

# Modesty: Wearing the Robes of Righteousness

by Scott Brown

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of modesty as a profession of godliness, humility, and shamefacedness, and it's connected with good works.*

**Duration:** 1:10:26

**Scripture:** 1 Timothy 2:9

**Topics:** "Modesty", "The Heart of Apparel"

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## Description

Scott Brown emphasizes the significance of modesty in apparel, urging fathers and daughters to ground their understanding of clothing in Scripture. He presents six biblical texts that address modesty, highlighting the importance of the heart's condition over mere outward appearance. The sermon discusses the tensions that arise in families regarding dress codes and the necessity of fathers guiding their daughters in making choices that reflect godliness. Ultimately, Brown connects modesty to the Gospel, illustrating how clothing can express the beauty of being clothed in Christ's righteousness.

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## Transcript

It's a very special joy to be gathered here tonight to do this. And as we were singing, I was looking around the room, seeing various fathers and their daughters. And I remember, you know, often I have this vision of some of these daughters as little girls.

I look at them and I say, no longer, no longer a little girl. And what a joy that as my own daughters are in that category, it was such a joy to walk with them when they were little, little girls. And it's an abounding joy to walk with them as young women now.

I love it. I love this season. But I also loved it when they were little.

So we have such a broad spectrum. Here we have daughters who are truly women. And then we have little girls as well.

So this is a very, very precious moment to be able to be together. This is something that God has done by putting us together in this way. And then to have us grow up together.

And to encourage one another, to walk beside one another, to speak the truth, to be patient with one another. All the different things that the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is meant for. I'd like for us to begin with something that I hope will help fathers and daughters to sort of center their thinking on a very, very

important topic.

And it's a topic that comes up every day, every single day of your life. This topic will arise up at the very beginning of the day. And it's the topic of apparel and modesty.

It's something that is unavoidable and something that because of its nature must have Christian thinking behind it. And so what I want to do tonight is try to center us, to center all of the thinking of a daughter and of a father around six biblical texts on modesty that every father and daughter ought to know. So fathers, I have a question for you.

Can you find six biblical texts in order to instruct your daughter on the matters of modesty and apparel? Do you have them in your mind? Have you been speaking to them? Because this is something they'll do every day. They're going to make a decision about this every single day. Do you have it in your mind and have you communicated it to them? That's a question.

Or daughters, how about you? I have a question for you. Can you defend the way that you dress from Scripture alone? Do you have in your mind explicitly biblical thoughts and a characteristically biblical position upon which you stand? And can you explain it to yourself? And can you explain it to others? And do you have confidence in it? And so my goal tonight is to give you those texts. My goal really tonight here is to unify fathers and daughters on this matter.

And we are unified by Scripture. That's what brings us together. It's not a man's opinion.

It's the Word of God that ought to form what we are unified on. And of course, we all understand that we see through a glass darkly. And so perfect unification among men is difficult because of that.

But at the same time, we have to at least agree on this one factor. And that is that Scripture is the place that we go to be unified. So that's sort of the premise.

So I want to give you these texts. And I hope that you have something to write with and are taking good notes for this. And I'm going to just name these six texts and the categories that they address.

And then I'll move on and explain some other things about it. The first is A Profession of Godliness out of 1 Timothy 2, 9 and 10. Second, The Hidden Person of the Heart, 1 Peter 3, 3-6.

Third, Androgyny, Deuteronomy 22, verse 5. Number four, Nakedness, Genesis 3, 21. Number five, Allurement, Proverbs 7, 4-27. And purpose, Romans 12, 1. So these are the texts and these are the broad categories that I'm going to address here in order to attempt to unify and clarify these matters between fathers and daughters.

Now I want to identify a number of issues on the table here before we enter into these texts. Issue number one, should there be a dress code in your family? Issue number two, should there be a dress code in your church? Issue number three, what is your dress code? Because actually, everyone has a dress code. Either that code is personally created or it's defined by the culture, or it's developed out of our own fallen conscience, or it's governed by Scripture.

Everyone has a dress code and that dress code is usually the cause of many tensions between fathers and daughters, husbands and wives, and daughters and their friends. Do you understand? I think you can relate with what I'm saying. This is a cause of enormous tension.

Issue number four, the sufficiency of Scripture. Is Scripture really sufficient for the clothing of daughters and wives? And of course, our answer to that question is absolutely yes. Scripture is the only reliable place that you can go.

And Scripture may offend your personal tastes. It may run crosswise with your desires. It might create conflict between a father and a daughter.

It might cause an argument between a husband and a wife. It may run roughshod over a parent's values or friends or people in the church. But let's just agree that Scripture stands in authority over all families and friends and fathers and daughters and institutions in this matter.

Tension number five, tensions in the family. Tension number one, fathers who are not biblically informed and are therefore ill-equipped to think biblically and therefore are unable to act appropriately on the matter. That's a tension.

This condition creates a tension. Here's another one. Passive fathers who have delegated the matter to the crowd.

Here's another tension. Wives who do not understand what men struggle with and are clueless. Tension number four.

Wives who are rebellious and do not have submissive hearts toward their husbands. The next tension, fathers who are afraid of conflict and therefore won't take responsibility. Tension number six, friends who do not agree.

