

Christian Character

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[0:00] 1 Timothy 2 from verse 8 through 10. Talking about Christian character. 1 Timothy 2, 8 through 10. Professing godliness with good works.

How the best dressed Christians should be dressed. I was looking at another scripture that tells us really what we should all be clothed with.

We should be clothed with humility. Clothed with humility. It's not so much the garment as in the spirit.

Clothed with humility. Here we see some description of how women should adorn themselves.

And we could learn from this and draw some learning from this. It's not just for women but for all of us. Because in this world that we live in, Christian youth are under pressure from the world.

[1:30] There's a constant bombarding that we're all getting in this world that we live in. Moral values are breaking down all around us. It's like there's no right and wrong anymore.

There's no black and white. No right and wrong. And we see that. I was referring to it this morning how I saw some images of some men in a fashion parade.

And they're walking down this, what do they call it, the runway in the fashion parade. And is that what they call it? Something like that. Whatever they do.

These men were pictured with the men were wearing high heels. And these men had dresses on and looked very feminine. And I thought what a shameful thing that is to see such a thing.

And then we've seen it, as I've mentioned in the news of late, wear a dress day. Where it's encouraging all to wear a dress whether men or female. And how abhorrent that is.

[2:32] How perverse that is. And of course the Bible is very clear about such a thing as that. And a man should be masculine.

And a woman should be feminine. So we're seeing this blurring of all of that these days. Where everything's getting broken down and blurred and lost in the muck and mire that is the world at times.

And a lack of modesty is a real factor these days. Especially among young girls as among young men.

There's a lack of modesty. And there's an explosion of loose living. And just anything goes. It's like there's no rules anymore. If you try to establish some rules or frameworks or guidelines.

You're being too strict or too hard. But the word of God does spell out some very clear boundaries. Some very clear guidelines for us to live by.

[3:39] And Christians we need to look out. And not be careless. Because our way of living is not set by this world. It's set by God's word.

And so we don't want to be careless about such things as this. In all aspects of our lives. It's like the Christian life is not a part of our life.

It's the whole of our life. It's within, without. It's a whole way of living. The Christian conduct. The conversation.

The way of life. Is very much the whole of our living. Of our fibre. Of our outward and inward.

And so we should take care about the choices we make. And guard our virtue and modesty. And you know this could especially speak to the younger people in our midst here.

[4:41] But really it's for all of us. Our behaviour is influenced all the time. By peer pressure. By the people we rub shoulders with. You know there's some folk that were telling me that they chose this church.

Because they didn't want the young people in their family to be misled. Even by the youth group of the church they used to be at. Because they used to do all kinds of weird things.

Like virtually discos in the youth group. And such things as that. And I've heard tell of how in some churches. The men's program they have beer on tap.

It's like you know the pastor doesn't make any stand on such a matter. And anything goes. And this is the way things are.

In many circles sadly. And we're influenced by what others are doing around about us. But this is not the best measure of what is right and wrong.

[5:41] In the sight of the Lord. Especially when most of those around us are godless people. I work with godless people. The people I work with.

They're nice people. But by and large they do not know the Lord. And their frame of reference. Their measuring stick. Is doing whatever is right in their own eyes.

Just like back in the Bible days. They did what was right in their own eyes. And it's easy in life just to conform to the majority. To the.

This blurred kind of morality. And we see even our politicians are saying. Oh that's un-Australian. You know that's. And saying. For example such statements as.

Climate change is the greatest moral threat. That mankind has ever seen. Now whether climate change is real or not. That's another story. But to say that's a moral. That that's a moral or a value issue.

[6:42] Is rubbish. It's nothing to do with it. So we don't set our morals or our values. By even our politicians. Well meaning though they may be. By the peer pressure that's all around us.

Especially in schools. In workplaces. In the everyday life that we all live. But this peer pressure is constantly bombarding us.

And it can damage and destroy our character. And it erodes that godliness that we want to establish for our lives. And we can all be subject to this.

To act like others. And end up like them. It's our choice. For example. And er. You might be a smoker. I'm not having a go at you here. But it's a fact.

That if you choose cigarettes. You're choosing to lose over 8 years of your life. To cough. To have bad breath. Yellow teeth.

[7:38] And a greater chance of cancer. It's a fact. You know the world tells us that. It's written on every cigarette packet. These things are doing you damage. Peer pressure can destroy character.

So make the choice to obey God. What are you following? This is a big question for all of us. And some girls and boys. Can get caught up. In following what is the latest clothing styles and fashions. And they end up spending up big. On expensive make up. And end up looking overdone. A lot of the time. And some young girls for example.

