

# **An Open Letter to Seventh-day Adventist Women**

## *What the Men Are Saying Tempts Them the Most*

Dear Sisters in Christ,

This letter is lovingly written to the women who are baptized members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. What a blessed privilege is ours, to be preparing for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Oh, if only we could each catch a glimpse of our high calling as daughters of the King, royal princesses, set apart as pure, holy and undefiled, waiting for our Bridegroom to return. The blessed hope, burning brightly in our hearts, will help us keep our focus on Jesus, so we gladly will turn away from the glamour and deceptions of this world.

### ***True to Our Baptismal Vows***

Our sacred baptismal vows are a testimony of our love and appreciation for what Jesus has done for us. With loving hearts, we “renounce the sinful ways of the world” and we feel a higher, holy calling above the empty attractions this world has to offer. We believe that “we are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with the principles of heaven....our dress is to be simple, modest, and neat, befitting those whose true beauty does not consist of outward adornment but in the imperishable ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit.”

It is only through the power of God’s indwelling presence, that we are enabled to keep these vows faithfully. Our deep love and commitment to Him is what keeps our hearts sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit. Only His continual presence can empower us to obey and follow His promptings.

Our loving Jesus is now our Great High Priest, who is interceding in the Most Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary for us. With a heart filled with incomprehensible love, He is praying for us, that we will be faithful to our vows, so that nothing will deprive us of the place He has prepared for us in Heaven. He wants us to continually open our hearts and let Him in each and every day, so His love can shine out to the world through us. He wants to do this through our radiant smiles, kind and loving deeds, by our meek and quiet spirits, and by the modest clothes we wear. Our godly lives will shine forth as a saving testimony of God’s love and forgiveness, and reveal His overcoming power in our personal lives.

### ***Our Laodicean Condition***

Dear sisters, this is God’s ideal for us. But God has a sobering message for us that reveals a rather serious problem. His beloved worldwide church is lukewarm—Laodicean. There are some very vital realities regarding our spiritual condition of which we may be oblivious.

This Laodicean state, as noted in prophecy, is the pervading condition of the last-day church. As a people, we have been immersed in the world, following the ways of the world, and comparing ourselves to the world for many years, and without realizing it. The Holy Spirit comes to each one of us individually, presenting the loving words straight from the heart of Jesus, as found in Revelation chapter 3. Laodicea does not perceive her lukewarm condition.

Until we are aware of our problem, we don't know that we need a solution. Our Savior desires for us to know our condition, that we are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked, so that we will be willing to accept His beautiful counsel. This is the only way we may become acceptable in His sight, purified from love of the world, and clothed in His robe of righteousness.

Because of our lukewarmness, we have inadvertently adopted some of the ways of the world. Therefore, God has some timely counsel for us, to help us correct our mistakes. It is time for us to wake up, become alert, and make sure we have our lamps trimmed and burning, lest we be the foolish virgins who are unprepared for their Lord's return.

God desires His daughters to be clothed in His purity, holiness and faithfulness. These are His garments of righteousness. Holy garments cannot cover the defilement of sin; Jesus has provided the remedy to cleanse us of all sin. His daughters must be clothed in garments that only He provides. He has promised that He will clothe us, and He wants us to lay aside our filthy garments, and accept His righteous raiment. As our faith and trust in Him grows, we will be willing to accept His inward adorning and to wear the garments that please Him and have His approval.

### ***The Demands of the World and Fashion***

As the world intensifies its headlong rush to perdition, it calls Laodicea to follow. The pull of the world is strong, and its voice can be deafening, except for the grace of God.

The world cries, Fashion is beautiful, fashion is sexy, you are out of touch if you don't follow the fashions. But the still small voice of the Lord calls to us, saying, Modesty is beautiful, purity and holiness are beautiful. It is only by the divine anointing that we desire the beauty of simplicity and choose God's way. It is through the gold of faith and love, gained through the purifying fire of self-denial that we will choose the voice of God over the voice of the world.

Love is that self-less principle that leads us to choose God's will over our own. Love to God leads us to consider how our dress and behavior affects not only our own spirituality but our brothers' in the Lord as well.

Because the world demands that we dress to please the carnal nature, immodest dress greatly pleases ungodly men. We may have been tricked into thinking we're doing men a favor by fashionably revealing our bodies. This may come as a surprise to most, but we can honestly say that Seventh-day Adventist men who love Jesus, and who are earnestly preparing for His soon return, are much grieved and troubled by the immodest dress and unholy demeanor of some of us Seventh-day Adventist women.

