

## **Wearing Your Heart on Your Sleeve**

By Edwin Crozier

Have you ever heard of someone who wears his heart on his sleeve? What does that even mean? When we use that phrase, we usually mean he is either extremely sensitive or he makes his emotions very clear. Either it is very easy to hurt his feelings or it is simply very easy to know what he is feeling.

In a sense, we Christians need to wear our hearts on our sleeves, but not out of oversensitivity or overt emotionalism. I Peter 3:3-4 says, "Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear—but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious" (ESV).

This passage doesn't teach that we are not allowed to fix our hair or wear jewelry. If it did, then it would also teach we aren't allowed to wear clothes. That is obviously not the case. Rather, the passage explains we should dress and behave in such a way that people can see what is in our hearts. Actually, we probably already do.

Granted, I know some people have never really thought about the way they dress. They are not dressing in order to express anything; they are simply dressing to fit in. Of course, that demonstrates something about their heart as well, doesn't it?

What are we telling others about our heart with the way we dress? Are we telling them we are sexy? ...wealthy? ...popular? ...lazy? Or are we telling them we are moral, holy, pure, and godly?

I Timothy 2:9-10 says, "Likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works" (ESV).

We are making a claim to godliness. That is, we are claiming to honor and glorify God. Does our dress declare we are doing that? Or does our dress try to focus people's attention on us? What does our dress claim about us? What does our dress claim about our God?

I Thessalonians 4:7 says, "For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness" (ESV).

We have been called to be set apart as holy in service to God. Impurity is diametrically opposed to that holiness. Is our dress holy? Or is it impure? Does our dress demonstrate us as instruments of God, useable by Him? Or does it declare that we conform to the world and its desires and work?

How much flesh is revealed by low cut blouses, high cut skirts, and bared midriffs? How much of the body's form is revealed by tight-fitting shirts and yoga pants? What kind of messages are written on our clothes? If someone is going to read those messages, where are they going to have to look and for how long?

We should be a people who wear our godly, discreet, chaste, pure heart on our sleeves. We must not give one message with our mouths and another with our clothes. We must consistently pursue holiness in word, conduct, and dress.

Be honest. What do your clothes say about your heart?