

*Your Clothes &*

*Your Heart*





This is written for Seventh-day Adventist Christians who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and have made a covenant with Him through baptism to follow Him wherever He may lead.

We are going to consider the connection between ***the condition of our hearts and what we wear.***

Although this is specifically addressed to women, it would be very appropriate for husbands, future husbands, fathers, and especially church leaders to consider the message in this presentation as well.



Let us ask, why do the majority of Seventh-day Adventist women dress the way they do? If you go to any large gathering of Seventh-day Adventists, you will notice that the majority of younger women are following the current fashions of the day. No one seems to be concerned about whether this is pleasing to God. It's just a matter of following what is popular with the majority.



Have you ever been absolutely positive that you were right, and then later found out that you were dead wrong? Of course, all of us have had that experience. It humbles us, and makes us realize we are prone to making mistakes and misjudgments. We are not all-wise and all knowing.





We all start with the assumption that our opinions are right. That's human nature—sinful human nature. We dress the way we want to dress, and we assume that God approves. Is this a safe assumption?

If we care about what God thinks, we need to consider what He inspired Ellen White to write:

“I was alarmed for ministers and people. . . . **They think they are all right when they are all wrong.**

Ministers and people must make greater advancement in the work of reform. They should commence without delay to correct their wrong habits of eating, drinking, **dressing** . . .” {1T 466.1}





To consider that our natural impulses and desires regarding how we dress could out of harmony with God's will is a troubling thought. But God tells us plainly that our human reasoning is in conflict with His principles on dress.





“The human heart has never been in harmony with the requirements of God. Human reasoning has ever sought to evade or set aside the simple, direct instructions of his word. Those precepts which enjoin self-denial and humility, which require modesty and simplicity in conversation, deportment, and **apparel**, have, in every age, been disregarded, even by the majority of those who professed to be followers of Christ. The result has ever been the same, — the adoption of the fashions, customs, and principles of the world” {CTBH 93.1}



God's principles are disregarded by the majority, even in the church. But the majority exerts a powerful influence on how we choose to dress. We want to fit in with the crowd, and not stand out as different.



It's natural to want to "fit in with the crowd" but it's spiritually dangerous! "Lacking the courage to stand firm for the right, women allow the current of popular feeling to draw them on in its wake."  
{CG 434.3}

Does God have a standard regarding dress? If we merely follow what is popular, will Jesus be happy with us?

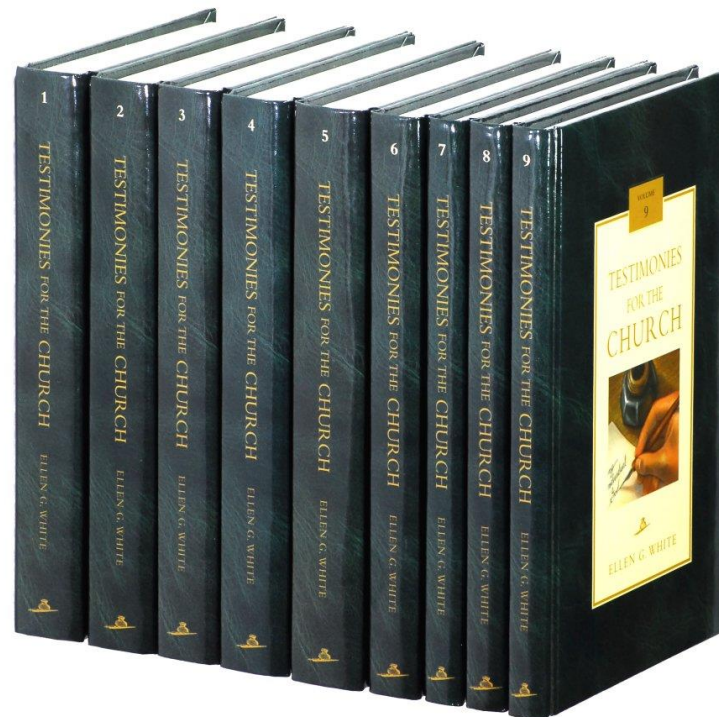
“Christ is ashamed of His professed followers. Wherein do we bear any resemblance to Him? Wherein does our dress conform to the Bible requirements?” 4T 648

What are the Bible requirements regarding dress?