### ***Our Dress on Sabbath Morning***

Our dress reveals what is in our hearts, and it also influences all those who see us, particularly our brothers. Many of us have no idea of the struggle that Christian men, young and old, have every Sabbath morning as they come to church, all over the world. Godly men everywhere are trying to keep their hearts pure, while some of us appear in immodest apparel take their thoughts

into forbidden paths. Immodest dress is very distracting and the Holy Spirit must actually vie for the attention of men and even women in God's church on His holy Sabbath day.

The divine worship service is our weekly sacred appointment to meet with Jesus. As we prepare for Church, our primary thoughts should be of Him. We are going to worship our Savior, the King of kings! How should we come into His presence? What does He want us to wear? How can we honor Him, and show our intense love for Him? These thoughts should be foremost in our minds. If we were going to meet a famous dignitary, would we be thinking about what is appropriate to wear for the occasion?

Surely, Jesus wants us to modestly cover our bodies. Church should be the one place where our brothers have a safe haven from the immodesty of the women of the world.

If the world wasn't shouting so loudly, nothing more would need to be said. But the problem is that the world's voice has become so loud that many have lost the ability to hear the message of Christian modesty. The idea is foreign to them. For so long, the world's fashions have been followed that some of us just can't see a problem at all.

***That is the reason we need to listen to what godly men are saying about what it is that tempts them to stumble.*** We can't argue with these consecrated Christian men. They are the ones with the struggle. And these righteous men have been willing to speak out in an appeal to Seventh-day Adventist women. They are asking us to consider them, especially as we get dressed for church. What they are saying is in complete harmony with the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

### ***An SDA Pastor Speaks Out***

"And what about the Christians who are surrounded by this glorification of the flesh? Unfortunately, it has not been left outside the church doors. Slowly the world edged into the remnant church. By degrees the sight of knees and thighs even in the sanctuary began to be tolerated. The sense of outrage disappeared as we got used to the weekly display.

"What about the Christian men whose inherent sex nature is so easily influenced by this nudity? Do they respond to the external stimuli by thinking evil thoughts and committing mental adultery? By the grace of God true Christians can lay hold of victory, even over the imaginations of the heart. Through submission and prayer any man can claim the power of a pure mind, but the styles of dress make it a more difficult struggle.

"Jesus made it clear that men are easily led into wrong thinking. He said, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Matthew 5:27, 28.

"And what can be said for the women who dress in such a way that they stimulate this kind of thinking? They are equally guilty before God. For this reason no true Christian woman, who understands the effect of such a course, will wear the revealing clothes which create such illicit desires. As the dress inches above the knee, the climate of sin is created. For the carnal man, who has not the power of the gospel in his life, there is no

chance whatever to resist the temptation. Every miniskirt is fuel which triggers the mind to think the most debased thoughts of which the carnal nature is capable. Christian women should have no share in this kind of enticement.

“Indeed, the second greatest commandment of Jesus would be violated by such a course. Christ said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' How could a woman wear clothing that was designed to cause her neighbour's husband to commit mental adultery and not be guilty of breaking that law of love? Would she love her neighbour as herself if she willfully did something to cause her neighbour's husband to sin against his wife and against God?

“We are dealing here with actions which cause others to sin. Moral issues are directly involved. We are counseled to close every door of temptation.

“ ‘Our example and influence must be a power on the side of reform. We must abstain from any practice which will blunt the conscience or encourage temptation. We must open no door that will give Satan access to the mind of one human being formed in the image of God.’ *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 360.

“Because the female reaction to nudity is so different from that of the male, women often minimize the spiritual problem we are talking about here. Too often their attitude is that men just ought to use more power of self-control and stifle their mental images. They fail completely to grasp the significant difference which God Himself put into the male nature. That nature cannot be reversed by any human effort or determination. It can be controlled by complete Christian commitment, but Christian women must co-operate in closing the avenues of the soul to temptation.” By Joe Crews, *Creeping Compromise*, pp. 24-26, Homeward Publishing 2008. Used by Permission

## **So, what are Seventh-day Adventist men saying?**

*The following comments were made to us personally, in writing or in seminars on dress.*

- *These areas are the most tempting and alluring to unholy thoughts:*

### **1.) Form fitting or tight clothing**

“Passionately provocative and exciting articles of clothing such as tight tops, sweaters—especially knit—T-shirts, dresses, pants or jeans which reveal the form of the upper or lower body lead to impure thoughts. Some say tight is almost as sexy as naked.”

