

Female Dressing and Moral Decadence among Nigerian Christian Youth in Light of 1st Timothy 2:9-10.

[S.O. David Awokoya](#)

ABSTRACT

Dressing, as an ethical issue has become a major matter in the contemporary time that is contributing to either the sanity of the society or its corruption. In Paul's letter to Timothy, he emphasized that women should dress modestly. It thus could be deduced that, the issue of dressing most especially that of women has been a matter of concern since the Biblical period. The subject of dressing is sensitive because what we wear says much about who we are. Our cloths and ornaments reveal not only our social, economic, and educational levels, but also our moral values. What we wear tells what we want the world to believe about us. The issue of female dressing is a sensitive matter in the contemporary time most especially in Nigeria, female dressing is contributing to moral decadence in the society, it could be observed that on most advertisement today viewed on the television, what is displayed in most cases are females half nakedness, also in the church of God today most especially among some Pentecostal denominations where social gospel is embraced and where "anything goes", seductive wears are now becoming popular as a result of which immorality is increasing among the so call children of God. Wearing of clothes that cover the body reasonably has now been regarded as old school fashion, the contemporary trend of dressing among ladies are skimpy wears, spaghetti dresses, body hug, dresses that exposes half of the breast, etc,

as a result of which men are tempted and in most cases consequently fall into the sin of sexual immorality. A reasonable number of pastors have fallen as result of seductive dresses ladies wear to the church. The kinds of make ups most Christian ladies do today is of no difference from those putting on by prostitutes, this is not limited to single ladies but could be seen among some married women as well. This study examines how female dressing has been a contributing factor to moral decadence in the contemporary Nigerian society especially among Christian youths. The paper analyzes 1st Timothy 2:9-10 using the Bible as a corrective measure for the dressing abnormality among contemporary Christian youths.

Keywords: Dressing, Nigeria, Paul, Timothy, Youths.

INTRODUCTION

Among other challenges confronting the contemporary society is the issue of moral decadence among the youth which is not only affecting the society but also the Church of God especially in Nigeria.³⁸ There several factors responsible for this problems; among them is indecent dressing among the contemporary females most especially the young ladies. It is unfortunate to note that in the contemporary age, corruption is on the increase and this is seriously affecting both the society and the church of God and seriously leading to moral

³⁸ Adelodun Jeremiah and Kolawole Oladotun Paul "The Error Of Belshazzar in the Book of Daniel: a Warning to Nigerian Political Leadership" *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance* Volume XI, No. 11.1, Quarter I, (2020), 3. Thompson Mayowa and Kolawole Oladotun Paul "Exodus 8:16-19 and the Tragedy of Fake Miracles in Nigeria Christianity", *Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, Vol. 8, August Part III; No. 3. Batangas City, Philippines: Lyceum of the Philippines University (2020), 79-93. Kolawole Oladotun Paul and Alade Tayo "A Panoramic Discourse on Examination Malpractices in Nigeria" *Afro-Asian Journal of Social Sciences* Volume X, No. 3 Quarter III, (2019), 1.

decadence.³⁹ Observable, a number of teenage girls in the church have become mothers, rape is gradually becoming a common thing, and things are getting worse day in day out because the contemporary ladies have failed to embrace modesty in their dressing.

From a careful observation of the Nigerian society today, the idea of civilization has graduated into godlessness and in an attempt to update social status; ladies today now disrespect their bodies.⁴⁰ It is not uncommon to see young girls particularly students, dress in transparent materials, mini-skirt that expose their thighs, and other sensitive parts, blouses that expose their breasts, chest, abdominal parts, and armpits and other irregular dresses that.

Man and woman possess a complex reproductive system capable of being aroused and stimulated by a variety of factors. According to Frank, “Our society exposes or accentuates some portion of the female body as a source of stimulation to men.”⁴¹ The church has failed in many areas whereas God has not failed. The leaders, ministers, pastors in Nigeria are somewhat failing because they give platforms for such modes of dressings.⁴² Instead of appropriate and decent mode of dressing, it has turn to seductive style of adorning of the body and they (the perpetrators) end up looking half naked in the society and even in the church today; ushers now look like prostitutes. The stage of adornment in this century will make a Christian (one who has genuinely received Christ) cry

³⁹ Kolawole Oladotun Paul, Mirroring Corruption Epidemic in Nigeria via Biblical Lens: The Role of the Church, *Asia-Africa Journal of Mission and Ministry* Vol. 22. Hwarangro 815, Nowon-gu, Seoul: Mission and Society Research Institute, Sahmyook University, August. 31; (2020), 28–40.