We need to investigate for ourselves the inspired testimony on dress if Jesus is truly our Lord and Savior.

Each Christian woman must make a choice. Does she want to follow the fashions of the world, or does she care more about following Jesus?





What marvelous and valuable counsel God has given us! We read statements like these:

“God calls His church to be more separate from the world in their dress than you have thought.” {TDG 295.4}

“We warn our Christian sisters against the tendency to make their dresses according to worldly styles, thus attracting attention.” {3SM 244.1}

“Shall we appear to sanction these demoralizing fashions by adopting them?” {MYP 359.3}



What are demoralizing fashions? Have you considered the power that fashion has over your own life?

“We are aware that as we speak and write upon the subject of woman's dress we have to stem the current of custom. It is manifest that most women do not think and act in reference to dress from reason and reflection. They accept, without questioning, that which society and fashion imposes upon them.” {HR, May 1, 1872}

How strongly are you influenced by your peers and by the fashions they follow?

“Few have the moral courage to wear a dress in opposition to fashion, although it be modest and healthful. {HR, May 1, 1872}







Could a wrong influence in following fashion be strong enough to cause other women to be lost?

“Many a soul who was convinced of the truth has been led to decide against it by the pride and love of the world displayed by our sisters.” {4T 641}

How serious is the matter of influence in our dress?

“The subject of dress demands serious reflection and much prayer.

“My sisters, your dress is telling either in favor of Christ and the sacred truth or in favor of the world. Which is it? Remember we must all answer to God for the influence we exert.” {4T 641}



How hard it is to stem the tide and dress differently than our peers. And it's not just our peers we need to reckon with. We have the collective influence of six generations of Laodicean Seventh-day Adventists that have increasingly followed the fashions of the world! We have inherited the fashion-following spirit!



The last 100 years have seen tremendous changes in worldly fashion. And these changes have been reflected in the attire of the church as well. Look at the changes in women's fashion in the last 100 years:



**Hemlines** – From floor-length to *above the knee, even mini*

**Sleeves** – From wrist length to *sleeveless, even spaghetti straps*

**Necklines** – From the collar bone to *low cut, revealing*

**Ankles** – From always covered to *bare legs up to the thighs*

**Upper form** – From modestly covered to *tight & clingy*

**Lower form** – From concealed by long, full skirt to *revealed by tight skirts or pants*

In every one of these areas, the church has followed along with the world. These as just some of the changes that fashions have brought about in 100 years. We could also mention:



**Midriff** – From never bared to *exposed in swimwear etc.*

**Swimwear** – From loose, knee length to *tight panty length*

**Unisex** – From abhorred & rare to *adored & everywhere!*

**Heels** – From sturdy 1 inch or less to *sexy 4+ inches*

**Women's hair** – From long & natural to *short & dyed or bleached*

**Make-up** – From none to *on almost everyone!*

These are easily documentable facts of history. Fashions have changed dramatically, perhaps more rapidly than any period in the history of this world. Has society become more godly, more modest, more moral in the last 100 years? Hardly!



If the church has followed the fashions of the world, is the church more godly, modest and moral than it was 100 years ago? Obviously not!

Why do we assume that we are all right, when the evidence tells us that we are all wrong? By following the fashions of the world, we become like the world.



God warns His people of a huge danger. This warning comes to Laodicea as a straight testimony:

“What greater deception can come upon human minds than a **confidence that they are right when they are all wrong!** The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They know not that **their condition is deplorable** in the sight of God.” {3T 252.4}





