

Child Guidance Chap. Sixty-Six - Teaching the Fundamental Principles of Dress

A Necessary Part of Education.--No education can be complete that does not teach right principles in regard to dress. Without such teaching, the work of education is too often retarded and perverted. Love of dress and devotion to fashion are among the teacher's most formidable rivals and most effective hindrances. {CG 419.1}

No Precise Style Given.--No one precise style has been given me as the exact rule to guide all in their dress. {CG 419.2}

Neat, Attractive, Clean.--The young should be encouraged to form correct habits in dress, that their appearance may be neat and attractive; they should be taught to keep their garments clean and neatly mended. All their habits should be such as to make them a help and comfort to others. {CG 419.3}



Let the attire be appropriate and becoming. Though only a ten-cent calico, it should be kept neat and clean. {CG 419.4}

Order and Correct Taste.--In their dress they [Christians] avoid superfluity and display; but their clothing will be neat, not gaudy, modest, and arranged upon the person with order and taste. {CG 419.5}

Correct taste is not to be despised or condemned. Our faith, if carried out, will lead us to be so plain in dress and zealous of good works that we shall be marked as peculiar. But when we lose taste for order and neatness in dress, we virtually leave the truth; for the truth never degrades but elevates. {CG 419.6}

My sisters, your dress is telling either in favor of Christ and the sacred truth or in favor of the world. Which is it? {CG 420.1}



Good Taste in Colors and Figures.--Taste should be manifested as to colors. Uniformity in this respect is desirable as far as convenient. Complexion, however, may be taken into account. Modest colors should be sought for. When figured material is used, figures that are large and fiery, showing vanity and shallow pride in those who choose them, should be avoided. And a fantastic taste in putting on different colors is bad. {CG 420.2}

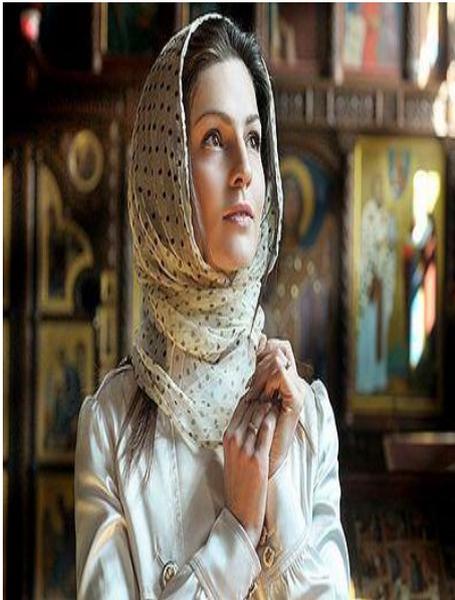
Consider Durability and Service.--Our clothing, while modest and simple, should be of good quality, of becoming colors, and suited for service. It should be chosen for durability rather than display. It should provide warmth and proper protection. The wise woman described in the Proverbs "is not afraid of the snow for her household: for

all her household are clothed with double garments." [Proverbs 31:21, margin.] {CG 420.3}

The Purchase of Good Material Is Economy.--It is right to buy good material and have it carefully made. This is economy. But rich trimmings are not needed, and to indulge in them is to spend for self-gratification money that should be put into God's cause. {CG 420.4}

Remember the Needs of the Lord's Vineyard.--We should dress neatly and tastefully; but, my sisters, when you are buying and making your own and your children's clothing, think of the work in the Lord's vineyard that is still waiting to be done. {CG 420.5}

Worldlings spend much on dress. But the Lord has charged His people to come out from the world and be separate. Gay or expensive apparel is not becoming to those who profess to believe that we are living in the last days. . . . {CG 420.6}



Practice economy in your outlay of means for dress. Remember that what you wear is constantly exerting an influence upon those with whom you come in contact. Do not lavish upon yourselves means that is greatly needed elsewhere. Do not spend the Lord's money to gratify a taste for expensive clothing. {CG 421.1}

