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Review of Panel Discussion in August 2007:
Teaching Our Daughters Modesty in Dress and Manner

1. Share one thing you have done in the past to teach modesty to your daughters.
 - ❧ Start when they are young and keep the subject before them as they grow into maturity. Use clothing catalogues to show examples of modesty and immodesty.
 - ❧ Set the example for them yourself even at home and teach siblings to be modest with each other as well.

2. When would you say is an appropriate time to start teaching our daughters about modesty?
 - ❧ Dress them modestly from the time they are very young so that they get used to what it feels like and would be uncomfortable if dressed otherwise.
 - ❧ Fathers should take an active part in seeing that their daughters dress modestly as they grow older.

3. What would be a godly approach to outward appearance in the teen years. What are some godly guidelines and **how can we communicate them to the heart?** (As opposed to just the teenager's "head," which interprets them as "laws")

"Haircuts, curls, make-up, trousers for women, jewelry, skirts above the ankle or the knee--all have been forbidden at various times. But such efforts are superficial and misguided. **Vanity can survive all external regulations.**" ~ Sharon James

"In the past, goodness has been defined primarily in terms of virtues such as honesty, kindness or integrity. Today, a terrifying number of young women see goodness mainly in terms of image. Compare two typical, genuine journal entries for adolescent girls one century apart:

Resolved, not to talk about myself or feelings. To think before speaking. To work seriously. To be self restrained in conversation and actions. Not to let my thoughts wander. To be dignified. Interest myself more in others (1892)

I will try to make myself better in any way I possibly can with the help of my budget and baby-sitting money. I will lose weight, get new lenses, already got new haircut, good make-up, new clothes and accessories (1982)" ~ Sharon James

- ❧ Develop a close relationship with your daughters: talk a lot, listen, don't put them down. Then you will have their heart and they will listen to you. (Proverbs 23:26)
 - ❧ Teach them the law of Love which is pleasing God and serving others, and that their bodies are the temple (dwelling place) of the Holy Spirit.
4. Our girls face a tremendous amount of peer pressure about the way they dress. How have you taught your girls to handle the pressure?
- ❧ When pressure comes from other Christian families, teach them to maintain your own family standards but with a gracious, not critical, spirit and not displaying a "holier than thou" attitude. As Christians, they will have to learn to be different in this world, so having godly standards as teens is a good opportunity to teach them how to live with differences.
 - ❧ In order for teens not to develop resentment toward us as parents, we must teach them to trust our judgment and to be submissive to our leadership.

5. At what point are boys awakened to physical attractiveness of girls so that we need to be alerting our girls to their need to be modest?
- ☞ Boys usually start to notice girls in junior high, but girls need to be learning modesty long before that time.
 - ☞ Modesty is a girl's defense. Men of all ages can be attracted to women (and girls) of any age. It is important for even young girls to try not to get the attention of wicked and perverse men.
6. How explicit should you be with girls about how their dress and manners affect young men? What approach have you taken?
- ☞ <http://www.therebelution.com/modestysurvey/> A very enlightening survey of how women's clothing affects men.
 - ☞ When they are young, teach them to dress to please the Lord.
 - ☞ As they grow into the teen years teach them the unique difficulty that men have. (Matthew 5:28) Teach them what men are attracted to: "skin, shape, and suggestion." Fathers should help educate them in this area.
 - ☞ The amount of detail will depend on their age, maturity, and the individual child, but you don't want them to learn these things from their peers, so watch for opportunities and make it your responsibility.
7. Some people seem to compromise modesty for the sake of being feminine. How can we distinguish for our girls how to be feminine without becoming immodest and drawing attention to the female body?
- ☞ Modesty and femininity go hand in hand. Everything that is feminine is not modest, and everything that is modest is not feminine.
 - ☞ Modesty does not mean we have to look sloppy or frumpy. We can be clean and attractive and feminine at the same time. I Timothy 2:9 instructs women to wear "proper" clothing. Proper means "well arranged."
 - ☞ We need to think about what our clothes say about us!

8. What do you do when your girls complain that they don't think they are pretty or display a complex about their looks?

"One recent survey showed that by the age of thirteen more than half of American girls are unhappy with their bodies. By the age of seventeen this escalates to an unbelievable 78%. No wonder that eating disorders such as anorexia are increasing. No wonder that the multi-million-dollar cosmetics and weight-control industries are booming." ~ Sharon James

9. Did your girls, when married, end up with the same dress standards that you have? How do you view that now?

10. What are some things you would do differently in teaching your girls modesty if you had it to do over again?

11. How do you keep girls from developing a "tom-boyish" look and manner?

12. Do you and how do you teach your girls not to flirt?

Purity

Notes from Today's Discussion:

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