

What to Teach Girls About Modesty

- 1) Teach that after the fall, God's design of clothes (Gen 3:7-11, 21) was to cover the body.**
 - a) Adam and Eve's coverings of fig leaves were not sufficient.
 - b) God killed an animal to cover their shame. He designed coats (garments) that covered their naked bodies. The purpose of these garments was to cover the body, not just the private parts of the body. They were not second skins, they were coverings.

- 2) Teach that today, Sinful Man's design of clothes is to uncover the body.**
 - a) Draw attention to the body for self-glorification (pride)
 - b) Draw attention to the body for self-advertisement (lust)

- 3) Teach that the body (in its nakedness) is meant for marriage. This is a good thing, but for marriage only. Treat unmarried boys and men like brothers and fathers.**
 - a) The wife's body is given to the husband, and the husband's body is given to the wife for enjoyment and procreation. Any giving (or showing) of the naked body to others outside of marriage is sin and immorality. Any taking (or looking) on the naked body of others outside of marriage is sin and immorality.
 - b) Explain the truth that God made the female body to be extremely attractive to boys and men, so it must be covered to protect both female and male from lustful sinning. Girls learn that immodest dress brings them attention, but they need to understand that lustful attention is not love, it is sin. (I explained this to my young girls by using a delicious looking birthday cake. By setting the cake in front of them and then saying to look at it, but not think about eating it. To make them look at the cake day after day until their birthday, but wait to enjoy it would be torture. Their definition of lust became wanting something that didn't belong to them. They came to understand lust as being very closely associated with discontentment and greed.)
 - c) When a girl dresses modestly she is showing kindness to boys and men whom she should consider as her brothers or fathers. Otherwise, boys and men must learn to hide their eyes and not look on a girl who is immodestly dressed.
 - i) Rom. 14:21 – It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything that will cause your brother to stumble.
 - ii) Job 31:1 – I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl.

- 4) Understand Influences of Dress:** Teach children to be mindful of what influences them and how to fight it if need be.
 - a) God's word, family, church, peers, youth group, tradition, rules (false modesty – fear of man)
 - b) Hollywood, TV, movies, magazines, stores, fashion (love of the world)
 - c) Selfish desires, sin (pride and lust)
 - d) Other cultures (Arab - the skin you can see, you can touch and have)
 - e) Our culture (what skin you can see, pretend not to look, and don't touch)

5) **Teach girls what true beauty is:** True beauty doesn't fade as a woman ages, and isn't covered by clothes or revealed by immodesty.

- i) 1 Peter 3:3-6 - Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

6) **Continue to teach during the different phases of a girl's development:**

a) **Young girls** – When they still love to please you...

- i) Teach them to honor, respect, and obey Mommy and Daddy. This is the key to them being submissive to their husbands later, and ultimately to God.
- ii) Have a standard of modest dress for them.
- iii) As their mother, model the standard for them.
- iv) Warn your young girls of the coming time when they will not want to listen to Mommy and Daddy. Prepare them for the coming battle.
- v) Teach them to keep their body covered, private, pure and saved for marriage.
- vi) Teach them to value the instruction and advice of Godly examples.
- vii) Teach them to listen to and accept the instruction of older Godly people.

b) **Older girls** – When they begin to question Mommy and Daddy's instruction and standard of modesty...

- i) Begin showing them the motives and influences of their hearts. Help them to see the sin that lives in their hearts.
- ii) Teach them to examine their thoughts and choices.
 - (1) Why am I wearing this?
 - (2) Why do I like this?
 - (3) Am I uncovering what God covered?
 - (4) Is it covered, but skin tight, therefore revealing what God covered?
 - (5) What do YOU notice when I wear this? A body part? Expense?
 - (6) What message am I sending with my clothes? Is this the message I want sent?
- iii) Help them to study scripture to see the contrast between modesty and immodesty, humility and pride, purity and lust, faithfulness and adultery, godliness and worldliness.
- iv) Show them the story of David and Bathsheba. Bathsheba was uncovered and David did not hide his eyes. Show the prostitute of Proverbs and the haughty women of Isaiah.
- v) Teach them the perceptions other people have of certain types of dress.
- vi) Teach them that their clothing sends a message. What message do you want your children to send? What message do they want to send?
- vii) Use a "Modesty Checklist" to help your daughter evaluate the clothes she would like to wear. Have her use the checklist in front of a mirror while observing herself bending over, moving about, raising her arms...

c) **Young ladies**—When they have their own standards...

- i) Continued true modesty is the goal. Encourage your young ladies not to have differing standards for differing occasions or groups of people. Her standard (if it is God's standard) should not change. Her peer group will change, fashions will change too, and if her standard changes, then her standard might really be nothing more than rule following, or the fear of man.
- ii) Encourage her to remain modest, especially as those around her may not be. She may have pure motives in what she chooses to wear, but she must still heed the warnings of why she must cover the body. She needs to be protected more than ever from sending the wrong message to boys or men. This is hard for girls to understand, so they must learn to trust God and parents in the things they don't yet fully understand.
- iii) Challenge them to continue to keep their bodies covered as the way to protect their purity for marriage.

7) **Modesty is not something you can buy on a hanger and put on your child.** Modesty comes from a heart that is submissive to God and His commands and purposes, including God's purpose for covering the body in clothing. Since it is God who covered the nakedness of the body as a result of our sin, we should not be surprised to see our sinful hearts (or our children's) struggle with His requirements. Help your children see their struggle with sin. Don't wait for the sin to grow and seize them, leading them into dangerous consequences. You know where the path of sin leads! Help them come to know their sinful selves and to know God's grace and mercy. Modesty will become 'her standard' as God works in her life.

a) Right thoughts of God and self lead to dressing modestly... keeping covered what God covered, and not calling attention to the body.

- i) As a girl grows in obedience, faith, trust, love, humility, purity, self-control, she will grow a standard of modesty that trusts in God.

(1) *Girls need to trust that God is sovereign and will bring them all they are hoping for, without them showing off their bodies and trying to 'help God out'.

b) Wrong thoughts of God and self lead to dressing immodestly (uncovering what God covered). Immodesty reveals a battle within the heart, or ignorance of God's purposes.

- i) Rebellion, unbelief, mistrust, unfaithfulness, selfishness, pride, vanity, lust, and unrestraint all point to a discontentment with God's sovereignty.

8) **Challenge them to keep covered what God covered:** Let no one see their naked bodies or body parts unless appropriate – marriage, medical