

# 1 Timothy 2

## Prayer & Modesty

It takes a lot of faith to “pray for all men” and “be a modest person.” This may seem like a strange statement for someone to make, but modesty whether in our attitude or our apparel is against what popular opinion says one should do to be successful in life. The general rule is that you must fight your way to the top of the ladder or be left behind. These worldly attitudes appear to leave one who wishes to follow God’s plan for conducting his life in this world destined for failure. Therefore it takes a great faith to trust that God will care of us when we go against what is successful to our mortal minds and to seek first the Kingdom of God and let God supply the rest. (Matthew 6:24-34)

### *Pray For All Men*

Let us begin with the first instruction in 1 Timothy 2, and that is to “pray for all men.”

For whom do you typically pray?

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We are told to pray for “all men,” not only the ones whom we love, like or respect. This may be very hard for some people. For example, the next command is to pray for those in authority. What is the purpose of the prayers for those in authority?

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The desire in verse 8 was that men pray everywhere lifting up holy hands. What can we infer about the prayers of the wicked from this statement? Give other passages which support your position?

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However, we know from passages that the prayers of the righteous are heard.

*1Jo 3:22 And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight*

Why pray for all men? (1 Timothy 2:3-4) “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Like we said above, sometimes it can be hard to pray for those who have mistreated us or are simply different than we are. Is there anyone for whom you can't pray? If so, please consider the attitudes portrayed in this passage carefully.

### **Modesty**

What is modesty? Modesty is defined by The American Heritage Dictionary as, “Quiet or humble in appearance; observing conventional properties in speech, behavior, or dress.” Modesty is often referred to when speaking of the way a person is dressed. Modesty is not about lines drawn on the body so we can insure that our shorts or skirts come down far enough; or a line on our chest, back and arms to decide if the top we are wearing covers enough of the body. We are not to see how close we can get to the line without crossing it. The underlying factor of modesty is not to draw attention to oneself. Modest people will not want to stand out in a crowd by drawing attention to themselves by the way they act or by the apparel (or lack thereof) they decide to wear. This same society that tells us if we are not willing to do whatever it might take to make it to the top of the corporate ladder is the same society that will tell you that the word “humble” would mean weak. This is not true! Think of our ultimate example; Jesus was a meek and humble man while living on earth. However, was Jesus weak when He faced a mob that wanted Him dead? (Read Matthew 23, Luke 4:29-30, John 8:59, and John 11:8)

*Jas 5:16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*

*1Ti 2:9-10 in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.*

*1 Peter 3:2-4 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel-- rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*

## 1 Tim. 2:9-10

- Modest
  - By definition modesty is being well-kept, orderly, quite and humble in speech, behavior or dress.
  - Same Greek word (*kosmios*) is translated “good behavior” in the qualifications of the elder in 1 Tim. 3:2
- Shamefacedness (propriety)
  - Sense of shame – Genesis 3:10
- Sobriety (moderation)
  - Sound Mind
  - Using good judgment
  - Think ahead
  - Same Greek word (*sophron*) is translated “sound mind” or “sober-minded” in the qualifications of the elder in 1 Tim 3:2

### I. Attitude

- 1 Peter 3:2-4 talks of a wife who can win her husband to the Lord by her chaste behavior.
- 1 Tim. 2:10 Inward beauty
  - not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing but which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works
- What does the following say about a person’s attitude:
  - I have a right to wear what I want! It is their responsibility not to lust.
  - The person that dresses like a member of a gang (motorcycle, street, etc...)

## II. **Overdressed** (1 Tim. 2:9, 1 Peter 3:1-6)

- Not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing (1 Tim. 2:9)
- Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel (1 Pet. 3:1-6)

## III. **Underdressed**

- God made man and women so they would be physically attracted to each other.
  - This desire is not bad.
- Psychologists say that men are more attracted to a partially dressed female than one completely nude.
  - Would you say that boys are more or less likely to speak coarsely about a girl who ....
    - wears miniskirt verses one who wears a long dress?
    - wears extremely tight clothing or modest clothing?
  - Don't be fooled; boys and girls talk in the locker rooms and hallways about the way people are dressed and what it means?
  - How would you describe the attire of a harlot? Is it only about length or tightness?
  - The more skin you show, the more sexual attention you will attract. Think about ....
    - Shirts with suggestive sayings
    - Mesh see-through shirts
    - Shorts (baggy doesn't make them modest)
    - Sundresses
    - Dresses or shirts that are low-cut in the front
    - Skirts with splits (purpose is to look sexy)
    - Strapless dresses
    - Straps only across the shoulders
    - Open-backed shirts/dresses
    - Hip huggers
    - Shirts that don't cover the midriff.
    - Etc...
- Quotes from "*The Christian and Modesty*" (Richard R. Boone)
  - Dr. Benjamin Spock said, "The women on the beach whom the men can't help watching are ... the ones with figures who want men to watch them and are bold enough to show this in their manner ..." (*Ladies Home Journal* [September, 1955], 26, 28).
  - In *Of Love and Lust*, Theodore Reik stated, "An astonishing great number of men are of the opinion that women are more attractive partly dressed—than nude. They prefer to see women partially disrobed to the sight of complete nakedness. In many cases the development of sexual excitement is retarded or weakened by the nude

body while the sight of the partly unclothed female body affects these men as exciting” (465).

