

A Holy Priesthood Wholly Dressed

Introduction:

1. Exodus 28:40-43; 1 Peter 2:4-10
2. Timothy was instructed to preach the word in and out of season (2 Tim. 4:2ff). Popular opinion doesn't shift or alter the gospel message.
 - a. He was told to be watchful in all things (2 Tim. 4:5). There is a contrast emphasis on "you" versus "they" (4:3). Timothy, where "they" do not finish in the faith but in their desires, must fulfill your ministry. Where they want their ears tickled, you must be sober and alert.
 - b. He was told to refute and repress false doctrine in the local church where he labored (1 Tim. 1:3, 4).
3. I want to look at the shadow priesthood. Hebrews 10:1, "For the law, having **a shadow** of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things..." The real image of the High Priest is our Lord. Further, we discover something profound: all Christians are living stones in God's temple/house. Furthermore, all Christians constitute a holy priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5). *No individual minister is the priest of the church any more than he is the house.* Every priest has something to offer; they offered animals and various offerings; we offer up spiritual sacrifices.
4. The priesthood was a divinely appointed role of holy service and representation. Priests stood between God and man, offering sacrifices and bearing the names of Israel before the Lord. Today, we bear the name of God before the world! Do we adorn that name or mar it? Women were called to behave so as not to bring blasphemy upon the word of God (Titus 2:5). Bondservants were called on to refuse the temptation of embezzlement and to adorn the doctrine of God (Titus 2:10). Why? For the grace of God has appeared to all men (Titus 2:11). Women and slaves proclaim loudly *that the grace of God reaches me* and their good works preach powerfully sermons of grace that the most articulate preacher can't fully construct.
5. Today, we too are called to be a *holy* priesthood, "wholly dressed" in body and heart.

Discussion:

I. [C] A RICHER UNDERSTANDING OF GODLY DRESS COMES FROM OUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST

A. [C] A Holy Priesthood – 1 Peter 2:5

1. **Priests were consecrated for sacred service.**

In the Old Testament, the priest's clothing wasn't casual—it was commanded by God (Exo. 28:1-4, "for glory and for beauty," dignity and splendor). Their garments reflected the **holiness** of their calling and the **seriousness** of approaching God.

2. **Christians are now the priests.**

[cl] Under the New Covenant, every believer is a priest (Rev. 1:6). Christ the faithful witness (martyr) the firstborn (from the dead), the ruler (over the kings of the earth), the one who loves and washes our souls—He made us a kingdom of priests to His God and Father. Whatever the relationship priests were to God in the OT, this is heightened! We no longer offer animal sacrifices, but **spiritual sacrifices** (Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:15). A deep and powerful principle of reverence remains. If we are serving a holy God, even **our dress must also reflect that holy priestly role.**

3. **Holiness is seen, not just felt.**

A priest in shorts and a tank top wouldn't be recognized in the temple. Why? Because clothing communicates identity. Christians today must ask, "**Does my appearance reflect my calling?**"

B. [C] **A Royal Priesthood – 1 Peter 2:9**

1. Royal adds another layer: dignity and distinction.

We don't just serve—we reign in Christ (Rom. 5:17). We're children of the heavenly King (Gal. 3:26-27). Our identity is both *holy* and *royal*—set apart and lifted up. A royal priesthood does not look like the world—it looks **set apart from the world**.

2. **Are royal garments defined by culture?**

Just as a king does not take his cues from peasants, the Christian does not take fashion cues from what is steeped in the world. Many are striving to be like pop stars or celebrities. Christian, you are a **citizen of heaven** (Phil. 3:20).

3. [C] **It is a question of reflection:** We're not advocating man-made lines for righteousness, but calling for believers to **reflect their identity in Christ** through **thoughtful, reverent choices**—just as Israel's priests did under divine instruction. "Let your light so shine before men, that **they may see** your good works **and glorify** your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). What they see in you is to bring them to want to glorify your Father. Therefore, Jesus is teaching that your Father is to be glorified in what they see...not just by what you think or feel.

C. [C] **A Called Priesthood** (1 Pet. 2:9). We are not only holy and royal—we are **summoned** for a purpose. Our calling is not just out of something, but **into** something—a life of holy purpose and public praise.

1. [cl] This ties directly to Peter's earlier charge: "As He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct" (1 Pet. 1:15). The call to holiness is **not optional** for the priesthood—it's a divine expectation.

2. The high priest bore a golden plate inscribed "**HOLINESS TO THE LORD**" on his forehead, showing that holiness marked both **his identity and his service**. Likewise, those called by Christ today must wear holiness *on their minds, in their habits, and in how they represent God*.

3. [C] Israel's high priest wore a turban, and on the front of that turban, a blue cord attached a pure gold plate with the engraved words: "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" (Exo. 28:36-38).

a) He was to wear it *continually*, and if he failed to wear it, the gifts offered by Israel would **not be accepted**.

b) This shows that holiness wasn't *optional*—it was **essential** to worship being received.

4. This visible declaration of holiness tied directly into Israel's **identity** and **mission**:

a) [cl] Jeremiah affirms, "*Israel was holiness to the LORD, the firstfruits of His increase*" (Jer. 2:3).

b) The high priest's adornment wasn't a decoration; it was a **sign of sacred duty and divine expectation**.

5. [C] Later, **Zechariah** paints a prophetic image of the *church era*—a time when everything connected to God's people is marked as holy (Zechariah 14:20-21):

a) From the **bells on horses**, the **cooking pots** in the Lord's house, the **bowls near the altar**, and even every pot in Jerusalem and Judah are all inscribed as "*Holiness to the LORD*."

b) This imagery shows that *holiness now pervades every part* of life—not just the temple or priesthood. What does this mean for us?

(1) It's not about **secularizing holiness** where nothing is special; it's about **sanctifying all things**—bringing every aspect of life under God's rule and purpose.

- (2) Whether in worship, at work, at the office, or in the barn, in leisure away or at home, the Christian carries God's presence and lives in a way that reflects His holiness.
- (3) We are the temple now: "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19, 20). God owns every part of us—spirit and body. He calls us to glorify Him in both.
- (4) That is why Paul instructed women to adorn themselves with modest apparel, which he clarifies as what is proper for women professing godliness (1 Tim. 2:9, 10). Modesty is not just about *covering*; it's about **confessing**. *Our clothes say something about who we are serving.*

- D. [C] **A Spiritual House (1 Pet. 2:5)**. The apostle Peter brings forth the idea that not only are we a holy, royal, and called priesthood, but we are also THE HOUSE/THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE!
1. If Zechariah figuratively depicts the church era where every pot, horse bell, and altar bowl once bear the mark of holiness, how much more should we—His living temple—reflect His holiness in all our conduct, including how we dress?"
 2. The apostle makes this application also (1 Pet. 2:9-12).
 3. If we are living stones in God's temple and royal priests in His service, then our conduct and clothing should reflect the dignity of His house, not the dress code of the world. Living stones don't blend in with rubble. Royal priests don't dress like commoners. If we've been called out of darkness, we shouldn't clothe ourselves in it.
 4. Now picture the high priest's garments—every stitch and layer chosen for sacred service. Just as God commanded Aaron's attire—designed to honor, conceal, and proclaim divine reverence—he was clothed in holiness, and he proclaimed "HOLINESS TO THE LORD." The ephod, the breastplate with twelve stones, the turban with the engraved plate of gold—all of it bespoke a man who stood in the presence of God. Not a thread was accidental. Not a piece was optional.
 5. Now contrast that with the casual Christian who strolls into the assembly, or out into the world, dressed not for sacred duty, but to match the culture. Where God once required covering and consecration, today there's often *exposure*, *indifference*, and a message of *obscurity*. T-shirts with irreverent slogans, body molding skinny jeans, skin-revealing outfits, and fashions borrowed straight from the red carpet of rebellion. Which image truly reflects "living stones, God's house, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation"? If Aaron entered the tabernacle revealing so much skin like many Christians dress today, what would God have done? We don't have to wonder about that answer. Scripture tells us! Let's read Exodus 28:42-43. He would incur iniquity and die!
- E. Some might counter: "Are you saying we must wear Aaron's garments?"
1. No—we're not bound to the physical garments of Aaron's priesthood, but we are bound to the spiritual principles they conveyed.
 - a) We're not commanded to wear tunics or breastplates today (Hebrews 7:12 – "*For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.*"). But the *principle of reverent, God-honoring dress* is not abolished—if anything, it is **intensified** in Christ.
 - b) Romans 15:4 says the things *written before* were written for our **learning**, not literal imitation.
 2. Hebrews 8:5 – *The law served as a shadow of heavenly things.*

