

Let My Eyes Help My Heart

By Jimmy Stevens

INTRODUCTION: Our eyes often determine what is in our hearts. Our hearts are the source of our actions.

- A. **Eyes:** Matt 6:22-23, 2 Pet 2:14, 1 John 2:16
- B. **Hearts and conduct:** Job 31:7-8, Psa 24:3-4, 119:111-112, 141:3-4, Prov 4:23, 23:6-8, Matt 12:34-35.
- C. **God sees both hearts and conduct.** Psa 44:20-21, Heb 4:13
- D. This lesson: to strengthen our resolve to keep our hearts morally pure.

I. Things that can draw the mind to immoral thoughts.

- A. Vulgar talk, jokes or conversations.
- B. Pornography. *porne*- a prostitute (one who offers themselves for sex, usually for pay) and *graphien*- to write. Related to Greek for "fornication". Writings, pictures, etc., put images of shameful, human nakedness in the mind. Includes visual and audible mediums—TV, movies, magazines, clothing advertisements, books, music lyrics, internet. Even "so-called" famous "art". **Renaming pornography doesn't change it.**
- C. Indecent or immodest attire and conduct.

II. God's ordained sexual thoughts and actions for MARRIAGE! Heb 13:4

- A. **"Marriage is honorable"** Gen 2:21-24, Matt 19:4-6, 1 Cor 7:1-5, Prov 5:15-20, Lev 18:7-8, 20:11, Matt 19:4-6, Mark 10:6-9
- B. **"among all"** Every human being, married or not.
- C. **"and the bed undefiled"** **"bed"**—sexual relationship. Deut 27:20
 - 1. **"undefiled bed"**, sexual relationship kept only in marriage.
 - 2. A **"defiled"** bed is associated with **"fornicators and adulterers"** Gen 49:4, cf. 1 Chr 5:1.
 - 3. Pleasure, 1 Cor 7:1-4, Gen 3:16, Eph 5:28-29. procreation, Gen 1:27-28, (cf. Gen 4:1)
 - 4. Shared pleasure of nakedness. Gen 2:25, Lev 18:8, Prov 5:15-19
 - 5. Whether mentally-thoughts, verbally-words, physically-touch, visually-attire or bodily suggestions, all are privileges **ONLY IN MARRIAGE** (of a man and woman) and **NEVER** outside of or before marriage.
 - 6. **"two shall become one flesh"**, share their bodies in a way no other human relationship offers.
- D. **"but fornicators and adulterers God will judge."**
 - 1. **Fornication**, **general** sexual immorality with unmarried, married, homosexuality, bestiality, etc.
 - 2. **Adultery**, **specific** unauthorized sexual activity where a marriage is involved.
 - 3. Both **honorable** marriage and **dishonorable** fornication and adultery are defined by sexual activity. (cf. Mark 10:7-9, 1 Cor 6:15-16), Deut 22:22, 1 Cor 7:1-6.
 - 4. Images of nakedness precede fornication. Lev 18:17, 20:17, Prov 6:23-25, 7:10-18, Matt 5:28, Gal 5:19, **"lewdness"** or **"lasciviousness"** (KJV)- The sin of leading others to sin. Sin committed before and along with fornication or adultery.
- E. Physiologically and psychologically sexual desire differs between men and women, yet both have desire for each other. 1 Cor 7:1-7
 - 1. Therefore, **both** men and women, boys and girls are accountable in this matter.
 - 2. However, the greatest social problems: more the way a man looks at a woman, than how a woman looks at a man. (ex. Consider the focus of pornography, crimes of sexual assaults, Biblical examples).
- D. **Men and Women, Boys and Girls, True manhood and womanhood is demonstrated by godly character, not by the display of our bodies to the world.**