Tension number seven, onlookers who do not like it when people dress modestly. Even when they see you in a group, they say, here comes the dress brigade that happens to my daughters all the time. All of these tensions and problems and questions bring up a whole slew of other questions.

Like how about this one? What is Christian liberty anyway? I thought that we were free in Christ. What does that mean? We just have to recognize in today's Christian world, Christian liberty includes taking almost all of your clothes off and walking about nearly actually naked in underwear. That's Christian liberty in today's environment.

We have to understand that there's a certain thinking about Christian liberty that actually might be off course. Christian liberty today is defined by thinking it legitimate for girls to dress like boys and boys to dress like girls. Is this a proper application of Christian liberty? That's a question that has to be asked.

It brings up questions of legalism. How do you define legalism? What is legalism? I'll just answer that question very briefly. Legalism is creating laws that are foreign to scripture, number one.

Number two, it's pretending that keeping laws can save you. That's legalism. Maintaining clear biblical standards is not legalism.

Having a standard based on scripture on clothing is not legalism. We can debate that. I'd be very happy to debate that, but that's my perspective.

How you apply all these things is very difficult because of many things going on in our own hearts. Here's my suggestion to all of us here. When you think about applying what is written in scripture regarding modesty, make sure that you understand that God desires you to apply it in your own life and not for

someone else.

This is the great danger. That your mind is actually dwelling in the wrong place. It was actually meant for you and not someone else.

There are great dangers in missing that point. I'd like to turn to a definition of modesty. I'm going to take it from Jeff Pollard.

The inner self-government rooted in an understanding of oneself before God, which is outwardly displayed in humility and purity from a genuine love for Jesus Christ. This whole matter of modesty, I think by that definition, I think it's a good definition, makes it clear that modesty is not just isolated to clothing. It's a far, far bigger issue than clothing alone because it begins in the heart.

Actually, the real subject is the heart and what is happening in the heart because modesty of the heart is like a fruitful womb. It gives birth to many children. Modesty in the heart gives birth to a quality of speech.

It gives birth to the way that you act. It gives birth to the manner of one's demeanor, the way you talk, the way you walk, the way you stand, the way you move your facial muscles when you respond. All of these things have to do with modesty and they all begin in the heart.

This whole subject of modesty is about more than clothing. It is about the hidden person of the heart. This message, I pray, will result in greater unfading beauty in the daughters of Zion and that God would use it in that way and that it would cause the meditations of our hearts to give birth to things that are modest outside of our hearts.

I want to give you a general principle of these texts before we move into them. First of all, I want to say that from these texts, we really learn that Christ has no intention to diminish the beauty of the daughters of Zion. He beautifies them by first of all bringing them to repentance, by giving them a new name and then clothing them in the robes of righteousness.

And so when we talk about this subject, we need to understand that something greater is here and what is here is the Gospel. I want to suggest that what the Bible says about modesty is typological and it's a type of something greater. When we talk about modesty, we're speaking of something earthly that points to something spiritual.

A type is a picture or a condition or a person or something smaller that points to something greater. And that's true of many things in Scripture, but modesty is one of those things that points to greater things, points to the Gospel, and it really does point to the whole subject of being clothed in robes of righteousness. That is the heart of the matter of what's said about clothing in this matter of modesty.

It's really the heart of Isaiah 61. My soul shall be joyful in my God, for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation. He has covered me with the robe of righteousness.

So, that's the introduction. I just want to try to set a few things in order before we went into these six texts of Scripture to help unify fathers and daughters. The first text is 1 Timothy 2, 9 and 10.

If you can open your Bibles there. This text speaks of the heart of modesty and what we read there is, "...in like manner also that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or pearls or costly clothing, but which is proper for women professing godliness with

good works." So, what we recognize right away is that God speaks about a woman's appearance in His Word. He does speak about this subject.

Most American Christians do not want anyone to talk to them about how they dress. But here, in this passage, God is telling the people of the church of Ephesus how to dress. Timothy was a pastor in Ephesus.

And so, what we learn here is that Paul wants to motivate the women in Ephesus to re-examine their dress. Most likely because they grew up in a pagan city, Ephesus. It was a pagan city.

And in this city, the body was glorified. The exposure of the human body was glorified. And so, here, the Apostle Paul comes to speak to this pastor about this matter.

And this passage has some connection with public worship. "...in the same way that men lift up holy hands and pray, so women ought to present themselves and even dress themselves appropriately." Clothing is an expression of worship. It's part of public worship.

When we gather together as a church in public worship, we have to understand that even our apparel has meaning in that setting. And as Paul is speaking to Timothy, we have to understand that Timothy is equipping this church in order to worship God, even in their corporate settings. So, 1 Timothy 2, 9 and 10 makes it clear that God has something to say about how women dress.

And Paul uses a number of words here that describe the kind of apparel that ought to be worn. First of all, there's orderly clothing. *Cosmeo* is the word that's used here in the passage.

And it has to do with orderliness. To adorn, it signifies action. It's a verb.

And what he's saying is that women should do something. They should take action. They should adorn themselves in a particular way.

And it's an orderly way. There's a beauty in the orderliness of the cosmos. And he uses this word that breathes that whole idea of beauty and orderliness.

Disorderliness, taking chaos and arranging it. So, it implies an orderly and beautiful arrangement instead of a rumpled and uncoordinated chaos. So, you have functionality and beauty and order all mixed in to the first words here in this passage.