- a) The garments of the priesthood were not incidental—they were part of that sacred shadow, designed to teach **reverence, distinction, and holiness**.
- b) If the shadow was clothed in honor, how much more should the **reality in Christ** be clothed with **reverence**?
- 3. The greater calling demands a greater heart and thoughtful choices.
 - a) While the garments differ, the **principle of holiness in appearance** remains. Our dress today must reflect our role as **servants at God's altar**, not trend-chasers of the world.
- 4. This is not *legalism*—it's *alignment with identity*.
 - a) [C] No one's binding linen trousers or ephods—but we *are* urging Christians to **think** like priests and **dress** like people who revere God (Titus 2:11-12). The things we do in the body and on the body are to present those spiritual sacrifices to God.
 - b) The New Testament builds upon the Levitical backdrop and calls us to a higher standard, not a lesser one. With greater revelation comes greater responsibility—**"of how much worse punishment...?"** (Hebrews 10:29). We are held **more accountable** because we stand in the **full light of the gospel**.
 - c) [C] Hebrews 12:28–29 reminds us that we must "serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire." Reverence is not outdated—it is intensified under the new covenant.
 - d) We don't wear Aaron's garments, but we do serve Aaron's God—and He still expects those who approach Him to do so with reverence, inside and out.
 - e) [C] Galatians 3:26, 27

- II. [C, Title] A RICHER UNDERSTANDING OF GODLY DRESS BEGINS WITH ORIGINS - To correctly understand modesty and the purpose of clothing, we must begin in the book of beginnings—Genesis.
- A. Genesis records the origin of clothing—the meaning of anything is best understood by returning to its origin. The New Testament repeatedly ties meaning to origin. [C, C]
1. [C] Marriage is defined by the creation of male and female (Matt. 19:4–6). God's laws governing marriage were to remain true from Adam forward. *The ceremonies and procedures may change with time, but the laws defining it, the responsibilities of it, etc., do not change.*
 2. [cl] Gender roles are upheld in the New Testament by appealing to their origin. In 1 Corinthians 14:34, Paul writes, "as the law also says," referring back to the foundation laid in Genesis 3:16, where the woman was told, "your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."
 - a) This origin-point establishes the principle of headship and submission. While the expression of that submission may vary across cultures (e.g., Sarah calling Abraham "lord" in 1 Peter 3:6), the core structure of authority and submission remains consistent.
 - b) Paul reaffirms this in 1 Timothy 2:11–14, tying the woman's submissive role not only to the fall, but even earlier—to the order of creation itself. The message is clear: God's design for male and female roles carries enduring meaning because it was rooted in the beginning.
 3. [cl] Likewise, we should understand the purpose of clothing by returning to its origin in Genesis 3. Clothing was first given by God to cover the shame of sin (Gen. 3:21), and that meaning persists.
 - a) What was the first instinct of fallen man (Gen. 3:7)? What was God's first act toward man? Clothing is not a fashion issue, but is tied to a sin and shame issue.
 - b) [C] Notice that Paul speaks about modest clothing in 1 Timothy 2:9–10, but just a few verses later (2:13, 14) he brings us back to the very beginning—Genesis. This is not a coincidence. He's showing us that *modesty*, like *marriage* and *role distinctions*, is not a cultural fad—it's rooted in creation. When we divorce clothing from its God-given origin, we obscure its meaning.
 - c) The concepts of Genesis are found in Revelation 3:17–18, where Jesus rebukes the church for being spiritually naked and counsels them to receive white garments to cover the shame of their nakedness—*echoing Genesis*. If meaning is rooted in origin, then clothing must still serve its original God-given purpose: to honor Him, cover shame, and reflect holiness. *If Jesus were literally offering white garments for sale today, would the clothes we choose to wear match or clash with His design?*
- B. [C] The bookends: Observe something lost in our English Translation. Paul uses the Greek word σωφροσύνη (*sōphrosýnē*)—pronounced *so-fros-SOO-nay*—in both **1 Timothy 2:9** and **2:15**, framing his appeal to Genesis (vv. 13–14) with this vital inner quality.
1. In verse 9, women are called to dress "with propriety and moderation" (*sōphrosýnē*), and in verse 15, they are to continue "in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control" (*sōphrosýnē* again).
 2. This term speaks to **self-governance**, **sobriety of mind**, and **moral restraint**—an *inner virtue* that shapes *outward behavior*.
 3. By bracketing his appeal to **creation order and the fall** with this word, Paul shows us something powerful: **True modesty flows from a heart aligned with God's original design**. It is not just about what we wear, but about who we are—people marked by reverence, restraint, and a desire to honor God in all things.

C. When definitions are severed from their origin, faulty *conclusions* rise, and *confusion* follows.

III. [C] A RICHER UNDERSTANDING OF GODLY DRESS SURRENDERS MAN'S SOLUTIONS.

- A. [C] They sowed fig leaves to cover their regenerative parts, yet, they were still *ashamed* and *naked* (Gen. 3:9, 10). Their choices were not God's. Man's ways apart from divine revelation are sure to fail.
- B. [C] God answered their problem by clothing them. In this first divine precedent for modesty (Gen. 3:21), we find that clothing is not merely *cultural*—it has a spiritual component. When clothing is divorced from this historical understanding, then any opinion goes, just like we see in man's corrupt definitions of marriage. The tunic was God's response to human guilt and shame, and it remains essential for maintaining decency before Him today.
- C. Am I saying that we must wear a tunic today? No! But the region it covers explains to us the region of nakedness.
1. "Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them." (Gen. 3:21, NKJV)
 - a) Observe that God made tunics for Adam and his wife. Whatever the tunic covers on a woman also applies to the man. The *zone of shame* applies equally. He didn't make a tunic for Eve and swimming shorts for Adam.
 - b) [C] The word "**tunics**" (Heb. *kěthoneth* pronounced keh-TOE-net) refers to a long shirt-like garment that covered from the shoulders to the knees or longer. This is a recognized fact in lexicons and historical resources. See the Cambridge source.
 - c) It is in contrast to loin coverings (*chagoroth*, Gen. 3:7), which only covered the waist area, God replaced them with garments that properly covered their nakedness.
 - d) [C] So, what God did in Genesis 3 sets the *baseline*: the divine coverage of nakedness goes from **shoulders to knees**. Anything less is inadequate.
 - (1) Isaiah 64:6–7 reinforces the truth first seen in Genesis 3. Our own efforts to cover shame—like Adam and Eve's fig leaves—are defiled and insufficient. Isaiah declares that "all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags," showing that human decisions, apart from God's counsel, cannot stand. Only He can provide an acceptable covering, as He did with Adam and Eve's tunics of skin—ultimately fulfilled in Christ.
 - (2) The lament in verse 7 highlights not only man's sin but his failure to "take hold" of God. We neglect His clear standards and instead embrace confusion and compromise. In doing so, we exchange God's definitions for cultural obscurity. This passage is a sobering reminder to lay hold of God's truth rather than fashioning our own fig leaves of justification.
 - e) Brett Hogland used to preach this but has recently abandoned it. In his two-part series on "A Better Understanding of the Christian's Apparel," he argues that Exodus 28:42 is not specific and that the tunic of Genesis 3:21 is no longer corroborating proof of a hard line for modesty. He concluded that while "The tunic shows that God provided sufficient clothing, we cannot assume that anything covered by the tunic is necessarily nakedness." He asserted, "That is not what is implied in Genesis 3, and that is not proper exegesis." He argues that it is not wrong to cover that much of our body. But we can't bind that. He then confesses that he doesn't know where the line is and that we don't really need it as long as our heart is aligned with Christ correctly. That is a clever argument that sounds balanced and spiritual, but it is still wrong.

