

SHAPE UP! BEHAVE YOURSELF!

I Cor 11:2-34

I. LOOK GOOD! THE MODESTY KEY

- A. Corinthian Concerns
 - 1. Veils for women
 - a. Eastern tradition, Jewish behavior, Muslim restrictions
 - b. Symbol of submission? of assured protection? Anything akin to veils today?
 - c. G.K. Chesterton notes difference between Muslim women & Christian nuns.
 - 2. Hair's import in ancient world (as in all worlds?) —signaling sexual identity?
 - 3. Paul's position: observe traditions (if not harmful) but acknowledge dignity of both sexes
- B. Church history enlightening
 - 1. Tertullian & his apostles—strict codes, especially for women
 - 2. Monastic orders' distinctive garbs (prior to Vatican II)
 - 3. Quakers' "plain" clothes (though often made of finest cloth!)
 - 4. Mennonites & Amish immediately recognizable
 - 5. Mormon missionaries
 - 6. Holiness & Pentecostal concerns
- C. American Application
 - 1. Dress appropriately for situation (beach? concert hall? wedding? funeral? sports arena? church? plumbing? teaching?)
 - 2. Certain, limited truth in *Dress for Success*? Interviews? Various interactions? Impact on self-confidence? Paul Harvey lesson
 - 3. Fashion dicta hard to dismiss—*Vogue* et al powerful; hair styles, beards, important?
- D. Modesty Key: "being unassuming or moderate in the estimation of one's abilities," "behavior, manner, or appearance intended to avoid impropriety or indecency"
 - 1. Unexceptional, non-ostentatious appearance—as Jesus disappeared into the crowd, not standing out generally appropriate
 - 2. Acceptable styles/fashions—"when in Rome do as the Romans do"
 - 3. Refraining from indecency (acknowledging standards change with time)
 - a. American missionaries in Hawaii illustrate issue
 - b. Christian colleges wrestle with questions

II. FEAST WELL! CONVIVIALITY IMPORTANT

- A. Feasting uniquely human trait
 - 1. Sharing meals strangely important for personal and social well-being—children especially
 - 2. Formal feasts provide good reasons to properly celebrate, build relationships
- B. Corinthian customs
 - 1. Daily meal important throughout the ancient Greco-Roman world—communal as well as family aspects, abundant food & drink, leisurely conversation (still evident in European cafes)
 - 2. Status significant at feasts—ancestry, economic qualifications.
- C. Biblical admonitions, practices
 - 1. O.T. feasts' import, instructional value
 - 2. Jesus' teachings re feasts, "supper of the Lamb"
- D. American application (in light of Paul's perspective)
 - 1. Various events: weddings; funerals; Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, etc.
 - 2. Food for all—no separate tables, same quality & quantity
 - 3. Fellowship for all—egalitarian sharing
- E. Principles
 - 1. Generosity—appropriate provisions for specific events
 - 2. Temperance—golden mean finding balance re healthy (both physiologically and socially) practices.

III. RIGHTLY OBSERVE the EUCHARIST

- A. Paul's words central to proper celebration
- B. Church traditions
 - 1. Early/Medieval Church consensus—central to every service; Christ truly present
 - 2. Protestant trajectories, tending to purely symbolic, remembrance
- C. Contemporary Concerns