

Strength and Honor Are Her Clothing

Presenter: Lillian Levy

Proverbs 31:25

She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.

Psalms 84:5

Blessed are those whose strength is in you, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.

Psalms 84:7

They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion.

Isaiah 61:10

I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God.
For He has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me
in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

Psalms 30:11-12

You turned my wailing into dancing; You removed my sackcloth
and clothed me with joy that my heart may sing to you and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever.

1 Peter 5:5

Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because
"God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

I can honestly say that fashion has always been an important part of my world. I have had a relationship with fashion and a passion for collecting vintage clothing. Many of you may share in my passion.

Fashion can be a unique way of expressing creativity and it reflects our joy in color and design. However, it can also be a burden and a problem.

We, as believing women, have a responsibility to present ourselves to the world around in a manner that reflects our belief system. We make a statement every day in every situation that tells the world who we are and what we represent. It is, at times, a spoken statement, and often it is an unspoken statement. Therefore, we are presenting ourselves, at all times, to both our private and public audience.

Billy Graham mentioned in one of his devotional books that it is “the duty of all believers to represent Christ in our conduct, conversation and personal appearance.”

This afternoon, the focus is directed on fashion and clothing. When we review our ideas relative to shopping for garments, we think of expressing ourselves in beautiful or dramatic colors. We question --- Which colors and shades compliment me? The line and design – does it work well with my body image? Is the garment appropriate for the occasion? Is the garment appropriate for the climate? Can I sit down in it? Can I walk up and down the staircase in this garment? How is the garment constructed? We look at the details, etc. Is this going to fit into my clothing budget? Can I travel with it? Will it fold successfully in my luggage? Is it classic and timeless? Does it keep me in harmony or does the garment get all the attention when I enter the door. (If we see the dress, sweater, jacket or blouse before the total woman, she is not in total harmony with her image because this dress, etc. is center state and we do not see the woman as a whole. We only see the major and striking component, the DRESS, etc.)

We, as Christian women, having presented ourselves appropriately and attractively, do have as our first priority the passion to help meet spiritual needs with biblical perspectives and Christ-centered insight to the culture surrounding us. We are to cloth ourselves with the “garments of righteousness” so that we can minister to those we touch in every area of our daily walk. We know that God does not look at the outside, but rather, at the “hidden person of the heart” and we know that He knows our heart. This is a great challenge and a great joy to live each day with expectations of a wonderful, unknown adventure as we represent our Lord and Savior.

We are to be lovely, strong and honorable ambassadors of the King. What an honor this truly is!

I would like to take this opportunity to read to you this afternoon a letter that was sent to me by a woman I have known for over 50 years, a woman of strength, honor and beauty. It was sent to me for my remarks and above all, for prayer. She does not live in this local area. The letter is from an 82 year old grandmother to her granddaughter. I felt led to share it with you because I think it demonstrates a woman of Godly strength. It touched me emotionally and made me cry.

Dear Granddaughter,

I am so sorry that I haven't written sooner. (It was very difficult for your Mom to write to me about your pregnancy, and not this is difficult for me as I have many mixed emotions.)

I am so thankful that you never considered abortion.

This little one inside of you can be a joy to you as a new mother giving you a reason for living which comes only from God. This child has a birth to look forward to, with a Mother who can shower God's love on him and lead him to know that God loves him and knew him before he came to be. Psalm 139

My real surprise is not that you are pregnant, but that you were having sex before marriage. That was not a mistake. That was sin. But, thankfully, God paid the price for sin on the cross; and when you repented, He forgave you because you are His child from the day you accepted Him as your Savior. (If you did.)

Now, you have the wonderful opportunity to be a Christian Mom, with no more sex until you are married. Jesus said, "go and sin no more" to the woman he forgave. Naturally, I have questions. Is the father of this child ready to be a responsible father, having also asked and received forgiveness???? He also knew he could become a parent.

There can be real victory in your life as you both face the role together of loving and caring for this precious baby as responsible parents.

I pray for you daily, and I love you deeply.

Grandmother

Jesus said, “I am leaving you with a gift – peace of mind and heart. And, the peace I give isn’t like the peace the world gives. So don’t be troubled or afraid. John 14:27

If you are here this afternoon and you are not sure if you know Jesus as your personal Savior, please know that God knows all about you. He knows your heartbreaks, your shattered dreams, your sins, your loneliness, your problems.

For all have sinned and fall short of God’s glorious standard. Romans 3:23
For the wages of sin is death. Romans 6:23

Man’s sin separated him from God. But, God provided the way for man’s return because He loves us and gave His Son to die on the cross for us. God offers to give us a new, unending live.

We make the choice to accept or reject God’s gift.

This reminds me of the words to a song:

*One day when heaven was filled with His praises
One day when sin was a black as could be,
Jesus came forth to be born of a virgin
Dwelted among men, my Redeemer is He
Living, He loved me
Dying, He saved me
Buried, He carried my sins far away
Rising, He justified
Freely forever
And, one day, He’s coming
Oh, glorious Day!*

Romans 13:14 – Clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

Our Father and our God,

Please help me to be gentle and kind, in spite of difficult times and heart breaking experiences. Teach me to be humble. As women of God, let your strength and love shine through our lives at all times because of Jesus Christ.

Amen

Lillian Levy, the mother of our Women's Ministry Director, has enjoyed a variety of career experiences, including Real Estate, Director of a Medical Weight Reducing Clinic, Owner of a Weight, Exercise and Life style spa, and personal shopper. In between, she obtained a BS in Individualized Studies at George Mason University. She currently facilitates and leads Women's Bible Studies through Stonecroft Ministries and mentors women through the Titus 2 example. She is a role model of the Proverbs 31 woman for her daughter, granddaughter, and the women that she regularly and consistently mentors. She and her husband, Earl, are members of McLean Bible Church where they are active in various ministries.