- (1) *It's not wrong to cover that much of our body. But we can't bind it.* Our denominational friends talk the same way.
 - (2) What is to keep this from morphing into other areas? "Baptism by immersion is not wrong, but don't bind it." "It's not wrong to be a member of the church of Christ, but don't bind that it is the only true church." "It's not wrong to sing without instrumental music, it is preferred, but don't bind it." It's not wrong to partake of the Lord's Supper every Sunday, but don't bind that it must be partaken every Sunday." "It is not wrong to believe there is only one permissible reason for divorce and remarriage, just don't bind it."
 - (3) We try to get people to think more soberly. *Show from the Scriptures that baptism is by something other than immersion*, that Jesus built more than one church, that the early church worship involved the use of mechanical instruments, and offered the Lord's Supper on any other day than the first day? Show from the Scriptures that one can divorce and remarry for any reason other than adultery. Show from the Bible that it is lawful to cover less than what the tunic covers? If we are not careful, we are setting up a pathway of departure from Bible authority.
2. The tunic was never meant to be a *pattern* for *fashion* or cultural style—but it was a *divine pattern* for how redemptive clothing addresses shame. It marked the **specific area** of nakedness that God Himself chose to cover. In doing so, it establishes a **pattern of principle**, not of fabric—a holy standard for what must be concealed in the presence of God.
 3. Brett treats the tunic as if it were merely sufficient clothing, as if it only mattered that Adam and Eve were simply *covered* by something.
 - a) But was the sacrifice of Jesus merely *sufficient*? Or was it God's complete response to the *shame, curse, and spiritual exposure* caused by sin? Likewise, the tunic wasn't just "something to wear"—**it was God's deliberate replacement** for what *wasn't enough*.
 - b) The better question isn't, "*Was the tunic enough?*" but rather, "*What did God judge as not enough?*" The fig-leaf loin covering was man's solution—God rejected it. What did God provide in its place? A **tunic**—a garment that **covered from the shoulders to the thighs**, reaching to the knees (as implied in Exodus 28:42).
 - c) We're not speaking where God is silent—we're speaking where He **acted**. God didn't leave the definition of "enough" up to man, and neither should we. It is presumption to say that any amount of exposure between the shoulders and knees is acceptable when God's example consistently covered that very region.
 - d) And I say this as someone who, when young, once thought nothing of taking my shirt off in before others when working. But God's Word called me to think again. "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its lusts*" (Rom. 13:14).

This verse is not just about internal transformation—it calls for a complete re-clothing of the self. To "**put on Christ**" means more than believing—it means **alignment**. Putting on Christ makes no allowance for the flesh to feed its lusts. It refuses to feed the culture's obsession with sensuality. The Christian dresses to promote life, not lust. Wearing Christ not only covers the soul but reshapes character and subsequently, **choices** and **conduct**. This impacts **clothing**. Replace the fig leaves of Eden and be clothed with Christ in baptism, followed with reverence and self-control.

From the first two lessons, we matched the holiness required of the priesthood to the royal priesthood that Peter identifies us as (1 Pet. 2:5, 9). We looked at clothing from a foundational standpoint. It is not a side issue of Scripture. We wear clothing because man is in a fallen state. Genesis 3 teaches that man's instinct after sin is to patch things up with inadequate coverings. Isaiah 64:6, 7 affirms that our righteousness is defiled and ineffective. Only God's covering—rooted in grace, sacrifice, and holiness—is sufficient. With this lesson, I ask:

IV. MODEST APPAREL: DID GOD LEAVE US GUESSING?

A real temptation can exist to blur clear boundaries God has set, *especially in matters of modesty*. It has been said that the language of Exodus 28:42 is too vague to draw a line at the knee.

[C] Jeremiah Cox published an article on the 84th Street church's website in Oklahoma City, entitled "Reflections on Modesty," where he claims that this passage is too obscure to draw a line. He wrote, "Upon further investigation of the meaning of the language, it is the conviction of this author (Jeremiah Cox) that there is too much ambiguity attached to the word to justify binding a specific anatomical line at the knee in discussions of modest apparel based on the text of Exodus 28:42."

I want to uncover the truth of Exodus 28:42. *Is it clear or unclear, ambiguous or authoritative, vague or precise?* If it is unclear, we run into some problems:

- A. WHAT PROBLEM SURFACES by saying Exodus 28:42 is too ambiguous to bind a specific line? **Read verse 43!** God warned that failure to follow this command would result in death: "*lest they bear iniquity and die.*" If the command were truly vague, that would make God unjust—punishing priests for violating a line He never defined. But God is not vague when it comes to sin and death. In the Garden of Eden, He marked out the forbidden tree. In Leviticus 10:1–3, Nadab and Abihu died for violating clear instructions. **Boundaries were clear**, and the consequences were real. So we must ask: *Did God specify how to "cover their nakedness"?* The answer is yes—He said **from the waist to the thighs**. Is this information ambiguous? If so,
 1. [C] *It accuses God of being unclear about life-and-death commands.*
 2. *It undermines confidence in God's word.* If we can't know what "cover the nakedness" means, can we know what "repent and be baptized" means?
 3. *It opens the door to subjective and cultural definitions of modesty.* Without a fixed line, everyone becomes a law to themselves—modesty loses its anchor in Scripture, and we return to Judge 21:25.
 4. *It encourages rebellion under the cloak of "uncertainty."* **If nothing is sure, then anything goes!**
 5. *It contradicts the pattern God repeatedly sets in Scripture.* God gives specific measurements, instructions, material, etc. Why would He then be unclear here?
 6. *It minimizes the moral teaching embedded in the shadow.* Hebrews 8:5 affirms that the Law was a shadow of heavenly things. The shadow teaches, but vagueness doesn't.
 7. *It weakens teaching authority and creates division.* Some preachers will become afraid to teach clear lines. Division will ensue between those who want clarity versus those who want cultural drift.
- B. [C] The problem with false teaching is...a ditch.
 1. Jesus spoke, "Can the **blind lead** the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?" (Lk. 6:39). False doctrine is not benign; it swerves off into a ditch.
 2. Peter warns of the destructive end of false teachers (2 Pet. 2:1, 2). Notice:
 - a) They bring in *destructive* heresies.

- b) They bring on themselves swift *destruction*.
- c) Many follow their *destructive* ways.
- d) But I want you to notice two other *destructive* elements in this text:
 - (1) They deny the Lord/Master. False teaching leads one into the destructive state of being a Lord-denier...a slave that refuses to own his Lord.
 - (2) They blaspheme the way of truth (2:2). Notice there is a *single way* of truth, and this stands in contrast to the *many destructive ways*. It is singular because there is only one Lord and one way (Jn. 14:6).
 - (a) False teaching is not benign; it drives into a ditch; it denies the Lord, and it denies His way, His path of truth!
 - (3) To claim that God gives the death penalty while speaking in unclear terms is to deny His justice and tarnish His reputation.

