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KNOWING WHO YOU ARE CHANGES EVERYTHING.

By Rachel Nielsen

As a freshman in high school, Jacqueline C., from Indiana, USA, was asked to design costumes for all 25 members of her school's play. The play was set in the late 1800s in the southern United States, so designing costumes that fit the time and place was not an easy task.

Jacqueline started by reading books about costume design, researching the time period, and looking at lots of pictures. She also spent time talking with the director about how each character should be portrayed.

After all her research, Jacqueline designed the costumes, and she made sure all the actors looked their part. "There are two characters in the play that are complete opposites," Jacqueline says. "Their actions showed that they were opposites, and I made sure their costumes did too."

When actors are dressed appropriately for their character, it adds a lot to the play. "Their costumes pull the whole show together and give it a polished look," Jacqueline explains. As a costume designer, Jacqueline knows the importance of actors' looking their part, and as a Latter-day Saint, she knows the importance of our looking our part too. "The first impression the world has of us is based on how we look," she says.

When you know the part you play as a child of God, a covenant keeper, and a participant in the work of salvation, modesty will come naturally. Instead of being only about the length of your shorts, modesty will be about living up to your potential, keeping your covenants, and bringing others to Christ. It will be about looking—and becoming—the part.

MODESTY IS MORE THAN JUST DRESS

When you hear the word *modesty*, it's natural to think about whether or not clothing is revealing or inappropriate. But did you know that modesty is about more than just clothing?

When it comes down to it, modesty is about the messages we send to the world through our appearance *and* our actions. Elaine S. Dalton, former Young Women general president, taught that modesty "is an outward manifestation of an inner knowledge and commitment."¹ When you

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really know that you are a child of God, a covenant keeper, and a participant in the work of salvation, you'll want your actions and appearance to “glorify God in your body, and in your spirit” (1 Corinthians 6:20).

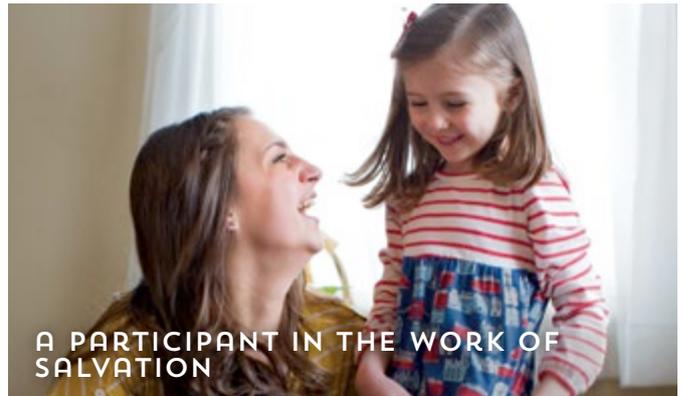
YOU ARE A CHILD OF GOD {LOOK THE PART}

The “most majestic, powerful, and glorious Being in the universe”² is your Heavenly Father, and the blessings of that truth are incredible! Because you are a child of God, you have unlimited potential, you have infinite worth, and you have inherited goodness from your Father. As you come to understand this divine heritage, “it will be reflected in [your] countenance, [your] appearance, and [your] actions.”³

When you know and understand your true identity, it “will make you free—not free from restraints, but free from doubts, anxieties, or peer pressure. You will not need to worry, ‘Do I look all right?’ ‘Do I sound OK?’ ‘What do people think of me?’”⁴ When you truly know that you are a child of God, you will know that Heavenly Father’s opinion is what matters most. How you look and act won’t be about pleasing the world but rather about living up to your potential and expressing love and gratitude to your Father. As one young woman, Samantha Y., 17, from Utah, USA, says, “When you are modest, it shows Heavenly Father that you love Him and you want to be obedient to Him.”

YOU ARE A COVENANT KEEPER {LOOK THE PART}

At baptism, you covenanted to “stand as a witness of God at all times and in all things, and in all places” (Mosiah 18:9). And everything you do, say, and wear should help you keep this promise. Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught, “Honoring our covenants, starting with baptism, affects who we are and what we do, including the kinds of things we say, the music we listen to, and the clothing we wear. When we make and keep covenants, we are coming out of the world



and into the kingdom of God. Our appearance should reflect that.”⁵

When you understand that your covenants bring you “into the kingdom of God,” you’ll have the desire to look and act like a member of that kingdom.

YOU ARE A PARTICIPANT IN THE WORK OF SALVATION {LOOK THE PART}

You’re on earth at an exciting time. The work of the Lord is moving forward, and you’re a part of it! As a participant in the work of salvation, you’ve been asked to “let your light . . . shine before men” (Matthew 5:16), and you can do this by being modest. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said, “We should be recognizable in appearance as well as in behavior that we truly are disciples of Christ.”⁶

Jade F., 16, knows that outward appearances and actions can make you stand out as a disciple of Christ. “When we wear something, we represent who we are,” she says. “I live in a place in Arizona where there are only a few Latter-day Saints. So when I’m modest, people notice and it’s a missionary experience.”