- The mother of the mini-skirt and London fashion designer, Mary Quant, said, “Mini-clothes are symbolic of those girls who want to seduce a man” (Nov. 13, 1967). When asked where such clothing was headed, she curtly replied: “Sex.”
- In her syndicated column (not dated in Tant’s article) Ann Landers responded to a young girl’s complaint about the unwanted advances of young boys. Landers said that girls should give boys with “roaming hands” a “clap in the chops” when they make such advances. Listen to a 17-year-old boy’s response to Landers’ advice: “Sometimes it’s not in words, it’s the way a girl gets herself together. The miniskirts are a pretty good eyeful when a girl is sitting down;” it’s like she is wearing a bikini. No normal guy can look at all that flesh and not get ideas. Transparent blouses and sweaters and jeans that fill like sausage casing are worn to get guys excited, and he wants to do more than just look.” Landers responded to his letter: “Girls: don’t let your clothes issue any invitations you don’t mean to fulfill.” Men should not either.
- In March, 1970, a survey of top law enforcement officials was published. With responses from 37 states (including 61 % of the nation’s largest cities), ninety percent (yes, 90%) of the officers agreed that “girls who wear miniskirts risk greater danger of becoming sex victims.”
- A 1971 edition of *The Atlanta Constitution* reported, “This question was put to a group of Atlanta teenagers: Do you seek the exercise or the sun when you don a swimsuit? ‘Neither’ was the reply, ‘We seek the boys!’”
- In 1979, David Tant wrote, “In a discussion with a group of young people, the question was asked why girls (and boys) go around with shirts or blouses unbuttoned to a daring extent and wear otherwise suggestive clothing. The consensus was that it was done for advertising purposes.”

#### **IV. Are there legitimate lines that can be drawn?**

- The Bible calls partially nude body “naked” (Gen. 3)
  - Why were Adam and Eve ashamed? (v. 10)
  - Did they have any clothes on? (v. 7)
    - An apron (covering): thought to be much like a modern pair of shorts.
  - God considered them naked, He made for them tunics of skin and “clothed them” (v. 21)
- Ex 28:42 "And you shall make for them linen trousers to cover their nakedness; they shall reach from the waist to the thighs."
  - It appears here the body should be covered from the waist to the thighs.

## V. Bodily movements

- Certain types of dancing, where guys and girls move in a certain way, will cause sexual excitement in the opposite sex.
- Girls sitting (or doing anything) in a short skirt or a low-cut blouse need to be very careful.
  - It can be embarrassing teaching a Bible class where girls are sitting on the front row showing entirely too much.
  - In older times there was a mirror by the door, and it was for girls to check themselves before they left the house.
- Sexual gestures (music videos, movies, probably school...)

## VI. Our speech

- Eph 5:4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.
  - Dirty jokes, lewd comments, etc...

## VII. Men and Women should dress and appear distinct

- Deut. 22:5
  - Should a man wear a dress?
  - Should a woman wear men's clothing?
  - Should a man wear women's jewelry? (Does it draw attention?)
- 1 Cor. 11:14-16
  - Is long hair on a man modest? (Does it draw attention?)
  - Is short hair appropriate for a woman?
- 1 Cor. 6:9-11 effeminate (soft clothing)
  - Some translators, translate this word as homosexual
  - The Greek word here is *malakos* and defined as "of uncertain affinity; soft, i.e. fine (clothing); figuratively, a catamite:--effeminate, soft."

## Questions about “How To Dress” (article source unknown)

To help determine what modest and immodest apparel is, I offer the following thought-provoking and pertinent questions:

1. Can I stand, walk, sit, kneel, bend over, etc., in this clothing without being naked by biblical standards?
2. Does my clothing emphasize certain body parts or areas that would tend to provoke lust in others?
3. Does my clothing stir admiration and respect for me, or does it prompt worldly opinions?
4. Since clothing can indicate character, would my clothing suggest an abundance or lack of upright character?
5. What kind of influence will my clothing have on those who are not Christians?
6. What kind of influence will my clothing have on those who are Christians?
7. Would I wear this if Jesus was in my personal, physical presence?

Jesus blesses the meek person in Matthew 5:5. Jesus never blessed the proud people who did things to draw attention to themselves to look religious. On the contrary, Jesus called them hypocrites. In the 23rd chapter of Matthew, Jesus describes this type of person as a dish that is beautiful and clean on the outside, but the inside of the dish is still very dirty. The person never took the time or cared to wash the inside. If we will take the time to mold and shape our hearts, we are considered blessed by Jesus. (Matthew 5:1-12) However, if we are wearing turtleneck sweaters, long sleeve shirts, with pants or skirts to our ankles and our actions are never out of line, but it is only for a show, then we are that hypocrite that is spoke of very harshly in Matthew 23. Let's strive to first wash the inside (our hearts) and strive to make our attitude a modest one. Then, the clothes that we wear will become longer and will cover more of the body so that we draw attention to our Godly behavior in a perverse world, instead of our bodily features or figure.