

The Christian's Spiritual Garments

Lesson 11

I. Last Week We Discussed Proper Clothing For The Christian Woman.

A. We understand that God is not impressed with outward beauty. Since He can see the "hidden person" in our hearts and minds, this is where He looks for beauty in His children.

1 Samuel 16:7b – "...for the Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

B. Knowing this, our outward appearance is still important because:

1. We must be a good example to those inside and outside the church.

1 Thessalonians 4:11-13 – "¹¹ that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, ¹² that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing."

2. We are commanded to glorify God with our bodies.

1 Corinthians 6:19 – "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

C. Christian women must set some steadfast rules regarding clothing based on New Testament principles of righteousness.

1 Timothy 2:9a – "...in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation,"

1. Modesty – (a) free from vanity or boastfulness, (b) having regard for decency of behavior, speech, dress, etc., (c) propriety – appropriateness, suitability, correctness

2. Modesty is required – regarding how much of the body is revealed.

3. Moderation is required – regarding excessive spending

4. Propriety or appropriateness is required in order to make proper choices in our clothing, considering the events we are dressing for. Not all garments are appropriate for every occasion. For example, you don't wear a ball gown to Six Flags, nor do you wear shorts to church.

II. What Is The First Rule For Helping The Christian Woman Develop Her "Inward" Beauty In The Eyes of God And Of Those Who See Her Example In The World.

A. Peter explains that this "inner beauty" is what is important to God:

1 Peter 3:3-4 – "³ Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—⁴ rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God."

B. **Love God above all else.** Pleasing God will never be the priority it must be until we love Him above ALL else.

1. **Deuteronomy 6:3-4** – "⁴ *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!* ⁵ *You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.*"
2. **Mark 12:30** – "*And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.* *This is the first commandment.*"
3. Jesus tells us that love compels action:
 - a. **John 14:15** – "*If you love Me, keep My commandments.*"
 - b. **Matthew 6:33** – "*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*"
4. It is human nature to organize our priorities according to what we value most. Are we less productive in the kingdom because our love of God is not really our first love?
5. Friendship with the world can be the greatest threat to loving God above all else.

James 4:4-5 – "*Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.* ⁵ *Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, 'The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously?'*"

God is jealous of anything that prevents us from loving Him most.

6. In **Revelation 2** we read the letter to the church in Ephesus. It said, "I know your works:
 - a. They labored in the kingdom
 - b. They were patient.
 - c. They would not bear those who were evil.
 - d. They tested false apostles and found them liars.
 - e. They persevered.
 - f. Yet notice how they failed:

Revelation 2:4-5 – "*Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place – unless you repent.*"
 - g. Many today have lost that initial enthusiasm for reaching out to the lost, the hungry, the sick, the discouraged, the grieving, the poor that are all around us. Serving God may mean learning something new or trying something different than we think we are capable of.
 - h. We must strive to be like Paul, who took advantage of every opportunity to serve God – even when it was hard, or inconvenient or he was in pain or when he was criticized and persecuted.

2 Corinthians 12:9-11 – “⁹ And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For **when I am weak, then I am strong.**”

- i. God wants us to attempt things that we think we are too weak to do. Only then will we realize that God provides the strength we need to accomplish His work. That leaves us with nothing to boast about since we are only capable with His help.

III. What Are The Christian Virtues That Must Clothe The Christian Woman?

A. **HUMILITY** – **I Peter 5:5** – “Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

1. Christ left an example that we should follow in His footsteps:

Philippians 2:3-8 – “³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but **in humility** consider others better than yourselves. ⁴ Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross!”

2. Jesus said we must deny ourselves: **Luke 9:23** – “Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.”

3. Following the example of Christ, Christians should be willing to perform the most menial services for other people.

John 13:14-16 – “Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.”

4. **Colossians 2:16-23** – “Let no one cheat you out of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.”