When you look and act like a participant in the work of salvation, you’ll be an example of the believers (see 1 Timothy 4:12) and can bring others closer to Christ. (To learn more about your role in the work of salvation, visit lds.org/go/YouthRoleNE5.)

WHEN YOU
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IT “WILL MAKE YOU FREE . . .
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OR PEER PRESSURE.”

CLAIM YOUR BLESSINGS

Many wonderful blessings will come when you look and become the part of a Latter-day Saint by being modest in action and appearance. Here are a few of those blessings:

The Companionship of the Holy Ghost

“When you are well groomed and modestly dressed, you invite the companionship of the Spirit.”⁷

Protection, Chastity, and Virtue

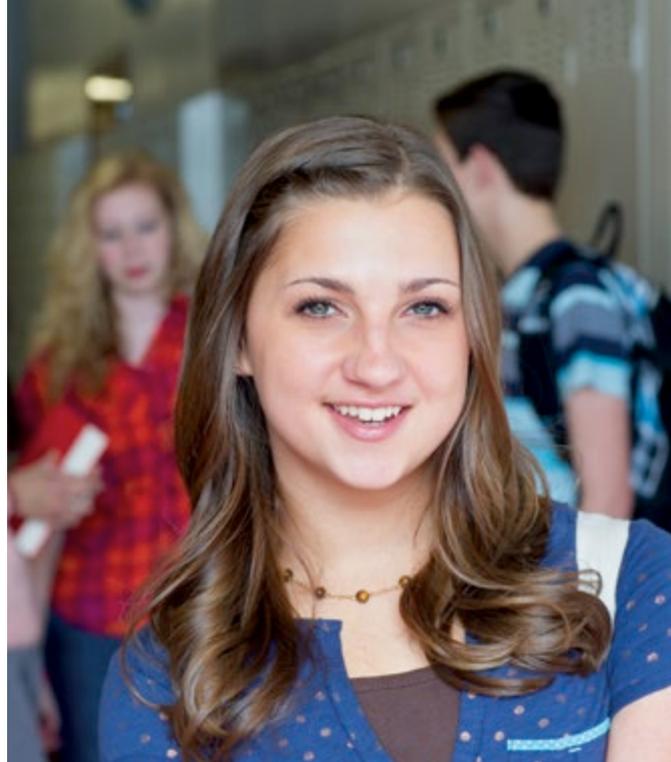
“Just as one does not hike trails inhabited by rattlesnakes barefoot, similarly in today’s world it is essential to our very safety to be modest. . . . Modesty has everything to do with keeping our footing securely on the path of chastity and virtue. . . . We simply cannot afford to be casual or get too close to the edge. That is dangerous ground for any [child] of God to walk.”⁸

Confidence and Self-Worth

“As modesty becomes the virtue that regulates and moderates action in our lives, we . . . will find an increased sense of self-worth.”⁹

True Beauty

“How truly beautiful is a well-groomed young woman who is clean in body and mind. She is a daughter of God in whom her Eternal Father can take pride. How handsome is a young man who is well groomed. He is a son of God, deemed worthy of holding the holy priesthood of God.”¹⁰



A NEW WAY TO LOOK AT MODESTY

The next time you’re thinking about modesty, whether you’re wondering if your shorts are long enough or if your words are clean enough, first think of who you are. Remember that you are a child of God, a covenant keeper, and a participant in the work of salvation. When you think of it this way, modesty will no longer be a question of the length of your shorts or the cleanliness of your words; instead, it will be about living up to your potential as a child of God, keeping your covenants, and bringing others to Christ. As Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles reminds us, “You are a Saint of the great latter-day dispensation—look the part.”¹¹ **NE**

Rachel Nielsen lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. Elaine S. Dalton, “Arise and Shine Forth” (address given at Brigham Young University Women’s Conference, Apr. 30, 2004), 7; ce.byu.edu/cw/womensconference/transcripts.php.
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Forget Me Not,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 123.
3. Elaine S. Dalton, “Arise and Shine Forth,” 2.
4. James E. Faust, “What It Means to Be a Daughter of God,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 102.
5. Robert D. Hales, “Modesty: Reverence for the Lord,” *Ensign*, Aug. 2008, 36.
6. Jeffrey R. Holland, “To Young Women,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 29.
7. *For the Strength of Youth* (2011), 6.
8. Elaine S. Dalton, “Stay on the Path,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 113.
9. Silvia H. Allred, “Modesty: A Timeless Principle for All,” *Ensign*, July 2009, 32.
10. Gordon B. Hinckley, “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 11.
11. D. Todd Christofferson, “A Sense of the Sacred,” *New Era*, Jun. 2006, 30.