They can wear revealing clothes or fashions. That accentuate their figure. Or draw attention to themselves. They try their best to provoke attention from boys.

By showing their shape or their skin. It's not a good thing. It's not a wholesome thing. It's not a wise decision. How we dress. How we behave. It's important. And as a Christian.

[8:36] Young person. Older person. We want to look our best. And act like ladies and gentlemen. In this world where. It's almost like. You don't call a woman a lady anymore.

That's the kind of a. It's not politically correct. To call females a lady anymore. Or to call you. To say you've got a wife. You've actually got a wife. You know.

Don't use that word. You just use the word partner these days. You might upset somebody. Or use the word husband. You know. That's an old fashioned word. Or even father and mother. They're almost outlawing these.

Or words to do with gender. For goodness sake. This is the mad. Mad world we're living in. And we've got to be politically correct. And watch our every word. Lest we offend.

The radicals. That want to rule us. In this world today. That. Men. Be gentlemen. And women. Be ladies.

[9:30] Let's not be caught up in the worldly ways. Let's. Let's be different. Let's have some kind of godly. Backbone. And spine. Sadly. We see the way of the world.

Chaste. So we'll go back to 1 Timothy 2, reading through verse 9. It tells us of a number of things here. It tells us of women adorn themselves in modest apparel.

Modest. What does that mean? It means orderly, decent, reasonable. What we wear outwardly reflects on our inner purity. If it's questionable, don't wear it.

[15:12] That's a good guide. If in doubt, don't. Don't wear it. If you think it's questionable, it doesn't mean that a Christian must wear old and outdated clothing.

We've got to walk around like some very glum and miserable people, looking like we're wearing sackcloth.

It doesn't mean that we have to wear what's old or outdated, but that we consider what the Lord would think. Is it wholesome? Is it proper?

Is it fitting? Is it decent? Is it respectable? And there's nothing wrong with a woman being fashionable or attractive. Certainly not.

But the real beauty is much deeper than skin level. It's about character. That hidden man of the heart, that spirit of the man, of the woman.

[16:09] And modesty. What does that mean? In other words, being wary about anything that is too tight, too low, too short. That which shows too much skin. Short skirts or shorts or shirts, and low skirts, low shirts and pants.

These are the kind of things you've got to question that. As well as anything that shows too much shape. Tight sweaters, jeans or t-shirts. I'll tell you frankly, and this is, you know, this could be argued, and you might say, oh, you're stretching it here.

But these are questions we all have to answer. We all have to consider these things, because our fashion is not set by this world. It has to accord with these principles here, these godly principles. Chaste, modest. It means decent, respectable. So we have to consider such things. It goes on in 1 Timothy 2 verse 9.

Women adorn themselves in modest apparel with shamefacedness. Shamefacedness, that's another not very common word. It speaks of a sense of shame. It's an unusual sounding word.

[17:22] It's a healthy sense of shame, of blushing. And it's when we think, when we wear something, there's a shamefacedness, it means being conscious of what might bring embarrassment, or disgrace, and avoiding it.

So a godly woman is ashamed if her clothing is not right. She is a person of character. She's got a God-given sense of shame, that enables them to blush.

You know, sometimes it's like, we've lost that sense of blushing. You hear of it, it's like, it's uncommon now. We're just used to getting so much rubbish, that we've lost the sense of blushing. And I know I touched on it this morning, but for example, Jeremiah chapter 6, we see the prophet speaking of a people who could not be ashamed or blush.

Jeremiah 6, from verse 15, it says, were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush.

[18:33] And it goes on. But the point is, they were not ashamed, they could not blush. We're seeing things like, the city of Adelaide, having a gay pride, and flying a rainbow flag, over the city town hall.

And we're seeing this celebration of something that God's word says is abomination. That's how God defines it. And there's no, there's no getting around what God's word says about such things as that.

And yet, they've lost the sense of shame, and they've gone to the other extreme, where they're proud of their sin. Gay pride. God help us. God help Australia.

There's a loss of that sense of shame. And it says here that they've forgotten how to blush. And then it goes on, and we've got to get back to the old paths in verse 16. The clothing which we wear says something about our character.

And if our clothing exposes our body, it should cause shame and blushing. So wear clothes that will not cause shame. That's the sense of this shamefacedness.

[19:52] We blush when we're wearing something we're not comfortable with, because we honour God. 1 Timothy 2 verse 9, it goes on. I know this is

somewhat of an uncomfortable message, really, but I'm just saying what it says.