C. [C] *Is the Hebrew too general and unclear?*

1. THE PURPOSE. The point in giving these instructions was that priests would cover their nakedness and not die (Exo. 28:43). The consequences associated with the instructions require clarity. Without these trousers, there was potential for indecent exposure when ascending the steps (cf. Ex. 20:26). The altar that Solomon built was very high (2 Chron. 4:1 ~ 15 feet high). Although the altar size changed from the Tabernacle to the Temple, what God considered indecent didn't.
2. [C] THE SEPTUAGINT. The Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek around 280-250 BC in what is known as the Septuagint, providing an early and influential version of the Old Testament.
 - a) The Septuagint was translated by **Jewish scholars fluent in both Hebrew and Greek**. Their translation shows how **they understood the modesty instruction found in Exodus 28:42**.
Are you interested?
 - b) [C] "Καὶ ποιήσεις αὐτοῖς περισκελῆ λινᾶ, καλύψαι ἀσχημοσύνην χρωτὸς αὐτῶν· ἀπὸ ὀσφύος ἕως μηρῶν ἔσται." **Translation:** "And you shall make for them linen drawers to cover the shame of flesh; from the waist to the thighs they shall reach."
 - c) [C] **μηρός** (*mēros*) [mā-ROS] The Septuagint confirms the meaning by translating *yarek* as *mēros*, a word that doesn't mean hip or loins, but thigh. In both **biblical** and **historical Greek usage**, the term consistently refers to the **upper leg**. This word appears in Revelation 19:16, where Christ's thigh bears the title "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." It was his thigh, the same place bodily part that priests were to thoroughly cover. If this term is clear when applied to Christ, it should be equally clear when applied to the priesthood.
 - d) [cl] **ἀσχημοσύνη** (*aschēmosynē*) [ahs-khay-moh-SOO-nay]. This word is **precise** and strongly tied to indecent **bodily exposure**, which is why it appears again in **Revelation 16:15**, also in the context of **visible nakedness**.
 - e) [cl] **περισκελῆ**, (*periskeleas*, peh-ree-skeh-LAYS) describes the trousers and literally means "around the legs." It is defined in the standard LSJ lexicon as referring to **drawers or leggings**.¹
 - (1) [C] **round the leg**: hence **περισκελῆ**, τά, **drawers**, LXX Ex. 28.38(42), Ph. 2.157: sg., περισκελές λινού LXX Le. 16.4.

¹ Liddell-Scott-Jones (LSJ), s.v. **περισκελής** (B) – "round the leg; hence, drawers or leggings" (LXX Exod. 28:42; Lev. 16:4)

- (2) This explains the **literal meaning** of the word's formation—**peri** (around) [peh-REE] + **skelos** [SKEH-loss] (leg). So **περισκελῇ** refers to something that **goes around or encloses the leg**. This upper leg is the region God describes as needing full coverage.
- (3) This wasn't a loose robe—it was designed to cover the thigh specifically. The same term is used in Leviticus 16:4, showing consistency in how the priests were to be clothed.
- f) Points to take away:
 - (1) Clarifies the original Hebrew. Connects OT words with NT words. Shows how Jews themselves interpreted before the NT.
 - (2) Proves the "Hebrew is NOT vague." Hebrews fluent in Greek understood the covering requirement for visible modesty boundaries.
 - (3) Exodus 28:42 was not ambiguous to the 70-72 scholars of the LXX. It is not vague to scholars of biblical translation. I could not find one translation that translates it into anything but "thigh." In fact, even the Message Bible got this right: "Make linen underwear to cover their nakedness from waist to thigh." Please understand, this language was not ambiguous to priests, and it should not be to us. Their lives rested on an understanding of it.
3. [C] THE CONTEXTUAL DEFINITION OF WORDS.
 - a) It has been shown that the word for "thigh" in Exodus 28:42 has a range of meanings in OT usage. **CAUTION:** Just because a term can mean many things does *not* mean it can't refer to something specific in context.
 - b) Consider "ARM." When one says, "He won't escape the *arm of the law*," he is referring to the branch of law enforcement. If someone says "arm yourselves for a fight," we understand the need to get a weapon. If someone says, "He broke his arm," we know it's the limb.
 - c) [C] Regardless of there being multiple definitions of words, we absolutely must know:
 - (1) Man must live by "every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD" (Deut. 8:3).
 - (2) "Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him" (Prov. 30:5). Every word that the Holy Spirit has used is to be understood and is valuable to our understanding, useful to refine, test, and prove us. Context gives us clear meaning and understanding.
 - d) A similar approach was argued in 2000 over the *days of creation* in Genesis 1, where multiple definitions were attached to the word day to source ambiguity.
 - e) [C, click thru] Let's illustrate this with the Hebrew word "*yom*" (day). Notice that "*day*" can have a wide array of definitions in Genesis 1.
 - (1) The term "day" can be used broadly (Gen. 2:4).
 - (2) The term "day" can be employed as an idiom or figure of speech whose meaning goes beyond the literal word (Zech. 14:7).
 - (3) The term "*day*" can be used in a **comparative sense**, where it expresses a **relationship or analogy** rather than a strict measurement of time. In **2 Peter 3:8**, Scripture says, "*with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*" This shows that "*day*" can be used **comparatively** to emphasize God's timeless perspective. It should never be used to define God's account to man of creation.
 - (4) The term "day" can be used of a normal 24-hour day (Exo. 22:30). When God gave Israel commands about sacrifices (Lev. 22:30), He told them to eat it *that day*—**yôm**—not

some era or extended period. They didn't need a theologian to figure out what He meant.

- f) [cl] We see *day* in the context of Genesis 1, paired with things that require a regular day:
 - (1) *A numbered day*—'first day,' 'second day,' and so on (Gen. 1:5, 8; cf. Num. 7:12, 18). Some say 'day' in Genesis 1 might mean a long period, like an age. But in Scripture, when the word *day* is paired with a number, it always means a regular day—not a *symbolic or stretched-out period*. That pattern doesn't change anywhere else, so treating Genesis 1 as the exception is just special pleading.
 - (2) *A chronological sequence*. Day doesn't simply have a number in front of it, but it is a chronological sequence of days.
 - (3) *Evening and morning* markers force a normal understanding of "day."
 - (4) Corroborating passages: Exodus 20:11. God **connects His own creative pattern** to the pattern of human labor: **six days of work, one day of rest**. If 'day' in Genesis 1 meant an age or indefinite period, then **Exodus 20:11** collapses. God would be commanding Israel to rest one undefined epoch every six undefined epochs! To misunderstand day in Genesis 1 is nothing short of a willful act of unbelief.
- g) [C, click thru] Just as "yom" has a broad range with a clear meaning in Genesis 1, so "yarek" has a broad range of definitions. Brown, Driver, and Briggs define *yarek* with several different definitions. In Scripture, we see:
 - (1) Jacob's hip socket (Gen. 32:25, 31, 32)
 - (2) Body/loins (Gen. 46:26)
 - (3) Regenerative area (Num. 5:21-27)
 - (4) A proverbial expression of a merciless beatdown (Jud. 15:8)
 - (5) Something struck to show remorse (Jer. 31:19)
 - (6) Where a sword was worn on the outer thigh (Jud. 3:16; Song. 3:8)
- h) But the meaning is clear in every passage, and so it is in Exodus 28:42. Those who blur "yarek" to avoid the call to modesty, whether they know it or not, are doing the same others did with "yom" in 2000. Notice that "yarek" is paired with:
 - (1) The priestly garments. Priests had to know measurements and materials.
 - (2) The purpose is defined as covering nakedness. This is the endpoint of nakedness. The "waist" is the beginning of the lower half of the body that reaches down, covering even the thighs. Corroborating this is the tunic given to Adam and Eve to cover the shame of their nakedness—a garment that reached down to the knees.
 - (3) The punishment for missing the mark carries with it the bearing of sin and death.
 - (4) Propriety ensues with the zone of indecent exposure being defined from the waist down. Not to the hips, or to the loins, but to the thigh.