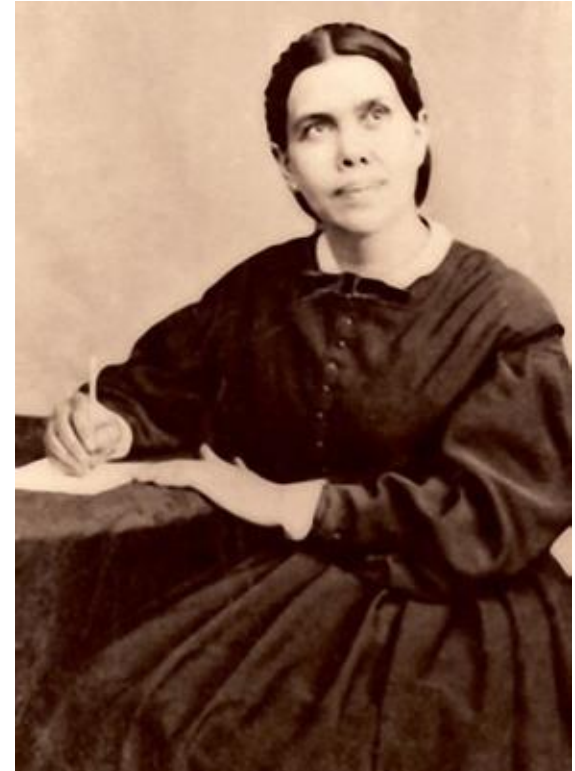
How serious is our deplorable condition?

“They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God. . . I was shown that many are flattering themselves that they are good Christians, who have not a ray of light from Jesus.”

(Please read the entire chapter The Laodicean Church, chapter 27 in Testimonies for the Church, volume 3.)



“Many cling to their . . .  
darling sins while they are in  
so great a deception as to  
talk and feel that they are in  
need of nothing.” (See The  
Laodicean Church, 3T 253-  
260)



Our deception is that we think we're fine, but we are not fine! We have automatically assumed the way we dress is the correct standard. Those who are more modest than us we label as fanatical and those who are less modest than us we consider to be worldly. But we assume our standard is just right!



So, if we have the attitude of believing that we are right in our choices, we tend to get really upset when anyone might suggest that the way we dress is not pleasing to God. Ellen White faced that same attitude in her day:





“As we bear testimony against pride and following the fashions of the world, we are met with excuses and self-justification. . . It is the inventions and fashions of the world that have led God's people, and they are unwilling to move out independent of the fashions and customs of the world. . . The distance is widening between Christ and his people, and lessening between them and the world.” {4bSG 68}

For some reason, when the subject of dress comes up, we women tend to get our defenses up. We're ready to fight for our choice to appear as we want, and we tend to rise up against anyone who would suggest that we have a need to reform in this area. But if we are serious about our commitment to Jesus, we simply cannot afford to shut our ears and harden our hearts against God's inspired messages. To do so would be disastrous.





We need to understand that what we wear affects our relationship with God. If we ignore God's principles of dress, we neglect the inward adorning as well.

*“As we see our sisters departing from simplicity in dress and cultivating a love for the fashions of the world, we feel troubled. By taking steps in this direction **they are separating themselves from God** and neglecting the inward adorning.” {CH 596.1}*

All Seventh-day Adventists need to know God's principles of dress.

