

# Loving God & Others with Gender-Distinct Clothing

## Introduction—A Theology of Gender Distinctions

### Genesis 1

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ וַיְרִדוּ בְּדֹגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ: <sup>26</sup>

וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ <sup>27</sup>

זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם:

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

<sup>27</sup> God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

### Exegesis

1. When God made mankind, He imparted dominion to both male and female. The plural form of the verb "to rule" (Gen. 1:26) indicates this.
2. It is mankind that is made in God's image, not just the male (Gen. 1:26-27).
3. There is an ABB'A' structure in 1:26-27 that could be expressed in several ways: (1) Plurality (us, our, our) — Singularity (God, His, He) — Singularity (הָאָדָם) — Plurality (male, female, them), or one might express it as Trinity-Unity-Unity-Duality. Expressing it in the latter fashion, however, highlights the difference between God and man. God is a tri-unity of persons. Man is a bi-unity of persons. Even though the Godhead is a tri-person unity and in marriage mankind experiences a two-person unity, there are several instructive parallels. The former expression captures more accurately the way in which God's creation of mankind as male and female reflects His image and likeness: plurality & unity
4. Both men and women bear the image of God. However both do not bear all the same aspects of God's image to the same degree. The male is the primary bearer of certain aspects of the divine image and the female the primary bearer of other aspects.
5. That the female is the primary bearer of those aspects of God that involve tenderness, compassion, mothering love is suggested by those passages that depict God in female terms (Isa. 49:15; 66:12-13; Luke 13:34). Other passages that use feminine imagery for God includes Deut. 32:18; Isa. 42:13-14)
6. On the other hand, the strength and power of God are exclusively described in male terms (e.g., warrior, Zeph. 3:17; father, Deut. 1:31).

### In terms of marriage

1. As in divine unity, the persons do not lose their identity by being united.
2. As in the trinity, the persons are united in self-giving and others-receiving love.
3. As in the trinity, the overflow of their mutual love results in creation, in our case procreation.

## Consequence of Gender Blurring

When the gender distinctions God built into humanity and human society in order to reflect his image are blurred or eliminated to any degree, the image of God is to that degree blurred. Maintaining God-designed gender-distinctions is not about upholding traditional norms or customs. It is about reflecting the image of our triune God as He designed it to be reflected.

## Conclusions:

The creation of the female and male as primary bearers of certain aspects of the divine image provides a theological explanation for God's concern that gender-distinctions be maintained in sex (contra-homosexuality), in marital roles (1 Cor. 11:8-12; Eph. 5:22-32), in the church (1 Cor. 11:3; 14:34-35; 1 Tim. 2:11-15), in built-in physical characteristics (e.g., hair length 1 Cor. 11:14-15), and social convention (dress distinctions, Deut. 22:5).

## I. Principles of Interpreting & Applying Old Testament Law to the Modern Believer

Purposes of the OT:

1. God revealing Himself, His will, character, etc. (Heb. 1:1-3; cf. John 1:18)
2. To instruct and equip up (Rom. 15:4; 2 Tim. 3:16-17)

Mal. 3:6 I am the Lord, I change not.

Conclusion: We have a God of unchanging character. Since God is unchanging what pleases Him and displeases Him will not change.

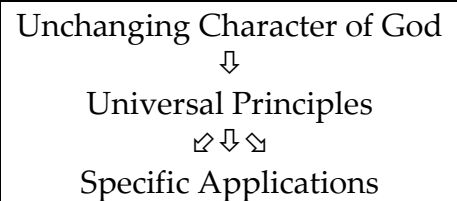
Qualification: Unchanging character is not the same as being unfeeling (Hos. 11:8) or unable to change His plans (Jer. 18:7-10).

God's Unchanging Character is revealed in OT Law through Direct Statements concerning His character (Lev. 11:44, "I am holy"), Universal Principles (Lev. 11:44, "be ye holy"), and Specific Applications (Deut. 7 – don't marry or associate with Canaanites)

From God's character are derived Universal Principles.

A universal principle is a principle that is true at all times, places, and cultures, from are derived specific applications.

E.g., You must be holy, for I am holy. UP: God's people must be holy. This UP is rooted in God's UC – He is holy.



From the Universal Principles come Specific Applications.

Specific Applications are applications of Universal Principles to specific people or groups, for specific times and purposes.

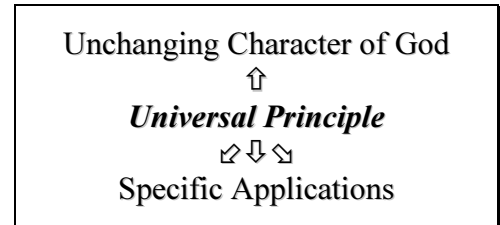
- Specific applications are commands that require us to do something.
- Specific applications *always* reflect at least one UP.
- Specific applications may or may not have universal application
- You can identify a specific application by asking if a more specific/concrete application may be made from the law. If not, then it is a specific application.