D. Brief Summary:

1. We've seen the Septuagint confirm the meaning by translating *yarek* as *mēros*, or *thigh*.
2. We've noticed how Bible scholars in every Bible translation I have access to translate it as "thighs."
3. Whether it is for modesty or against theistic evolution, where some have stretched a word's definition to escape certainty, *context still speaks—and God's word still means what it says*.

E. [C] Hebrew Syntax: Verb Stems and Emphasis through Word Order.

1. One thing we often miss in English is how biblical Hebrew uses **different verb stems** to express **intensity, causation, or reflexiveness**. These aren't vague or decorative—they're deliberate and powerful.
2. [C] The Discovery Bible helps highlight these kinds of subtle details that give Hebrew its depth.
3. [C] You will notice the red arrow. It is their symbol of showing that the word "cover" has the Piel verb stem. *What does this mean?* According to their notes: "The *Piel* verb-stem points to where *energetic* (multi-level) activity results, placing the receiver (object) in a *new condition*. ...*The fuller Hebrew meaning of Piel is brought out in translation with auxiliary terms like fully, thoroughly...*"
4. Put simply: **Piel puts the verb on steroids**. Where the Qal stem might say, "He broke it," the Piel stem would say, "He smashed it to pieces." It takes the verb and puts it into a *robust* state. If you wept in Qal, you continually cried rivers of tears in Piel.
5. In Exodus 28:42, God doesn't just say "cover"—He says, **fully cover, completely conceal, thoroughly clothe**.
6. This brings necessary clarity to the Hebrew, which cannot be ignored. If these are ignored, we easily move from defending Scripture to **undermining what God Himself emphasizes**.
7. I want to make this very clear: when a written article or sermon makes God's word vague and ignores the syntax implications of Piel, it is **an inversion of God's clarity!** It is not ambiguity on God's part—it's either *ignorance* or *avoidance on ours!* It's not *preaching*, it's *perpetuating* poor research.
8. [C] But there's more...you will also notice that "even to the thighs" is in red. This is another code from the Discovery Bible that speaks of "Focus Emphasis." They say, "*Focus-emphasis is a common literary technique of the original (Hebrew and Greek) text – emphasized words shown in The Discovery Bible highlighted in red.*"
 - a) [C, click thru] In biblical Hebrew, emphasis is not shown by **bold** font or ALL CAPS punctuation like in texting. Instead, it's conveyed through powerful literary tools such as:
 - (1) Rearranging of words (fronting of key terms)
 - (2) Repetition to stress important concepts or themes (Isa. 6:3, Holy, Holy, Holy)²
 - (3) Lexical choice (using rare, unusual, or intense words)
 - (4) Structural placement – placing a word or phrase in a prominent position.
 - b) [C] *Focus-emphasis* tells readers: Give full attention to this word (phrase). Unpack its fuller meaning, which is key to understanding the passage through the eyes of the original writer.
 - c) When *The Discovery Bible* identifies "even to the thighs" (עַד־יִרְכָּיִם – 'ad yerekhayim) as having **focus-emphasis**, they're noting that in Hebrew syntax, *this phrase is placed to draw attention!*
 - (1) In biblical Hebrew, **fronting** and **emphatic positioning** are key methods for creating focus-emphasis. This means altering normal word order to emphasize a particular phrase. It's not arbitrary—it's an intentional way of saying, "*This part matters most.*"
 - (2) [C, C] In **Exodus 28:42**, the **region being covered** ("*from the loins to the thighs*") is given *structural prominence*, drawing focus to what God defined as needing to be



² The repetition of 'holy' isn't just a point of focus—it's a statement of contrast. *Holy, holy, holy* sets God apart not only in purity but in position. When Isaiah heard it, he didn't say, 'Interesting.' He said, 'Woe is me!' That's the impact of contrast emphasis—when heaven speaks, earth trembles.

clothed. Carefully observe that the Hebrew verb *yihyu* [yee-HYOO] follows *yarek* (thighs), giving it that **structural prominence**. It is from the root *hayah* ("to be") in the **Qal** imperfect, 3rd person plural, and communicates an **intended ongoing state**: "they shall be [there]," stressing continual physical **coverage to the stated boundary**.

- (3) [C] A helpful pop culture parallel is **Yoda** from *Star Wars*, who often uses fronted word order. Normal wording would say, "You must learn self-control." Yoda's fronting would say, "Self-control, you must learn." This highlights *self-control* by placing it first—just as Hebrew sometimes highlights key ideas by reordering the sentence structure.
- (4) The Hebrew of Exodus 28:42 flips the normal word order to highlight the line God draws. It sounds unusual in English—but like Yoda: 'From the loins to the thighs, they shall be' is not casual, it's emphatic. When God defines modesty, He doesn't whisper it. He emphasizes it. We must also.

d) "Even to the thighs" means "cover even the thighs." When we say "From A to Z," we mean it includes not only "A" but also "Z."

F. [C] Isaiah 47:2–3 — A Passage Brother Hogland Requested I Address.

1. This passage describes Babylon's humiliation using the imagery of a noblewoman being taken captive and forced to labor. Her skirt would be removed to pass through the river.
2. The word **piš** (**shoq**) [shōk] and Bible translations are mixed between *thigh* and *leg*. It generally refers to the **lower leg**. However, when referencing **animals**, it often designates the **upper portion** (thigh or haunch)—which may add interpretive weight to how it is applied here.
3. So why do some **translations render it as "thigh"** rather than just "leg"? Because contextually, **"your nakedness shall be uncovered, yes, your shame will be seen."** This implies a **region more intimate** than just the shin or calf. The exposure was humiliating and shameful. The image of *shame* being brought upon Babylon *breaks down if the entire leg is not in view*.
4. Also contextually, the **long, flowing garment (skirt or train)**—likely reaching the lower leg—was removed, exposing the upper leg in the process. *Removing this to wade through water ended in indecent exposure* (v. 3). So, while the word *yarek* (thigh) is not here, **the context points there**.
5. In short: *The passage doesn't name the thigh directly—but it implicates it.* **THE SKIRT WAS REMOVED, AND THE SHAME THAT FOLLOWED WAS NOT SIMPLY WET ANKLES.**
6. [cl] Hebrew Syntax also justifies the *interpretive translation* as thigh, with the intense Piel stem.
 - a) *Isaiah 47:2 is the inverse of Exodus 28:42. In Exodus*, the *Piel stem* commands complete covering for holiness; **in Isaiah**, it describes deliberate uncovering that brings shame.
 - b) [C] **These two passages don't create ambiguity—they reinforce clarity.** When God wants the shameful parts covered, He says so with strong language. When those parts are exposed, it is called shame. In both texts, God uses the strongest Hebrew voice (Piel) to emphasize just how seriously He takes both *covering* and *uncovering*.

Conclusion: If covering to the thighs was so clearly required under the shadow priesthood (Ex. 28:42), and uncovering the same area by making the whole leg bare is linked to shame (Isa. 47:2), should Christians—priests of the new covenant (1 Pet. 2:5, 9)—treat these areas as ambiguous? The grammar matches the message: **nakedness is real, defined, and shameful—unless God covers it.** [C] We don't want to lose our confidence. Our confidence slips away when our clarity fades (cf. Heb. 10:35, 32). Like Eve, Satan invades our thoughts and attacks our simplicity and with confusion he leads us into open rebellion. [C] **INVITATION: (Gal. 3:26, 27).**

PREPARED MATERIALS I HAVE NOT YET COVERED FOR LESSON 4....

V. Scholarship? Since scholarship was introduced in a recent lesson that erased a hard line for modesty, I want to balance it with this:

1. Several respected scholars affirm that the Hebrew word יָרֵךְ (*yārek*), is translated properly as "thigh" in **Exodus 28:42**, and refers to the upper leg and that the priestly undergarments were intended to extend **to the knee**.