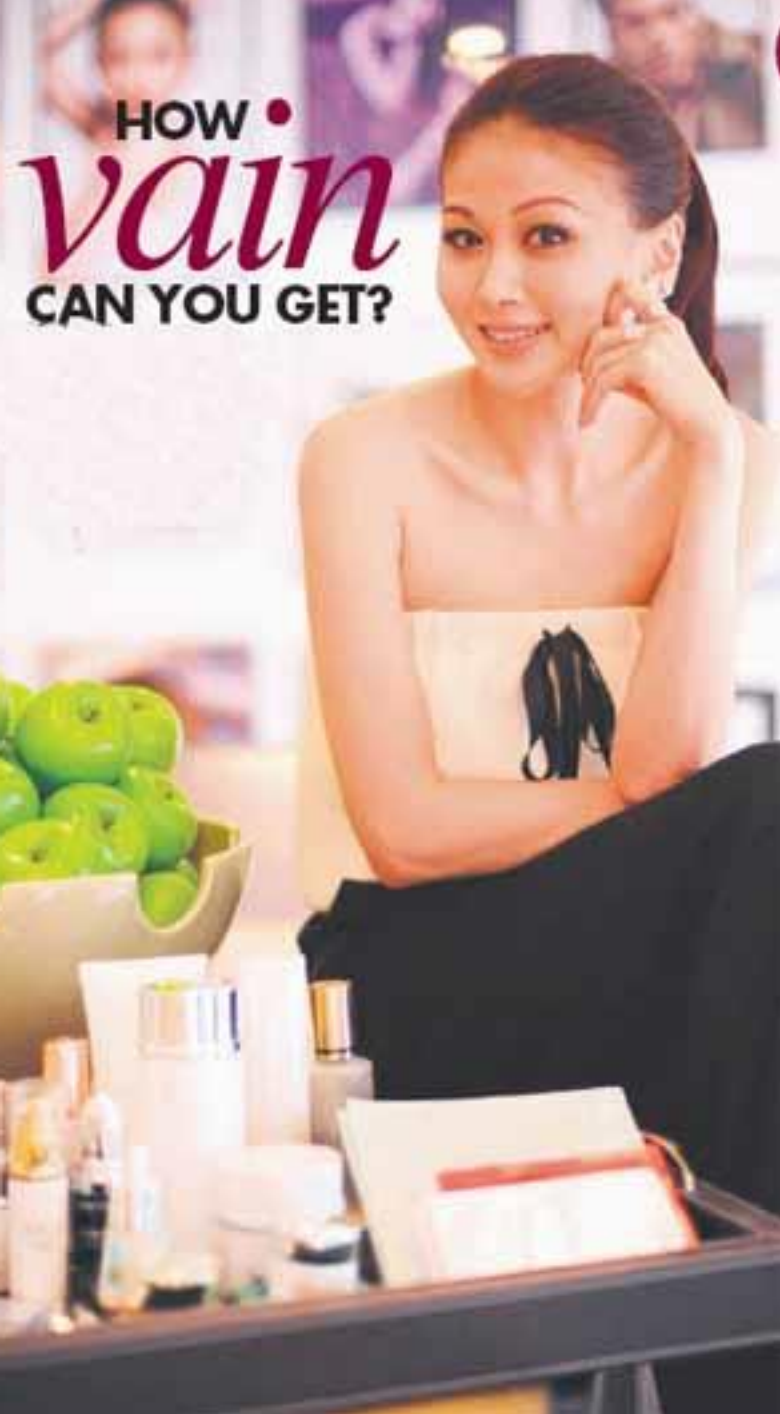


"Christians should not neglect to search the Scriptures on these points. They need to understand that which the Lord of heaven appreciates in even the dressing of the body." {6MR 161.1}





"Those who are earnest in seeking for the grace of Christ will heed the precious words of instruction inspired of God. Even the style of the apparel will express the truth of the gospel. Their dress bears its testimony to their own family, to the church and the world, that they are being purified from vanity and selfishness. They demonstrate that they are not idolaters." {6MR 161.1}



“There are few who understand their own hearts. The vain, trifling lovers of fashion may claim to be followers of Christ, but their dress and conversation show what occupies the mind and engages the affections. **The outside appearance is an index to the heart.** True refinement does not find satisfaction in the adorning of the body for display. **A modest, godly woman will dress modestly.** Simplicity of apparel always makes a sensible woman appear to the best advantage. A refined, cultured mind will be revealed in the choice of simple and appropriate attire. In the sanctified heart there is no place for thoughts of needless adornment.” {CTBH 93.1}

150 years ago, ribbons, feathers and excessive trimmings were a sign of vanity and pride. Today, artificial enhancements and immodest attire reveal what's in the heart:

“I saw that **the outside appearance is an index to the heart**. When the exterior is hung with ribbons, collars, and needless things, it plainly shows that the love for all this is in the heart; unless such persons are cleansed from their corruption, they can never see God, for only the pure in heart will see Him.”--1T 136 (1856). {DG 154.1}



“Sabbath-keepers, remember that **the outside appearance is an index to the heart**, and while you are so anxious to imitate the fashions of the world; while your heart is in these things, you are like them, you have their spirit, and have lost the truth out of your heart. While you study your appearance to look as near like the world as possible, remember your Redeemer. Upon his head was a crown of thorns. The greatest concern some Sabbath-keepers have is their outward appearance. They are fostering pride, and will perish with their pride unless they entirely reform.” {2SG 286.2}