It says here, it goes on with shamefacedness, then the next one is sobriety. Sobriety. Again, another unfamiliar kind of word. Sobriety, it speaks about good sound judgment.

You know, when there's a drunk, they go to the sobering up shelter, to get sobered up, to get their reason back, to get that alcohol out of their mind and body, so they can make things straight again. Sobriety. It means having soberness, having sound judgment, having good sense and self-control. Well, in respect to our character, and how we project that in what we wear, we should have self-control.

We should have, make sound judgments, and make good sensible decisions. So when we go to wear something, as the context here, young women, but likewise men, could take the same points here.

[21:08] We check our notice. Will what I'm going to wear honour the Lord? Is it modest? Is it proper? Will it bring more attention to me, and less attention to God? Will it reflect the fact that I belong to the Lord?

Sobriety is another key word. Then it goes on, 1 Timothy 2, verse 10, But which becometh women, professing godliness with good works.

God's people should also pursue godliness. Godliness. So, young ladies, young women, be devout. Do what is pleasing to God. Godliness, God-likeness.

One young lady said that she looked for the most godly women that she knew, and looked at what they wore, and followed their example. We could reverse this, avoid wearing what ungodly women wear.

It's a wise thing to do, isn't it? Make those choices. Who will we follow? Godly women, or ungodly women? And men, who will we follow? Godly men, or ungodly men?

[22:12] These are all decisions to consider. And God's people are meant to be free from lasciviousness. That's another big word.

I'm not sure where that one is here, actually. It must be in one of the other references in 1 Peter. But lasciviousness, it means what is lewd, what is provoking those illicit desires.

And for a woman, this can mean not wearing clothing that is scanty, or promotes lust from men.

Christian men, likewise, must stay away from that which will corrupt their thinking, certain places or materials.

The Bible encourages us to make these decisions. I know this has been confronting, to talk on such things, but the word is very straight down the line here, as to setting a high standard for ourselves.

And your standard might be at a certain place. It may not be as others might set their standard. But before God set a standard, that you would think would honour your Lord.

[23:27] To set a standard that you'll live to please Him, and that you'll set principles of decency, so that what you wear, it's not going to project an ungodly spirit.

But it will be that hidden man of the heart, that godly spirit. And such that women will not wear that which will improperly catch the eyes of men, and cause them to sin.

Some will argue it's the fashion. Everyone else is wearing them. But Christians are not to be fashioned according to this world. It's very clear. We fashion ourselves according to the word, not the world.

So, again, consider these things. Cover yourself, and avoid that which may bring shame, or embarrassment. May cause others to lust, or may take you among evil companions.

Learn to be a lady, or a gentleman, who brings honour to the Lord. So that that is your ultimate. And Christian man, you'll look for a woman, who has those principles.

[24:33] Who sets that standard, so that you know that woman, has made a conscious decision, to honour the Lord. And likewise men, women rather, that you'll look for a lifetime spouse, a husband, that you can spend a lifetime with, who will live, and act like a gentleman.

That will act gracefully, and be polite. That will be sweet, and gracious. And as I say, as we elsewhere read, to clothe yourselves with humility.

We don't walk around prideful, and arrogant, and putting others down, but there's a spirit, of grace within us. And we'll project that sweetness of Christ, that gracious spirit.

Now there's all kinds of practical things, we could say, just on a purely practical level, to young people, that might be, watching here, that might consider these practical areas of life. that we don't walk slumped down, with our shoulders, and scuffing our feet. We learn good manners, and good taste. We're respectful, and courteous.

[25:48] We practice kindness, and cleanliness. We learn table manners, and courtesy. You wash yourself, you use deodorant, you brush your teeth, you be thankful.

These are all practicalities, that sadly, it's out the window, at times. People don't, you know, don't make an effort, to even dress up for church. We should put our best foot forward.

We should, once and dress well, for our Lord. We want to, I think sometimes, looking at the Mormons, and Jehovah's Witnesses, they put us to shame, at times, because, we can get sloppy, and there's no excuse for sloppiness.

You can go down the op shop, and get yourself a, a reasonable jacket, and shirt, and tie. Men, so, let's lift our game. And women, let's learn to speak, and dress, and act like ladies, not like foul-mouthed, street corner prostitutes.

You see that these days, where women just utter, the gutter talk, of the world. Let's lift the standard. Let's aim high. Young men, act like a gentleman, with dignity, and integrity.