When God goes out of His way to mark a **boundary** and emphasizes it in the text, it's not something we can shrug off. He defines this region—**from waist to thighs**—as the area of **nakedness**. And if it mattered for priests ministering before Him in the Old Testament shadow, why would it not matter for His *royal priesthood* today (1 Pet. 2:9)?

[C] MODESTY AS REVERENCE: When the Heart Isn't Enough

We've been talking about the doctrine of modesty for a few weeks. Modesty is under fire, not simply from culture, but even from Christians who claim the Bible draws no line. Others disregard the instruction given.

[C] The Previous three lessons (review).

In our Scripture reading from Proverbs 4:20–27, the emphasis is NOT *following your heart* but rather *forming your heart* by listening diligently to your "Father's" instruction and letting it direct every part of your life—your eyes, feet, speech, and conduct. NOTICE, where the word is to *remain* in view and be *retained* in (4:21).

[C] In Proverbs 4:21, the word "**depart**" is in the **Hiphil** [HIF-eel] **verb stem**, which often means "to cause" something to happen. Where the Piel stem intensifies the action, the Hiphil stem is **causative**—it shows that the subject **causes** the action to occur.

So instead of simply saying, "Don't let God's words leave your sight," the Hiphil stem intensifies the character's effort and responsibility: "**Make sure you don't allow them to be moved.**" It's like a coach saying, "*Keep your eye on the ball—don't let it out of your sight for a second!*" That's not passive; it's intentional. You're not just letting things happen—you're **making** things happen.

The father in Proverbs is placing the responsibility on the son: "*Keep God's Word always in view. Don't let it drift out of your focus.*" "*Let them not escape from your sight...*" (ESV). Notice: treasuring them in the midst of your heart comes after the instruction, not before. So too don't let the examples and information in this series escape your sight.

I. [C] A HEART CONDITION

- A. The heart must be in the right place. The *condition* of the heart is directly related to apparel in Proverbs 7:10, "And there a woman met him, *With* the attire of a harlot, and a **crafty heart**." A crafty heart will have a crafty dress. When the heart is in the wrong place, clothing will not cover the right place. Some dress doctrine up in indecent crafty clothing as well. *What do I mean by this?*
- B. [C] I recently read a comment on FB: "*Just so you know, there's a difference between nakedness and modesty. In layman's terms, modesty is how the body is arranged. Nakedness is how the body is covered.*"
 1. [cl] I don't even know what that means—*nakedness is how the body is covered?* "But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness" (2 Tim. 2:16). To me, that is like someone saying I am not religious, I'm spiritual. Or I am a member of the church without religion. It sounds clever, but it doesn't mean anything. It is a manufactured fog used to enshroud and obscure something important. NAKEDNESS is how the body is uncovered...the lack of covering.
 2. The writer says, '*just so you know*'—as if he's revealing some great truth the rest of us missed. But when we are done knowing what he wants us to know, all we have is obscurity packaged up in a clever-sounding phrase.
 3. And notice the pride—he appoints himself the expert, able to reduce God's standards into 'layman's terms.' Yet, no one walks away with a clearer understanding—just the writer, feeling elevated, as if he dropped something deep.
 4. **Modesty is not a word game—it's a creation issue; it's a holiness issue; it's a reverence issue.** 2 Timothy 2:14, "Remind *them* of these things, charging *them* before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers." It is not merely about how the heart feels, or how the

body is arranged—it's about whether we've obeyed God's clear standard for how the body is covered. God doesn't give us vague suggestions—He didn't tell Adam when he was hiding in shame, "I want you to know something...there's a difference between nakedness and modesty. In layman's terms, modesty is how the body is arranged and nakedness is how the body is covered." No, when Adam said he hid because he was naked, God gave him a tunic (Gen. 3:10, 21).

- a) A person can't be modest while exposing what God calls naked."
- b) Timothy 2:9 says women must 'adorn themselves in **modest apparel**.' That's not speaking necessarily about how gracefully you sit or walk—but your choice of clothing. Exodus 28:42 proves God defines nakedness: **from the waist to the thighs**. One CANNOT, therefore, be modest while revealing what God says brings shame. *That's not modesty—that's rebellion, arranged nicely.*

C. [C] **What is the answer for modesty?** Whatever the answer is for modesty is the answer for all of our conduct. It is a reverent heart trained in righteousness.

- 1. **A reverent heart governs the hemline and leads to reverent dress.** Hebrews 12:28 commands us to "serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear," and 1 Timothy 2:9 instructs women to "adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and **reverence** (Strong's G127 – *aidos*)".
- 2. The same word is used in both passages. This is no coincidence. The **attitude** we bring before God in worship (Heb. 12:28) is the **same mindset** that should shape how we present ourselves before Him (1 Tim. 2:9). **Reverence isn't just internal—it is visible.** A heart that fears God will not treat modesty as a vague opinion but as a holy response to a holy God.

II. [C] **A HEART DIRECTION (Prov. 4:23-27).** Solomon speaks of a heart's direction.

- A. *Modest dress isn't automatically understood*—just adorn your heart with Christ, and everything else will fall into place. But that's only half the truth. To truly adorn the heart with Christ means to *receive His teaching and submit to it in action* (Jn. 14:15). Notice Triumph's lyrics on "Fight the Good Fight" where it speaks of taking a look inside your heart...there's an answer in your heart. Yes, but is it the right answer!
- B. [C] Scripture teaches that we are not judged merely by the intentions of the heart, but by the **fruit** it produces (Jer. 17:9–10; cf. Matt. 7:20). In the New Testament, **nothing is reduced to a heart issue alone**—not salvation, not worship, and certainly not modesty. A heart aligned with Christ doesn't drift into holiness—it walks in obedience.
 - 1. [C] **Conversion?** Many today speak of the heart as if sincerity alone is enough to please God—but there is still sin in sincerity when truth is lacking, when obedience is absent.
 - a) The Romans were not saved simply because their hearts were adorned with Christ. Paul said, *"But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered"* (Rom. 6:17). Their adornment of heart was to follow through in obedience to revealed instruction...**THAT FORM OF DOCTRINE TO WHICH YOU WERE DELIVERED.** If it were "heart only," then faith alone would suffice.
 - b) Scripture consistently shows that the heart must be shaped by God's **Word**. Jesus identified evil actions flowing from the heart (Matt. 15:18-19). *Heart-born thoughts shape foot-worn paths. What starts in the heart later walks in the streets! So, sin doesn't just simmer in the heart; it boils over into life.*
 - c) The heart must be taught and directed by the truth. At Pentecost, the people were *"cut to the heart"* (Acts 2:37)—but their salvation came only after they responded to the instruction: *"Repent and be baptized..."* (Acts 2:38).

- d) A heart filled with faith flows into a confession of Christ (Rom. 10:9, 10).
 - e) Without divine revelation, the heart has no trusty roadmap. To “obey from the heart” means the heart had first been taught and then responds with faithful action.
2. [c] **Worship** (Jn. 4:23, 24). Many claim that as long as the heart is sincere, worship is acceptable to God. But if worship were only a “heart issue,” there would be no rules in religion, no need for instruction, order, or discernment.
- a) Yet Jesus said that “*true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth*” (John 4:23). Worship must involve the heart (*spirit*), but it must also be governed by *truth*. The Samaritans in John 4 believed they were worshiping God sincerely, but Jesus plainly told the woman, “*You worship what you do not know*” (v. 22). Their worship was heartfelt—but *it was still wrong, because it lacked the right roadmap*.
 - b) Worship that pleases God must be directed by divine instruction. Paul later wrote, “*Let all things be done decently and in order*” (1 Cor. 14:40)—an acknowledgment that even sincere believers must submit their worship to God’s design and rules.
 - c) Vain worship violates both the spirit (heart) and the truth (Matt. 15:8, 9). A heart adorned with Christ will not dismiss His pattern—it will seek it out and submit to it.
 - d) *When the heart is not guided by God’s Word, it risks becoming a well-meaning substitute for the truth.*
3. [c] Just as obedience in salvation requires instruction, so does acceptable worship, and so does acceptable adornment. Paul didn’t understand modesty as purely a heart issue (1 Tim. 2:9, 10). I’ll return to this text in a moment.