III. Why are impure sexual thoughts and actions so sinful?

- A. The greater the value, the greater the crime and punishment for destroying it. Corrupting God's great gift of sexual desire in marriage makes it so sinful.
- B. God designed sexual desire to have **"addictive properties"** that can be abused.
 - 1. **Good:** Pleasure that repeatedly draws a husband and wife together making their bond stronger. Its power should not be permanently denied. 1 Cor 7:5
 - 2. **Bad:** Outside of marriage, it causes one to constantly return to sexually immoral conduct. Leads to lying, deception and deeper involvement in sexual misconduct. 1 John 2:16, Matt 5:27-28, Prov 5:1-20, 6:23-35, 2 Pet 2:12-14, Gal 5:19-21, Eph 5:3-5, Col 3:2-8
- C. Don't deny yourself of this special, secret treasure by sharing it with others outside of marriage.

IV. Key factors promoting sexually immoral thoughts and conduct.

- A. Mental portrayal of nakedness of others. Without this, there is no issue. Therefore, covering shameful nakedness helps keep hearts pure. Requires a study of modest **apparel** and **conduct**.
- B. Two keys for learning God's thoughts on modest apparel and conduct.
 - 1. **First.** Nakedness is to be shared, mentally and physically, only in marriage.

2. **Second.** Determine what nakedness is and then cover it. Therefore, **modesty** is **DIRECTLY RELATED TO MARRIAGE, WHETHER ONE IS MARRIED OR NOT** (“among all” Heb 13:4).

V. What is modest?

- A. Some argue...
1. “God did not draw a line for modest apparel.” ARE THEY SURE?
 2. “Cannot use the Old Testament because we are under the New.” ARE WE DEALING WITH AN OLD LAW—NEW LAW MATTER?
 3. “Godly men and women will just know.” IF THEY KNOW THEY CAN TELL WHERE TO DRAW THE LINE. IF THERE IS NO LINE HOW CAN THEY KNOW?
 4. Would God give such a powerful human desire without clearly regulating it?
 5. How would God legislate shameful nakedness if He did not define it? Lev 18, 20.
- B. Two sources from which we learn how God defines shameful nakedness.
1. Direct statements in the Bible.
 2. Implied sin when contrasting with nakedness in marriage, Prov 5:15-20.
- C. All the Bible should be used since nakedness is a human, not legal, trait, 1 Cor 10:6.