⁴⁰ Indecent dressing in today’s society.
<http://druganddangerofadusing.blogspot.com> (Accessed 02/09/2015).

⁴¹ Frank C. Peters, “Fashion and your Faith” *Christian Reader*, April – May (1971), 2.

⁴² Sodiq Oyeleke, “Indecent dressing in Churches worries pastor” *The Punch Newspaper* (Wednesday 5th 2011), 8.

on the level at which it has brought disgrace both to the society and the Church in Nigeria.

Biblical Concept of Dressing

Morality is the distinction between right and wrong.⁴³ It is the determination of what should be done and what should not be done. Morals deal with behaviors as well as motives. There is a great deal of discussion on what is the source of morals and whether or not they are objective.⁴⁴ Biblically, morals are derived from [God's](#) character and revealed to us through the [Scriptures](#). As a matter of fact, Biblical morality cannot be divorced from biblical ethics. The Old Testament has only one source of ethical teaching: the will of Yahweh for the people He has created and with whom He has made covenant. The moral preaching of the prophets places its accent on the concept of social justice (Isa 1.27; 5.7; 28.17; Jer 5.1; 22.3; 33.15; Ezek 18.5; Hos 5.1; Amos 5.7).⁴⁵ There are three main divisions of the law (instructs or teachings). The moral code otherwise called the ten commandments (Deut 5:7-21); the spiritual code -ordinances, all of which foreshadow Christ and salvation (Ex 20:3-17; 35:40); and the social code which deals with the judgment and divine laws of God's new establishment for his people (Exodus 21:23). It includes rules for diet, sanitation, quarantine, soil conservation, taxation, military service, marriage, divorce etc.

The Canonical Scripture is the standard for Christian life and ethics, there is no issue that concerns human life that the

⁴³ P.S. Rogas, *Moral Development and Moral education* (London: Allen & Union, 2003), 16.

⁴⁴ H.I. Fabiyi, *Essentials of Bible Knowledge* (Ibadan: Dayster Press, 1979), 45.

⁴⁵ Kolawole Oladotun Paul, "The Social Nature of the Prophetic Ministry of Amos and Nigerian Pastors, *Afro-Asian Journal of Social Sciences*, Volume XI, No. 11.1 Quarter I, (2020), 11.

Bible does not speak about and give a standard.⁴⁶ Genesis gives the account of the creation of man as well as the fall of man. (Gen 2:25). Therefore, the issue of dress can be traced to the fall of man. In order to take care of human nakedness after the fall, they sew fig leaves to cover for their nakedness, but that was not sufficient, it could only cover them half nakedly, it was not a perfect covering and God could not approve such as a standard for dressing, as a result, God became the first fashion designer who made the first dress for man from an animal skin and there by setting the standard for dressing for mankind which should cover them perfectly.

From this time onward, human beings have been coming up with various kinds of dress and from the time of the fall of man. This particular event sets the background for the use of dress among human beings. Therefore, the idea of dressing became part of human culture, thus, clothing and different kinds of dress became part of the lives of the people of the Biblical times.⁴⁷

Human being is the crown of God's creation, most marvelous in design, most beautiful in form and features, and most charming in expression. God expressed His total satisfaction over His creation of Adam and eve, declaring; "very good" (Gen. 1:31).⁴⁸ Haulotte explained that the importance of clothing is not minimized in the Bible, on the contrary, God's revelation gives to it spiritual significance.⁴⁹ The rich spiritual symbolism

⁴⁶ Jacob Peter Oluwashola and Oladotun Paul "Is the Bible the Word of God? A Theo-Apologetical Rethink", *Pharos Journal of Theology*, volume 101, no 4, (2020).

⁴⁷ J.D Douglas, (ed) *New International Bible Dictionary* (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 282.

⁴⁸ Kolawole Oladotun Paul, "God's Image in Man; A Biblical Perspective". *American Journal of Biblical Theology: Illuminating God's Word*, Volume 20: 14, (2019).