*Note: Sisters, it is also our responsibility to keep the eyes of men from staring at private areas of our body as well. Have you noticed when an immodestly dressed woman walks by, most men struggle to keep their eyes away. Anything that is tight or slinky, and shows the form of the hips, so that the female anatomy is observable, would fall into this immodest category. Clothing should be modest in every respect, not just some aspects.*

### **2.) Sleeveless dresses or tops**

“So close to the breast of a women, the bare skin of underarms in sleeveless or loose sleeved blouses has much sex appeal and is a great snare. The desire for a man to see more when the arms are outstretched or uplifted is a great temptation. Many times underwear and part of the breast are exposed in this scanty apparel.”

### **3.) Low necklines, cleavage revealing**

“The breasts, the most provocative and tempting part of a woman’s body, tantalizes the passions. Low cut clothing which reveal cleavage are totally inappropriate for the God-fearing woman. Cleavage is flaunting one’s sexuality. It is very distracting and a ‘wicked fashion.’ Low necklines invite the eyes to an area that should only be revealed to one’s husband.” Loose hanging tops or necklines that are revealing when bending over also fit in this category.”

*Note: It is important for us as women to understand that our breasts are probably the most tempting area of our body. The eyes of any normal man, even a godly Christian man, are strongly tempted to look at a woman’s breasts when they are revealed in any way. And when men look lingeringly with lust, they sin against God. Our Christian responsibility is to keep them from being tempted to lust, and to not to lure their eyes to our breasts. We are to cover and disguise our breasts in such a way that men’s eyes are drawn to our faces, and not our chests.*

### **4.) Sheer or slinky apparel**

“This type of clothing arouses unwholesome curiosity, because it is designed to reveal and not conceal the most private areas of a woman’s body. Men’s minds will wonder what is under there. Imagination will be excited because sheer and slinky is a teaser!”

### **5.) Peek-a-boos and slits**

“These are also “teasers” because they target areas that should be hidden, drawing the eyes of men to that particular area. They are more revealing because it exposes just a little bit for a moment, but arouses the intense desire for more and more of what you are hiding.”

*Note: Sisters, we need to make sure we are modestly covered when we stand, walk, sit, bend or kneel, and especially if we are up front on the rostrum on Sabbath morning. Slits are designed to give a flashing effect, and many men have spoken out against women wearing slits in their skirts, especially high slits.*

### **6.) Short dresses**

“Nude legs and thighs are a ‘provocation to lust’ in the eyes of men. Bare back, bare midriffs, bare thighs, and bare legs are all flagrantly suggestive. What happened to the God-given shame a woman naturally feels when her body is exposed?”

### **7.) Slacks**

“In their very nature, slacks are apt to reveal and display your form. Women contend for *modest* slacks, but who wears them? In the very nature of the case, it is difficult to make a pair of modest

slacks (especially for a woman who has a full figure), and as a matter of fact, it is an extremely rare thing to see a woman in slacks which are not too tight. Why is this? Why may men wear slacks which fit loosely, while the slacks of women must cling to every inch of their thighs and hips and buttocks and crotch? Verily it is because the god of this world who inspires these styles, and he knows his business only too well. He knows only too well that it is a snare to a man's heart to have displayed before his eyes the form of a woman's legs, thighs and buttocks.

“You ought, by all means, to keep your private parts carefully concealed at all times, and there is nothing that will do it so well as a *dress*. A *loose-fitting* skirt or dress, *provided it is not too short*, is also the best possible clothing with which to conceal all of the tempting parts of the anatomy which reside between your waist and your knees.

“You must believe it on the word of a man, though you may not be able to understand it. The *sight* of the *form* of your thighs and buttocks and private parts will tempt the heart of a man, and it is the nature of slacks to display the form of those parts.” by Gwen and Rick Shorter, *Thy Nakedness, Lord What Shall I Wear?* pp. 159-160, Homeward Publishing 2004. Used by permission.

*Note: Long, loose and flowing skirts and dresses made with substantial material are by far the most modest clothing we can wear. Especially in God's house, we should be seeking that inward and outward modesty in which God delights.*

## **8.) Jewelry and colorful cosmetics**

“A woman who paints her face and nails, wears elaborate hairstyles and decks herself with ornaments appears to be trying to attract sexual attention. These things reveal a proud and vain heart, and contradict the Christian standards of purity, meekness and simplicity.”