VI. Where is God’s line between shameful nakedness and modesty?

- A. **Adam & Eve, Gen 3:6-10, 21**
1. Their choice of clothing still left them naked before God.
 - a. “coverings” NKJ, “aprons” (KJV, ASV, RSV), “loin coverings” (NAS), or “loincloths” (NRS).
 - b. *Strong*: Hebrew word *chagowr* (khag-ore’) as “a belt for the waist.”
 - c. *Brown, Driver & Briggs*: “(1) a girdle, a belt; (2) a girdle, a loin-covering, a belt, a loin-cloth, armor.”
 - d. This Hebrew word appears in Gen 3:7; 1 Sam 18:4; 2 Sam 18:11; 20:8; 1 Kings 2:5; 2 Kings 3:21; and Isa 3:24. It always refers to a girdle, a belt, a sash, a loin-covering, a loin-cloth, or to armor that would cover the midsection of the body. 1 Sam 18:4, Isa 3:24
 2. God made proper garments for Adam and Eve.
 - a. “coats of skins” KJV, ASV. “garments of skins” RSV, NAS, NIV, NRS. “tunics of skin” NKJ.
 - b. *Strong*: Hebrew word *kethoneth* (keth-o’-neth) as “from an unused root meaning to cover; a shirt: KJV—coat, garment, robe.”
 - c. *Brown, Driver and Briggs*: “a tunic, an undergarment; a long shirt-like garment usually of linen.”
 - d. *Gesenius’ Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament Scriptures*: “coats/garments/tunics” as “a tunic, an inner garment next to the skin (Lev 16:4); also worn by women (SoS 5:3; 2 Sam 13:18); generally with sleeves, coming down to the knees, rarely to the ankles.”
 - e. *Wilson’s Old Testament Word Studies*: “garments” as “a tunic, worn next to the skin... generally with sleeves, to the knees, but seldom to the ankles.”
 - f. Hebrew word often translated “tunic(s).” Ex: Joseph’s coat, Gen 37:3, 23, 31-33, the priestly garments, Ex 28:4, 39-40; 29:5, 8; 39:27; 40:14, etc.
 3. Fig leaves covered only the generative portions. God’s tunics covered from *shoulders* to *knees*. He established clothing as a permanent requirement. This agrees with the rest of the Bible.
- B. “naked” or “nakedness”—different degrees of being unclothed, or clothed improperly.
1. Without any clothing (Gen 2:25; 3:7-11; Isa 20:2-4)
 2. Poorly clad (Job 22:6; 1 Cor 4:11; Mat 25:36-44; Jam 2:15)
 3. Without an outer garment John 21:7.
 4. Figurative senses: uncovered, open Heb 4:13
- C. Whether *literal* or *figurative*, God’s description of human nakedness is the same.
1. **THIGHS**:. Ex 28:42-43, 20:26. God required higher moral standards than heathen religions. Babylon’s wickedness, Isa 47:1-3. Any clothing or conduct exposing or accentuating thighs. The knee is a natural visual and psychological break in that section of the body. The more the thigh is exposed the greater the anticipation of viewing something higher with evil thoughts.
 2. **HIPS**: (mid-section) 2 Sam 10:4, Isa 20:2-4. Clothing accentuating hips as a focal point of attention.
 3. **BREASTS**: (chest). Women’s breasts are for their husband’s pleasure, not other men’s eyes. Prov 5:15-20, Ezek 23:3, 8, 10, 18, 21, Hos 2:2-5. Clothing that expose or accentuate breasts or cleavage.
- D. When the *thighs*, the *hip area* and *chest area* are the center of attention they can excite sexual desires whether for good in marriage or for evil and shame associated with fornication. It is foolish to argue God has not set a standard. Judgment on appearance must be governed by God’s definition of nakedness.

VII. Shameful nakedness by apparel and body language.

- A. **Bodily movements**. Can be fully covered, but use body language. Ex: Dancing, cheerleading, walking, suggestive movements or poses, hand and facial gestures. Prov 5:3, 6:24-25, 7:1-27.

- B. **Tight fitting.** Nakedness displayed in form fitting clothing. Ex: Tight fitting garments.
- C. **Types of clothing.** Prints, designs, logos or other features that accentuate shameful nakedness.
- D. **Special occasions.** Don't change sexual desire. Men don't think "occasion". Ex: Strapless or low-cut formal "prom" dresses, "wedding gowns", skimpy swim suits, costumes, athletic uniforms. The marriage treasure is more valuable than any special occasion. Don't let worldly people tell you how to dress.
- E. **Short and revealing.** Obviously immodest.
- F. **Preserving marital nakedness is the issue.** Modest attire and conduct hides shameful nakedness.

IX. "But preacher..."

- A. **"Not everybody lusts for me when I wear that."** Do you know everybody's thoughts? We dress not because some **may not** lust, but because some **will**.
- B. **"Some will lust regardless of what we wear."** Let them bear the burden alone. Set a good example for them.
- C. **"But after a while people get used to style"** That doesn't make it right. Can we apply that to stealing, lying, murder, language? Getting used to sin does not make it less sinful. 1 Tim 4:1-2
- D. **"But I have the right to dress any way I want."** We are not talking about rights. We are talking about preserving God's designed attraction in marriage. **NO ONE HAS A RIGHT TO VIOLATE GOD'S LAW.**
- E. **"I'll show them, I'll wear something that is even more immodest."** Invariably some will challenge God's law of decency. They stray further away from God. They become like the harlots of Proverbs who entice with their bodies. **NO ONE CAN DEFY GOD AND GET AWAY WITH IT.**
- F. **Ignorance** of modesty or **inability** to find decent clothes that properly fit does not change the effect it may have on others. Gaining weight does not justify indecency.
- G. **"Less clothing is more comfortable when it is hot."** Turn your mind to the cross of the suffering Savior who suffered so you could go to heaven. Then decide if a little discomfort is worth it.
- H. We either respect marriage with our attire and conduct or we respect fornicators and adulterers. Sharing our bodies with the wrong people cheapens our special gift in marriage.
- I. In a society that is so easily triggered in sexual assaults and murder related to sex crimes, shouldn't we be even more protective?

