

Vessels of Honor – Part 3 & 4

1 Thessalonians 4:4 *That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;*

In the last letter he ever wrote, the Apostle Paul once again stressed to Timothy how important it was to live a holy life, to stand strong, to not become entangled with the world, to depart from iniquity, to flee from lusts, and to follow righteousness. He wanted his young protégé to be a **Vessel of Honor**, so that his life could be useful and effective in God's Kingdom.

2 Timothy 2:19-21 *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.*

When he writes to Timothy, notice that Paul gives us four characteristics that distinguish **VESSELS OF HONOR** from "vessels of dishonor" ...

1. They have purged themselves from iniquity ("lawlessness")
2. They have been sanctified ("set apart, separated, purified, made holy")
3. They are meet ("profitable, good") for the Master's use
4. They are prepared unto every good work ("deed, action")

As you progress beyond the book of Acts into the epistles written to New Testament churches, the further you go in time, the louder the warning becomes: **You can't maintain salvation without sanctification!**

Jude 1:3-5 *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation (new birth experience), it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness (loose living, absence of restraint), and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.*

The great Hebrew writer Ahad Ha'Am said it this way: "More than Israel kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath kept Israel." **MORE THAN YOU KEEP HOLINESS STANDARDS, HOLINESS STANDARDS KEEP YOU!**

Let's answer a few general questions before we look at specific standards:

1. What are holiness standards and why are they important to me?

Isaiah 59:19 *So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.*

In the Old Testament, a standard was a banner that was lifted up before the people on a pole as a rallying point or signal. In Numbers 21:8-9, this same word is used to indicate the pole upon which the bronze serpent was placed. When God Himself lifts up a standard, it implies His presence and protection as He leads His people.

The modern definition of a STANDARD is "a simple test for determining the authenticity, quality or value of something intangible." Quite simply, holiness standards are NOT the "tangible part" of holiness – that happens through an internal work of God's Spirit. However, they ARE an external sign that an authentic work of salvation and subsequent Christian maturity have taken place. So, in a very real way, holiness standards ARE a "test of quality."

2. Why are holiness standards mentioned infrequently in Scripture?

Proverbs 25:2 *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.*

The Bible is a goldmine, with much treasure hidden beneath its surface. The more you search, the more beauty you behold. Some resent the necessity of "digging for truth" (spending time in prayerful study) and feel that we should only obey what "lays on the surface" of God's Word. But they have missed the treasure – and the point! God designed His Word so that the plan of salvation is obvious to the sinner, but the paths of sanctification are apparent only to the student.

3. Don't we need several verses to confirm each standard we teach?

2 Corinthians 13:1 *This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.*

The phrase "in the mouth of two or three witnesses" isn't referring to teaching doctrine at all – every time it is used (2 Corinthians 13:1, Deuteronomy 17:6, Deuteronomy 19:15, 1 Timothy 5:19, Matthew 18:16), it is dealing with the judgment of an individual who has been accused of sin! If the Bible consistently frowns on a behavior, we don't need God to give us several "Thou Shalt Nots"! My question would be, **"How many times does God need to say it for you to obey it?"**

4. Why are there more “external standards” for women in the Bible?

Genesis 1:27 *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

AFTER sin entered the world in the Garden of Eden, God instituted the principle of MODESTY, which is simply “restraint” in the way the body is covered or decorated, so that flesh is not accentuated. However, even BEFORE sin entered the world, God instituted the principle of DISTINCTION between the sexes. Men are to be men, and women are to be women. We are DIFFERENT from creation, by God’s design and will. **This is not politically correct, but it is biblically correct!** So, it makes sense that God would give DIFFERENT standards to men and women, to protect them from the lust of the flesh.