III. [C] **A HEART STRIPPED OF INSTRUCTION WILL BE CLOTHED IN SHAME.** *The heart can be sincere—and still sincerely wrong.*

- A. Man needs something beyond himself to become complete. Jeremiah declared, “*It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps*” (Jer. 10:23). Paul echoes this in 2 Timothy 2:15, where he urges believers to “*be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*”
- B. Even with access to the Word, diligence and accuracy are required. A faithful worker must:
 - **Be diligent,**
 - **Possess the word of truth,** and
 - **Rightly divide it**—cutting a straight line.
- C. Such instruction would be meaningless if all that mattered was a good heart. The heart alone is not sufficient—it must be shaped by truth.
- D. Divine instruction gives the heart *clarity* to act with authority. *Authority* gives the heart confidence that it is approved by God without being put to shame!
- E. **APOLLOS** (Acts 18:24-28). Apollos needed clearer teaching to align his zeal with accuracy.
 - 1. *His manner* (18:24). He was eloquent and mighty in Scripture (18:24). We can correctly say that he pursued divine instruction and had a large knowledge of Scripture.
 - 2. *His sincerity* (18:25). He was fervently in spirit. Who could judge his heart as not being sincere and zealous? His heart strove for accuracy—but at the same time—it *was incomplete*.
 - 3. *His action* (18:26). He spoke/taught boldly/publicly in the synagogue. He knew emphatically and clearly that Jesus was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Yet he lacked something equally needed...the way to contact Jesus’ saving grace...he knew only the baptism of John. That means he

didn't know of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 upon the apostles. It means he didn't know baptism in the name of the Lord. He was essentially carrying on the ministry of John when John's ministry had already been completed in Christ.

4. *His correction* (18:26). Although his heart was sincere, and although he was mighty in Scripture, he needed to have the way of God explained to him more accurately. If sincerity alone were enough, there was no need for Aquilla and Priscilla to explain it any more accurately.
5. *The result* (18:27, 28). After receiving correction, he became a more effective teacher.
6. The lesson: Because something is aligned *internally* (his fervent spirit) doesn't guarantee everything is appropriate *externally* (his message preached and condition before God). Apollos didn't remain in partial knowledge. He did not argue, "My heart is aligned with Jesus being the Christ, so my message is sufficient." He was teachable and was willing to make himself straight with the fuller truth so that he would not be ashamed. A good heart needs sound and clear teaching. This movement from humility moves out of confusion and into clarity. Not the other way around.

IV. [C] MODESTY NEEDS INSTRUCTION

- A. If modesty becomes automatically understood when people turn to Jesus, why does Paul instruct Christian women to adorn themselves intentionally this way? They, like Apollos, were lacking something. In the same way, Titus was to teach Christian women to love their husbands and children (Titus 2:4). He was to teach older men and women to learn reverence (Titus 2:1, 1). Why give specific guidance on these matters if they simply take care of themselves? **Things don't just take care of themselves!** Remember the Hiphil verb stem?
- B. A central theme of Paul's writing in 1 Timothy was to address proper conduct in the house of the Lord (1 Tim. 3:15). This also becomes central to a preacher's work.
- C. Paul gives objective standards (1 Tim. 2:9, 10).
 1. *Modest/respectable apparel* – clothing that is orderly, appropriate, and does not draw undue attention.
 2. *Propriety/modesty* – means a sense of shame, reverence, and moral sensitivity about what should be covered. Since shame is connected to partial nakedness, God is calling women to have shamefacedness when considering their adornment.
 3. *Self-control/moderation* – means restraint and sound judgment. Have a restraining gavel to make a judgment on approved or unapproved attire. These concrete virtues carry visible implications.
- D. Paul gives both **negative and positive applications**—*not with... but with*. He calls sisters **not** to strive toward extravagance or attention-grabbing display, but instead to dress with what is "*proper*"—what naturally accords with godliness and good works.
 1. Proper adornment is not left to the shifting winds of "whatever feels modest in your heart."
 2. All Christian conduct—including modesty—must be **informed by Scripture**, not guided by personal feelings or **cultural trends**. If the *cult* of Diana could influence Christian women in Ephesus, then the *cult* of our **modern culture** can just as easily push Christians today out of alignment with Christ.

Conclusion:

1. Modesty isn't legalism—it's reverence. So ask: **Am I dressing as one set apart for God's service—or for the world's applause?** Am I adorned with reverence or rationalization? "Let us serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:28–29).

MODESTY AS REVERENCE: WHEN CLARITY IS REJECTED

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 1:24-29

This evening sermon provides the **sobering balance** to the morning's encouragement. It says, essentially: "If you **reject** clarity, you're not showing humility—you're showing rebellion. And God doesn't overlook that."

We saw this morning: **Apollos → heard teaching → received clarity → changed for the better**. However, Proverbs 1:24-29 warns against the *rejection of instruction*. **scoffers → hear teaching → despise and disregard → calamity!**

Let's properly apply this to our series on modesty. How clear is the information in this series? Is it viewed as teaching that will better my standing with God and others? Is its message disregarded and despised? Some might counter the earlier lesson, insisting that 1 Peter 3:3-4 shows God only cares about the heart. However, Peter teaches that character comes out in conduct (1 Pet. 1:15-17; 3:1, 2).

I. [C] TWO VOICES, ONE MESSAGE: DRESS WITH REVERENCE

- A. Peter doesn't contradict Paul. He is not saying outward appearance doesn't matter—he's saying it shouldn't become **the focus**. In fact, he assumes women *will* adorn themselves and **tells them what kind of beauty matters most**. Paul, likewise, tells them *how* to adorn themselves.
- B. **Peter emphasizes motive and heart**, while **Paul emphasizes practice and appearance**, and **together they provide a complete picture**.

1 Peter 3	1 Timothy 2	Shared Emphasis
Focus on inner beauty over showy dress	Command to wear modest clothing with self-restraint	Both warn against showy, sensual, or status-driven attire
Inner beauty is "precious in God's sight"	Proper dress is "fitting for those professing godliness"	Modesty is about honoring God, not just personal comfort
Implied contrast: the internal vs. external	Practical instruction on visible appearance that adorns the gospel	Inner and outer life must align in reverence and humility

Together, these inspired men show that modesty is not just a feeling in the heart—it is expressed in actual life choices. The heart and body work together in reverence for God.

II. [C] **Modesty and Scholarship.** [NOTE: HIT THESE FAST] After listening to the third lesson in an exposition of Exodus 28:42 and Isaiah 47:2, how do you judge the information brought out by the Hebrew, the Hebrew syntax, the Greek translation, etc.? Does the claim that some have made that these passages are too vague stand? I want to add the weight of several respected scholars regarding the Hebrew word יָרֵךְ (*yārek*), translated properly as "thigh" in **Exodus 28:42**, and the priestly undergarments. These scholars had access to the weight of the things I touched on in lesson 3.

- A. *Keil and Delitzsch*, "reaching from the hips to the thighs, and serving 'to cover the flesh of the nakedness.'" Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, respected 19th-century scholars, confirm in their commentary on Exodus 28:42 that the priestly breeches were to cover "from the loins to the thighs," specifically to prevent improper exposure during priestly service.
 1. They emphasize that this garment was required even under other robes and that failure to wear it could result in guilt and death before God.
 2. Their explanation reinforces that God clearly defined a specific region of the body to be covered.