Specific applications may be divided into two types:

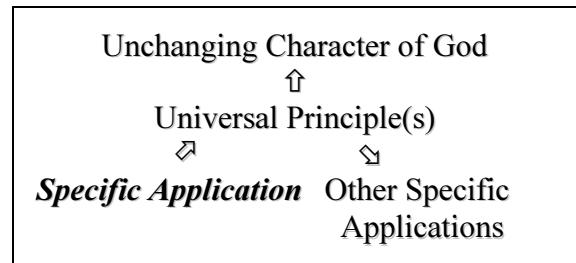
- Generalized applications given to a specific group of people. This appear in the form of “do X all the time or never do X.”
  - E.g., Thou shalt not murder. (Exo. 20)
- Specialized applications given for a limited set of circumstances, to a specific group of people.
  - E.g., Kill all Amalekites in Canaan (1 Sam. 15:3)

When dealing with any OT Law, we want to ask these questions:

1. Is this law a specific application or a universal principle?
2. If it is a Universal Principle then
  - a. What does this principle reflect about the unchanging character of God?
  - b. What Specific Applications can be inferred from this principle?



3. If it is a Specific Application then
  - a. What is the Universal Principle behind this SA?
  - b. What does this inferred UP reveal about the unchanging character of God?
  - c. What other SAs can be made from the inferred UP behind this SA?



## II. Application of UP/SA to Deuteronomy 22

### Deut. 22:1-4 Specific Application

<sup>1</sup>"You shall not see your countryman's ox or his sheep straying away, and pay no attention to them; you shall certainly bring them back to your countryman.

<sup>2</sup>"If your countryman is not near you, or if you do not know him, then you shall bring it home to your house, and it shall remain with you until your countryman looks for it; then you shall restore it to him.

<sup>3</sup>"Thus you shall do with his donkey, and you shall do the same with his garment, and you shall do likewise with anything lost by your countryman, which he has lost and you have found. You are not allowed to neglect *them*.

<sup>4</sup>"You shall not see your countryman's donkey or his ox fallen down on the way, and pay no attention to them; you shall certainly help him to raise *them* up.

**Universal Principle:** Love your neighbor as yourself. Ownership of private property.

**Specific Application:** (1) Return to others what they lose; (2) Hold what is lost for one to come seeking for it

**Unchanging Character of God:** God loves us, seeking our best interest; hence we imitate his love in our relationships with others

**Contextual Limitations?** No. It applies to us today. Urban application may differ from rural application.

**Other Specific Applications:** Since the UP is to love others as ourselves, then applications can be made to the issue of how to treat other people's property when it is *not* lost.

#### **Deut. 22:6-7 Specific Application**

<sup>6</sup> "If you happen to come upon a bird's nest along the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, and the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young;

<sup>7</sup> you shall certainly let the mother go, but the young you may take for yourself, in order that it may be well with you and that you may prolong your days.

**Universal Principle:** We must be wise stewards of God's creation.

**Unchanging Character of God:** God cares for His creation. God loves us and others (mismanagement of resources often results in hardship and deprivation for other people.)

**Other Specific Application:** Wanton destruction of natural wildlife resources is wrong. We must be responsible in our management of the world around us.

**Contextual Limitations:** No. Wildlife management plans on federal or state level may alter the application, but the principle must be maintained.

#### **Deut. 22:8 Specific Application**

<sup>8</sup> "When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, so that you will not bring bloodguilt on your house if anyone falls from it.

**Explanation:** In Israel, the roof was a place to store grain, to sleep in the summer, children often played there. Therefore, a fence was needed to keep people from falling off.

**Universal Principles:** (1) Love others as ourselves; (2) Love for others protects them from harm; (3) Life is valuable because we are made in God's image (cf. Gen. 9:6), therefore, we must make provision for its protection

**Unchanging Character of God:** God loves us and provides guards to keep us from harm. We are to love others in the same way.

**Other Specific Applications:** We are responsible to make our homes safe for others. We should ensure the safety of people whenever we are constructing buildings where they will be. Railings on balconies, stairs, no-slip grips on stairs, etc.

**Contextual Limitations?** No. It applies to us, if we are building flat-roofed houses, where the roof will be used for living-space.

#### **Deut. 22:9 Specific Application**

<sup>9</sup> "You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, or all the produce of the seed which you have sown and the increase of the vineyard will become defiled.

**Explanation:** When two varieties of a kind of plant are planted together (e.g., two types of corn), they often cross pollinate and render each other infertile. This command protected Israel from destroying their seed supply and undermining the fertility of the land.

**Universal Principle:** We are to care for the earth and not harm its capacity for fruitfulness. We must exercise proper management of our crop resources.

**Unchanging Character of God:** God loves us and provide guards to keep us from harm.

**Other Specific Applications:** Don't plant the same crop over and over without replenishing the nutrients in the soil either naturally or artificially.

