

When Dressing, Put on a Smile

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We live in a time when fashions can become obsessions with us. Garments are constantly changing style as the fashion designers dictate what the “respectable” people will be wearing this season. And some Christians seem to be caught up in the whirlwind of flashy clothes and all the trinkets that go with them. Sure, God wants us to be properly clothed at all times, but it becomes very easy to take advantage of the accessibility of clothes and become nothing more than breathing mannequins.

Christians must allow the purity of the Christian heart to decide what will be worn in public. I know of a woman who is a member of the church who must have a fabulous wardrobe. She always has something on which looks as though it came directly from the department store window. And if she wears the same dresses more than once, she does so at such intervals that no one could tell that she did not have access to an infinite variety of garments. But though her clothing is the latest in styling and usually very modest, she always appears a bit underdressed. Her countenance seems naked. She rarely has a smile or a kind word for anyone.

The expression of a Christian life can be the most precious of garments. It really isn't what one wears on the outside that draws people, but what one is inside. Some of us haven't learned this yet. One of the most obnoxious “Christians” I have ever met is meticulous about his dress. What he doesn't realize is that if he changed his personality, he could wear bib overalls and people would still love him.

Paul warned of overdressing and suggests that there is a certain amount of judgment and discretion involved in deciding what to put on. “Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good words, as befits women making a claim to godliness” (1 Tim. 2:9, 10). When we slip into our clothes each day, we ought to be able to say, “Father, I know that you will be pleased with this outfit today.”

When dressing, it isn't really the material or the pattern of the garment that is of paramount concern, but rather, that we are wearing the Spirit of Christ (Gal. 3:27). Oh yes, there's one more thing. The next time you get dressed to go out — be sure to put on a smile!