And then he uses also a term, *hados*, or shamefacedness, when he speaks of modest clothing. And this describes the state of mind. He talks first about the orderliness and the functionality of it.

And then there's a state of mind that ought to govern it. And he's speaking about the state of mind of a woman. And what that means for fathers is that they need to help their daughters understand this state of mind.

Because every day when they stand in front of the mirror, they should have this kind of state of mind about them. There's a way to think when they dress themselves. In other words, there are certain kinds of thoughts that ought to happen when your daughter is dressing herself.

And it is rolled up in this word, shamefacedness. It means reverence. It's actually sort of almost a bashfulness, a downcast eyes.

It's the total opposite of, if you've got it, flaunt it. It's sort of the polar opposite of that whole kind of mentality. It backs off from exposure.

It covers rather than reveals. It understates rather than promotes. It's reserve.

Let me read to you a Greek lexicon on this word, shamefacedness. Shamefacedness is the idea of a sense of shame and modesty in regard to the clothing worn. It communicates feminine reserve in matters of sex.

And the word involves an innate moral repugnance of doing the dishonorable. It is shamefacedness which, quote, shrinks from passing over the limits of womanly reserve and modesty as well as from dishonor which would justly attach thereto. The commentator George Knight says it like this regarding shamefacedness.

Quote, reverence, awe, respect for the feeling or opinion of others or for one's own conscience and to shame, self-respect, sense of honor. That habitual self-government with its constant reign on all its passions and desires which would hinder the temptation from arising. So it has to do with shrinking back from pushing the limits, pushing the boundaries.

This is a mentality that we need to somehow nurse in our daughters so that they think that way when they consider dressing themselves. And then there is the term moderation that's used here. This also carries thoughts of understatement, a soundness of mind, self-control and keeping a reign in on exposure.

And so it implies humility and self-control and actually even a whole mentality of hating sin. And so this sets modesty in opposition to elaborate, gaudy kind of apparel. So there's a soundness and a sanity, a lack of silliness, a lack of flirtatiousness that's implied in this word.

And then what Paul says is that this all has to do with professing godliness. So apparel is one of the subsets of making a profession of godliness. God has given us all a great responsibility in the world to profess godliness.

I asked a man before we started what he wanted to do. And he said, I want to tell people about Jesus. And I thought, he wants to profess godliness.

That's what he wants. He wants to use his life and his mouth to profess what is godly. And the clothes, the hair, the jewelry, they all have a purpose.

And that is to profess godliness. So when a girl stands in front of the mirror and she thinks about what she puts on, she needs to think, how do I profess godliness in what I'm going to put on now? Because I have a calling from God to make a profession of something. And that profession is a profession of godliness.

Often in our natural state, in our flesh, we want to dress for identification. And this issue is very relevant today when fashion designers, they're deliberately trying to build their brand by connecting their brand to the customer's identity. Clothing designers want people who will identify with the brand and be walking advertisements of that style, that culture, whatever it is.

That's why there's such an emphasis today on branded clothing. And you're familiar with names like Calvin Klein and Abercrombie & Fitch. If you wear these brands, you can identify with the epistemological content of the company that's selling them.

That's what you're doing. So styles make identity connections. While on the one hand, God says your apparel includes making a profession of godliness, the fashion world says you're actually making a profession of some brand, some style, some angle on the world.

And so you have to always ask, what signal does this send? I read a really neat book I want to recommend called *The Beauty of Modesty*. And I have a copy here, I believe. I'll quote from the book.

What signal does my clothing send? When you wear Abercrombie & Fitch, well, if she isn't aware of the Abercrombie & Fitch propaganda, she's telling you she is clueless. And if she is aware, then she's telling us that she is loose. She is sending sensual signals by association.

Another company is Calvin Klein. Their clothing ads are basically explicit commercials for teenage promiscuity. So this is just a recognition that there's a profession that's made in clothing.

And as fathers and daughters and husbands and wives relate to one another, they need to establish a principle that they can agree upon, that their clothing is actually a profession of some kind of faith. It's faith in something. It's an identification with something.

And so they have to understand that and agree together that, yes, this is true, that my clothing is a profession, and that it ought to be a profession of faith. And also of good works, if you see that in the text, that this is also connected with good works. And so all women's clothing, whether it's worn in the home or the church or the grocery store or at the beach, it should cry out the good works of godliness and a profession of faith and humility and shamefacedness.

This is why God has designed clothing for us to wear. He intends that our clothing is making a profession of faith. Is our clothing causing others to stumble? And I just want to suggest, when clothing is too tight or exposing your figure, you would draw attention to that area.

And women are much less sensitive to this than men are, so they need their fathers to help them understand what kind of clothing draws the eyes and misleads and causes men to stumble. Because they will stumble if you dress wrongly. And of course, I think we would be very careful to say it takes eyes who are looking, but it also takes clothing that is shamefaced enough so that it doesn't draw the eyes.

Every man here knows how difficult it is to even speak to women who are immodestly dressed. It's very, very difficult. In this sense, fathers and daughters need to be speaking about these things.

A father needs to explain to his daughter what are the things that cause men to stumble. The daughter will not understand because she doesn't think that way and she doesn't see that way. And this is why daughters need fathers.