⁴⁹ Edgar Haulotte, *Symbolism du Vehement Selon la Bible* (Lyons: Nelson Publishing Company, 1966), 7.

of clothing helps us to appreciate the importance that God attaches to clothing in the life of His people.

The clothing worn by the Hebrew people of Biblical times was graceful, modest and exceedingly significant. They were considered so much a part of those who wore them that they not only told who and what they were, but were intended as external symbols of the individual's innermost feelings and deepest desires and his moral urge to represent God aright. With certain kinds of cloth and with astonishingly vivid colors of white, purple, scarlet, blue, yellow, they represented the state of their minds and emotions.⁵⁰

The warmth of Palestine's climate led the people to prefer loose-fitting clothes, while the drab landscape may have contributed to their preference for bright colors in their garments. In the Bible, clothes or their absence (nudity) serve to represent the spiritual condition of human beings, God and His glory. As people became increasingly corrupt, they tried to replace the beautiful simplicity of their innocence with inventions of fabrics, fashions, and ornaments of gold, jewels, and pearls. In other words, the more depraved people became, the more extravagant became their clothes and ornaments.

Types of Clothing in Bible Times

Clothing was made from simple material, such as leather or goat's hair. In the early period of history, the Hebrew were a people who tended flocks and herds, thus, they wove most of their clothes from plentiful wool. Every Jewish home had a room for weaving cloth. General terms for clothing in the Bible include attire and raiment.⁵¹ It is difficult to give a satisfactory

⁵⁰ Douglas, *New International Bible Dictionary*, 282.

⁵¹ Douglas, (ed), *New International Bible Dictionary*, 282.

account of the various articles of dress mentioned in the Bible.⁵² However, the general characteristics of oriental dress have indeed preserved a remarkable uniformity in all ages.

The modern Arabs dress as much as the ancient Hebrews did; there are the same flowing robes, the same distinction between the outer and inner garments the former heavy and warm, the latter light, adapted to the rapid and excessive changes of temperature in those countries; and there is the same distinction between the costume of the rich and the poor, consisting in the multiplication of robes of a finer texture.

The costume of the men and women were very similar in Bible times; although there was sufficient difference, however, to mark the sex, and it was strictly forbidden to a woman to wear the appendages, such as the staff, signet-ring, and other ornaments, of a man; as well as to a man to wear outer robe of a woman. The basic differences between the dress of men and women that:

There was an upper or second tunic, the difference being that it was longer than the first. The linen cloth appears to have been a wrapper of fine linen, which might be used in various ways, but especially as a night-shirt. (Mark 14:51). The outer garment consisted of a quadrangular piece of woolen cloth, probably resembling in shape a scotch plaid. The size and texture would vary with the means of the wearer. It might be worn in various ways, either wrapped round the body or thrown over the shoulders like a shawl, with the ends or "skirts" hanging down in front; or it might be thrown over the head, so as to conceal the face. 2 Sam 15:30; Esther 6:12.

⁵² F. L. Cross, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, (New York: [Oxford University Press](https://www.oxforduniversitypress.com/), 1997), 45.

The ends were skirted with a fringe and bound with a dark purple ribbon, Num. 15:38, it was confined at the waist by a girdle outer garment was the poor man's bed clothing (Ex. 22:26, 27).

The inner garment is what both the men and women wear, but the outer garment differs. Men and women all wear tunics made of strips of cloth woven in brightly colored pattern, but there is differences between the men's tunics and the women's tunics that of the women reached to the ankle while the men to the knee; some of the men and the one child in the group wore skirt from waist to knee.⁵³

Female Dressing in Bible Times

In the Old Testament, many articles of women's' clothing are mentioned, Ezekiel 13:18, 21 refers to a "kerchief", the Hebrew word is *מִסְפָּחָה* (*Mispahah*), a head-covering or veil (NIV) of some sort, the exact nature of which is unknown. Isaiah 3:16-24 speaks of *רְעָלָה* "mufflers," probably two-piece veils, one part covering the face bellow the eyes, the other the head, down, over the neck; "wimples," is rendered "cloaks" in NIV; "stomachers" in English means that part of a woman's dress that covers the breast and the pit of the stomach – usually much ornamented – but the meaning of the Hebrew is unknown.⁵⁴

Women often add to their adornment by an elaborate braiding of the hair. Peter found it necessary to warn Christian women against relying on such adoring making them attractive (1 Peter 3:3). In the Old Testament there are a number of references to painting the eyes in

⁵³ Thomas Nelson, *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Illinois: Thomas Nelson Publishing Company, 2006), 121.