**Contextual Limitations:** None. Application to today is probably the same.

### Deut. 22:10 Specific Application

<sup>10</sup> "You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together.

**Explanation:** These two animals are of unequal strength, build, or height. Yoking them would be cruel.

**Universal Principle:** We are to care for animals and use them in ways that are not cruel or damaging. We should not be cruel to animals in any form. <sup>NAU</sup> Proverbs 12:10 A righteous man has regard for the life of his animal, But *even* the compassion of the wicked is cruel

**Unchanging Character of God:** God cares for His creation.

**Other Specific Applications:** Don't abuse cats, frogs, etc. When hunting, attempt to kill the animal quickly to minimize its pain.

**Contextual Limitations:** None. Would apply to today if you were plowing with animals.

### Deut. 22:11 Specific Application

<sup>11</sup> "You shall not wear a material mixed of wool and linen together.

**Explanation:** View 1: physically harmful.<sup>1</sup>

View 2: not to wear what was reserved for the tabernacle material & high priestly clothes.<sup>2</sup>

**Universal Principle:** If harmful, the UP would be taking care of ourselves. If separation, it points out God's holiness, i.e., specialness; like the incense – couldn't be copied.

**Unchanging Character of God:** If harmful, God loves us. If separation, God is holy.

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<sup>1</sup> JFB: "Although this precept, like the other two with which it is associated, was in all probability designed to root out some superstition, it seems to have had a further meaning. The law, it is to be observed, did not prohibit the Israelites wearing many different kinds of cloths together, but only the two specified; and the observations and researches of modern science have proved that "wool, when combined with linen, increases its power of passing off the electricity from the body. In hot climates, it brings on malignant fevers and exhausts the strength; and when passing off from the body, it meets with the heated air, inflames and excoriates like a blister" [WHITLAW]" Note: Ezek. 44:17-18 which suggests wool was forbidden to priests because it caused sweat. What comes out of the body...

<sup>2</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 4:208 "Let not anyone of you wear a garment made of woollen and linen, for that is appointed to be for the priests alone." Μηδέις δ' ἐξ ὑμῶν κλωστήν ἐξ ἐρίου καὶ λίνου στολήν φορεῖτω τοῖς γὰρ ἱερεῦσι μόνοις ταύτην ἀποδεδείχθαι

Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22*, 1658-1664, argues that since the priestly garments were made from a blend of linen and wool (e.g., Exod 28:6; 39:29; colored cloth is wool) as well as the Tabernacle's inner curtains (Exod 26:1, 31) and the high priest's ephod, breastplate, and belt (Exod 28:6, 15; 39:29), though the ordinary priest wore this mixture only in his belt (Exod. 39:29), the purpose of this prohibition was that "mixtures ... characterize the holiness of the sacred sphere .... The laity ... dare not cross its boundary."

**Other Specific Applications:** View 1: We should avoid wearing things that are physically harmful (e.g., feet binding). View 2: Guard against making God and what is associated with Him common & ordinary. He is holy.

**Contextual Limitations:** View 1: none. View 2: Yes: the tabernacle/temple has been done away with in Christ (cf. Heb. 8-9). We are now the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6).

### **Deut. 22:12 Specific Application**

<sup>12</sup> “You shall make yourself tassels on the four corners of your garment with which you cover yourself.

**Explanation:** Num. 15:37-41 explains these tassels were to remind the Israel men of God’s commandments. Guard them from spiritual unfaithfulness and guide them into holiness.

**Universal Principle:** We are to meditate on and be guided by God’s word. We are to be holy to God.

**Unchanging Character of God:** God deserves all our love. God is holy.

**Other Specific Applications:** We create ways that will remind us of God’s word and its principles in our lives. E.g., Scripture plaques on walls of home.

**Contextual Limitations:** Yes. This specific application served to distinguish Israel from the surrounding nations. It was a reminder of the covenant they were in with God. We are not under that covenant. However, the universal principle of keeping the commands of God before us so that we do not stray from our love for Him is highly relevant to us.

## **III. Rationale for Dealing with Gender-Distinct Clothing**

<sup>NASB</sup> **Deuteronomy 22:5** "A woman shall not wear man's clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God.

### **A. God’s View of the Seriousness of Violating Deut. 22:5**

God says that any woman who wears a man’s clothing or any man who wears a women’s clothing is an “abomination unto the LORD thy God” (Deut. 22:5b). This places this sin in the category of other sins which are called an ‘abomination.’ Revelation 21:27 says that the person who does what is abominable in God's eyes will not enter heaven.