And this is why daughters need fathers to actually talk to them carefully and even explicitly about these matters. And they should explain it with enough detail so that they really understand. And God has given fathers for this reason.

So, it's appropriate for fathers to have these kinds of discussions with their daughters. And it's appropriate for daughters to say, Daddy, what do you think? Is this okay? That should be normal. And a daughter should be able to ask that question with humility and joy and a heart of submission.

And when it's not there, we have to understand what is happening in the heart of that daughter. These things are connected with good works. Good works.

So, there are a number of words that are used here. What we learn from this passage also is that God is interested in both the heart and the appearance. It would be wrong to say it only matters what's in your heart.

And it would be equally wrong to say it only matters what's on the outside. Both of those things are extreme statements that really lead in the wrong direction. And actually, the Bible isn't so binary that way.

The Bible actually holds both in tension. Both the outward appearance and the heart matter. And so, that's what we find in this text here.

John Angel James said this in the 19th century pastor, Study your profession and thoroughly understand what it implies and enjoins. Consider well what sanctity and conduct, what spirituality of mind, what separation from the world in spirit and taste, what devotional feelings, what faith, hope, love, and humility are communicated in your dress. Okay.

Let me just come down to some statements that I think are implied in what we've just read in this first text. Immodesty is. I'm going to talk about what immodesty is.

I'm going to talk about what modesty is. First of all, immodesty is an expression of self. Immodesty is drawing attention to yourself.

Modesty is identification and association with sinful cultures and their appearances. Immodesty is an obsession with legitimizing oneself through hair, jewelry, or apparel. Immodesty is insecurity, arrogance, and worldliness externalized.

Immodesty is insensitivity to the temptations of men. Immodesty is lack of love for your brother. Immodesty is a lack of love for your mother.

Immodesty makes you less of a person and more of an object. Immodesty destroys love and inflames lust. So, clothing is not a neutral area.

It's given by God to declare His glory like everything else. You might ask, why the stars? Why the oceans? Why the deserts? Why cars? Why airplanes? Why the internet? Why anything? Why clothing? It's for a profession of faith. It's for the glory of God.

Clothing is no different than the big ticket items that we think about normally when we consider our Christian profession. Modesty is a public profession of faith. Modesty is an external expression of affections.

Modesty is a reflection of holiness expressed in appearance. Modesty is a proclamation of the Gospel. Modesty is a demonstration of humility.

Modesty is a display of self-control. It is an acknowledgement of the sin of Adam and Eve and their need to cover their nakedness. Modesty is a means to declare that God single-handedly covers the nakedness of fallen sinners.

In short, modesty is the Gospel externalized. So that's the first text, 1 Timothy 2.9-10. Every father and daughter needs to understand this text. Second text, 1 Peter 3.1-6. The focus here is the hidden person of the heart.

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.

For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands as Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him, Lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror. Peter starts with a prohibition, do not. Do not.

Let not. And let not your adornment be merely outward. So he's saying that there's a right and a wrong.

There's a black and a white regarding apparel. There's a good and evil. And he mentions three categories of outward adornment.

You see them? Hair, jewelry and clothes. Now, because of what is said about hair and jewelry and clothes in other places in Scripture, we know that he is not objecting. Well, for example, for jewelry.

Because we see godly practices of the wearing of jewelry. So he can't mean that he's prohibiting all jewelry or the prohibiting of arranging of hair of any kind. But he's objecting to an excessive focus on the outward appearance.

And what we learn here is that modesty is not achieved by just simply wearing a dress. There's far more at stake here. It's more than understanding clothing as well.

You can wear a dress and you can still be arrogant and self-righteous and proud and explicitly immodest, even though on the outside you may receive a comment that you are dressed modestly. When in fact, there is no modesty at all because of the inner person of the heart. The heart is the heart of the matter.

And what is happening in the heart expresses itself in the way that you handle your hair, what you put on your wrists and around your neck and on your head. And it includes perfume and anything else that might be detectable. So a genuinely modest heart always precedes genuinely modest dress.

In this passage, what we learn is that everything is an expression of something in this life. Clothing is inescapably an expression of something that has already gone on in the heart. You could say clothing is inescapably religious in that sense.

That it reflects the heart and the moral compass of the person who is wearing it. The outward always exposes the inward. And the inward always plays itself out in real life, in real culture, in real words.

So if your heart is craving the applause and the approval of the world, then your clothing will find itself as a reflection of it. If your heart desires to glorify Christ, then this will be your self-conscious pattern. So he's speaking of extravagant clothing here.

Isaiah actually captures the nature of this problem. And what he says is that the very manner in which the Israelite women walked was an expression of something inward. And their outward walk was just consistent with what was going on in their hearts.

So in Isaiah 3, verse 16, we read this, "'Moreover,' says the Lord, "'because the daughters of Zion are haughty,' that's something inside the heart. Haughtiness is something that is inside. "'Because they are haughty and walk without stretch and axe and wanton eyes, "'walking and mincing as they go, "'making a jingling with their feet, "'therefore the Lord will strike with a scab "'the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, "'and the Lord will uncover their secret parts.