- B. *John Gill* (1697–1771) – Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible. John Gill, a renowned theologian and Hebraist, interprets Exodus 28:42 as follows:
1. "They were to reach above the navel near the heart, and to the end of the thigh, which is the knee, as Maimonides says."
 2. Gill references Maimonides (my-MON-uh-deez), a preeminent Jewish scholar (AD 1135–1204). He was a philosopher and physician who lived in Spain, Morocco, and Egypt. He is considered one of the most influential **Jewish thinkers of the Middle Ages**. Maimonides isn't inspired Scripture, but his writings **reflect ancient Jewish understanding**, particularly helpful when studying priestly garments, temple service, and modesty laws. He understood that the "thigh" (yārek) extends to the knee.
- C. *The Pulpit Commentary*
1. Even the **Pulpit Commentary**, a trusted resource in pulpits and study desks for over a century, affirms the clarity of this passage. It says the linen undergarments in Exodus 28:42 extended '**from the waist to a little above the knee.**' In other words, the point isn't vague or flexible; it's specific. These scholars weren't agenda-driven—they were seeking to explain the plain meaning of the text. *That's the kind of clarity we need today.*
 2. Quote: "Rather, 'linen drawers' (Kalisch), such as we see worn by the Egyptians generally, reaching from the waist to a little above the knee. (See Wilkinson in Rawlinson's Herodotus, vol. 2. p. 113, 2nd ed.) ... Unto the thighs - i.e., to the bottom of the thighs where they adjoin on the knee."
- D. *Charles John Ellicott* (1819–1905). A member of the Revision Committee for the English Revised Version, said: "Drawers reaching from the waist to a little above the knee were the sole garment of many in Egypt, a necessary garment of all. Their object was as here stated."
1. Even the Gentiles practiced what was later legislated for God's priests!
 2. Ellicott referenced that **Egyptians wore garments covering from the waist to the knee**, not because they followed God's law, but because that **region was deemed to be covered**.
 3. Paul rebuked the Corinthians for tolerating sin that was not even named among the Gentiles (1 Cor. 5:1). His point seems to be that sometimes, even the world has a moral compass, and when the world gets it right and Christians don't, we should be ashamed and weep.
 4. He later instructed them about a principle that even nature teaches (1 Cor. 11:14). In the same way, we could ask: *Doesn't even nature itself teach us that it's shameful to expose the upper leg?* This is not just about Hebrew grammar—it's about **common decency**.
 5. Paul's use of Gentile conscience and natural understanding affirms that *some things are plainly understood even without divine revelation*—but how much more when **God does give revelation**, as in Exodus 28:42?

III. A Biblical Case Study When Clarity is Rejected:

- A. **UZZAH** had zeal but not aligned with godly instruction—he died for his irreverence (2 Sam. 6:6-7). Who carried the holy things? Only one third of the Levitical priesthood was privileged to transport holy things, the *Kohathites*. But even these men were not permitted to directly touch or even look upon these lest they die. The holy things were to be covered with skins and cloth before being transported. Notice the specificity of God (Num. 4:4-15, 18-20; note, same verb with Piel stem as in Exo. 28:42). While Uzzah had good intentions, he failed the standard. God will not change his mind. Man is called to change his. **LESSON:** Good intentions don't sanctify disobedient actions.
- B. **SAUL** acted from compulsion rather than command (1 Sam. 10:8; 13:8-14).

1. His actions usurped a priest's role. Samuel did not excuse him, saying, "Because your heart was in the right place, your kingdom will stand forever." Rather, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the *commandment* of the Lord."
 2. His kingship was rejected because **his actions were foolish** and out of alignment (1 Sam. 13:14).
 3. **LESSON:** The "heart" truly matters when it **reveres God's commands** and **submits to His standards**, not one that *replaces* specific instruction with emotional sincerity.
 - a) Solomon penned, Proverbs 4:23: "*Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.*" But the "issues of life" must still be **directed and disciplined** by God's Word—*not left to feelings* (Prov. 4:21). When his fears held sway, Saul lost his heart.
 - b) God has always expected both the heart and the actions to align with His word (Jn. 14:15).
 4. **Application:** Clarity rejected out of fear, convenience, or pride is still rebellion.
- C. **MOSES** struck the rock that God had spelled out clearly to speak to (Num. 20:7-12).
1. The clarity of God—"speak."
 2. The rejection of Moses—strike.
 3. The result: didn't enter the Promised Land. POINT: Even leaders are required to mind God's clarity, or they risk misrepresenting God and being punished. Moses lost his heart with rashness of speech (Psa. 106:32-33).
- D. **ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA** (Acts 5:1-10).
1. What Ananias Teaches Us About the Heart and Holiness: Half-truths get whole judgments.
 2. God doesn't judge the heart alone. Ananias and Sapphira's intentions may have included generosity. They gave money to the church. But their action—holding back part while pretending to give all was dishonest—they lied to God (5:4).
 3. **Lesson:** God judged their integrity by what they did with what they said, not merely by what may have been in their hearts.
 4. They had instruction that taught they didn't have to give it all and that it was a freewill offering. The sin wasn't necessarily stinginess but acted out deception.
 5. Just like Ananias, some today want to appear more than they are. They may appear reverent while dismissing God's instructions on modesty...scorning the teaching of 1 Timothy 2:9-10 and say, "God knows my heart." Modesty becomes a half-truth—a heart only issue.
 6. Ananias presented one image to the church while concealing his true image. They **exposed others** to confusion or temptation by faking sacrificial devotion.
 - a) **They still gave!** Some today might say, "But they gave something—that's good!" But God is not pleased with partial gifts cloaked in falsehood.
 - b) This teaches that **partial obedience clothed in deceit** is still rebellion in God's eyes. God doesn't just judge what we give, but why and how we give it (cf. 2 Cor. 9:7).
 7. TAKEAWAY:
 - a) "If anyone desires to be **first**, he shall be **last** of all and servant of all." (Mk. 9:35). To pretend you are servant of all when you are not is dishonest.
 - b) *God didn't strike Ananias and Sapphira dead because they failed to give everything, but because they pretended to. He wasn't demanding all their money—He was honest.*
 - (1) Likewise, God isn't demanding that we wear what some might judge—the most conservative clothing imaginable to prove devotion—or to dress with last centuries style...modesty is not about style...it's about reverence toward what the Lord revealed.

- (2) The issue isn't just the fabric or the form—it's whether our heart and body are in reverent agreement with God's instructions.

Conclusion:

1. Let's remember the exhortation from Proverbs 1:24-29, which underscores the dangers of rejecting clarity: "Because I have called and you refused... They would have none of my counsel and despised all my reproof... then they will call on Me, but I will not answer..." God and His wisdom are removed!
2. God has not changed—He is still a consuming fire, and our service to Him must still be "with reverence and godly fear. God hasn't changed. Nakedness hasn't changed. And reverence hasn't changed. The real question is—have we?
3. We must not take for granted the grace extended in Christ. Grace is not a license for irreverence but a call to deeper holiness (Titus 2:11-12).
4. I want to end this series with a mirror check.
 - A. "Do I approach God's instructions with the heart of Apollos—or the impulse of Uzzah or Saul?"
 - B. "Am I moving toward clarity or away from it?"
5. God's call for reverence has never been unclear. From Eden to Sinai, from the shadow of the Law to the substance of Christ, God has always drawn a line between holy and profane, between covered and uncovered, between honoring Him and indulging self. If God demanded modesty in the shadow, how much more in the substance? If He drew clear lines then, shall we blur them now?
6. **Invitation:**
Have you clothed yourself with Christ in baptism (Gal. 3:27)? Are you living as His holy priest (Rev. 1:6)? If not, come in faith and obedience—be washed, be clothed, be consecrated. Let your life and dress reflect the holiness of the One you serve.