Contemporary Comments on the Adult Sabbath School Lesson

[Title] In the Loom of Heaven
[Text] Isaiah 64; Romans 3:21-31; 4:1-7; 6:1-13; Philippians 3:3-16
[Use] April 2, 2011

Clothing fashions come and go. And if you live long enough, what was popular a few decades ago becomes the latest fad. See if you remember some of these fads for women, and recognize which ones have returned:

The 1950’s were known as the “elegance” decade. Dresses were a little below the knees, had capped sleeves and sometimes were button-up instead of zippered. Floral patterns were the most popular. Solid-color high heels with a bow or buckles were the choice for shoes. Simplicity was valued and hair was simple and elegant. Red lipstick was the only bold makeup statement.

The 1960’s were the decade of wild colors. Dresses were usually short with bright, solid colors like electric blue, hot pink and bright yellow. They were in no way fitting, but had more of a boxed look to them. Shoes were as bright as the clothing but never just one solid color. Both high heels with straps and a buckle, and flats, were popular.

The 1970’s introduced us to Disco, and with Disco came skin-tight, low-waist, bell-bottom jeans. Blouses were loose fitting with bright floral and metallic patterns. Shoe heels were ridiculously high. Makeup colors were as crazy as the clothes colors, with popular eye shadow colors like green and orange going all the way to the eyebrows. Colored mascara was a hit, too.

The 1980’s still carried the skintight pants, but other fads were added, such as fingerless gloves. T-shirts of your favorite band or with words making a personal statement were popular. Young women followed the dress fads of two female rock stars—they could choose between the cute, energetic, happy one, or the rebellious, hardcore one.

The 1990’s dared everyone to be different, and many fads returned. Polo’s and white jeans became popular. So did leather mini skirts. Black leather jackets, low-rise jeans and Converse tennis shoes or boots that went all the way up to the knee were considered “cool”.

But women aren’t the only ones who have cared about fashion through the years. Some men have, too. And evidently, some are willing to spend thousands on the clothes they wear.

Eton, a Swedish shirt-making company celebrated it’s 80th birthday two years ago by creating a man’s dress shirt made out of the finest Egyptian cotton. The shirt’s studs are encrusted with colored diamonds, and the cufflinks with white diamonds. Known as the most expensive men’s shirt in the world, it has a price tag of over $45,000.

There’s also a world’s most expensive tie that can be purchased. The Satya Paul Design studio first displayed that necktie in a fashion show. The tie is made of pure silk with a pattern in 150 grams of gold. It’s also embellished with 271 diamonds weighing 77 carats total. Which is why it costs $220,000.

If you’re a man who likes sweaters, in 2008 two foundations put some of Bill Cosby’s sweaters on eBay—ones he wore during his sitcom, “The Cosby Show”. Like the 80’s the colors are loud, geometric, swirling or patchwork colors. The price was $5,000 per sweater.
From fashion fads to excessive spending, do you think that sometimes we have our priorities out-of-whack? Sure, as Christians we should wear nice, modern, clean clothes that represent our beliefs. Yet we are told to “dress to impress” and “dress for success”. But whom are we trying to impress? Are what success are we after?

This week we began a new quarter studying the topic of “Garments of Grace: Clothing Imagery in the Bible”. And we learned this week that what really matters—what is of eternal significance—isn't our outward clothing. It's our inward clothing. The robe of righteousness that Jesus offers each of us. The purpose of the robe? To make us spotless, because we can't be spotless on our own.

Although accepting the robe is a one-time event—it's not a “fad”—but continues for a lifetime. We can't accept the symbol of Jesus’ robe of righteousness and keep on living as we please. Rather, it's the beginning of a new life in Christ—a life that daily aspires to be more like Him. The fact that we cannot see this robe in no way diminishes its value. It cost an immense amount. It costs Jesus His life. And yet it’s free to all of us.

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