"In that day the Lord will take away the finery, "'the jingling anklets, the scarves and the crescents, "'the pendants, the bracelets and the veils, "'the headdresses, the leg ornaments and the headbands, "'the perfume boxes, the charms and the rings, "'the nose jewels, the festal apparel and the mantles, "'the outer garments, the purses and the mirrors, "'the fine linen, the turbans and the robes, "'and so it shall be instead of a sweet smell there will be a stench, "'instead of a sash, a rope, "'instead of well-set hair, baldness, "'instead of a rich robe, a girdling of sackcloth, "'branding instead of beauty. "'Your name shall fall by the sword, "'your men shall fall by the sword, "'and you're mighty in the war. "'Her gates will lament and mourn, "'and she shall be desolate and sit on the ground.'" So, Isaiah is speaking about the haughty women of his time and all the expressions of that haughtiness that work its way out in real life.

So, let's lay this principle down very, very clearly. Modesty is not achieved by wearing a dress. Anyone can do that, because you can wear a dress and still be arrogant and self-righteous and proud and wanting to promote yourself.

And then there's an example given of women who did live modestly. And again, this is not a categorical prohibition against jewelry. The Proverbs 31 woman dressed beautifully, the bride in the Song of Songs wore jewelry, Isaac gave a nose ring to his betrothed.

And so, there are godly uses of jewelry and clothing and the arrangements of hair. So, God is not actually saying that you should look like a ruffled mess and care nothing about what you look like. The Bible actually says the opposite, that you should care what you look like, but you should care in a right way.

The examples of women who fulfilled this are in verses 5 and 6. For in this manner in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror. So, he's saying in this manner. In what manner? In the manner of modest to clothing, they adorned themselves with submissiveness and obedience.

There was an inner spirit of their hearts that was the core of it. And there were a lot of things that happened in their outward life because of their inward humility. Not only did they not dress excessively or wear their hair ostentatiously or dress promiscuously, they didn't do any of that, but they also were not rebellious to their husbands.

They had a shame-facedness about their hearts. They had humble hearts. Their submissiveness found its beginning in their hearts as wives.

Now, what this means is that if you're a daughter and you cannot in your heart find humility and shame-facedness and a desire for understatement in your dress, you will have a hard time with submissiveness because that's another problem. You might dress wrongly, but there's a very, very big problem and that is you will not be able to love your husband and submit to him the way that God wants you to. If you struggle with this now, understand you will struggle with the same category of problem in a different realm.

I hope you understand what I'm saying here. When there is inner humility in the heart, it means that the way you walk, the way you talk, the way your face looks, the way you dress, the way you relate to your husband, it affects everything. This modesty is enormously influential in your life.

And though you might be a little girl today and you're struggling with it now, win the war now so that you're not harming your family because you never learned how to have this kind of humility and submissiveness that these women adorn themselves with. Let's get to the third text. Deuteronomy 22 verse 5. Androgyny.

Androgyny. A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man nor shall a man put on a woman's garment. For all who do so are an abomination to the Lord your God.

Now, that's a terrifying verse of Scripture because it places those who reject it as being an abomination to the Lord. So, it has enormous significance. Now, the language is so plain here.

Women are not to wear anything that pertains to a man. Notice that it says something different to women than it does to men. What does it mean to not wear anything that pertains to a man? Now, the Hebrew word translated pertains really means the apparatus of a man.

The things that a man uses and wears. It's actually way beyond clothing. When he's talking to women, he's talking about something far beyond clothing.

When he's talking to men, he's talking about clothing explicitly. Do you see the difference? So, it includes whatever a man needs to be a man and to fulfill a man's role. That means that for a woman to wear a soldier's uniform is a violation.

That's what that means. Some years ago, over a decade ago, my family was reading through this section in Deuteronomy. And we came to this passage about clothing.

And when we read this, it was like there was a big gigantic light that started to flicker in our living room. And my girls were young at that time, but they understood what this meant. I mean, isn't it pretty plain? It's not very complex language.

It's extremely clear. It doesn't take a rocket theologian to figure it out. This text really shook up the wardrobes of my girls.

But they clearly understood the truth that God made men and women different. And He wants men to dress like men and women to dress like women. When this passage crashed, interrupted our whole family life, we realized that we even have the pictures to prove how we misunderstood matters of clothing.

This was the time when my daughters began to shift away from wearing men's clothing, including pants and things like that. I have pictures of my daughters dressed in very interesting apparel. So maybe you do too.

I'm sure some of you probably do. So there are two issues that we had to grapple with. Issue number one was what is distinctively manly and womanly dress.

We had to ask ourselves that question. What is it? Our conclusion was, and we still maintain this conclusion in our home, is that the pants that my daughters were wearing were actually explicitly male in their nature. So we determined that there was so much blurring of manhood and womanhood that it was important for my daughters to dress in a way that was explicitly distinct.

Not sort of distinct, not blurring the lines, getting as close to it as we could. But our conviction was that there should be an explicit difference between the way that a woman and a man looks. There are various cultural issues that you have to consider with that.

And we ended up with, if that means that we all stick out, then it's better to stick out rather than to fade into your cultural background so that there's no distinction. It's better to be distinct rather than not on this matter because of the very dramatic warning that it is an abomination. So it's not a small sort of issue before God because He uses such terrifying language to explain what it really is to Him when a woman dresses according to the equipment of a man and a man wearing the clothing of a woman.