The following bulleted items are designated as an abomination (תועבה *to 'evah*) in the Old Testament.<sup>3</sup>

- Homosexuality (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; 1 Kgs 14:24)
- Sexual sins listed in Lev. 18 (Lev. 18:26, 27, 29)
- Idolatry (Deut. 7:25, 26, 12:31; 13:14, 15; 27:15; 32:16; 2 Kgs 23:13; 2 Chr. 34:33; 36:14)
- Unclean animals (Deut. 14:3; 17:4)

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<sup>3</sup> Other words translated abomination are פגול—sacrificial meat left over on the 3rd day (Lev. 7:18); שִׂקָץ — God-specified unclean animals (Lev. 11:10, 11, 12, 20, 23, 41, 42)

- Sacrifice of blemished animals (Deut. 17:1)
- Canaanite practices: Child sacrifice, witchcraft, astrology, spiritism (Deut. 18:9, 12; 2 Kgs 16:3; 21:2, 11; 2 Chr. 28:3; 33:2; Ezra 9:1, 11, 14)
- Wearing opposite gender clothing (Deut. 22:5)
- Giving to God money obtained through prostitution (Deut. 23:18)
- Remarrying a woman whom you divorced and who married someone else after being divorced (Deut. 24:4)
- Dishonesty in business transaction (Deut. 25:16; Prov. 11:1; 20:10; 20:23)
- A devious person (Prov. 3:32)
- Haughtiness (Prov. 6:16-19; 16:5)
- Lying (Prov. 6:16-19; 12:22),
- Murder (Prov. 6:16-19)
- Wicked Plans (Prov. 6:16-19; 15:26),
- Proneness to evil (Prov. 6:16-19)
- False witness (Prov. 6:16-19)
- Spreader of discord (Prov. 6:16-19)
- Perverse in heart (Prov. 11:20)
- The sacrifice of the wicked (Prov. 15:8; 21:27)
- The way of the wicked (Prov. 15:9)
- Justifying the wicked or condemning the righteous (Prov. 17:15)
- Prayer of the law breaker (Prov. 28:9)

**Conclusion:** The term ‘abomination’ is not limited strictly to sins associated with sexual immorality or idolatry. Lying, wicked plans, spreading discord, injustice and all the behavior of the unbeliever are abominable to the Lord. All of the previous are clearly moral issues; however, the Lord also labels the eating of unclean animals as an abomination. This is crucial for it shows that even in regard to something that God would later permit, to do it while it was forbidden was an abomination. From this data we may infer that any disobedience to God, regardless of the nature of the command, is abhorrent to God. Some sins, however, are more abhorrent to God than others.

## **B. The Relation of Deut. 22:5 to Loving God**

An abomination is the direct opposite of something that delights God. Notice the antithesis that is established between an abomination and pleasing the Lord in the following passages.

Proverbs 11:1 A false balance is an abomination to the LORD, But a just weight is His delight.

Proverbs 11:20 The perverse in heart are an abomination to the LORD, But the blameless in *their* walk are His delight.

Proverbs 12:22 Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal faithfully are His delight.

Proverbs 15:8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, But the prayer of the upright is His delight.

When we love God, we delight in what He delights in (Isa. 58:13-14) and we want to desire to please him in everything (2 Cor. 5:9). God has revealed what pleases Him in

relation to gender-distinctiveness in clothing. Obedience to Deut. 22:5 should be nothing less than the outflow of a heart that passionately desires to please God.

#### IV. Understanding Deuteronomy 22:5

Deuteronomy 22:5 לֹא־יִהְיֶה כְּלִי־גִבּוֹר עַל־אִשָּׁה וְלֹא־יִלְבַּשׁ גִּבּוֹר שְׂמַלְת אִשָּׁה כִּי תוֹעֵבַת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כֹּל־עֲשֵׂה אֵלֶּה: פ

**Deuteronomy 22:5** οὐκ ἔσται σκεύη ἀνδρὸς ἐπὶ γυναικί οὐδὲ μὴ ἐνδύσεται ἀνὴρ στολὴν γυναικείαν ὅτι βδέλυγμα κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ σου ἔστιν πᾶς ποιῶν ταῦτα

**KJV Deuteronomy 22:5** The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so *are* abomination unto the LORD thy God.

**NASB Deuteronomy 22:5** "A woman shall not wear man's clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God.

**NIV Deuteronomy 22:5** A woman must not wear men's clothing, nor a man wear women's clothing, for the LORD your God detests anyone who does this.

**NET Deuteronomy 22:5** A woman must not wear men's clothing, nor should a man dress up in women's clothing, for all who do this are an offense to the LORD your God.

Literal translation: "There shall not be the item of a man upon a woman; and a man shall not clothe (himself) with the garment of a woman."

#### A. Translation Issues

גִּבּוֹר —Adam Clarke claims this is a term for "signifies a strong man or a man of war".

##### Response:

(1) Not one single English translation translates this term as warrior. All translate with the word man.