X. "Godliness" and "good works" are required for modest apparel and conduct.

- A. A godly mind will learn what is modest and moral.
 "We met a good lady in Australia who, before her conversion and soon thereafter, took great pleasure in going to the beach in the usual costume. But as she matured spiritually, she was less and less comfortable there. It was not the result of hearing "southern preachers," for she neither heard preaching nor read articles on the subject. It was the result of her own study and its influence upon her. ("What About Mixed Swimming?" by Sewell Hall, *Christianity Magazine*, July 1990)
- B. **1 Tim 2:9-10**, "in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, 10 but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works."
 1. **"Moderation"**, **"modest"**, avoids drawing attention to oneself for the wrong reason. Includes extravagant attire, scant attire, or even descent attire badly displayed. The kind of person we are is the kind of person we will attract. When people are immodest, decent people turn their heads away. Who's left looking?
 2. **"Godliness with good works"** applies to both men and women. Too often, style is more important than **"godliness and good works"**. Generally, this worldly attitude is seen in other areas of life. Can we attract people with shameful nakedness, **then ask them to study?**
 3. **"Propriety"**, **"proper"** proper for pleasing God. First ask "What would please God?", then dress and act accordingly. Phil 1:9-10
 4. Godly minds understand that immodest apparel and conduct are the **bait used in fornication**. (whether committed or not). Therefore, 1 Cor 6:18, 2 Tim 2:22, 1 Th 5:22
- C. **Teach children early.** The home is God's sex education environment.
 1. Exact age of a understanding sexual matters is unknown. Start early. A good habit of modesty before that age makes teaching it later easier.
 2. Teach that modest apparel and conduct are how God wants them to respect themselves and marriage, and he has given them a special treasure that belongs to no one else on earth except their spouse.
 4. Husbands and fathers are the best advisors for wives and daughters on how men look at women, and what is proper dress. (**care enough to protect your treasures**). Many wives cheat on their husbands by sharing their nakedness with other men.
 5. Wives and mothers help preserve decency in their husbands and sons.
 6. **Sadly, parents teach children to dress and act like fornicators, then fear for their morality.**

7. Sadly, society promotes the things they abhor. (registered sex offenders, child molesters, sexual assaults, etc.).
- D. **Typical professional advice for the work place**, "Look in a mirror to **SEE WHAT OTHERS WILL SEE!**

XI. How can I let my eyes help my heart?

- A. Honestly review this lesson.
- B. Repent of shameful thoughts and conduct and ask for forgiveness.
- C. Keep God's word on hand Job 31:1-12, 11:13-20, Prov 6:20-35, Psa 101:3, 119:37, 123:1, Col 3:5-6
- D. Take control of you mind when tempted. Turn your head. Walk away. Go home. Get out of the car. Get out of the room. Turn off the movie, TV show, music, internet. Don't pick up or look at pornographic books, magazines, pictures, internet, etc. Get involved with brethren and things that help you keep your mind pure. Pray and study.

CONCLUSION: The gift of human sexuality is beautifully designed by God to be expressed and enjoyed as a special treasure only in the marriage relationship. Proper attire and conduct are necessary for preserving that treasure. Use your godly character to attract others. 1 Pet 3:3-4

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