Simplicity in Dress Recommends the Wearer's Religion.--Simplicity of dress will make a sensible woman appear to the best advantage. {CG 421.2}

Dress as Christians should dress--simply, plainly adorn yourselves as becometh women professing godliness, with good works. {CG 421.3}

Many, in order to keep pace with absurd fashion, lose their taste for natural simplicity and are charmed with the artificial. They sacrifice time and money, the vigor of intellect, and true elevation of soul, and devote their entire being to the claims of fashionable life. {CG 421.4}

Dear youth, a disposition in you to dress according to the fashion, and to wear lace, and gold, and artificials for display, will not recommend to others your religion or the truth that you profess. People of discernment will look upon your attempts to beautify the external as proof of weak minds and proud hearts. {CG 421.5}

There Should Be No Inappropriate Display.--I would remind the youth who ornament their persons and wear feathers upon their hats that, because of their sins, our Saviour's head wore the shameful crown of thorns. When you devote precious time to trimming your apparel, remember that the King of glory wore a plain, seamless coat. You who weary yourselves in decorating your persons please bear in mind that Jesus was often weary from incessant toil and self-denial and self-sacrifice to bless the suffering and the needy. . . . It was on our account that He poured out His prayers to His Father with strong cries and tears. It was to save us from the very pride and love of

vanity and pleasure which we now indulge, and which crowds out the love of Jesus, that those tears were shed, and that our Saviour's visage was marred with sorrow and anguish more than any of the sons of men. {CG 421.6}

Unnecessary Trimmings.--Do without the unnecessary trimmings, and lay aside for the advancement of the cause of God the means thus saved. Learn the lesson of self-denial, and teach it to your children. {CG 422.1}

A Point Clarified.--The question has often been asked me if I believe it wrong to wear plain linen collars. [NOTE: SEE TESTIMONIES FOR THE CHURCH, VOL. 1, PP. 135, 136.] My answer has always been No. Some have taken the extreme meaning of what I have written about collars, and have maintained that it is wrong to wear one of any description. I was shown expensively wrought collars, and expensive and unnecessary ribbons and laces, which some Sabbathkeepers have worn, and still wear for the sake of show and fashion. In mentioning collars, I did not design to be understood that nothing like a collar should be worn, or in mentioning ribbons, that no ribbons at all should be worn. {CG 422.2}

Extravagant or Extreme Trimmings.--Our ministers and their wives should be an example in plainness of dress; they should dress neatly, comfortably, wearing good material, but avoiding anything like extravagance and trimmings, even if not expensive; for these things tell to our disadvantage. We should educate the youth to simplicity of dress, plainness with neatness. Let the extra trimmings be left out, even though the cost be but a trifle. {CG 422.3}

Not for Display.--True refinement does not find satisfaction in the adorning of the body for display. {CG 423.1}

The Bible teaches modesty in dress. "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel." 1 Timothy 2:9. This forbids display in dress, gaudy colors, profuse ornamentation. Any device designed to attract attention to the wearer or to excite admiration is excluded from the modest apparel which God's Word enjoins. {CG 423.2}

Self-denial in dress is a part of our Christian duty. To dress plainly and abstain from display of jewelry and ornaments of every kind is in keeping with our faith. Are we of the number who see the folly of worldlings in indulging in extravagance of dress as well as in love of amusements? {CG 423.3}

Imperishable Ornaments Versus Gold or Pearls.-- There is an ornament that will never perish, that will promote the happiness of all around us in this life, and will shine with undimmed luster in the immortal future. It is the adorning of a meek and lowly spirit.