*Note: If we look like the world, we will attract the world, or the worldly minded in the church, which contradicts spiritually mindedness. This is a stumbling block to young and old in the church. Instead of trying to draw attention to ourselves, let's pass it on to Jesus. This is a time for heart searching, and putting away of worldly adornment. Everything we can do to prepare the way for the blessing of God and the latter rain, we must do now.*

## **Take Jesus With You When You Shop!**

It's important to realize that most of the modern clothing, shoes and accessories designed for women is inappropriate for the Christian woman to wear. They were designed by worldly fashion designers for people who love the world. We are not of this world. We are citizens of a heavenly country. Therefore, we need to shop with anointed eyes, that we may not purchase any thing designed for the purpose of vanity or seduction. We need to remember that Jesus wants us to keep Him close at all times.

## ***What Does Our Mirror Tell Us?***

What do men see when they look at us? It would be a good idea to use a mirror, or have a family member do a modesty check on every part of our clothing before we leave the house. We need to bend over, sit, walk, and make sure every sensitive part of our bodies is modestly covered. We should be sure to wear sufficient undergarments so that light cannot shine through our clothing. We need to safeguard our brothers' eyes!

As one writer noted, if God sends to hell the man who lusts in his heart and does not repent, what about the woman who caused the man to lust in the first place? God wants us to repent and turn from immodesty.

A godly influence that is exerted by women who dress modestly will be a blessing to our sisters as well, especially our younger sisters. The mutual love and respect that is shown through modest dress will allow the Holy Spirit to work with increased power in our churches.

When visitors come into our churches, it will be clear to them that we, as a church, believe in and practice biblical modesty. Because of our example, in time, they will also cover themselves appropriately as they continue to fellowship with us.

## ***A Warning and an Appeal***

These specifics are meant to provide helpful instruction to our beloved sisters, not to offend in any way. We believe the warnings in God's Word are given because our Heavenly Father is trying to point us to a higher and holier path, even the narrow way. The world has strong appeal for the masses, and only a few are willing to listen to the voice of the Loving Shepherd.

Because our Lord Jesus values us so highly, He warns us about the dangers of following worldly fashions. He wants to protect His beloved daughters from getting pulled into Satan's traps. He has a much higher purpose for us. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, set apart for holy use. The Holy Spirit wants to dwell in us, so we can lead others to Jesus, not into sin. God's love is truly exemplified when we care enough about our brothers to avoid causing them to stumble. "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. 1 John 2:10

Dear sisters, we have a high and holy calling—ambassadors for the King of kings! "God does not require us to give up any thing that it is for our best interest to retain." *Steps to Christ, p. 46.* He has a special mission for us, and that mission can only be accomplished as we are clothed in the robe of His righteousness. Every morning He will cover us as we completely surrender our hearts to Him. This includes every aspect of our lives, including what we wear. He is willing to take over the management of our wardrobe, and show us what is pleasing in His sight.

As we give the Lord Jesus complete control, His incredible love will fill our heart in such a way that we will see our previous vanity and pride as sins that crucify our Lord afresh and put Him to an open shame. We will have a higher purpose as daughters of God. His approval is all we desire. As we submit to Him, revealing His loving principles of modesty and simplicity, He will be able to use us in a more powerful way in His holy service. Our dress will not contradict our

profession, but will be in harmony with and give credibility to our witness. As we realize our inestimable value to our Savior, our sense of worth, uniqueness and specialness in His eyes will far outweigh the cheap thrill of any vain attention we may have sought in the past.

Dear sister in Christ, are you willing to join this modesty movement for God's glory, to support our brothers in Christ, and be a humble servant and holy witness to other sisters? If so, we invite you to print this open letter and circulate it among your Seventh-day Adventist friends.

We are encouraged as we see the incredible response to this message all over the world. The web site that shares this message of modesty has been visited by over 8,000 individuals in just 4 months, from 114 countries of the world (including the Vatican) and every state in United States. The Holy Spirit is touching hearts and lives, and drawing His daughters closer to Him. Won't you join us in sharing this loving message of modesty. Please pray for us as we are praying for you.

In Christian and sisterly love,

Linda Kirk, Gwen Shorter & Yolanda Palmer (formerly known as Ullanda Innocent)

<http://www.movingtowardmodesty.com>