Men are stimulated by SIGHT. This is why Jesus said, “Whosoever LOOKETH on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” (Matthew 5:28) A man is attracted to a woman physically before he is connected to her emotionally. However, women are stimulated by TOUCH, either a physical or an emotional touch. That is why Paul gives a different command concerning women: “It is good for a man not to TOUCH a woman.” (1 Corinthians 7:1)

Notice that Jesus did not say, “Whosoever looketh on a man ...” This is not because it wouldn’t be sin for a woman to visually lust, or because women have no inclination to visually lust, but merely because women are generally not tempted by the lust of the eye as men are. In the same way, women are more commonly given to enticing dress than men are. We read in the Scripture of “the attire of an harlot” but never “the attire of an whoremonger.” Again, this is not because men cannot sin in the way they dress, but merely because the sin of intentional enticement in dress is not so much the sin of men as it is of women.

In their 2011 book, “A Billion Wicked Thoughts,” researchers Ogi Ogas and Sai Gaddam bypass the current politically-correct notion that men and women are the “same,” simply by evaluating how they really use the internet: *“On the Web, men prefer images. Women prefer stories. Men prefer graphic sex. Women prefer relationships and romance.”*

GODLY FEMININITY is protected by how women APPEAR and how men ACT. **GODLY MASCULINITY** is protected by how men ACT and how women APPEAR. So yes, there are more “external standards” for women in the Bible – and more “internal standards” for men at the same time! Women are commanded to APPEAR holy so that men are not tempted; men are commanded to ACT holy so that women are not tempted. And this is because we are DIFFERENT from creation!

5. Isn’t “internal holiness” more important than external holiness?

The short answer to this question is YES, just like your internal organs (heart, lungs) are more important than your external organs (eyes, ears). However, in a normal, healthy body you want to have BOTH! It is a fatal error to preach external standards without preaching internal standards! However, to think we can be “holy on the inside” while remaining “unaffected on the outside” is an equally fatal error before God! We must have holiness both inside and outside! So the REAL issue is how your internal holiness AFFECTS your external lifestyle.

Luke 6:43-46 *For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. **For every tree is known by his own fruit.** For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: **for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.** And **why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?***

It goes without saying that external compliance with “standards” is worthless before God, unless there is also an internal REALITY of holiness. Internal issues are obviously the most important; therefore, we spend much more time teaching them. However, the **preeminence** of internals does not negate the **place** of externals, which are simply manifestations of the inward qualities. For example, we are saved by the work of the Holy Ghost, not by tongues. Speaking in tongues alone does not send us to heaven, and the lack of tongues alone does not condemn us to hell. Nevertheless, the initial sign of speaking in tongues definitely illustrates the reality of someone receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It’s the same with “external standards.”

6. How do I develop REAL holiness, both internally and externally?

True holiness is intended to be IMPOSSIBLE without the Holy Ghost! Just like speaking in tongues, holiness is a work of the Spirit, not a work of the flesh. So it’s GOOD if you think holiness is hard to accomplish, and that you can’t do it on your own! But there is one thing you can do in the meantime – **you can OBEY!** Because, when it comes to big Bible issues like SALVATION and SANCTIFICATION, **you don’t have to understand completely to obey immediately!**

In the book of Romans, Paul gives us the only passage in the New Testament where the word “YIELD” is used multiple times. The Greek word he uses means “to exhibit, to substantiate, to prove, or to show.” The bottom line is, **if you’re truly YIELDED to God, IT WILL SHOW!**

Romans 6:12-19 *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither **yield** ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but **yield** yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye **yield** yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. **Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.** I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have **yielded** your members servants to uncleanness and **to iniquity unto iniquity**; even so now **yield** your members **servants to righteousness unto holiness.***

Paul says it very plainly – you once were a SERVANT to SIN, and now you are a SERVANT to RIGHTEOUSNESS. And it is “**righteousness unto holiness**” – if the JUSTIFICATION you’ve experienced on the INSIDE is real, it will show up in SANCTIFICATION on the OUTSIDE! God is not the least bit interested in being made over in YOUR image. He refuses to conform to your culture, comfort, or convenience. He is totally convinced that since He alone redeemed (“purchased”) you out of sin, He OWNS you. And with God that is non-negotiable!

God wants to make you over into HIS image – so if you have a Biblical salvation experience, it will CHANGE you in ways that you could not have previously imagined. Your DESIRES will change. Your SPEECH will change. Your PRIORITIES will change. Your THINKING will change. Your HEART will change. Your ACTIVITIES will change. Your DRESS CODE will change. Your ENTIRE LIFESTYLE will change.

