

# The Examiner



Published by the Winter Park church of Christ  
Meeting at: 2122 Market Street; Wilmington NC 28403

[www.winterparkcocnc.com](http://www.winterparkcocnc.com)

Vol. 2, No. 6

Edited by John Cripps

May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014

## Modesty by Mark Mayberry - Part Three

Furthermore, the Israelites were to be unrelenting in their opposition to idolatry. Moses said, “You shall not worship their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their deeds; but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their sacred pillars in pieces” (**Exod. 23:24**). He added, “You shall tear down their altars, and smash their sacred pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire” (**Deut. 7:5**). These words apply directly to the nation of Israel, a political theocracy. Nevertheless, there is a spiritual application that must be made to the Christian era: namely, we must militantly oppose false religions. Paul said, “We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ” (**2 Cor. 10:5**). These principles are clearly set forth in the Old Testament and carried forward to the New.

Consider the matter of adultery, which is condemned in both Covenants. God defined this word in the Old Testament (**Exod. 20:14; Lev. 20:10; etc.**). However, when the New Testament was written, the Lord did not have to go back and

redefine the word. The Old Testament meaning was carried forward into the Christian age. Therefore, when someone today gives a new and radically different meaning to the word “adultery” (such as those who redefine adultery as mere covenant breaking), that ought to be a warning signal to those who know and love the truth.

In like manner, God’s assessment of nakedness has not changed. The Bible consistently condemns all forms of public nakedness. The Lord’s commendation of modesty and condemnation of immodesty remains constant from dispensation to dispensation. Yes, the Law of Moses has been nailed to the cross. Yet, let us also recognize that the things that were written beforehand were written for our learning (**Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:6, 11**). In affirming that preachers of the gospel could receive financial support, Paul said, “I am not speaking these things according to human judgment, am I? Or does not the Law also say these things?” Then he quoted from **Deuteronomy 25:4**, which says, “You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing” (**1 Cor. 9:9-10**). Was Paul “binding the Old Testament”?

No, he was emphasizing a principle that has remained unchanged from generation to generation. The same is true regarding the issue under discussion.

## Modest Apparel Should Conceal The Thighs

To this end, the Levitical priests were to wear linen trousers that reached to the knees (**Exod. 28:40-43**). Please note that the linen trousers or breeches were worn underneath additional outer layers of clothing. Yet, they were required so that, under all conditions, the priest would be modestly clothed. What area was to be covered by the trousers? The text says “they shall reach from the loins even to the thighs.” Does this mean that the garment merely extended into the thigh area? No, they fully covered the thigh. The Old Testament repeatedly uses “from . . . to” expressions that would define a range of things from one extreme to another, including everything in between (**Lev. 13:12-13; Num. 6:4; 2 Sam. 14:25; Jer. 31:34**). Accordingly, The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia says, “breeches” were “a garment, extending from the waist to or just below the knee or to the ankle, and covering each leg separately.”<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, the altar was to be without steps so as to prevent indecent exposure while climbing up to offer sacrifice (**Exod. 20:25-26**). This commandment demonstrates that God required a higher moral standard than heathen religions,

which were characterized by immodesty and immorality.

Another passage worth considering is God’s description of the overthrow of Babylon, wherein Isaiah likens that cruel northern nation to a woman whose nakedness is exposed. He said, “Take off the skirt, and uncover the thigh” (**Isa. 47:1-3**). This language clearly implies that a woman’s skirt should cover her thighs. If the thighs are visible, her nakedness is uncovered. Therefore, the people of God should avoid wearing any clothing in public that would expose or accentuate the thighs. Examples of inappropriate clothing include typical high-school cheerleading uniforms, mini-skirts, slit-skirts, shorts, swimsuits, etc.

The point can also be seen in New Testament terminology. In commenting on **1 Timothy 2:9**, Adam Clark says, “The apostle seems to refer here to different parts of the Grecian and Roman dress. The stolee seems to have been originally very simple. It was a long piece of cloth, doubled in the middle, and sewed up on both sides, having room only for the arms; at the top, a piece was cut out, or a slit made, through which the head passed. It hung down to the feet, both before and behind, and was girded with the zona round the body, just under the breasts. It was sometimes made with, sometimes without, sleeves; and, that it might sit the better, it was gathered on each shoulder with a band or buckle. Some of the Greek women wore them open on each side, from

the bottom up above the knee, so as to discover a part of the thigh. These were termed phainomeerides, showers (discoverers) of the thigh; but it was, in general, only young girls or immodest women who wore them thus.”<sup>2</sup>?

Before moving on to the next point, let us quote from Brother Connie Adams who made the following comments at the Hebron Lane Church of Christ in Shepherdsville, Kentucky on 9/2/97:

I want to say one more thing about Christians and shorts. Brethren often have pot lucks. I’m often hesitant about attending pot lucks in warm weather, because I know before I go that some of my brothers or some of my sisters will show up in attire which, so far as I am concerned, is immodest. They often come in what’s called “walking shorts.” The problem with shorts is that they don’t have as much material in them as a skirt does. A woman can have a skirt down to her knees, and when she sits down, she’s got enough cloth that she can protect herself and not be exposed to everybody. But you don’t have enough cloth with shorts. Those who wear walking shorts are fairly modest when they are standing up. But there is one thing about these walking shorts. Sooner or later, walkers get tired, and they have to sit down. Then when they sit down at a picnic table, and they cross their legs, it all the sudden becomes a leg show. I’m calling it what it is. It’s a leg show, and brethren didn’t used to go to leg shows! Christians used to

know the difference between right and wrong on this subject, but somehow, it seems we don’t know the difference anymore.

### Modest Apparel Should Conceal the Hips and Waist

We gain some insight into this issue by the harsh actions of Hanun, the son of Nahash, king of the Ammonites. When David sent ambassadors to console the Ammonite king on the death of his father, Hanun dishonored David’s ambassadors by shaving off half of their beards and cutting off their clothes in the middle, thus exposing their buttocks. Upon hearing of this scandalous disgrace, David declared war against the Ammonites (2 Sam. 10:1-4).

Another example would be that of Isaiah, who walked naked and barefoot three years as a sign against Egypt and Ethiopia. This example showed that Israel should not make alliances with such nations because they would also be led away captive, naked and barefoot, with their buttocks uncovered (Isa. 20:1-4). Notice again that nakedness is defined as exposing the hips.

Therefore, Christians should avoid wearing any clothing in public that would expose or accentuate the hips. Many modern bathing suits expose more of the hips than they conceal. Tight clothing can also “expose” the buttocks. Many folks wear clothing so tight that the effect is the same as if they were naked. Leotards, Spandex, and tight fitting jeans only change the color of one’s skin. The

world understands how men react to such clothing. Conway Twitty once popularized a ribald song about “the angel who was a devil in her tight fitting jeans.” Let’s not foolishly deceive ourselves in this regard.

One other point can be made from Exodus 28:42, which teaches that the priests were to be covered from the loins/waist to the thigh. Recognizing the inclusive nature of this passage, not only does it indicate that an uncovered thigh is nakedness, it shows that an uncovered loin/waist is also counted as nakedness. Hence, the waist must be covered as well. Bare midriffs are condemned based on this principle. ---- concluded in our next bulletin

### Someone once said,

- "We rush to grow up and then long to be children again.
- We lose our health to make money and then lose our money to restore our health.
- We think anxiously about the future and forget the present, so that we live in neither the present nor the future.
- We live as if we will never die, and die as if we had never lived." How sad.
- But, you know what? Fearing God and keeping His commandments could make this all better (Ecc1 12:13). — Via Whit Sasser