

Does God Care What We Wear to Church?

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Many Christians grow up being taught to wear their Sunday's best to church each week. Dressing up for Sunday morning service is considered by some believers a sign of respect to God, respect to the house of God, and to honor the time of worship.

Nowadays, younger generations of Christians are showing up to church dressed more casual. This new trend has caused some to wonder if wearing Sunday's best is in line with what we are taught in [Scripture](#) about our clothes or what we wear to church. This is not a new issue for Christians. How we dress for gathering together for worship has been something the church has faced since its inception. James, the brother of Jesus, wrote a letter to the growing church, which includes a brief discussion about the issue of what to wear.

"Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, 'Here's a good seat for you,' but say to the poor man, 'You stand there' or 'Sit on the floor by my feet,' have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?" ([James 2:2-4](#)).

Wearing fine clothes will not earn us favor with God, and it shouldn't earn us favor with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ either. God has a compassionate heart toward those who cannot afford nice clothes. We should not look down on those who choose not to spend their money on expensive clothing. We are consistently reminded throughout Scripture to not judge by appearances, because what matters to God is our inward [faith](#).

According to the Bible, God is more concerned with the condition of our hearts than what we're wearing to church.

God Warns against Outside Appearances

In Israel's search for their new king, the prophet Samuel was sent by the Lord to anoint the man who would become the king. Samuel arrived in Bethlehem and assumed God would choose Eliab – David's brother – because he was tall and attractive. God boldly corrected Samuel's assumption about outward appearances.

"But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart'" (1 Samuel 16:7).

Samuel did what most of us are guilty of doing. We judge by outside appearances without really understanding what is happening beneath the surface in a person's heart. Though David was the youngest of his brothers, and probably who they thought least qualified to be a king, that is who God had Samuel anoint as the new king of Israel. Truly, this story about David's anointing is a powerful lesson to believers to not be tempted to judge based only on what we see.

4 Scriptural Guidelines on What to Wear

God is certainly concerned with what His followers "put on." There are Scripture verses that are particularly helpful in better understanding what God cares about.

1. Adorn yourself with a gentle and quiet spirit.

"Do not let your adorning be external — the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear — but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious" (1 Peter 3:3-4).

In this passage, the Apostle Peter instructed women to not be concerned with their outer beauty – which is an overwhelming pressure and standard many women face. Rather what God cares about most is that they adorn themselves with a gentle and quiet spirit. A woman's worth is not in her outer beauty, or in the fine things she puts on, it is found in the condition of her spirit.

2. Adorn yourself with good works.

"Likewise, also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness — with good works" (1 Timothy 2:9-10).

Scripture makes it clear that we should dress in clothes that are respectable and demonstrate self-control. We should not be preoccupied with costly clothes or focusing on gaining attention through fine things. Women should adorn themselves with good works as a result of their faith in the Lord. This is what is pleasing to God.

3. "Take off" your love of the world.

"I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one. Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" ([1 John 2:14-15](#)).

The apostle John wrote a powerful message for his fellow brothers in Christ. The temptation is great to love the things of this world, and to put on the luxuries of the world. However, the Bible teaches that men should "put off" the love of the world to overcome the evil one in their lives. God wants men's hearts to be pure and to love Jesus more than anything else. To do that, men must "take off" love of the world and fill their hearts with love of God.

4. Clothe yourself with love.

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity" ([Colossians 3:12-14](#)).

This passage in the letter to the Colossians is quoted often as inspiration for how we should treat others. It is a radical reminder of how we should be concerned with our spiritual clothing and what's inside of our hearts. God is concerned with the inward parts of who we are and desires us to clothe ourselves with these righteous things.

Is It Ok to Wear Sunday's Best?

As we read the scope of Scripture on this topic, the question may arise if we should dress up at all. It is not wrong to wear your Sunday's best to church. However, it is important to keep a pure motive. The condition of your heart should be your top priority. Are we first clothing ourselves in love and humility, compassion, and gentleness?

How we dress should not hinder others from feeling welcome at a church – especially those who cannot afford finer clothes or choose to steward their money in different ways. Likewise, we do not want the appearances of another, or ourselves, to cause anyone to stumble by showing favoritism. God strongly urges Christians to not show favoritism, and if what we wear to church causes favoritism, then it is time to rethink what we are putting on.

The clothes or accessories we wear should not stir up our pride or self-edification. As believers, we are to decrease as Jesus increases ([John 3:30](#)). Remember, the condition of your heart matters infinitely more to God than what you decide to wear to Sunday services.

Clothe Yourself with Love

When we look to Scripture, it becomes clear that God cares about the condition of our hearts more than what we wear to church. We should first put on gentle and quiet spirits, and we should adorn ourselves with good works as a result of our faith in Jesus. We should put off love of the world and instead, clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, and humility. Above everything else, we should clothe ourselves with love because that is what God desires for those of us who are on a mission to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.