We ended up with the conclusion that pants revealed parts of their bodies that should remain concealed. What began really as a source of irritation in our family turned into a source of joy as my daughters began to really embrace the principle. And so while the world was just continuing to spin toward androgyny, and I think the world has spun even a little bit farther toward androgyny since that time.

The challenges are even greater today than they were over a decade ago when the Brown family started spinning the other way. Now, I want to give you sort of a history of this matter of the wearing of pants. History matters.

Those who have their heads in the sand regarding history often do not have the capacity to see what is really happening to them and what is happening in their world. So history matters. So we're encouraging families to understand history because history has a way of showing you things that once were that are not now.

And they give you a sense of the drift that takes place in the world. So it's important that you understand history. I think it would be very unwise for fathers not to ground their daughters in history.

Because if they don't, their daughters won't really know where they are. Where are they living? And what does God say about those things happening at that time that they're living? Because everybody lives in a different geographical location, a different era, and you have to know where you are. A daughter needs to know where she is in history.

I think it provides security to her. I think it provides wisdom. I think it provides strength to her when she knows where she is in history.

So, pants were first worn by women in America and they were actually considered by the church as sinful. Because when they were introduced, and there was a time when they were introduced, not that long ago, they were intentionally androgynous in their nature. Pants were promoted by the early feminists for very specific reasons, ungodly reasons.

And then as time progressed, women started wearing pants as they went off to the factories in World War I. And then there was a gigantic press of women into the workforce in World War II. And women more and more began to take on the equipment of a man. Later on, as the 20th century progressed, they were designed to be intentionally alluring.

What began as androgyny and feminism and homosexuality, lesbianism, actually turned more toward allurements. So, pants were originally promoted by feminists in order to get women into the workplace. And then later, with the rise of Hollywood, they were used for seduction in order to expose the female form.

And so, all you really have to do is look at what fashion designers say about blue jeans. You can Google search this. It's not something you have to look very hard for.

But it's clear from the fashion designers anyway that they are intentionally androgynous and meant for seduction. And they really are at war with a biblical morality. Women adopted them to say that they were equal with men.

That's just a matter of history. And so, in terms of this product of pants, they are either intentionally androgynous or intentionally immodest. At least in their conception.

I'm not saying that everyone who wears pants today is intentionally androgynous. And I'm not saying that everyone who wears pants today is intentionally trying to send a message of immorality. I'm not saying that.

I'm just saying that from the standpoint of history, that is the rock from which they were hewn. And so, when you find these principles that were forming the apparel of womanhood, you find that they stand very clearly against the purity and the role distinction and the moderation that God requires of His daughters. And the reason the church rejected the practice in the early part of the 20th century is because they violated all these three principles.

They violated purity because they revealed female anatomy specifically the buttocks and the crotch. This was the position of the church at the beginning of the 20th century on this matter. It's certainly not the position of the church today.

But I think we just need to understand that something is very different today that causes the church to embrace it as opposed to a church even as few years as 100 years ago to brand it as explicitly androgynous and immoral. We don't think that way today, but I think history should just help us to understand where we are today. It violated moderation because they drew attention to the physical areas of a woman's body instead of the hidden person of the heart.

And the pants spoke louder than the heart could. And then they violated role distinctiveness. Now, you who have only been born maybe in the last decade don't know how embedded this principle was in culture.

Amazingly, the state of California did not make it legal for women to wear pants in the workplace until 1995 when Governor Pete Wilson signed into law releasing the ban against women wearing pants in the workplace. Can you imagine? I grew up in a state where it was illegal for women to wear pants to the workplace until 1995. I just want us to have some historical... You just have to grapple with history for a minute on this.

It's very important that our daughters aren't just born into the world and they do not understand where they are. They have to understand that. This is why my fellow elder Dan Horn here says that for a woman to dress like a man is to kill in them the role that God has created for them.

It matters. It matters whether you wear the accoutrements of a man if you're a girl. It matters a lot.

It's actually an abomination. So you should be very careful. When there's such a strong warning, it should take your breath away for a minute and help you to pull back and think thoughts beyond the ones that just immediately come into your mind.

There are a number of cultural realities that are a result of rejecting Deuteronomy 22.5. Today the majority of women put on pants and they go to work every day and they let somebody else raise their children. That's just normality today. Today we send women into the battlefield to fight wars with all the accoutrements of manhood.

We have major corporations aggressively endorsing sodomy. This is a result of the church not understanding Deuteronomy 22.5. Let's be really clear about these massive movements. They are related.

They're in the same family as rejecting Deuteronomy 22.5. Tomorrow we're going to go down to an abortion clinic where women are killing their babies so that they can go get their educations and they can go get their work because we have so let the various streams of the rejection of God to run. And this is one of them. And it's in the same family.

When we go down to that abortion clinic, I think you should consider that the modern apparel that is so acceptable today is related to the killing of those babies. It's not the same thing as it, but it comes out of the exact same family. It's rejecting the function of a woman.

And many of the women walking in that abortion clinic tomorrow, they're rejecting womanhood. They're rejecting the way that God has desired to apparel them. And this is an expression of it now.

And you can see how it might seem to be such a small thing. It just has to do with what I'm wearing. But it's not such a small thing because it's related to other things that become so great that they actually end in murder.