[26:56] You know, open the door for, the women, and, and be respectful, to your mother, and your father. These are, wholesome, godly, decent things, that we can all learn, to put into action, because, we're projecting, who we belong to.

And, 1 Samuel 16, 7, it says, man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. Now, some people say, well, God's just looking at the heart. It doesn't matter what I wear.

But, the first part of the verse says, man looketh on the outward appearance. So, we've still got to, do, what's, decent, put the effort in, and, uh, try to project yourself, in the best way you can.

And, it doesn't mean you have to walk around, putting on a show, or strutting around like a peacock, but, that there's, there's a wholesome sense of, making a bit of an effort, in that regard.

As much as you can. And, again, you can, you can get decent clothes, from op shops. It's not, really a money thing. And, uh, it's possible to see a person's clothing, from a distance, and to tell their occupation.

[28:04] For example, you see a man dressed in a, in blue, with a badge, and a gun on his belt, you're fairly safe, in concluding, that he is a policeman. And, a person's character and values, can also show through, the clothes they wear.

Like someone put it, if you dangle the wrong bait, you'll catch, the wrong fish. And, so, young men, young women, when you're looking, for, a spouse, if you dangle the wrong bait, you'll catch the wrong fish.

So, an immodest woman, is the wrong bait. Don't go for it. Don't, don't, don't, don't be, don't be, alert by that. Chances are, you will not catch, the kind of guy, you would want, to spend the rest of your life with, young woman, if you dress like that.

Now, you could catch, that kind of guy, would you want that kind of guy, to raise your children. If you wear, immodest clothes, girls, chances are, you'll attract, creepy guys.

So, this is, this is the reality. If a girl dresses, in a provocative way, her clothes, can grab attention, but for all the wrong reasons. And a boy is attracted, for the wrong reasons.

[29:18] Has little concern, about treating her, with dignity, as a lady, or regarding her, as lovely. It cheapens her. So, our clothes, can cheapen us.

Young ladies, modesty, can serve a strong protection, for finding the right kind of man. A dignity, in your dress, invites and encourages, a man of dignity, and character, to be attracted to you.

So, learn to glorify the Lord, in how you present, in how you, project yourself, to bring attention, to the Lord, to aim high, to lift your game, to lift your standard.

It reflects, your Christian character. Now, why should the Mormons, and JW's, outshine us? We should be, exceeding.

There was a missionary, who visited some friends, in Thailand, and they all sat together, at the dining table, and in the process, of conversation, several comments, were made, about the

beautiful orchid, in the centre of the table.

[30:23] Not long after, leaving the home, the missionary, asked the people, who had gathered there, how many, had noticed the vase, at the table centre, that was used, to hold the orchid.

And no one, among them, could even recount, what the vase, had looked like, but they were captivated, by the beauty, of the flower. No one had taken, much notice, of the vase.

And again, it's, sometimes, the beauty, is not having, necessarily, clothes, that draw attention, to yourself, but about, that spirit, that is within, the spirit, that is within.

And the Lord Jesus, is the flower, if you like. We are the vase. We want to, project Christ, to our world. And to bring attention, to our Lord, to lift him up.

Here's the rose of Sharon. There were two friends, drinking coffee one day, and one mother, was lamenting over, the young girl, her young son, was dating.

[31:28] And she said, she wears a belly ring. Sometimes girls, don't realise, what they're doing, I suggested. She said, she knows, what she is doing. I asked her, what the motivation was, in having a belly ring, and the mother said, the girl answered, it makes me feel, more sexy.

You know, what people wear, can be, motivated, by what, is within them. And, better, far better, it'd be, that you aspire, to project godliness, in how you dress, in how you live.

How you dress, is reflective, of character. Ask God, for wisdom, in these choices, of life. It tells us, in the word of God, if any of you, lack wisdom, to ask, of God, who gives, to all men, liberally, and appraideth not, and it shall be given him.

He doesn't hold back, if we ask for wisdom, he will give it, liberally. Wisdom, is divine, as having a, heavenly perspective, on an earthly situation. Wisdom, is God's perspective, on life, that our Lord, looks at life, and he sees, our world from, his perspective.

Instead of the different, opinions of, men and women, let's get God's opinion, let's get God's perspective, let's get God's point of view, that's wisdom. Lastly, guard your heart, guard your heart.

[32:52] It says in Proverbs 4, 23, to keep thy heart, with all diligence, for out of it, are the issues of life. What it boils down to, is not a particular dress code, that women should wear, certain clothes, or certain lengths of skirts, or certain styles, and men should wear, certain types of clothes, certain types of, such.