God has bidden us wear the richest dress upon the soul. . . . Instead of seeking golden ornaments for the exterior, an earnest effort would be put forth to secure that wisdom which is of more value than fine gold. {CG 423.4}

Of how little value are gold or pearls or costly array in comparison with the loveliness of Christ. Natural loveliness consists in symmetry, or the harmonious proportion of parts, each with the other; but spiritual loveliness consists in the harmony or likeness of our souls to Jesus. This will make its possessor more precious than fine gold, even the golden wedge of Ophir. The grace of Christ is indeed a priceless adornment. It elevates and ennobles its possessor and reflects beams of glory upon others, attracting them also to the Source of light and blessing. {CG 423.5}

The Attractiveness of Genuine Beauty.--There is a natural tendency with all to be sentimental rather than practical. In view of this fact, it is important that parents, in the education of their children, should direct and train their minds to love truth, duty, and self-denial, and to possess noble independence, to choose to be right, if the majority choose to be wrong. . . . {CG 424.1}

If they preserve to themselves sound constitutions and amiable tempers, they will possess true beauty that they can wear with a divine grace. And they will have no need to be adorned with artificials, for these are always expressive of an absence of the inward adorning of true moral worth. A beautiful character is of value in the sight of God. Such beauty will attract, but not mislead. Such charms are fast colors; they never fade. {CG 424.2}

The pure religion of Jesus requires of its followers the simplicity of natural beauty and the polish of natural refinement and elevated purity, rather than the artificial and false. {CG 424.3}



Teach Children to Recognize Sensible Dress.--Let us be faithful to the duties of the home life. Let your children understand that obedience must reign there. Teach them to distinguish between that which is sensible and that which is foolish in the matter of dress, and furnish them with clothes that are neat and simple. As a people who are preparing for the soon return of Christ, we should give to the world an example of modest dress in contrast with the prevailing fashion of

the day. Talk these things over, and plan wisely what you will do; then carry out your plans in your families. Determine to be guided by higher principles than the notions and desires of your children. {CG 424.4}

If our hearts are united with Christ's heart, nothing will be put upon the person to attract attention or to create controversy. {CG 425.1}

Provide Becoming Garments Appropriate for Age and Station in Life.--My sister, bind your children to your heart by affection. Give them proper care and attention in all

things. Furnish them with becoming garments, that they may not be mortified by their appearance, for this would be injurious to their self-respect. . . . It is always right to be neat and to be clad appropriately, in a manner becoming to your age and station in life. {CG 425.2}

The Body Should Not Be Constricted.--The dress should fit easily, obstructing neither the circulation of the blood nor a free, full, natural respiration. The feet should be suitably protected from cold and damp. Clad in this way, we can take exercise in the open air, even in the dew of morning or evening, or after a fall of rain or snow, without fear of taking cold. {CG 425.3}

The Dress of Young Children.--If the dress of the child combines warmth, protection, and comfort, one of the chief causes of irritation and restlessness will be removed. The little one will have better health, and the mother will not find the care of the child so heavy a tax upon her strength and time. {CG 425.4}

Tight bands or waists hinder the action of the heart and lungs and should be avoided. No part of the body should at any time be made uncomfortable by clothing that compresses any organ or restricts its freedom of movement. The clothing of all children should be loose enough to admit of the freest and fullest respiration, and so arranged that the shoulders will support its weight. {CG 426.1}

Let the Extremities Be Properly Clothed.--Special attention should be given to the extremities, that they may be as thoroughly clothed as the chest and the region over the heart, where is the greatest amount of heat. Parents who dress their children with the extremities naked, or nearly so, are sacrificing the health and lives of their children to fashion. If these parts are not so warm as the body, the circulation is not equalized. When the extremities, which are remote from the vital organs, are not properly clad, the blood is driven to the head, causing headache or nosebleed; or there is a sense of fullness about the chest, producing cough or palpitation of the heart, on account of too much blood in that locality; or the stomach has too much blood, causing indigestion. {CG 426.2}

In order to follow the fashions, mothers dress their children with limbs nearly naked; and the blood is chilled back from its natural course and thrown upon the internal organs, breaking up the circulation and producing disease. The limbs were not formed by our Creator to endure exposure, as was the face. The Lord provided, . . . also, large veins and nerves for the limbs and feet, to contain a large amount of the current of human life, that the limbs might be uniformly as warm as the body. They should be so thoroughly clothed as to induce the blood to the extremities. {CG 426.3}