Notice Paul’s repeated use of the words “YIELD,” “OBEY,” and “SERVANT” in this passage. SIN became easier, drew you deeper, and had more power over you every time you would YIELD to it (“iniquity unto iniquity”). But in the same way, RIGHTEOUSNESS becomes easier, draws you deeper, and has more power over you every time you YIELD to it (“righteousness unto holiness”).

You can be EITHER a slave of sin or a slave of God. You cannot be NEITHER – and you cannot be BOTH. We do not control ourselves – we are a “servant of something” – whatever CONTROLS us is our LORD. So the most important principle in living a HOLY LIFE is to learn to YIELD to the HOLY GHOST. **Don’t argue – just YIELD!**

For the next part of our study, we want to look closely at a passage of Scripture that Paul wrote to Timothy, who was the young pastor of the great Apostolic church in the sinful mega-city of Ephesus. Perhaps nowhere else in the New Testament do we see the distinction between men’s and women’s standards of holiness any more clearly.

1 Timothy 2:8-10 *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up **holy hands**, without **wrath** and **doubting**. In like manner also, that women **adorn** themselves in modest **apparel**, with **shamefacedness and sobriety**; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*

Notice that **MEN’S** holiness issues are standards of **ACTION**:

- **APPETITE** (“lift up holy hands”)
- **ANGER** (“without wrath”)
- **APATHY** (“without doubting”)

Notice that **WOMEN’S** holiness issues are standards of **APPEARANCE**:

- **ADORNMENT** (“adorn themselves”)
- **APPAREL** (“in modest apparel”)
- **ATTITUDE** (“with shamefacedness and sobriety”)

But it’s not just Paul. Look at this passage from the writing of Peter ...

1 Peter 3:1-5 *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward **adorning** of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of **apparel**; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a **meek and quiet spirit**, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:*

Both Paul and Peter express very similar admonitions in these passages, allowing us to see very clearly the “standards” taught by the first century Apostolics. Paul is teaching about conduct and appearance of women in the CHURCH, while Peter is teaching about conduct and appearance of women in the HOME (especially where an unsaved husband is present). But notice that the same “standards” apply in either setting!

Paul deals with THEOLOGICAL reasons for holiness while Peter deals with PRACTICAL reasons for holiness. HOLINESS was important to the early church, because Christianity was born into a Roman world of luxury and decadence. It was in this context that Apostolics lived out their faith.

UNDERSTANDING ADORNMENT

ADORN means “to beautify or decorate with ornaments.” The Greek word is “kosmeo,” from which we derive our English word “cosmetics.” It comes from the root word “kosmos,” which is translated “world,” but also has the meaning “order, arrangement or decoration.” So, just as the attractive and orderly arrangement of the stars “adorns” the world, so humans can “adorn” themselves. However, the Apostles make it very clear that the way women often desire to adorn themselves is in direct opposition to the way God desires for them to adorn themselves! In their world, like ours, the topic of ADORNMENT specifically refers to cosmetics and jewelry.

Before dealing with the New Testament passages concerning adornment, it would be wise to examine the history of adornment as it relates to God’s people in the Old Testament, since “these things were “written for our admonition” (1 Corinthians 10:11). Bear in mind the following points:

IMPLICIT TEACHING. In the Old Testament, we may find God’s condemnation of certain practices in His consistent expressed attitude toward them, rather than in a direct prohibition. The numerous instances of seduction, adultery, apostasy and divine punishment resulting from the use of jewelry and cosmetics should constitute a solemn warning for us.

DESCRIPTIVE PASSAGES. Careful study of some passages which seem to speak favorably of the use of ornaments will reveal that they are descriptive of the prevailing culture, not prescriptive of how God wants His people to beautify themselves. We must search for God’s attitude toward a practice, and not adopt it just because it is included in a descriptive or allegorical passage of Scripture. Details of stories, parables or allegories should be looked upon merely as the props of the story, and not be used to formulate doctrine unless they are confirmed elsewhere in Scripture.