(2) No Hebrew Lexicon understands the word this way:

**Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the OT:** the young, strong man Pr 30<sub>19</sub>, the male newborn Jb 3<sub>3</sub>; || זָכָר Jr 30<sub>6</sub>, || אִישׁ Jr 22<sub>30</sub> 23<sub>9</sub>, || אֲנוּשׁ Jb 4<sub>17</sub> 10<sub>5</sub>, || אָדָם Jb 14<sub>10</sub> 16<sub>21</sub> 33<sub>17</sub> Lam 3<sub>30</sub>, :: נִקְבָּה Jr 31<sub>22</sub> :: אִשָּׁה Dt 22<sub>5</sub> :: טָרַף Ex 10<sub>11</sub> 12<sub>37</sub> Jr 41<sub>16</sub> 43<sub>6</sub> (44<sub>20</sub>);

**Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon:** man as strong, disting. fr. women, children, and non-combatants whom he is to defend, chiefly poetic.

**Theological Wordbook of the OT:** geber. Man. As distinct from such more general words for man as 'ādām, 'ish, 'enôsh, etc., this word specifically, relates to a male at the height of his powers. As such it depicts humanity at its most competent and capable level.

(3) The word for warrior is גִּבּוֹר. Though *geber* and *gibbor* have the same root, they are *not* interchangeable or synonymous.

כְּלִי —Some have claimed this word refers to implements of war.

**Response:**

(1) *Keli* is best translated “Item” = vessel, equipment, very general term whose meaning depends entirely upon the context in which it is found.

(2) **Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the OT:** “utensil in the broadest sense of the word”

1. **vessel, receptacle** for the storage of documents Jr 32<sub>14</sub>, wine, oil, fruits Jr 40<sub>10</sub>, food Ezk 4<sub>9</sub>, beverage Ru 2<sub>9</sub>, cereals Gn 42<sub>25</sub>, bread-sack 1S 9<sub>7</sub>, shepherd’s bag 17<sub>40</sub>;

2. **piece of equipment:** furniture Gn 45<sub>20</sub> Ex 27<sub>19</sub>, in the tent Nu 19<sub>18</sub>; harness for cattle 2S 24<sub>22</sub>, in the ship Jon 1<sub>5</sub>, musical instruments: Ps 71<sub>22</sub>,

3. **implement, instrument** Gn 49<sub>5</sub> hunting equipment Gn 27<sub>3</sub>;

4. **other things:** a) **ornament:** Gn 24<sub>53</sub> Ex 3<sub>22</sub>, b) **garments:** Dt 22<sub>5</sub> (parallel with שְׂמֹנֶה), c) **weapons** 2K 7<sub>15</sub>,

5. **vessel, meaning ship, boat** Is 18<sub>2</sub>,

“Garment” = standard term for clothing

“clothe” = to put on a garment

## B. Interpretation Issues

**Transvestitism:** This interpretation is based solely on contrived Canaanite parallels or other pagan religious ceremonies. There is no lexical, grammatical, or contextual support for the view that this passage addresses transvestitism only and specifically (though it would, of course, include it in its prohibition).

**Pagan Empowerment Ritual:** P. C. Craigie, *Deuteronomy in NICOT*, suggests a parallel to a Canaanite text in which a woman wears the armor of a man and prays for a man’s strength to kill her enemy. Again, Craigie offers no substantive grounds (lexical, grammatical, contextual) for this interpretation.

There are no compelling reasons not to regard this as a general prohibition against men wearing women’s clothing and women wearing men’s clothing. As a general prohibition, all deviant reasons for which one may do this are equally prohibited.

Summary: Women aren’t supposed to wear men’s clothes; men aren’t supposed to wear women’s clothes.

## V. Old Testament Culture

Standard OT garb = a robe.

How did they apply this Scripture? We don’t know for sure. Whatever the difference between men’s robes and women’s, they were clearly recognizable. The point is that

however the Israelites distinguished between the male and female garb, they knew the difference and were able to apply this principle in a visible way.

For stylized examples of Israeli dress c. 725 BC, see Lachish Relief.ppt

## VI. Application of Deuteronomy 22:5 to Western culture

### A. Universal Principle / Specific Application

Is this a universal principle or is a specific application? If it is a universal principle, what is the principle?

**Universal Principle 1:** It is wrong to confuse or blur God-ordained gender-distinctions.

**Universal Principle 2:** Gender-distinction must be maintained in male and female clothing.

What does this teach us about the Unchanging Character of God? These universal principles reflect (1) God's creative design of two distinct genders, (2) God's will for the genders to have different roles in society (woman as a helper to the man), (3) perhaps designed to reflect the plurality of persons in the Godhead.

Recall the opening discussion of gender-distinction as part of the image of God and the multiplicity of areas God builds gender-distinction into human society.

### B. History of Gender-Distinction in Western Culture

#### 1. Period of Clear Distinction: 1600-1880

- All men wore pants of some time and women wore only dresses/skirts. Historically, we have evidence of pants or breeches being worn by the lower classes as far back as AD 471 (James Laver, *Costume and Fashion: A Concise History*). They came into culture prominence c. 1600.
- Amelia Bloomer of Woman's Suffrage movement introduced bloomers in the mid-late 1850s, but received such negative reaction that she urged her followers to quit wearing them lest the cause of Women's Suffrage be damaged.