Satan invented the fashions which leave the limbs exposed, chilling back the life current from its original course. And parents bow at the shrine of fashion and so clothe their children that the nerves and veins become contracted, and do not answer the purpose that God designed they should. The result is habitually cold feet and hands. Those parents who follow fashion instead of reason will have an account to render to God for thus robbing their children of health. Even life itself is frequently sacrificed to the god of fashion. {CG 427.1}

A Distinction in Dress of Men and Women.--There is an increasing tendency to have women in their dress and appearance as near like the other sex as possible and to fashion their dress very much like that of men, but God pronounces it abomination. "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety." 1 Timothy 2:9. . . . {CG 427.2}

God designed that there should be a plain distinction between the dress of men and women, and has considered the matter of sufficient importance to give explicit directions in regard to it; for the same dress worn by both sexes would cause confusion and great increase of crime. {CG 427.3}

Dressing for Church.--Let none dishonor God's sanctuary by their showy apparel. {CG 427.4}

All should be taught to be neat, clean, and orderly in their dress, but not to indulge in that external adorning which is wholly inappropriate for the sanctuary. There should be no display of the apparel, for this encourages irreverence. The attention of the people is often called to this or that fine article of dress, and thus thoughts are intruded that should have no place in the hearts of the worshipers. God is to be the subject of thought, the object of worship; and anything that attracts the mind from the solemn, sacred service is an offense to Him. The parading of bows and ribbons, ruffles and feathers, and gold and silver ornaments is a species of idolatry and is wholly inappropriate for the sacred service of God. {CG 427.5}

Some receive the idea that in order to carry out that separation from the world that the Word of God requires, they must be neglectful of their apparel. There is a class of sisters who think they are carrying out the principle of nonconformity to the world by wearing an ordinary sun-bonnet, and the same dress worn by them through the week, upon the Sabbath when appearing in the assembly of the saints to engage in the worship of God. And some men who profess to be Christians view the matter of dress in the same light. These persons assemble with God's people upon the Sabbath, with their clothing dusty and soiled, and even with gaping rents in their garments, which are placed upon their persons in a slovenly manner. {CG 428.1}

This class, if they had an engagement to meet a friend honored by the world, by whom they wished to be especially favored, would exert themselves to appear in his presence with the best apparel that could be obtained; for this friend would feel insulted were they to come into his presence with their hair uncombed and garments uncleanly and in disorder. Yet these persons think that it is no matter in what dress they appear or what is the condition of their persons when they meet upon the Sabbath to worship the great God. {CG 428.2}

Dress Not to Be Made a Subject of Controversy.-- There is no need to make the dress question the main point of your religion. There is something richer to talk of. Talk of Christ; and when the heart is converted, everything that is out of harmony with the Word of God will drop off. {CG 428.3}

It is not your dress that makes you of value in the Lord's sight. It is the inward adorning, the graces of the Spirit, the kind word, the thoughtful consideration for others that God values. {CG 429.1}

None to Be Conscience for Another, but Set a Worthy Example.--Do not encourage a class who center their religion in dress. Let each one study the plain teachings of the Scriptures as to simplicity and plainness of dress and by faithful obedience to those teachings strive to set a worthy example to the world and to those new in the faith. God does not want any one person to be conscience for another. {CG 429.2}

Talk of the love and humility of Jesus, but do not encourage the brethren and sisters to engage in picking flaws in the dress or appearance of one another. Some take delight in this work; and when their minds are turned in this direction, they begin to feel that they must become church tinkers. They climb upon the judgment seat, and as soon as they see one of their brethren and sisters, they look to find something to criticize. This is one of the most effectual means of becoming narrow-minded and of dwarfing spiritual growth. God would have them step down from the judgment seat, for He has never placed them there. {CG 429.3}

The Heart Must Be Right.--If we are Christians, we shall follow Christ, even though the path in which we are to walk cuts right across our natural inclinations. There is no use in telling you that you must not wear this or that, for if the love of these vain things is in your heart, your laying off your adornments will only be like cutting the foliage off a tree. The inclinations of the natural heart would again assert themselves. You must have a conscience of your own. {CG 429.4}