**“The external appearance is an index to the heart. When hearts are affected by the truth there will be a death to the world, and those who are dead to the world will not be moved by the laugh, the jeer, and the scorn of unbelievers.**



**“They will feel an anxious desire to be like their Master, separate from the world. They will not imitate its fashions or customs. The noble object will be ever before them, to glorify God and gain the immortal inheritance, and in comparison with this everything of an earthly nature will sink into insignificance.” {TMK 312.5}**

**Dear Seventh-day Adventist Sisters,** God has a special work for you to do, unique and precious that cannot be accomplished by anyone else in the world. He is calling you to represent Him in purity and holiness.





“Satan knows that women have a power of influence for good or for evil; therefore he seeks to enlist them in his cause. . . .” {DG 152.1}

This area of our appearance is the one area that Satan is working in harder than any other in the lives of Seventh-day Adventist women.

“Obedience to fashion is pervading our Seventh-day Adventist churches and is doing more than any other power to separate our people from God.” {4T 647}

We’ve had almost a hundred years since our prophetess died, in which we have done it “our way.”





You can see it in the history of how ladies have dressed for the last century, and observe one small compromise after another taking place. We need to face it: we have inherited a century of compromise, much of it taking place before many of us were even born. It's a gradual decline, almost imperceptible, especially to the undiscerning.



This is a serious matter. We simply cannot afford to trust the example of even the most influential and highly respected female leaders in our church. They also have inherited the influence of a century of Laodicean apostasy. Because they are following those that came before them, their dress cannot be your example. God has a standard, and we are responsible for finding out what it is.



Careful research will show that the youthful fashions of the 1920's – 1940's made a huge impact on future fashions. The rising dress hems, the skimpy swimwear, the acceptance of unisex fashion paralleled the degeneration of society depicted in the movies.



Those fashions were fully accepted by our mothers and grandmothers in the church. Thus, when the baby boomers came along, they were all set to accept the mini skirt and the unisex fashions of the 1970's – 1980's. Their parents couldn't protest too loudly, because they had followed the fashions of their time as well.

Some will say, We don't need to dress like they did in the 1800's! That is true, we don't need to dress in the STYLES of the 1800's. We need to dress in the styles of our times, as long as they conform to God's STANDARDS.

1800's Style



STYLES change with the times. God's STANDARDS never change. They are timeless biblical principles. "All matters of dress should be strictly guarded, following closely the Bible rule." {CG 430.2}

2000's Style



What constitutes the “fashions of the world” which we are warned against following?

A simple answer would be any fashion which promotes and portray worldly principles such as

- **Pride, vanity, showiness**
- Sensuality, immorality, immodesty
- Selfishness, extravagance, indulgence
- Confusion, rebellion, defiance



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- Selfishness, extravagance, indulgence
- **Confusion, rebellion, defiance**





“The very principle that leads them to dress as they do, that makes Heaven ashamed of them, will reveal in them a love of dress, a love of outside appearance, at the expense of the soul.” {PH157 13.1}



Godly attire, on the other hand, will promote and portray Christ-like principles such as:

- **Humility, meekness, godliness**
- Purity, modesty, virtue
- Simplicity, self-denial, self-sacrifice
- Faithfulness, submission, obedience



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- **Faithfulness,**  
**submission, obedience**



“Those who are truly seeking to follow Christ will have conscientious scruples in regard to the dress they wear;” MYP 345, 346





Why do we find it so difficult to dress according to godly standards? Why does it seem like it is too hard?

“There must be a painful work of detachment as well as a work of attachment. Pride, selfishness, vanity, worldliness--sin in all its forms--must be overcome if we would enter into a union with Christ. The reason why many find the Christian life so deplorably hard, why they are so fickle, so variable, is that they try to attach themselves to Christ without first detaching themselves from these cherished idols.” {5T 231.3}





God tells us we must have a willing heart to lay our cherished idols aside. God will give us grace to do that.