#### 2. Period of Cultural Ferment (1880-1920)

- Women's Suffrage 1848-1920 (1920 = 19<sup>th</sup> amendment allowing women to vote.
- Dress Reform Movements – corsets, heavy petticoats, dirt-dragging skirts, coalescence of woman's suffrage rights, property rights, rights to children in a divorce, etc.
  - Amelia Bloomer of Woman's Suffrage movement introduced bloomers in the mid-late 1850s, but received such negative reaction

that she urged her followers to quit wearing them lest the cause of Women's Suffrage be damaged.

- New Sports: Bicycling
- Flappers

### 3. Push to Remove Gender Distinctiveness 1920-2000

**Note:** The most important points to note about this period are (1) society was deliberately pursuing a course to remove the gender-distinctions in clothing, and (2) the direction of this societal trend was contrary to the biblical principles for gender-distinctiveness in clothing.

- 30-40's Marlene Dietrich – movie star, wore pants and made her fame; At work: dresses to work, pants in factory, dresses home
- 50's mothers begin to dress girls in pants, but wear only dresses themselves. Fashion designers begin to push feminine designs of pants
- 60's bell-bottom jeans become the cultural norm for unisex pants, which was only one part of a larger movement obliterate all distinctions between men and women, including hair style distinctions and distinctions between roles in the home.
- By the 70's and 80's virtually no form of pants was considered a men's only apparel. All forms were worn by women, including sweat pants, regular jeans, dress slacks, etc.
- In the 90's major public figures (e.g., Hillary Clinton) introduced the pants suit into the political & corporate arena, where it was still considered inappropriate. The unisex movement incorporated a radical push to homosexual and lesbian behavior: women simply do not need men, and vice versa. Although women putting on pants cannot be cited as the reason we are battling homosexuality today, it was nevertheless one factor in our cultures deliberate move to reject all biblical norms for the relations of men and women.
- 2000 – present: Guy cut jeans for women; hip huggers worn by guys

### C. Key questions

#### 1. Was there a point in western culture at which pants were a men's only apparel?

Answer: Yes. Any denial of this reflects historical ignorance.

#### 2. Was it wrong for western women to put on pants and violate this gender-distinction in apparel?

Answer: Yes, it violated the principle of Deut. 22:5.

#### 3. At what point in the repeated violation of this principle does the pants-dress distinction in our culture cease to be an issue in maintaining the principle of Deuteronomy 22:5?

Answer: When a new gender-distinct norm **replaces** the old cultural norm. Replacement is the key. It is not sufficient for the old distinction to be removed. There must be a culturally-recognized, visible, gender-distinctiveness in the clothing for men and for women. A distinctiveness that is visible and obvious to the casual observer.

Note: Are there women's pants? Yes. Are they designed by and for women? Yes. Do men wear them? No. But all of these questions miss the point. Dresses and pants have been the

defining distinctive between men and women in our culture for hundreds of years. Only when these distinctives are replaced with styles/items of clothing that honor the biblical principle established in Deut. 22:5 will this issue dissolve.

4. **How will we know when that replacement has taken place?**

Answer: There are a number of different indicator's of a society's norms for gender-distinction. One indicator is its icons. When the sign for a woman's restroom is no longer a figure with a skirt, but some other item of clothing then you will know that skirts have been replaced with that other item. Another indicator will be the answer given to the question: "What do I need to wear to make sure I'm never mistaken as a man in this culture?"

**Indications of this distinction at various levels of society:**

**High Society:** Hillary Clinton—first woman in US history to ever wear dress slacks to a presidential ball. Noted in American fashion as a prime mover introducing pant suits as acceptable apparel for women seeking high political office.

Susan Martin, *The Buffalo News* 11/19/2000, discussing the cultural implications of Hillary Clinton's practice of wearing pantsuits: "'Hillary Clinton is the paradigm of the modern working woman, and she is wearing what really is an iconic outfit. It is completely normative now. Women can wear pantsuits," said Valerie Steele, a fashion historian and acting director of the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. ....

Even in the '80s, a woman wearing pants on the podium was frowned upon in some American cities, Falletta said. And it still is in Europe. Indeed, while Hollywood's Marlene Dietrich rose to stardom wearing trousers in the '30s, acceptance of the pantsuit for professional women has been slow.

Among the criticisms: The look is too masculine. The statement, too powerful. The idea that women were imitating men didn't sit well in some professional and social circles. Or, conversely, the look has been called too alluring because pants can reveal a woman's shape more than other business attire.

For that reason John T. Molloy wrote this in his "New Women's Dress for Success," published in 1996: "If you want to wear the pants in the office, don't wear pants to the office." And his advice to women who do want to wear pants: Wear a jacket with the pants, preferably one that hangs at least 6 inches below the waist to camouflage the shape of the hips and waist. Slow acceptance indeed.

As Valerie Steele explained: "The pantsuit was a revolution for working women. It is hard to believe that as recently as the 1970s, it was a major issue. Women were insisting that they should be able to wear them to work and school. We went on strike at my high school to wear pants on cold days," she said.