PROGRESSIVE REVELATION. To put it frankly, not everything that was allowed in Old Testament times is reflective of God’s ideal for His people! Typical examples are polygamy and divorce, which were allowed in Old Testament times because of Israel’s stubbornness. We do not find explicit condemnation of such practices in the Old Testament, but we certainly do in the New Testament! The same principle of “progressive revelation” applies to what we teach from the New Testament about adornment.

EARTHLY TABERNACLE. In the Old Testament, God dwelt among His people but within the Tabernacle (or Temple). In the New Testament, God dwells within us, and our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost. Thus, the Tabernacle itself is a better picture of how we should live than the often-rebellious Israelites! The Tabernacle was undecorated on the outside but extremely beautiful on the inside – just like the child of God!

ADORNMENT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT JEWELRY WAS ORIGINALLY A BLESSING FROM GOD. Pieces of jewelry were used as money in Old Testament times, because they were so valuable (Job 42:11). Abraham was wealthy in silver and gold (Genesis 13:2), and God even instructed Israel to take the jewelry of the Egyptians when they were freed from bondage (Exodus 3:22, 11:2). This was God’s blessing on Israel, giving them “currency” to spend during their journey. Until this point, jewelry seems basically to be viewed positively because of its practical function.

However, a disturbing trend was developing among God’s people at the same time, as they began to use their ornaments as an expression of pride and sensuality, like the pagan nations around them. This is why God began calling His people to repentance **by removing their ornaments.** The situation came to a crisis point in Exodus 32-33 while Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments. Tired of waiting for Moses and anxious to have a visible god, the Israelites brought their ornaments to Aaron, who used them to make a molten calf in imitation of the gods of Egypt. **ISRAEL HAD TURNED INTO IDOLS THE MOST VALUABLE GIFTS GOD HAD GIVEN THEM!**

When Moses went up again to the mountain to plead with God to forgive their sin, God reassured Moses that He would keep His covenant to bring Israel to the land of Canaan, but He Himself would not go with them! If He were to appear among them in their rebellious state, His holy presence would mean their complete destruction. When Israel learned that God would no longer guide them with His personal presence, they deeply repented of their sin and took off their jewelry. In response, God offered to reconsider His action toward them, but He requested that they prove the depth of their repentance by permanently removing their ornaments.

Exodus 33:1-6 *And the LORD said unto Moses, Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it: And **I will send an angel before thee;** and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for **I will not go up in the midst of thee;** for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way. And when the people heard these evil tidings, **they mourned: and no man did put on him his ornaments.** For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now **put off thy ornaments from thee,** that I may know what to do unto thee. And the children of Israel **stripped themselves of their ornaments** by the mount Horeb.*

God's command to the Israelites to remove their ornaments before going into the land of Canaan applies to us as we also journey to our "Promised Land." Canaan is not a type of Heaven, but of a "deeper spiritual experience" with God (accompanied by giants and battles!).

Why were ornaments such a stumbling block to the spiritual life of Israel? And why does the Bible teach that adornment can be so detrimental to our spiritual life? Part of the answer is that "**we wear what we worship, and we worship what we wear.**" Our clothing and ornamentation best reveal our idols, whether they are beauty, wealth or sophistication. To adorn our bodies with jewelry and makeup turns the attention from God to us, and promotes the "cult of self" which is idolatry. That is why outward adorning is a stumbling block to the inner spiritual life!

When God instructed Moses to take up a freewill offering for the construction of the tabernacle, at the top of the long list of suggested items was GOLD. God was not forcing it from the Israelites, but the suggestion is conspicuous! They must have taken the hint, because they brought "all jewels of gold" to the Lord.

Exodus 35:22 *And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered offered an offering of gold unto the LORD.*

Israel also freely gave to the Lord the spoils of their military victories.

Numbers 31:50 *We have therefore brought an oblation for the LORD, what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets, to make an atonement for our souls before the LORD.*

God eventually verbalized his outright hatred for jewelry on his people.

