

A few years ago, a sweet sister from Baytown gave Sommer a book: "SecretKeeper: The Delicate Power of Modesty." No, Sommer didn't need the book. But she and I have influence in teaching young people and this lady thought this perspective would be helpful. We both read the book and were impressed at how this female author powerfully presented the effect women have on men and how a woman must understand the great power she has to influence men with her body, and therefore must have a great sense of responsibility concerning modesty.

I want to present a few of her ideas as we walk through a Bible study on the topic of modesty. Let me say that this lesson is intended for our young ladies, who need to know the power of dress. And this lesson is for older women, who, in our beauty-centric culture, face the same dress pressure. This lesson is for young men, who are looking for godly young ladies with whom to associate. And this is for husbands and fathers, as they support and teach the women in their lives how to be godly.

I think this title is very well worded: The Delicate Power of Modesty. We will establish that immodesty and irresponsible dress can effect people in devastating ways. But if that is true, then once a woman realizes that, through her modest choices she can peaceably show great power for purity and godliness!

And yes, this is something God demands of his daughters: **(I Timothy 2:9-10)**
"I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly"

There are 3 Absolute Truths every woman must know and know well, so that she will make the effort to apply the power of modesty every day:

1. The Allure of Your Body

- a. We use terms like her "attractiveness," her "sexuality," or her "beauty." Many different terms are used to profess that a woman's body has an effect on men.
- b. The Bible indicates clearly that men are visual creatures and particularly attracted to and reactive to the female form:
 - i. **Song of Solomon 4:1-4** – He didn't comment on her intellect...
 - ii. **II Samuel 11:2** – David saw her body and lost his mind!
 - iii. **Matthew 5:28** – The power of the "look" can enter the mind and grow to more sin.
- c. Every woman needs to know this about men. It can be embarrassing for a man to admit, but it is important for a woman to hear: a woman's body can easily have power over a man.
- d. Modesty, then, is her power to control that effect; to limit the allure she offers to men.
- e. While being modest with your clothes cannot stop nor control the thoughts of a man:
 - i. It can limit what he sees and what his eye is immediately drawn to.
 - ii. Modestly can minimize what he can investigate with his eyes.
 - iii. It cannot stop his imagination, but can limit what he has to work with before it.
- f. **Gestalt Theory** – The power of the mind to take partial information and fill in the rest.
- g. Godly women cover their bodies. I'm not talking about their wrists and ankle, but the parts of their body associated with allure and sexuality. They do not give partial information that can easily and readily promote the male mind to fill in the rest of the details.
- h. She will dress in a way where she can comfortably converse with a man and know that he is not being given visual cues in a direction neither of them should go.
 - i. Ex) – ladies tugging on dresses while conversing at church! Put on more clothes!

2. The Purpose of Your Body

- a. So why did God give a woman the power of allurements and then ask her to keep it to herself? Many women think their sexuality has a purpose that requires showing it:
 - i. To fulfill self-worth. Yet, it is the condition of your soul that accomplishes that.
 - ii. To be accepted by others. Yet this has never been God's purpose for your body.
- b. The Purpose of Your Beauty and Your Body is to Fulfill the Desires of Your Husband.
- c. Modesty is your power to keep what belongs to one for and only for that one.
 - i. **Genesis 2:18,22,24-25** – It must have been exhilarating to be presented with a beautiful woman. And hey, she's not wearing any clothes! But this woman was God's gift for this one man, and all of the sharing physically was because of that relationship.

1. “Well, what if I am not married?” - Then cover your body. Hide it. Keep it to yourself. Show your character and a man will love you. And when he becomes your husband you can share your body with him, and him alone.
2. You don’t show it to all men until you marry one. You hide it from all men until you’ve married one!
- ii. **Proverbs 5:18-19** – Her body is not to exhilarate anyone except her husband.
 1. **V20** – Gentlemen, do you want others laying hands on your wife, on parts of your wife that are just for you? Then hold their eyes to that same standard.
- iii. **Proverbs 7:10-13** – Before she spoke to him. Before she touched him. She shows him her body: “dressed like a harlot.” The body can be used for promoting sinful behavior. But Godly women will not be a part of that in any regard.
- iv. And while you cannot control the thoughts of any man, you can control what he does with his hands, and with his EYES
 1. Rule: If your would not want a man touching you in a certain spot, then do not show them that area of your body. Do not show the contour of your body.
 2. Fathers, if you do not want a young man to touch your daughter in that place, then regard it as a place that must be covered with clothing.

3. The Goal of Your Heart

- a. Ultimately dress and modesty are not the issues, are they? The issues are the goals each and every godly woman sets in her heart. Goals her husband or father help her meet.
 - i. Clothing is merely a result of that heart, the product of what is on the inside.
- b. Modesty is your power to show the world what kind of a person you really are!
- c. So, what is the GOAL of your Heart? **I Timothy 2:10** – Godliness. We all want to be right with God. From the inside out, we want to be a person who pleases God, right?
 - i. **V9** – So, our clothing should reflect that goal.
 1. “**Proper clothing**” – literally, good behavior clothing!
 2. “**Modestly**” – “shamefacedness” – bashfulness toward men, reverence to God!
 3. “**Discreetly**” – “sound mind; self control.” No one makes this decision. Culture cannot dictate how you dress. You, in Christ, have that power!
 4. “**Not with hair, pearls, garments**” – This is not negating these things, but it is negating the importance of these things to show your beauty.
 - ii. **V10** – She will be known, like the virtuous woman of **Proverbs 31**, not by how she reveals her flesh, or uses her body to get what she wants, but with conservative discretion, downplaying her body to all men but her mate. She is known to all, men and women, for her deeds in Christ!
- d. Modesty is an issue of the heart, for that’s where your choices originate. However, this does not mean clothing is irrelevant. This passage teaches the opposite. She says, “*don’t judge me by what I wear, judge me by who I am.*” God says, “how you dress tells the world who you are.” Ladies, what are you telling the world about who you are?
 - i. And gentlemen, the way you use your eyes, the ladies you look at, the way you speak of modesty in your home, the conversations with your wife, the bible studies with your daughters, all of that tells the world who you are as well. Ladies need support!

Conclusion – Colossians 3:1-7 – Before you go to Macy’s for their one day sale, before you buy that dress for your friend’s wedding, or go get new clothes for worship, or the beach, please read this passage.

Understand the ALLURE of your body. Understand how God has blessed you with beauty for a purpose, limited only to exhilaration of your spouse. And understand that every outfit, every choice, every time, is announcing to family, friends, strangers and God exactly what is in your heart.

And it is the heart I address in this invitation. If you heart has lost its love for being holy? If clothing or words or choices are reflecting that something inside you is not where it ought to be? Make that right, let God help you, God’s people help you, and clothing will follow suit.