"Even some restaurants would keep out women if they had on pants. Some women would take off their pants and wear their jacket as a miniskirt just to make fun of how ridiculous this kind of rule was," she added.

These days, despite their broader acceptance -- plus their obvious comfort and improved good looks -- pantsuits continue to draw commentary from fashion critics and observers alike.

Especially when someone with Hillary Rodham Clinton's name recognition wears one.

**University Campus:** My sister-in-law Charity Brown, was challenged at the University of Alabama about why she always wore dresses. In response she asked her challenger, "If I told you that I just saw a guy dressed like a woman walking down the street, what would you think he was wearing?" The girl answered, "Oh he probably had long hair and was wearing a dress ... [pause] [pause] ... You got me! ... I know I'm wearing men's clothing when I wear pants. In fact, just the other day I had my hair up in my ball cap and somebody mistook me as a guy."

*Die Zeit* BERLIN February 8, 2007

- German fashion designer Donatella Versace: "U.S. presidential candidate Hillary Clinton should tap into her feminine side and wear dresses and skirts instead of trousers,"
- "I can understand (trousers) are comfortable but she's a woman and she is allowed to show that,"
- "She should treat femininity as an opportunity and not try to emulate masculinity in politics."

*The Tribune*, May 23, 2007

- *Elle* magazine's style director, Isabel Dupre, "Before, to be a strong woman, you had to look like a man -- a suit. Women want to be more feminine now. It's acceptable to be a strong woman but dress like a woman [wear a dress]."

*Pantaloons and Power: A Nineteenth-Century Dress Reform in the United States*<sup>4</sup>

- 176, "Today many women wear pants without raising eyebrows, but society has not given up the belief that on some level payments must belong to men."
- "... In twentieth-century society, "who wears the pants" resonates in popular culture: the one who wears the pants has the power and is in control. On a recent television talk show, the audience harangued "controlling" women with the accusation that they were wearing the pants of the family.

**5. What place does the direction of a culture play in determining the application of Deut. 22:5?**

**Answer:** God has chosen not to specify how gender-distinctness should be manifested in clothing. Therefore, culture determines/creates gender distinctions in clothing. As long as culture maintains the principle of gender-distinctiveness in its styles, it is not deliberately (philosophically) moving in a direction that is contrary to Scripture, and is in harmony with other biblical principles (e.g., modesty), exactly how it chooses to manifest gender distinctions is not really a matter of concern.

If the culture is deliberately moving in a direction that violates biblical standards, then Christian's responsibility is to resist that movement and assert biblical norms.

Ephesians 5:11 Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even reprove them;

If a culture, on the other hand, is moving toward biblical norms or incorporating biblical norms, then that cultural shift should be supported.

**6. What factors should I consider when evaluating whether to participate in a cultural shift?**<sup>5</sup>

- Directional Analysis of Culture
  - Where has this culture been in relation to the biblical standard?

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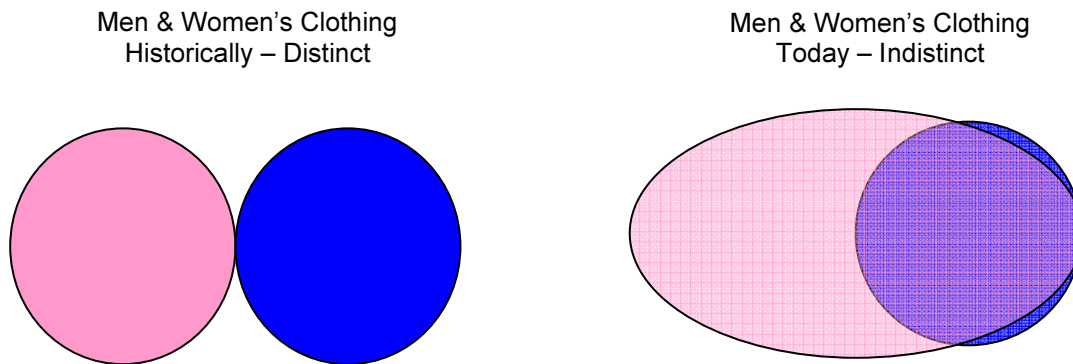
<sup>4</sup> Gayle V. Fischer. *Pantaloons and Power: A Nineteenth-Century Dress Reform in the United States*. Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2001.

<sup>5</sup> I recommend Kevin J. Vanhoozer's *Everyday Theology: How to Read Cultural Texts and Interpret Trends* (Baker, 2007), pp. 15-60, 229-44, as a valuable contribution toward developing an adequate theological framework for analyzing culture.