In many of our churches, we see fashion marching into church on Sabbath morning. But it seems that there is little concern. “There is a terrible sin upon us as a people, that we have permitted our church members to dress in a manner inconsistent with their faith.” {4T 648}

Sisters, we need to look at our own hearts, and consider if our attire has been inconsistent with our profession to love the Lord Jesus with all our hearts.



“I am filled with sadness when I think of our condition as a people. The Lord has not closed heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God. Pride, covetousness, and love of the world have lived in the heart without fear of banishment or condemnation. Grievous and presumptuous sins have dwelt among us. And yet the general opinion is that the church is flourishing and that peace and spiritual prosperity are in all her borders.” {5T 217.1}

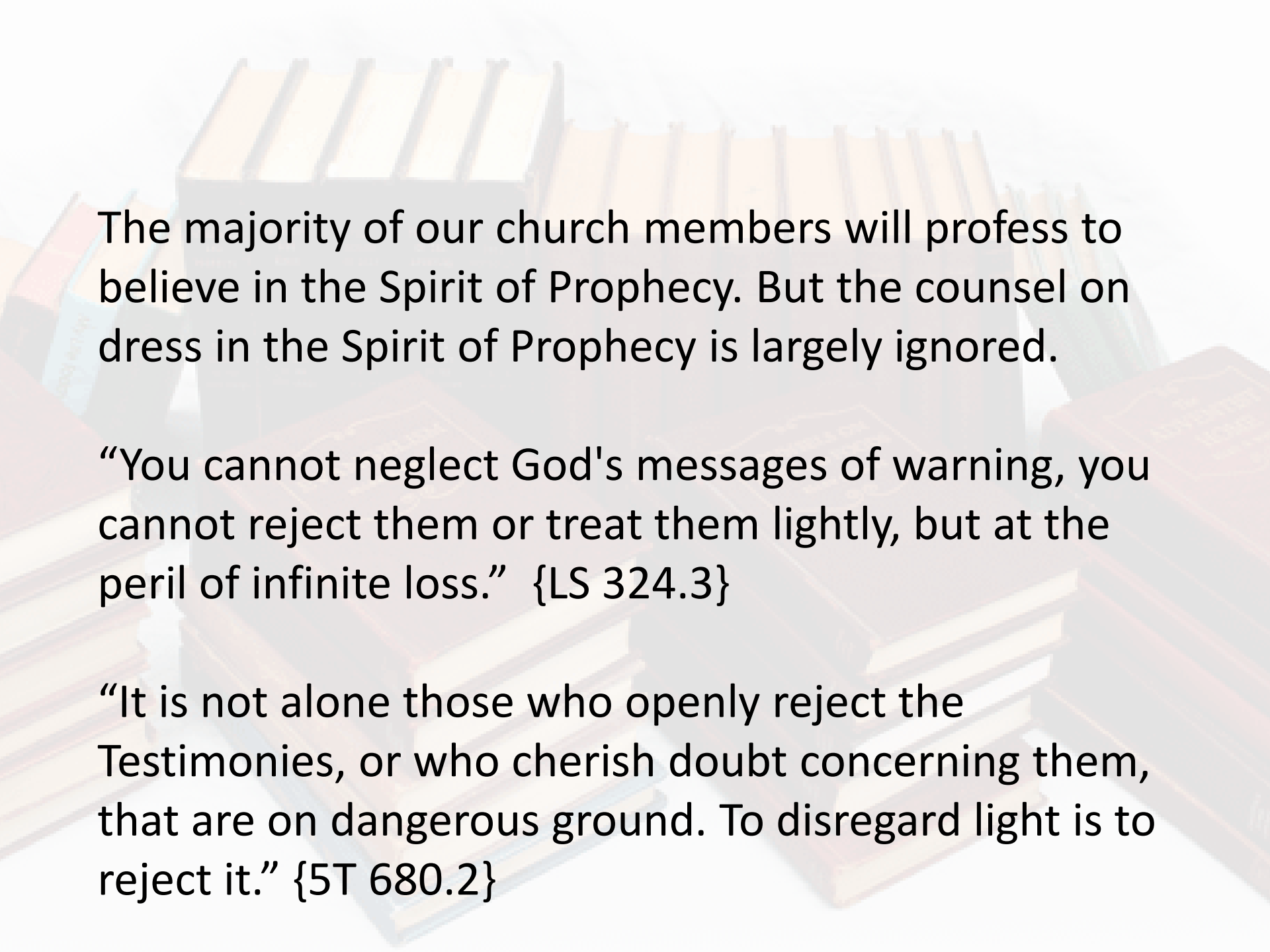


“I was shown that the people of God should not imitate the fashions of the world. Some have done this, and are fast losing the peculiar, holy character which should distinguish them as God's people.” 1T 189



