**“Pretty Is As Pretty Does”**

Joanne Beckley – Part #3 (conclusion of this article)

**EXCUSES!**

1. ***Some boys/men will lust no matter what I wear!*** That may be true, but at least you won’t be the cause. Even if this is true, does that mean you can still wear immodest clothing?

2. ***If someone lusts after me, that’s their problem not mine!*** *“They ought to learn to control their minds.”* No, it is your problem (**Matthew 18:6-7**). If you dress in revealing suggestive clothing you are guilty of lasciviousness (**Galatians 5:19**).

3. ***It is hot and I dress for comfort in the summer!*** *“If that means shorter shorts, lower cut dresses and blouses, and shorter skirts that barely cover what underwear covers then so be it – I have to keep cool!”* Nothing is wrong with keeping cool as long as we cover ourselves the way God wants us to. Are you willing to throw away God’s standard of decency just to keep cool? Do men and women stop lusting just because it is hot?

4. ***It is none of your business what I wear!*** God made it His business. God made parents responsible. God made you responsible to please Him. The fact that I love you and want you to go to heaven causes me to talk with you about what you are wearing and how it can cause you to miss eternal life.

5. ***I like the way I look!*** *“It makes me feel good. It makes me fit in with the crowd.”* Notice who you want to please. You are ignoring that God wants you to be pure in heart and clothing. You are ignoring how you can cause others to sin. Do you like the boys? Then, why are you doing them harm?

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 PARENTS, we are to model a consistent example, **Deuteronomy 6:5-9**. You cannot have a double standard in how you dress and what you teach your girls. This passage says, ***"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”***

 Parents are charged by God to protect their children. Modesty is just ONE area that must be done. We must teach the principle of ownership. Our bodies are not our own (**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**). They belong to God. Jesus is Lord over all. You do not belong to this world. God is trusting us to respect our bodies, our beauty and how we use it. It is necessary to constantly train our children from a young age, encouraging right choices right up until they marry. Teach your daughters how to be modest around their dad, around their brothers. It should be a way of life. Make it the normal, natural way to dress, behave ALL the time. Emphasize that they cannot make other girls their standard for dress. The issue of your children’s clothing must not be a bigger issue than their hearts. Help them to recognize that it is pride that will get in the way of choosing appropriate clothing. Young women, we MUST understand the power of our influence on men and how we can destroy their good intentions. Let us teach and encourage our girls. Nothing hurts a young lady more then to be accused of dressing like a harlot who is trying to seduce a man when she doesn’t realize she is doing so.

**WHAT CAN WE, AS A CONGREGATION, DO TO HELP OUR YOUNG PEOPLE?**

**Education!** – confront the problem before the problem exists. Teach with great regularity and boldness the principles of godly living. Teach by example! **Titus 2:3-7**. Live godly lives before one another and this will accomplish more than a hundred sermons and classes.

**Expectation!** – We need to EXPECT those who say they are children of God to act like it! Examination! – It is critical that we ***“examine everything carefully and prayerfully, lest there be any among us who may fall short of God’s gracious gift of salvation”*** (**Hebrews 12:14-15**; **1 Thessalonians 5:21-22**). If one among us is behaving immorally, including provocative apparel, designed to entice lustful thoughts in others, to be something less than walking in holiness – then we owe it to that person, as well as to the congregation, to call them to more responsible behavior.

**Talk!** – Reason with Bibles opened when talking to a Christian who is not dressing modestly. Help them to write the meanings of important words in their Bibles and make sure they understand the words. Not only should young people be brought to an awareness of how to dress herself but their parents also need to be educated. If such a talk is done in love, and with God’s Word as the guiding standard, then precious souls can be steered back onto the straight and narrow way of Christ. The church is the bride of Christ. Let us honor and protect His bride.