- Where is this culture now in relation to the biblical standard?
- Where should it be?
- Where is it going?
- Where will its current trend(s) take it?
- Communication Analysis of Culture
  - Why do people say they are doing this?<sup>6</sup>
  - What does the culture say this means? Connotative and associational implications
  - What are the consequences, intended or unintended, of this cultural trend?<sup>7</sup>
- Theological Analysis of Culture
  - What does the Bible say?
  - Where does this fit with God’s creation-fall-redemption plan?
    - What element of divine creation remain?
    - What aspects of this cultural practice reflect the Fall? Is there a theological error at the root of the practice?
    - If the practices and values of Jesus were applied, how would this look different?
- Individual decision (e.g., to wear/not wear this item):
  - Is it in harmony with Scripture?
  - What is the direction this decision will move me: world-ward or Godward?
  - Is my motivation for making this decision in harmony with Scripture?

**7. Has our culture replaced skirts and dresses with another gender-distinct style or item of clothing?**

**Answer:** No. Our culture has instead assimilated men’s pants for women’s use.



**8. Where is our culture going?**

*Fashion and Its Social Agendas* (Crane, 2000)

“Had a 19th century social scientist set out to predict how women would dress at the beginning of the 21st century, it would only have been by considering the clothing of the most marginal women in Europe and America that an accurate assessment would have been obtained.”<sup>8</sup>

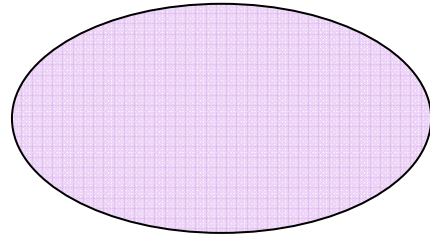
<sup>6</sup> What is their illocutionary intent?

<sup>7</sup> What is the perlocutionary effect?

<sup>8</sup> Diana Crane. *Fashion and Its Social Agendas*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

If the margin of 21<sup>st</sup> century society is where we're headed, then we're headed toward the androgynous, the homosexual & lesbian, the pornographic.

Men & Women's Clothing  
Future – Indistinguishable?



## VII. How to Respond to and View those who violate the principles of Deut. 22:5

### A. Dealing with New Converts

Coming into relationship with Jesus Christ involves becoming a citizen of His kingdom, adopting an entirely new set of values, and becoming acculturated to the values of Heaven. New converts coming out of a pagan society have an immense amount to learn about living for Christ. Deuteronomy 22:5 is not a top-ten issue.

There are three methods I recommend for addressing this issue with new converts. (1) They should quickly be brought into a series of discipleship classes that cover first, the basics of Christian life & theology, second, entire sanctification and the doctrine of holiness; third, what it means to love God and others, and then perhaps fourth, how to develop a biblical lifestyle in the current culture. (2) The second method is to wait for the new convert to bring up the issue with you before addressing it. At this point you must determine, aided by the Holy Spirit, whether they are spiritually mature enough to receive the information. If they are, share this material with them. If not, use method three. (3) The third method is to tell a new convert they have a good question and you will be happy to give them a biblical answer, but you don't think that they have matured far enough in the Christian life to tackle this issue yet. Encourage them to keep their heart open to the Holy Spirit's leadership and obey whatever He tells them. And then assure them that the issue will be discussed in their discipleship classes and at a later date you'll be happy to show them what the Bible says about the topic.

### B. How to View Other Christians who don't know this principle or disagree with this interpretation

***Those who don't know.*** God holds people accountable for what they know, not for what they don't know (Rom. 2:12; John 15:22, 24). Since love assumes the best about others (1 Cor. 13:7), unless we know differently, we should assume those who are violating this principle do not know better. On that basis, we should accept them as fellow believers. We should not unchristianize them. We also remember that God deals with people about issues at different times. He does not deal with everybody about every issue at the same time (1 Cor. 3:2). We can confidently leave them in God's hands to deal with them about this issue in His time. If they see our practice and question us about it, it may be an opportunity to share this truth with them.

***Those who disagree with this interpretation.*** Paul says in Romans 14:10, 12 “we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ... So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.” Ultimately, we all have to give an account for ourselves, not for others. Paul admonishes Timothy to avoid arguments that do not lead to edification (1 Tim. 1:4; 2 Tim. 2:24). Rather than arguing and striving with such people, after you have shared your understanding of this principle and how it applies to today, be gracious and listen to them. Remember that every way of a man is right in his own eyes, and that it is at least possible that you could be wrong in some area in your life. Since Deut. 22:5 is not part of the essence of the gospel, we should be kind, charitable, and gracious to those who disagree with us.

It may be that the practical consequences of such a disagreement mean that we may not be able to work together in areas affected by the disagreement, but it should not mean that we unchristianize each other, or refuse to cooperate in areas that are not affected by this disagreement.

***Those who disagree with our application.*** This would be people who believe Deut. 22:5 teaches there must be a gender-distinction in men and women’s clothing, but disagree us about how it should be done in contemporary culture. Again, Romans 14 applies. To these people, I would respond, “How do you communicate effectively that you are opposed to women wearing men’s clothes and men wearing women’s clothing?” How do you maintain that distinction? Does your culture recognize what you are doing?