

IMPACT

I Must **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; *in all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.
Proverbs 3:5-6

Passage: Matthew 18:6 “But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea”

Quote: “Clothes and company tell true tales about character.” J, C, Ryle, written in the 1800’s

Immodesty involves appearances or actions that draw attention to areas of the body that can cause sinful thinking in others. Christ took sinful thinking seriously! He taught, “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”¹ In other words, if your intention when looking at someone else is to fanaticize about having a physical “encounter” with him or her, you have done so in your mind and have sinned in the sight of God. Christ went on to say, “If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.”² He was not “advocating self-mutilation for this would not in fact cure lust, which is actually a problem of the heart.”³ He was, however, commanding them to take sinful thoughts, as well as sinful deeds, very seriously.

God commands that we “*Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*”⁴ Some people not only refuse to flee youthful lusts, they encourage them in others by the way they dress and act and thereby become a stumbling block. In an unbiblical attempt to justify immodest attire, they might reply to reproof with the excuse, “If he/she has ‘dirty thoughts, that’s his/her problem, not mine!” Wrong thinking! We have already read how God views those who cause another to sin. The idea behind “causes one to sin” is “to entrap, to trip up or stumble; or to entice to sin, apostasy or displeasure.”⁵ The general principle of not eating

meat offered to idols *if doing so offends another Christian can be applied to attire.* Paul warned, “So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, *not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother’s way....* If your brother is grieved because of your food, [attire] you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your [attire] the one for whom Christ died.... It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine ***nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.***”⁶ To offend the conscience of another is not walking in love and is allowing your good to be evil spoken of. Paul also dealt with this issue in I Corinthians. He concluded with, “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or ***whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*** Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, just as I also please all men in all things, *not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.*”⁷

God’s A Honor Roll, Appearance, Part I

A final word about appearance and morality. “For this is *the will of God*, your sanctification: that you should *abstain from sexual immorality*; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel (or body)⁸ *in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust*, like the Gentiles who do not know God.... For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.”⁹ Christians must guide physical desires by a spiritual desire for purity and honor. You *develop* a sanctified or a sensual mindset through how you view people that you find physically attractive. “Being married does not guarantee sexual purity.”⁸ Your mindset will influence your relationship with your spouse and will act out in selfishness or selflessness. It could tragically lead to adultery. You *display* your mindset by how you dress! Your appearance should never encourage others to develop a selfish, lustful attitude. What mindset and motive influences *your* choice of clothing and how you wear it?

1 Matt.5:27-28 2 Matt.5:29-30 3 MSB 4 II Tim.2:22 5 Strong’s Gr.Dict 6 Rom.14 7 I Cor.8; 10:31-33 8 MSB 9 I Thess.4:3-8