It's about the heart. That is where it starts, and ends. It's in the heart, and our outward appearance, will show. It reflects the inward.

What statement, do my clothes make, about my heart? In choosing what to wear, whose attention, do I desire? Whose approval, do I crave? Do I want to please God?

Or am I just going along, with the world? Who am I trying, to identify with? Is the word of God, my standard, or is it the latest fashion? You know, you see, the latest fashion, so I know, I was talking, not long ago, about some, weird fashion it is, that people buy jeans, with holes in them.

You know, I must have some, really trendy jeans, back at home, that I wear in the garden, or when I do my, when I do my handyman jobs, around the place.

[34:11] But it's like, why would you go and buy, I'm not having, I hope no one's got, any holy jeans here tonight, I'm not meaning, to pick on anybody, but there's this, there's this weird, way of the world, that you just jump, on the bandwagon, with whatever the latest, trendy, fatty fashion is, instead of, you know, let's be, be sensible, and find wisdom.

Now, it's been a fairly, confronting, topic tonight, because, what we wear, and how we dress, it is a very personal thing, and, you might, disagree with some of the, things that I've said, but, nevertheless, the Bible does tell us, that, we project something, by what we wear, and it's about being discerning of that, and being, alert to that, asking to honour the Lord, with, all areas of our life, and sometimes, he might point things out, to us, and, for you, it might be something different, for me, the key here, really, is, our heart, and, the Bible says, the Lord Jesus says, thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, do you love him, if we love our Lord, it, embraces all, dimensions of our life, all the decisions of our life, in who we mix with, who we associate with, who we spend time with, in, what we think is, rightful, or wrongful, we'll set it by the word, not by, what the latest fashion is, what the, what the Hollywood, trend is, we'll set it by, what

is decent, and honourable, and likewise, with, our morals, and, our decency, we won't, we won't fall, to the gutter talk, of the world, we'll say,
I'm not going to use a word, like that, it's, it's crass, it's, it's a word that is vulgar, and crude, I'm going to consciously decide, that I'm not going to utter that, from my mouth, even a word that, we might, kind of, innocently, have developed a habit, of saying, I'm thinking, we'll make that choice, and men, we'll be gentlemen, we'll be gentlemen, gentlemen, we'll be, upstanding, gentlemen, in how we treat, others around us, as Paul, told Timothy, to treat, the women, around him, as sisters, with all purity, that's how we should, treat women, men, treat them, like you would, treat your sister, guard them, honour them, uphold them, be courteous to them, love them, women, aspire to a godly standard, set it high, set the bar high, not, by man-made rules, or, regulation, but because, your Lord, is that uppermost, thought of your mind, that you want to honour him, and that will reflect, in what you, do, in all aspects of life, now of course, tonight,
I've really been addressing, Christian folk, to, really give you some, pointers, about, what Paul told Timothy, as to, how, people should adorn themselves, he says, not with, all this, putting on a finery, but, as, that which is, women, professing godliness, with good works, and, the, the, the good, the, the most good work, that we can ever, have, and really, it's not a work, but is, to put our trust in Christ, that is the greatest, action, that we can ever, make, is to put our trust, in him, and it's not by, good works, of doing, noble things, but the, the most, wonderful work, that we can, enact, is to put our trust, in Christ, and, and to receive his salvation, and,
I urge you tonight, if you, if you don't know, his saving love, your destination, is, is damnation, but, if you, receive his love, you receive his work, of the cross, dying on your part, rising again, it's, eternity changing, not just life changing, and your destination, can be, altered, you can have a, a change of, flight route, as it were, and, instead of going, to hell, you'll go to heaven, by virtue, of his payment, for you, so, and that's made possible, because Christ died, on the cross, for our sins, and, that's the only, hope, that any of us have, now, again, let me, couch this, that, I've said some things, that might be, a bit, personal, might have touched, a few, nerves here tonight, yet, let's aspire, aspire to that, and that godliness, that is within, will come, and project without, it'll, it'll, it'll show, in every dimension, of life, not just in the clothing, but in the attitude, in the spirit, and that's even more so, important, that hidden man of the heart, as Peter writes, that, that inner, you, so, so he'll give you grace, he'll give you humility, he'll give you that attitude, that, that, inner fortitude, that character, of spirit, so that, you'll live the Christian life, not because you have to, not because it's an irksome, having to, but because it's a joyful, glad, blessing, to live for Christ, to know him, and to live, every moment, every day, to the best you can, to his praise, let's pray,