIV).

When these words were written, “the fashionable Roman woman used virtually every beauty aid that worldly women use today. A Roman woman began her day by arranging her hair and putting on makeup. She painted her lips, toes and finger nails, applied eye shadow, put on false eye lashes, coated her face with powder and put on rouge unto her cheeks. She wore her elaborate hairdos, complete with curls, braids and some even wore wigs. Roman women adorned the rest of their bodies as much as their faces. When going out, they would array themselves with jewels, often wearing expensive rings on every finger”.

Seventh day Adventist women should set the standard on dress for women in the world. A woman is modesty dressed when her dress is of a length that when she is sitting her knees are covered. When clothing is tight, short, and sleeveless, with low backs, plunging necklines, slits and peep holes it implies that women want to appeal to men sexually. They are also revealing who has their hearts. It is a sign that their love for the world is stronger than their love for Christ. Adventist women are not to love the things of the world.

1 John 2:15 tells us;” If we love the world, the love of the Father is not in us. The way a women dresses is a statement as to who she is. A women’s character is judged by how she dresses. Our habits must stem principles and not from the example of the world, what we like, what we want, what we think or feel or what is the in style, but from the Bible. Customs and fashion may change, but the principles of right conduct remain the same.

When Adventist women dress immodestly they dishonor God, people are turned away from the church, people lose respect for them, and young people, new believers and those who desire to dress that way are influenced to follow their example. “Especially should the wives of ministers be careful not to depart from the plain teaching of the Bible on this point of dress.”(Evangelism p675)

Early in Adventist history Ellen G White wrote that the purpose of Christian dress is “to protect the people of God from the corrupting influence of the world, as well as to promote physical and moral health.” –( 4T 634) She also counsels that we should avoid gaudy display and profuse ornamentation, fads and extreme fashion, particularly those transgressing the laws of modesty, and that our clothing should be, when possible, of good quality, of becoming colors, and suitable for service… rather than display” Our attire should be characterized by “ modesty, “ “beauty,” “grace,” and appropriateness of normal simplicity.” (M Y P 351, 352) The people of God should always be found amoung the conservatives in dress, and will not ‘let the dress question fill the mind.”(EV 273) To dress plainly, abstaining from display of jewelry and ornamentation of every kind is in keeping with our faith.” (3T 366)

“Christians should not take pains to make themselves a gazing stock by dressing differently from the world. But if, when following out their convictions of duty in respect to dressing modestly and healthfully, they find themselves out of fashion, they should not change their dress in order to be like the world; but they should manifest a noble independence and moral courage to be right, if the entire world differ from them.

If the world introduces a modest, convenient, and healthful mode of dress, which is in accordance with the Bible, it will not change our relation to God or to the world to adapt such a style of dress. Christians should follow Christ and make their dress conform to God’s word. They should shun extremes. They should humbly pursue a straightforward course, irrespective of applause or of censure, and should cling to the right because of its own merits.” (CG414)

“Christian parents by example, instruction, and authority should lead their sons and daughters to attire themselves modestly and thus win the respect and confidence of those who know them. Let us consider ourselves well dressed, only when we meet the demands of modesty by wearing tasteful, conservative clothing. The Lord condemns needless, extravagant expenditure of money to gratify pride and love of display” (T M 179) “Pride and extravagance in dress are sins to which women especially prone; hence these injunctions relate directly to her.” (C G 415)

God wants Adventist women to focus on developing good character qualities such as purity, kindness, humility, dependability, loyalty, chastity, commitment, respect, compassion and self-control, not on dress. I believe that when we have Jesus on the inside we don’t need anything on the outside for the beauty of Jesus will be seen in us.

Remember “whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, you need to do it to bring glory to God “. (1 Cor. 10: 31) Are you glorifying God by the way you dress?