“The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt. Yet few are alarmed or astonished at their want of spiritual power.” {5T 217.2}



The background of the slide features a stack of several books, likely religious or historical in nature, arranged in a slightly curved line. The books are rendered in a semi-transparent, light brown and tan color, creating a subtle, textured backdrop for the text.

The majority of our church members will profess to believe in the Spirit of Prophecy. But the counsel on dress in the Spirit of Prophecy is largely ignored.

“You cannot neglect God's messages of warning, you cannot reject them or treat them lightly, but at the peril of infinite loss.” {LS 324.3}

“It is not alone those who openly reject the Testimonies, or who cherish doubt concerning them, that are on dangerous ground. To disregard light is to reject it.” {5T 680.2}

“Many who profess to believe the Testimonies live in neglect of the light given. The dress reform is treated by some with great indifference and by others with contempt, because there is a cross attached to it. 3T 171



“Doubt, and even disbelief of the testimonies of the Spirit of God, is leavening our churches everywhere. Satan would have it thus. Ministers who preach self instead of Christ would have it thus. The testimonies are unread and unappreciated. God has spoken to you. Light has been shining from His word and from the testimonies, and both have been slighted and disregarded. The result is apparent in the lack of purity and devotion and earnest faith among us.” {5T 217.2}





“God will have a people separate and distinct from the world. And as soon as any have a desire to imitate the fashions of the world, that they do not immediately subdue, just so soon God ceases to acknowledge them as His children. They are the children of the world and of darkness.” 1T 137



“No Christian can conform to the demoralizing fashions of the world without imperiling his [or her] soul's salvation.” {CG 433.2}



“Those who have not moral courage to take their position conscientiously in the face of unbelievers, and leave the fashions of the world, and imitate the self-denying life of Christ, are ashamed of Him, and do not love His example.”  
{4bSG 77.4}



“The test of discipleship is not brought to bear as closely as it should be upon those who present themselves for baptism. It should be understood whether those who profess to be converted are simply taking the name of Seventh-day Adventist, or whether they are taking their stand on the Lord's side, to come out of the world and be separate and touch not the unclean thing. When they give evidence that they fully understand their position, they are to be accepted. But when they show that they are following the customs and fashions and sentiments of the world, they are to be faithfully dealt with. If they feel no burden to change their course of action, they should not be accepted as members of the church. The Lord wants those who compose His church to be true, faithful stewards of the grace of Christ.”--TM 128. {PaM 164.1}



“Christ and the church have claims upon each individual member that their thoughts, their energies, their means, their dress, and their deportment shall correspond with the life and character of Christ. **No Christian can conform to fashion.**” {19MR 325.2}



“Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.” {COL 69.1}





Are you longing for the character of Christ to be reproduced in you, so that you may reflect His lovely image, and be ready to live with Him forever?

“These souls brought forth fruit meet for repentance. Not to fashion themselves according to the former lusts, but by the faith of the Son of God to follow in his steps, to reflect his character, and to purify themselves even as he is pure. **The vain fashions of the world were laid aside.**” {GC88 461.2}

If you, dear sister, have reposed in the impression that your dress is totally acceptable to God, simply because you are comfortable and happy with what you wear, and because you fit in with your peers, and with the rest of society, I urge you to go to God, and ask Him to give you a receptive heart, that you may be willing to hear His inspired counsel regarding what He wants you to wear.





Please consider the messages in the presentations provided on this web site, [www.SistersInSkirts.com](http://www.SistersInSkirts.com)

Pray that God will prepare the hearts of all His daughters to be ready to meet Him when He comes. May God bless you as you seek to please Him in all things, even in your appearance.