Where Many Denominations Lost Their Power.-- Human reasoning has ever sought to evade or set aside the simple, direct instructions of the Word of God. In every age a majority of the professed followers of Christ have disregarded those precepts which enjoin self-denial and humility, which require modesty and simplicity of conversation, deportment, and apparel. The result has ever been the same--departure from the teachings of the gospel leads to the adoption of the fashions, customs, and principles of the world. Vital godliness gives place to a dead formalism. The presence and power of God, withdrawn from those world-loving circles, are found with a class of humble worshipers, who are willing to obey the teachings of the Sacred Word. Through successive generations this course has been pursued. One after another different denominations have risen and yielding their simplicity, have lost, in a great measure, their early power. {CG 430.1}

God's Word the Standard.--All matters of dress should be strictly guarded, following closely the Bible rule. Fashion has been the goddess who has ruled the outside world, and she often insinuates herself into the church. The church should make the Word of God her standard, and parents should think intelligently upon this subject. When they see their children inclined to follow worldly fashions, they should, like Abraham,

resolutely command their households after them. Instead of uniting with the world, connect them with God. {CG 430.2}

Child Guidance Chap. Sixty-Seven - The Fascinating Power of Fashion

Fashion Is a Tyrannical Ruler.--Fashion rules the world; and she is a tyrannical mistress, often compelling her devotees to submit to the greatest inconvenience and discomfort. Fashion taxes without reason and collects without mercy. She has a fascinating power and stands ready to criticize and ridicule all who do not follow in her wake. {CG 432.1}

The rich are ambitious to outdo one another in conforming to her ever-varying styles; the middle and poorer classes strive to approach the standard set by those supposed to be above them. Where means or strength is limited, and the ambition for gentility is great, the burden becomes almost insupportable. With many it matters not how becoming, or even beautiful, a garment may be, let the fashions change, and it must be remade or cast aside. {CG 432.2}

Satan, the instigator and prime mover in the ever-changing, never-satisfying decrees of fashion, is always busy devising something new that shall prove an injury to physical and moral health; and he triumphs that his devices succeed so well. Death laughs that the health-destroying folly and blind zeal of the worshipers at fashion's shrine bring them so easily under his dominion. Happiness and the favor of God are laid upon her altar. {CG 432.3}

The idolatry of dress is a moral disease. It must not be taken over into the new life. In most cases submission to the gospel requirements will demand a decided change in the dress. {CG 432.4}

The Price Some Pay.--How contrary to the principles given in the Scriptures are many of the modes of dress that fashion prescribes! Think of the styles that have prevailed for the last few hundreds of years or even for the last few decades. How many . . . would be pronounced inappropriate for a refined, God-fearing, self-respecting woman. . . . Many a poor girl, for the sake of a stylish gown, has deprived herself of warm underwear and paid the penalty with her life. Many another, coveting the display and elegance of the rich, has been enticed into paths of dishonesty and shame. Many a home is deprived of comforts, many a man is driven to embezzlement or bankruptcy, to satisfy the extravagant demands of the wife or children. {CG 433.1}

Salvation Imperiled by Idolatry of Dress.--Pride and vanity are manifested everywhere; but those who are inclined to look into the mirror to admire themselves will have little inclination to look into the law of God, the great moral mirror. This idolatry of dress destroys all that is humble, meek, and lovely in character. It consumes the precious hours that should be devoted to meditation, to searching the heart, to the prayerful study of God's Word. . . . No Christian can conform to the demoralizing fashions of the world without imperiling his soul's salvation. {CG 433.2}

Love of Display Demoralizes the Home.--Aided by the grace of Christ, women are capable of doing a great and grand work. For this reason Satan works with his devices to invent fashionable dress, that love of display may so absorb the mind and heart and

affection of even professed Christian mothers in this age, that they have no time to give to the education and training of their children or to the cultivation of their own minds and characters, that they may be examples to their children, patterns of good works. When Satan secures the time and affections of the mother, he is fully aware of how much he has gained. In nine cases out of ten he has secured the devotion of the whole family to dress and frivolous display. He reckons the children as among his spoils, for he has captivated the mother. {CG 433.3}