Deuteronomy 7:25-26 *The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it is an abomination to the LORD thy God. Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.*

Even the kings of Israel were forbidden, among other things, to accumulate silver and gold (Deuteronomy 17:17). King Solomon later transgressed these laws, and it cost him his relationship with the Lord. Joshua put Achan and his family to death because they kept gold and silver, instead of turning it over to the treasury of the Lord (Joshua 7:21).

When Gideon broke the command of God, took the earrings of the Ishmaelites and made them into a priestly vestment for himself, he caused all of Israel to backslide. Note here that jewelry was a trademark of the sinful Ishmaelites and not of Israel – except when they backslid!

Judges 8:24 *And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey. (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.)*

The Old Testament reveals a growing trend against jewelry, for every time God's people began to possess it, jewelry became an occasion for spiritual decline through pride, sensuality or idolatry. God never forgot the mockery and idolatry associated with jewelry!

Israel's fascination with adornment was a constant snare to them; this was precisely the reason God began demanding for them to sacrifice their jewelry. And nowhere in the Old Testament did God ever give them permission to take back their jewelry!

The prophets consistently portray backslidden Israel as an unfaithful woman decked with jewelry and makeup, being judged by God. A serious Bible student can't help but see the obvious connection in God's mind!

Hosea 2:13 *And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the LORD.*

Jeremiah 4:30 *And when thou art spoiled, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with crimson, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou rentest thy face with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; thy lovers will despise thee, they will seek thy life.*

Ezekiel 23:40 *And furthermore, that ye have sent for men to come from far, unto whom a messenger was sent; and, lo, they came: for whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thy eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments.*

It would be impossible to make a proper study of adornment in the Bible without mentioning the name of Jezebel. She is not merely a Bible character, but rather a "representative person" in Scripture, much like Joseph served as a type of Christ. Because Jezebel so completely embodied the spirit of seduction in Israel's history, her name is even carried over into the New Testament and used symbolically to express God's abhorrence of similar conduct (Revelation 2:20). Jezebel's seductive look, obtained with cosmetics and jewelry (2 Kings 9:30), is consistent with her lifelong effort to seduce the Israelites into idolatry.

God was so concerned that the Israelites might make an idol out of Jezebel's tomb in the future that He judged her by having wild dogs devour her body (1 Kings 21:23, 2 Kings 9:35-37). She not only dealt Israel a crippling spiritual blow (from which it never fully recovered), but her spirit is seen trying to infiltrate the church all the way to Revelation (where it causes the church at Thyatira to fall under God's judgment).

Revelation 2:20 *Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*

The spirit of Esther stands in contrast to the spirit of Jezebel. When a woman was brought before a Persian king, she was allowed access to anything she desired in order to beautify herself (Esther 2:13). Esther, however, used only what the king's eunuch selected (Esther 2:15). The Bible only records that she used oil of myrrh, perfume, and other preparations to purify the skin (Esther 2:12).

Jewelry is sometimes used to represent good things, such as wisdom (Proverbs 1:9, 25:11-12). However, this is not a reason for us to wear jewelry any more than an occasional positive mention of wine (Luke 5:39, Luke 10:34, John 2:10) gives us permission to become drunk. In each case, the overall teaching of Scripture forbids the practice. Several good people wore jewelry in the Bible, but we must remember the principle of progressive revelation: God allowed many Old Testament practices because of the hardness of men's hearts (Matthew 19:8) or their ignorance (Acts 17:30), but explicitly reveals His will to us in the New Testament.

The Bible does not condemn all jewelry. For example, men such as Judah (Genesis 38:18), Joseph (Genesis 41:42), Mordecai (Esther 8:2), Saul (2 Samuel 1:10), and Daniel (Daniel 5:29) wore jewelry. However, in each case the jewelry had a FUNCTIONAL USE. Signet rings were used to transact legal business; crowns, chains and bands were used to signify royalty and convey legal authority. The high priest's breastplate of precious stones had a similar function of authority in Israel's worship (Exodus 28:17-38). Jewelry also had a functional use as a wedding token in Bible times (Genesis 24:47, Isaiah 61:10, Jeremiah 2:32).