- a. False teaching is a symptom of haughtiness, not humility. When we do not “hold fast to the Head (Jesus Christ)” of the church we begin to rationalize over-stepping the authority of Christ as the head of the church.
 - b. No “beheaded” creature can survive. The body of Christ is nourished and knit together” by the head. The head is the decision making center of the body. The parts only work when they are connected to the head.
 - c. Growth of the body results when the head is secure in its place. Then God allows the growth to flow to the body.
 - d. Congregations who have relaxed the standards of Christ in order to “grow” their congregation do not get true growth – their body just “swells”. Swelling in a body indicates that something is wrong.
- B. SUBMISSION – Submission is an underlying theme of the whole Bible. It is necessary to learn submission at an early age, so God created the chain of authority for the family, for the church, and for the government.
1. We will never be able to love God above all else and obey His commandments if we do not understand the importance of submission.
 2. The fleshly nature is rebellious and must be made to submit.
 3. Paul defines the line of authority for the church and the family
 - a. Family – **Ephesians 5:22-25**:
 - Vs 22 – “Wives submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.”
 - Vs 23 – “For the husband is head of the wife...”
 - Vs 25 – Husbands have a responsibility as the head of the family. “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her...”
 - Women in the world today seem to hate the words “submit” and “submissive” because for decades the feminist agenda has told women they can and should do anything a man can do.
 - ✓ They view submission as weakness, lack of ambition, laziness, lack of self-esteem and even ignorant. But the Biblical idea of submission is FAR from that.
 - ✓ When a husband loves his wife as Christ loves the church, he is not a domineering dictator. He loves her, treasures her, protects her, defends her and works to provide for her. He is willing to give up his life for her – just as Christ did for the church. Women in the world cannot experience such a relationship outside of Christianity.
 - ✓ A submissive woman can still make decisions, earn and handle money, be productive in society and the church, and be wise council in the family. She will not diminish her husband’s authority (especially in front of others).

- ✓ A submissive woman discusses situations that affect the family with her husband so they can both come to an agreement regarding the outcome because they both respect each other.

b. Church

- Vs 22 – "...Christ is the head of the church; and the savior of the body."
- Vs 24 – "The church is subject to Christ...", meaning every individual in the church.
- **Matthew 26:39** – Jesus was submissive to the will of God. *"He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."*
- Jesus is our perfect example of submission to God in dire circumstances. It is easy to be submissive when it doesn't cost you anything – but what about when it can cost you enormously?

c. Government – **Romans 13:1-2** – *"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves."*

- Unfortunately, this passage does not apply only to good governments. All government authority comes from God and we are bound to obey the laws of the land.
- The exceptions for this rule are:
 - ✓ when government demands compliance with laws that go against the word of God. If a Christian must go against God in order to comply with laws of the land, we must not.
 - ✓ when government forbids worship of God
 - ✓ when government forbids certain Biblical teaching because it may offend others (homosexuality, monogamy, moral purity, point out existing religious error, sin etc)
- Submission to the government is NOT a suggestion, it is a commandment.

I Peter 2:13-17 – ¹³ *Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. ¹⁵ For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men— ¹⁶ *as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.* ¹⁷ *Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king."**

- Many parents fail to teach their children to respect authority outside the home. This has resulted in several generations of young people who delight in opposing authority of the school, the police, even their jobs.
 - d. Submission is the tool that God used to create an orderly society among men on earth.
 - If we do not learn the everyday lessons about submission, chances are we will never fully understand submission to God.
 - Learning submission begins with infants and continues until death.
 - We don't do our children any favors if we fail to teach them the simple facts about the "line of authority" which begins with parents and ends with God.
- C. RIGHTEOUSNESS – This is the goal every Christian should be aiming for in their daily lives.

Isaiah 61:10 – "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness..."

This verse confirms an obvious fact, which is, that one cannot have righteousness without having salvation first.

1. Salvation reconciles us to God and righteousness then depends upon what we do once we have salvation.
2. Paul defines the source of the righteousness we seek:

Philippians 3:8-9 – *"⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that **which is through faith in Christ**, the righteousness which is from God by faith"*

 - a. We learned in our study of the book of Romans that "faith" does not simply mean "believing with your mind". James confirms that also.