And again, I'm not saying those who wear pants are going to murder their children. But what I am saying, it's in the same kind of family. We might think that clothing that we wear doesn't have that much of an impact on society.

But I think we could list many impacts of modern clothing on society. I read the other day that the average girl kisses 22 different men before she gets married. I think it has to do not just with clothing, but it does include what happens when men see young women wearing the wrong kind of clothing.

And then it subjects that young girl to 22 men. That's the average, by the way. Clothing and shamefacedness matters of the heart.

They are always religion externalized. John Calvin said this. Again, he's commenting on this verse.

Women go a pair of like men of war as there were some which had leather to bear the hack of brute on their shoulder than a disc staff in their hand. It is against kind and we ought to abhor it. Tyler Dorn was doing a bunch of research for me on the whole history of pants.

I've got a big giant file. If you want it, I'll send it to you. But I said, Tyler, what's hack of brute? He says that they leave to bear hack of brute on their shoulder than a disc staff in their hand.

He's saying they don't have a disc staff, but they've got this thing on their shoulder called a hack of brute. What's that? Well, it's a gun. So in Calvin's Geneva, there were women walking through the streets with all the military armory of a man carrying guns through the streets.

They were dressing like men. And he says, we ought to abhor it. So, I agree.

I mean, it's a gun on the shoulder. I mean, in Israel, 25% of the soldiers are women and they're all carrying arms. It's a mirror of this.

You know, how do you even define pants that cross the line of androgyny or purity? How do you define that? Because my perspective is this. It's not the pants that are the problem. Pants really actually aren't the issue.

They're just a possible expression of that problem. For example, I mean, my own wife wears pants. Did you know that? I think she calls them culottes.

They're very loose. You can hardly tell that they're pants. But in my understanding, someone might say, your wife is wearing pants.

And I would just say, well, when I look at them, they don't accentuate her form. They don't expose features of her body. And they are, in my estimation, in moderation.

So, someone might disagree with me and say, Scott, you're a hypocrite because your wife wears pants. I would just say, fathers and daughters and husbands and wives have to look at their apparel and ask, does it violate the principle of androgyny and does it violate the principle of impurity and does it draw the eyes to the parts of the body? So, you as a father have to figure out whether your version of pants exposes the crotch or the buttocks or draws the eyes of men. And you're going to have to figure out how to explain that to your daughter.

Because every man here understands this one point. If you have a gathering or a church where the majority of the women are wearing pants, you're going to have many of those men who are having trouble with their eyes. Men, you know exactly what I mean.

So, you have to figure out whether you call it pants or schmance or culottes or hula. I don't really care what you call them. But you have to answer this question.

Are you blurring the lines of androgyny through androgyny or are you allowing the drawing of attention of eyes to these areas of the body? That's the question. So, the question isn't first are you wearing pants? The question is what's happening? I hope that makes sense. When discussing the issue of pants, I like the issue of pants because it's so inflammatory.

It's an issue that forces you to really get down to the nubbies and think practically about things. That's why I like the illustration. It's sort of like the whole issue of age integration.

Well, the whole church is not about age integration. It's one little dinky thin part. The problem is, in the modern church, it's gigantic even though honestly for us it's a small issue in terms of our normal life.

So, the issue of age integration isn't the heart of the church. It's not the big issue in the church really for us. But, it drives a discussion like you can't believe about the sufficiency of Scripture.

Pants do the same thing. So, I like the subject because of that. So, when discussing pants, considerations of culture are also important.

And honestly, I'm not sure how to process all of this in terms of historical perspective. Because, for example, it's not just so simple to say pants are manly. Because clothing has a cultural element.

And for example, there have been times in history when robes were the apparel of men, but they're not today. Long robes that were kind of like long dresses. In fact, consider this, brethren.

In the dark age of Scotland, men were wearing dresses and they were calling them kilts. They still do. Is it expressly womanly to wear a kilt? I just think you have to grapple with that.

I will say this, when my friends wear kilts, I always tease them. That's as far as I'll go. I'm not ready to say they're explicitly womanly, but I do know the guys who have worn kilts, it's kind of awkward for them.

And they're not quite sure what to do, how to sit and things like that. It's just very strange. It's rough to do a lot of things that men do when you're wearing a kilt.

You can make an argument that culture has to be considered. One of the questions you might just consider is have women worn pants so long in this culture that now they're neutral? Both men and women can wear them and still be distinctly men and women. I just think it's a question you should ask.

I know what my answer to that question is. You may answer it differently, and I think that's fine. People can answer that question differently in our church and be fine.

But I want us to be very careful to ask the right questions about the matter. My view is actually no, because there's too much... This is just my opinion. It's not the opinion of the world.

It's not the opinion of every man here. It's not the opinion you have to have to join this church. My opinion on the matter is that God has expressly communicated that men and women should be distinctly different, and to make them just kind of different doesn't get it for me.

It just doesn't get it for me and my family. But we need to be very clear on this matter. It matters how women dress, and there's no neutrality in it, and one has to consider Scripture.

Okay, let me just end this point with one statement. I want us to get back to the time where people said, hey, who wears the pants in this family? I want to get back to that time. The fourth text.

Allurement, Proverbs 7, verses 4-27. This text has a lot to do with the power of the visual in a woman's dress. And it helps us understand temptation.

