

is designed to give the impression that she is a woman who worships the Lord. What a purpose and goal for a woman's attire. It takes the power of the Spirit's control to maintain this sort of situation! Good dress therefore goes along with one's worship!

Along with this worshipping of God and the apparel which is in keeping with it is the matter of "good works." These go right with "good dress." This is not some kind of addendum, but it points out that the best adorning any woman may have is good works. When this is seen, the Spirit of God is in control. This is truly serviceable material for any apparel.

It is interesting to note that when Dorcas is mentioned, it is not her dress, but her good works (Acts 9:36). This is the most "becoming" kind of clothing a woman can wear. Would to God all born again women would see this and be exercised in their hearts for this and this only in the purpose of God.

#### Conclusion.

What do we say to these things? The answer is quite simple. God is still looking at the inside of a person more than He is the outside (cf. 1 Sam. 16:7). Godliness is more important than wearing apparel. It is not how we look before men, but how we are in HIS holy presence. God grant to us that holy desire--all of us men and women--to glorify God in all things! Amen.

## THE BOOK OF FIRST TIMOTHY

### "Decorum of Women"

1 Timothy 2:9,10

#### Introduction

1. The place of women in public worship has been a source of controversy for a long time. We cannot resolve it, but we can provide a solution which to many may prove satisfying. It is, in any case, what we believe the Word of God teaches.
2. That Paul has shifted his emphasis to women in these verses is noted by the phrase "in like manner." This is but one word in the original Greek and indicates a major division of thought. He has been dealing with men (the male sex) and their responsibility to pray (v. 8). But women have their own peculiar role to play before God and men in public worship.
3. Most difficulties rise just here--role playing. When each child of God finds his place in the total program of God, the blessings will flow. Paul expresses his "will" in this matter for the verb "I will" is carried over from the previous verse to make plain sense. Let no one assume, however, that this is a personal matter with Paul. It is the Word of God and therefore is the "will of God." It could be nothing less than this if one believes in the verbal plenary inspiration of Scripture!
4. Well then, what does the Spirit will? He wills women concerning their dress and ministry. The texts for this study concern the former item. That dress is the concern of these verses is made plain by the phrase "adorn themselves." The verb is the same as the noun from which the term

"world" is often found in the N.T. It means an "orderly arrangement." Hence, women's dress or attire is to be of such a sort as to present themselves in an orderly fashion. The Spirit expostulates on this and recommends a wardrobe for women. What kind of clothing is included in this wardrobe? Study the text and find out! Mark these items:-

1. BECOMING APPAREL.

This thought is derived from the phrase "modest apparel." The word apparel has to do with that which is external. It is appearance as exhibited in one's dress. The idea of dress which is "becoming" comes from the "modest" which is the same term as "adorn" considered earlier. Hence, the department of a woman should be with dress becoming and orderly in fashion. This is a general injunction and sets the pace for all that follows.

2. EMOTIONAL APPAREL.

This does not in any wise suggest apparel which stirs up emotions! That is a far cry from the truth of the Word of God. As translated in our AV, the word which is employed is "shamefacedness." It should better be considered as the RV "shamefastness." It is the expression which is innate with those who truly love the Lord and is that feeling which shrinks from anything which is unbecoming a believer on the Lord Jesus. It is that inward experience which should accompany the outward bearing and deportment.

The assumption in this line of thinking is that one's heart is controlled by the Spirit of God. That the soul is susceptible to the dealings of our precious Lord. God grant that such will be the preparation of heart amongst godly women to the praise of the Lord in the assembly. What we are talking about here is a Spirit controlled life. Only this sort of situation will breathe the willingness to dress in accord with the Word. Remember: this IS the will of God. God give us women with such fixity of purpose.

3. WELL-BALANCED APPAREL.

"Sobriety" is a word which is often found in the Word. The root of this word suggests sound-mindedness. It is the good sense of the child of God that is at stake here. The apparel which falls into this category is acceptable with God. It is opposed to wastefulness. The thought conveyed is of a well-balanced state of mind. This is the result of habitual self-restraint. Now that's a big point. Many are not willing to exercise self-restraint, but that is what God drives at in this word. When a woman is concerned with a sound-mind apparel, she is in keeping with the will of God!

4. MODERATE APPAREL.

In this admonition, there is a great deal in the negative sense. It is not meant to deprive a woman of aesthetics, but to warn against the all too frequent emphasis which some women have: personal adornment for its own sake and not the Lord's.

Here the warning is against braided or plaited hair, gold, pearls, and costly clothing. It may be that the gold and pearls were intertwined in the plaited hair. The cost of clothing becomes a point of concern for the Lord! Let us not water this down nor call it into question as something which is of no consequence. This whole reference by Paul is also found in 1 Peter 3:3 where the same three items of plaited hair, gold, and apparel of costliness are mentioned. Paul, like Peter, teaches that excessive use of the items mentioned is not conducive to spiritual goals.

5. GODLY APPAREL.

The verb for "professing" is one which normally means "promise," but in the Pastorals it means "professing." The word godliness is not the usual word for this idea, but is one which could be rendered "worshipping God." What a thought that is! The whole attire of a woman