

Question: Is the skimpy clothing being worn by young women today appropriate?

Dear Abby does not think so. In her column recently, a reader remarked, "...I think some of the clothes marketed for girls are pretty shocking. Last summer, the style was teeny little tops that exposed the navel and had spaghetti straps, which are to be worn with bell-bottom hip hugger jeans. The skirts this year are minis and the shoes are chunky platforms..." Dear Abby replied, "I used to work the night shift for a courier service. My run took me into Manhattan between the hours of 1 and 3 A.M....During those hours prostitutes would openly solicit on street corners – and guess what they were wearing? Teeny tops with spaghetti straps, tight jeans and platform shoes!"

In the same column, another reader remarked, "It's very difficult to find appropriate clothing for girls..." Dear Abby responded, "I remember when I was young my mom said 'no!' to outfits that were too sophisticated or revealing. I thank her for teaching me how to dress with style and dignity. These decisions are taught by responsible parents who have the guts to draw the line with whiny children, media and manufacturers who do not have a clue (and could not care less) about what makes a little girl become a self-confident, independent woman."

Undoubtedly, the statements presented above drew a lot of criticism as being outdated and judgmental. If a gospel preacher had written the words above, people would have ridiculed him mercilessly. However, the statements were not the views of a preacher, but a woman of the world! Even she can see the connection between modest dress and morality, between immodest "inappropriate" apparel and "the attire of an harlot" (Pro 7:10). So, why can't the average citizen?

Should we accuse Ms. VanBuren of trying to set a dress code for everyone else? Do you agree with her in principle, but would never condone her comments in public for fear of being called "judgmental"? Would you say that although her views are well meaning, they intrude into a "gray area" for which there is no clear directive from God? No, rather, we ought to commend the substance of her statements, because they resonate principles established by God the Creator.

When Adam and Eve sinned and realized they were naked, they made aprons to cover their mid-section. God quickly clothed them with animal skins to cover the shame of their nakedness (Gen 3:1-21).

In Old Testament times, God warned Israel of her impending judgment for sin by saying, "...remove you veil, take off the skirt, uncover the thigh, pass through the rivers. Your nakedness shall be uncovered; yes, your shame will be seen" (Isa 47:2-3).

In these last days, the Son of God directs Christian women to wear modest clothing, "which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works" (1Tim 2:10).

Mothers should begin teaching these facts to their daughters as soon as they are able to understand human speech. A mother's instruction to her daughter about proper dress will not be well received when she is ready to prance around half-dressed in mixed company. Dress that a parent permits for younger children will be hard to prevent later. Children need to understand the "ground rules" before they enter the race. Think hard on it, and thanks for reading!