And there a woman met him with the attire of a harlot. Okay? And women need to understand how they're responsible to protect men's eyes. The eyes have played a major role in the long history of man's lust.

Just a couple of days ago, our family was reading 2 Samuel 11 where David saw a woman washing herself. And she was very beautiful to look upon. This has to do with the eyes.

Allurement. I'm talking now about how apparel is alluring. You have to consider that.

The Apostle Paul describes our existence in this world and the sinfulness of it as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes. This is the issue here. Job said, I've made a covenant with my eyes.

Why then should I look upon a maid? So, here there's a woman with the attire of a harlot. In other words, she is drawing him with her attire. That's what's happening.

It's allurement. And so it brings up that subject. Women are responsible for what she incites in a man.

And there should be a sense of shame for distracting someone from purity. There should be a reluctance to have distracting apparel that causes men to stumble. That's the principle.

And fathers just need to work with their daughters on this matter to help them figure it out. Matthew 18.6 says, Whoever causes one of the least of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he be drowned in the depths of the sea. You know, I have a number of millstones around here for that purpose, to tell that story.

It matters if you make people stumble. And you can make people stumble by your apparel. Jesus said, If your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you.

This is very extreme language. It's very much like the language of Deuteronomy 22.5. It's an abomination. God thinks differently about these things than we do.

We understate them, and He places them in their proper context. Here's what Jeff Pollard wrote. Dear woman, for a man of any age to stand behind you when you're giving an anatomy lesson, with your pants or your tight top, and you're not displaying the holiness and purity of heart.

Consider what Jesus said. It is impossible, but that offenses will come. But woe to him through whom they come.

And then the fifth text is regarding nakedness. Genesis 3.21 Understanding the purpose of clothing and the covering of nakedness is critical when you think about apparel because clothing was first given to cover nakedness and shame. It was given because of sin.

And God clothed Adam and Eve in the garden in order to cover their shame. This was a vision of the Gospel. This was the beginning of the Gospel when God covered the nakedness of His people.

And clothing is meant to express this miracle of the love of God that He would actually clothe us in our nakedness and in our shame. And then the sixth text. Purpose.

Romans 12.1-2 There are several that we can mention. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

This passage indicates that God owns your body and that He meant it to glorify Him. And so it includes ownership and lordship and citizenship. All these principles are here in Romans 12.1 It's so important that we understand the purpose of our bodies and that is to give glory to God.

I want to leave you with two things. Number one, and I wish I had time to develop this earlier, but this is not an argument against beauty. Maybe someday we can speak about beauty because God promotes beauty and encourages it.

So it's not an argument against beauty. And then the second is that the way of modesty is the way of the Gospel. For a daughter, the heart of it is the fruit of a transformed mind that desires to please her master, putting on the mind of Christ, setting her affections on things above.

And it's exemplified by godly women who glories in the fact that her nakedness has been covered by Christ and that even her apparel reflects that wonderful reality. For her father, the heart of it is to collaborate with his daughter in such a way that she understands the Gospel, she understands adultery,

she understands the lust of the eyes, she understands that her clothing is not a matter of personal expression, but it's a matter of the Gospel. It's that important.

A girl can dress modestly and still have an unconverted heart. She can clothe her body with robes that seem like righteousness, but is unclothed with the wedding garments of the Lord Jesus Christ. And that would be the greatest sorrow for a daughter.

Daughters, if you're resisting the Lord in the area of modesty, beware of what's lurking in your heart. If you're resisting your Father, it's an indication that you're resisting your Heavenly Father. So as a daughter of Zion, if you have repented and believed in the Gospel, you have been clothed with righteousness, you've received a new name and a crown of life, and your Savior has given you new robes.

And that is your identity. And you have a whole lifetime to publicly declare and explicitly demonstrate that you have a Savior who has clothed you. And every morning when you awaken, you'll have such a wonderful opportunity to stand in front of your wardrobe and ask the Gospel question, how can I express how thankful I am that He covered my nakedness? How can my apparel reflect these robes of righteousness that God has clothed me with? How can my blouse and my skirt be like the wedding garments of my King and my Savior and my Shepherd? And how can I represent that my sin and my shame has been covered by the precious blood of a Lamb? And you fathers, it's your job to bring the Word of God to your daughter, not your own thoughts.

He has given to you a daughter to be her teacher and her protector. And it is for you to look at her and know these things and help her to feel them in her heart so that she understands them there. And it's also your duty before God to shepherd her and to help her from man's perspective to avoid it.

And help her to know when she's missed the mark. She will miss the mark. I guarantee you she'll miss the mark.

But after a while, she won't. After a while, she won't. And finally, the practical effect of all of this on the hearts and the emotions of daughters.

What is this supposed to do to you? Isaiah 61 says it. Verse 10, I will greatly rejoice in the Lord. My soul shall be joyful in my God, for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation.

He has covered me with the robe of righteousness. As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its bud and the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

And this is the purpose of your apparel. Would you pray with me? O Lord, this very difficult subject, one that we are not well schooled in because of the inexperience and rejection in our current time of history, we pray that You would help us to understand it, to be patient with one another, to be merciful to our daughters and helpful to them. O Lord, that You would unify us at least around the words of these six texts that we might know how to please You in this world.

Amen. F-I-C-D-O-R-G

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