⁵⁴ " Dress." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. (Encyclopedia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 2010) Electronic Database

order to enhance their beauty, but it is always spoken of as a showy and somewhat vulgar device, unworthy of good women. Jezebel painted her eyes (2 Kings 9:30).⁵⁵

In ancient times women especially were much given to various kinds of ornaments. Earrings and nose-rings were especially common. On account of their drop-like shape, earrings are called “chains” (Isa. 3:19 KJV) and “pendants” (Judg. 8:24). The nose-ring or nose-jewel made necessary the piercing of the nostrils. Rings were worn by both men and women.⁵⁶ All ancient Israelites wore signet rings (Gen. 38:18. “seal”. Rings were often wore on the toes, anklets (spangles) on the ankles (Isa. 3:18) bracelets on the arms and wrists (Gen. 24:22; Ezek. 16:11). Women in Biblical times are expected to dress decently at all times.

Indecent form of Dressing in the Bible

Despite the fact that the Bible warned against indecent form of dressing, there could still be found in the Bible the idea of people dressing in an indecent form. A revealing example of how extravagant dressing fostered pride and self-glorification rather than the worship or glory of God is found in Isaiah 3:16-26.

“The women of Zion are haughty, walking along with outstretched necks, flitting with their eyes, tripping along with mincing steps, with ornaments jingling on their ankles. Therefore the Lord will b ring sores on the heads of the women of Zion; the Lord will make their scalps bald” (Is. 3:16-17).

⁵⁵ H. L. Willington, *Willington’s Guide to the Bible* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1984), 70.

⁵⁶ Douglas, (ed), *New International Bible Dictionary*, 283.

Isaiah first described how the daughters of Zion display their haughty pride. The inward pride of the women of Zion is shown outwardly by the way they walk, “head stretched sideways” to see if they are admired, and with seductive eyes, mincing steps, and coy glances, seeking to attract attention to themselves by the tinkling sound of small bells fastened to their ankles.⁵⁷

Several passages in the Old Testament speak of the use of cosmetic, especially the painting of the eyes. Such cosmetics were usually worn to attract illicit lover. Perhaps the most well-know passage concerning the use of colorful cosmetics is found in 2 Kings 9:30, where we are told what Jezebel did in the final hour of her life: “When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her eyes, and adorned her head and looked out of the window. From this text derives the proverbial expression, painted up like Jezebel.

Jezebel’s outward adoring was of no avail before Jehu or before God’s tribunal. Powder and paint do not cover up the inner corruption of the heart, nor do silks and satins hide the ugly stains of the soul. Jezebel was corrupt within in spite of all her efforts at outward beautification. God looks at the heart and asks for inward adorning rather than outward (1 Pet 3:3). Jezebel’s final seductive look, obtained with cosmetics and jewelry, is consistent with determined effort of her whole life to seduce the Israelites into idolatry. Because of this her name has become a symbol of seduction in Biblical history (Rev. 2:20).

Female Dressing in Nigerian Society

In the Northern part of Nigeria, there are two main categories of garment been worn, there is the one made up of rectangles joined together and folded to form a flat gown of Hausa-Style, and those which have small wedge of cloth, in order to flare-

⁵⁷ A.C. Myers, *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1987), 285.

out the lower edge, these are garment of Bornu origin. Some of the Northern dresses are as follows: Alkyabba: large enveloping cloak of expensive fabric usually embroidered. Adire: indigo dyed cloth. Babbar Riga: big gown Damara: Apron. Jarfa: Tattoo mark. K'afa: Trouser bands or cuff. Mazagi: Trouser girles. Tufafi: clothes. Turkedi: Women's gown. Zane: women wrapper. Wando: Trouser.¹⁵

The Yoruba women especially had won what is known as the Aso-Oke which are costly but still retain its charm, and also the head-lie which is also known as gele. The Yoruba women costume today is elaborate, first there is her underwear composed of Tobi or Yeri, once the sole garment, made from a straight strip of cloth, sometimes pleated, reaching to the knees or thereabout, sewn to a band which is tied around the waist; the petticoat of colored cotton with tucks and other embroidery; and the Lagidigba, waist beads (not so commonly worn now except by children). While the outer garment is also called the "Irobirin," a large wrapper of about 6 yards wrapped on the body to cover the breasts and reach to the calf or below. Gbarye: a gown with pleats, formally underwear. Gbarye Alapa Adan: a gown with large wing sleeves.