Because the Bible does not condemn these various types of "functional" jewelry in the Old Testament, we also maintain a BALANCED position by making allowance for a minimal amount of "functional" jewelry (such as wedding rings, wristwatches, hair clips, etc.), while maintaining God's desired prohibition on jewelry for the sole purpose of adornment. However, jewelry seems to have a fatal attraction for humans! We must constantly guard against the temptation to increase our tolerance of adornment!

ADORNMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Did God drop His objection to jewelry and makeup in the New Testament? Evidently not, for the apostolic admonitions of Peter and Paul are even more explicit than Old Testament commands. The New Testament repeatedly contrasts the INNER ADORNING of a gentle and quiet spirit with the OUTER ADORNING of the body by elaborate hairstyles, gold, pearls and costly attire. These are not TWO MODES of the SAME lifestyle, but TWO COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LIFESTYLES!

Both Peter and Paul expect women to adorn themselves, so long as it is in a proper fashion. God does not condemn natural ornaments! He has filled the world with things that are not only useful but also beautiful. God could have designed all fruits and vegetables to be green, but He created them in a variety of colors. God does not expect us to be drab or colorless in appearance, but He does expect godly adornment! There must be a consistency between the inward life and the outward appearance of a Christian! To pretend to come humbly before God while we are adorned in a way we know He does not like is hypocrisy!

According to the late Greek scholar Marvin Treece, both Peter and Jude quote extensively from the Book of Enoch in their epistles. While this extra-Biblical literature is not considered "inspired," Peter and Jude's direct quotes from it let us know that they considered a great deal of the information in the Book of Enoch to be factual.

Jude 14 *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,*

Jude 8 *Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.*

Enoch recorded that it was the fallen angels who taught men to create weapons (in order to destroy men), and taught women to produce makeup and paint their faces (also in order to destroy men!). This is why Jude uses the word "miaino," meaning "to dye with another color, to stain" (only used in this way in Jude 8). Here is the quote directly from the book of Enoch:

Enoch 8:1-3 *[The fallen angels] taught men to make swords, and knives, and shields, and breastplates, and made known to them the metals of the earth and the art of working them, and bracelets, and ornaments, and the use of antimony, and the beautifying of the eyelids, and all kinds of costly stones, and all colouring tinctures. And there arose much godlessness, and they committed fornication, and they were led astray, and became corrupt in all their ways.*

VIDEO: PERCEPTION OF BEAUTY

The New Testament culminates in the revelation of two symbolic women in the book of Revelation, the Great Harlot (world church) and the Bride of Christ (true church). The contrast in their outward appearance certainly has implications for followers of Christ:

THE GREAT HARLOT Revelation 17:1-6	THE BRIDE OF CHRIST Revelation 19:7-9; 21:2; 22:4,17
Apostate Church	Apostolic Church
invites others to commit spiritual fornication with her	invites others to prepare for the marriage supper of the Lamb
pours out the blood of martyrs like a drunkard pours out wine to drink	pours out her own desires as a sacrificial offering unto the Lord
arrayed in purple and scarlet, and bedecked with gold and jewels	clothed in fine white linen, representing inner righteousness
she has a name on her forehead ("Mother of Harlots"), like the frontlets ancient prostitutes wore	she has a name on her forehead, obviously the name of Jesus into which she has been baptized

God saw fit to represent the character of these symbolic women by their appearance because our appearance reveals who we are! Which of these two women should serve as the role model for our dress code?

Revelation 21:2 *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as **a bride adorned** for her husband.*

The purpose of this imagery is not to teach us to wear jewelry any more than the imagery of the city's walls is to teach us to build walls around ourselves. Rather, it is to show us that the Lord thinks of His church as His bride adorned with her jewels. The church's "jewels" are its individual believers, for God regards each of His people as a precious gem.

Isaiah 61:10 *I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as **a bride adorneth** herself with her jewels.*

Malachi 3:17 *And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up **my jewels**; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.*

God doesn't want us to derive our value from wearing earthly jewels and other adornments is because **WE ARE HIS HEAVENLY JEWELS!**