Little children hear more of dress than of their salvation, for the mother is more familiar with fashion than with her Saviour. {CG 434.1}

Parents and children are robbed of that which is best and sweetest and truest in life. For fashion's sake they are cheated out of a preparation for the life to come. {CG 434.2}

Not Brave Enough to Stem the Tide.--Many of the mother's burdens are the result of her effort to keep pace with the fashions of the day. Terrible is the effect of these fashions on the physical, mental, and moral health. Lacking the courage to stand firm for the right, women allow the current of popular feeling to draw them on in its wake. . . . Too often professedly Christian mothers sacrifice principle to their desire to follow the multitude who make fashion their god. Conscience protests, but they are not brave enough to take a decided stand against the wrong. {CG 434.3}

Parents--Take Care.--Parents frequently dress their children in extravagant garments, with much display of ornaments, then openly admire the effect of their apparel and compliment them on their appearance. These foolish parents would be filled with consternation if they could see how Satan seconds their efforts and urges them on to greater follies. {CG 434.4}

A Problem That Faces Many Mothers.--Your daughters are inclined, if they see a dress different from that which they have, to desire a dress similar to that. Or perhaps they want something else that they see others have, which you do not feel would be in accordance with your faith to grant them. Will you allow them to tease this thing out of you, letting them mold you instead of molding them according to the principles of the gospel? Our children are very precious in the sight of God. Let us teach them the Word of God and train them in His ways. It is your privilege to teach your children to live so that they will have the commendation of Heaven. . . . {CG 435.1}

Let us not encourage our children to follow the fashions of the world; and if we will be faithful in giving them a right training, they will not do this. . . . The fashions of the world often take a ridiculous form, and you must take a firm position against them. {CG 435.2}

The Fruitage of the Love of Display.--Love of dress and pleasure is wrecking the happiness of thousands. And some of those who profess to love and keep the commandments of God ape this class as near as they possibly can and retain the Christian name. Some of the young are so eager for display that they are even willing to give up the Christian name, if they can only follow out their inclination for vanity of dress and love of pleasure. {CG 435.3}

Families who spend much time in dressing for display may be likened to the fig tree that Christ saw from afar. This fig tree flaunted its flourishing branches in the very face of justice; but when Christ came to look for fruit, He searched from the topmost twig to the lowest boughs and found nothing but leaves. It is fruit that He hungers for; fruit He must have.

{CG 435.4}

Unsatisfying to Daughters of God.--There is enough necessary and important labor in this world of need and suffering without wasting precious moments for ornamentation or display. Daughters of the heavenly King, members of the royal family, will feel a burden of responsibility to attain to a higher life, that they may be brought into close connection with Heaven and work in unison with the Redeemer of the world. Those who are engaged in this work will not be satisfied with the fashions and follies which absorb the mind and affections of women in these last days. If they are indeed the daughters of God, they will be partakers of the divine nature. They will be stirred with deepest pity, as was their divine Redeemer, as they see the corrupting influences in society. They will be in sympathy with Christ and in their sphere, as they have ability and opportunity, will work to save perishing souls, as Christ worked in His exalted sphere for the benefit of man. {CG 436.1}

A person's character is judged by his style of dress. A refined taste, a cultivated mind, will be revealed in the choice of simple and appropriate attire. Chaste simplicity in dress, when united with modesty of demeanor, will go far toward surrounding a young woman with that atmosphere of sacred reserve which will be to her a shield from a thousand perils.-- Education, p. 248.(1903)

Women's Dress an Index of the Mind.--Dress is an index of the mind and heart. That which is hung upon the outside is the sign of what is within. It does not require intellect or a cultivated mind to overdress. The very fact that women can hang upon their persons such an amount of needless articles of clothing shows that they cannot have time to cultivate their intellects and store their minds with useful knowledge.-MS 76, 1900. {1MCP 289.2}



Blessings