James 2:19 – *"You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!"*
 - b. True faith compels one to ACT on that faith by obedience to the word of God.
 - c. We see that "active faith" emphasized in **Hebrews 11** where all of the heroes of the faith were counted as righteous because their faith compelled them to ACT upon God's word:
 - Vs 4 – *"By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks."*

- Vs 7 – *"By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith."*
 - Vs 8 – *"¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," ¹⁹ concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense."*
3. We must understand that we do not gain righteousness through our own "good works", even though good works are a necessary part of the Christian life.
- a. **Titus 3:4-6** – *"⁴ But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, ⁵ not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. ⁸ This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men."*
 - b. We must practice righteousness in our daily lives in an effort to be like Jesus Christ.
1 John 3:7 – *"Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous."*
 - c. We receive blessings today because we "practice righteousness".
1 Peter 3:12 – *"For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."*
 - d. One who continues to practice righteousness will finally be rewarded beyond all imagination when Jesus comes to collect His bride from the earth.
Revelation 19:7-9 – *"⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."*
4. KNOWLEDGE – Without proper nourishment the physical body becomes weak and sick. Without proper spiritual food our spirits become weak and sick.

- a. This has been true since God first gave the written Law of Moses.
Hosea 4:6 – “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”
- b. Many in the world today consider themselves “knowledgeable” and highly educated about almost everything. But few are truly knowledgeable about God’s word in truth.
Proverbs 1:7 – *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction.”*
- c. Gaining knowledge of God’s word is an ever increasing project. If we lose our zeal for finding only the truth of the Bible, we will also lose our zeal for God.
Colossians 1:10 – *“ that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;”*

IV. The Faith We Receive From Hearing The Gospel Is INTENDED To Cause Us A Transformation Which Produces Christ-likeness, Righteousness And Completeness In Our Hearts.

- A. This transformation is one that we must commit ourselves to:
 1. **Romans 12:1-2** – *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”*
 2. Remember, we are NOT the same person we were before becoming a Christian. We must make every effort to develop the new person into a likeness of Christ.
Ephesians 4:23-24 – *“...be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.”*
 3. We must learn to seek higher things.
Colossians 3:1-3 – *“¹If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. ³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”*
 4. We must add better things to our lives.
2 Peter 1:5-8 – *“giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶ to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, ⁷ to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. ⁸ For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

5. We must produce fruit.

Ephesians 5:21 – "²² *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,* ²³ *gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*"

6. We must meditate on better things.

Philippians 4:8 – "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."

B. It takes effort on our part to develop the mind of Christ. It is not a miraculous gift we are given when we become a "babe" in Christ.

1. A good beginning is to remember that Christ came as a servant to others and we must have the spirit of servant-hood as well.

Philippians 2:5-8 – "⁵ *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,* ⁶ *who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,* ⁷ *but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.* ⁸ *And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.*"

2. It is not in the fleshly nature to strive for these things:

a. We like being recognized for our good work.

b. Servants are not valued in society, and few would aspire to become a "bondservant", which indicates that we are not only servants, but also indebted to our master.

c. Jesus willingly gave up his true position as "equal with God" in order to live on earth in the form of an ordinary man. That is a sacrifice that I don't think we can truly comprehend.

d. Few people are willing to let their highest accomplishments be forgotten so that they could take a take on a lowly, menial position.

3. The best tools we have to help us accomplish these goals is the word of Christ and the encouragement of our Christian brothers and sisters.

Colossians 3:16 – "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

CONCLUSION: When we see all of this information gathered together and realize that there is much work to be done to transform ourselves into the Christ-like people that we so much want to be – it can seem an impossible task. We must not be discouraged by that thought, but rather accept that it can only be accomplished one day at a time. However, there are some things we can do to help us stay focused:

1. Write down some specific goals for ourselves: short term goals that will be accomplished fairly soon, and some long term goals that will be ongoing throughout our lives. The list will also be encouragement when we can see our progress and growth in these areas.

2. Pray for wisdom and courage to accomplish the goals.
3. Set aside a time each day to meditate on the higher things mentioned in Philippians 4:8.
4. Make a list of good works you are capable of performing and work toward accomplishing each of them. Checking off completed tasks is very encouraging.
5. Make a list of a few good works you have never attempted and commit to trying them.
6. Increase your knowledge of God's word in Bible study and by reading trusted Christian magazines (Gospel Advocate, Gospel Journal, Spiritual Sword, Christian Woman Magazine, etc) and inspirational books by trustworthy authors.
7. Don't stop until you can see the change in yourself.

Psalm 17:15 – “¹⁵ As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.”