Among the Owerri, Ngwa, Bende and Arochukwu people, an attire which is a cross between the traditional and Western has been evolved and is popular with the modern young men. It comprises a long sleeve loose shirt over real Indian Madras (today popularly known as George) tied round the waist and reaching below the knees. Like among most other people, women begin quite young to develop a taste in costume and make -up. Young Ibo girls paint themselves with cam-wood powder which is red in color and draw delicate patterns in indigo all over their bodies. For clothing, rows and rows of beads circle their waists. Occasionally a girl ties a narrow piece of cloth round her waist. Among the Onitsha Ibo, a woman's social status is immensely raised by the acquisition of ivory ornaments-anklets and bangles.

Exposition of 1 Tim 2:9-10

ᾠσαυτως και τας γυναικας εν καταστολη κοσμιω μετα αιδους και σωφροσυνης κοσμειν εαυτας μη εν πλεγμασιν η χρυσω η μαργαριταις η ιματισμω πολυτελει ¹⁰αλλ ο πρεπει γυναξιν επαγγελλομεναις θεοσεβειαν δι εργαων αγαθων⁵⁸

I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, ¹⁰but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God. (NIV)

Because of the special instruction for Church leaders, the two epistles to Timothy and one to Titus are commonly known as the Pastoral Epistles.⁵⁹ It is generally believed that they were written just before Paul's martyrdom c. 66 A.D.²¹ In the second chapter of First Timothy, the Apostle Paul is concerned about women appearing modest in their clothing. In verse nine, σωφροσυνης provides the clue for the interpretation of this difficult passage. The Greek word translated 'sobriety' means the voluntary limitation of one's freedom of thought and behavior or sober mindedness.⁶⁰ It describes an inner self-control - spiritual radar that tells a person what is good and proper.

The Greek word κοσμιω (related to the Greek word from which we get the English word cosmetic) translated 'modest' simply means decent and orderly; it also entails having a sound mind and good sense.⁶¹ A woman's clothing should be decent, orderly, and in good taste. κοσμιω can also be interpreted to

⁵⁸William G. Pierpont,; Robinson, Maurice A.: *The New Testament in the Original Greek: According to the Byzantine/Majority Text Form* (Roswell, GA : The Original Word Publishers, 1995).

⁵⁹ L. Swindler, *Biblical Affirmation of Women* (Philadelphia: The West Minister Press, 1979), 186.

⁶⁰ *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. PC Study Bible Formatted electronic database,(1989).

⁶¹ S. Zodhiates, *Hebrew-Greek Key Word Study Bible* (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1991), 1494.

mean the avoidance of extremes. Therefore, a woman who possesses this quality is ashamed to go beyond the bounds of what is decent and proper.

The latest fashion fads were tempting the women in the church at Ephesus, and Paul had to remind Timothy to warn the women not to get trapped, that women should adorn themselves modestly and sensibly in seemly apparel. The contrast here is between the artificial glamour of the world and the true beauty of a godly life. Paul did not forbid the use of jewelry or lovely clothes, but rather the excessive use of them as substitutes for the true beauty of a meek and quiet spirit (1 Pet 3:1-6). A woman who depends only on externals will run out of ammunition! She may attract attention, but she will not win lasting affection.⁶² The form of dress advocated has reference primarily to that worn in church. In public worship women should dress with simplicity and reserve, not concerned to display their physical charms.⁶³ However, it is not necessary to infer from the text that Christian women came to church dressed ostentatiously and in bad taste.⁶⁴

Ephesus was a wealthy commercial city, and some women there competed against each other for attention and popularity. In that day expensive hairdos arrayed with costly jewelry were an accepted way to get to the top socially. Braided hair (which characterizes the spiritual harlot (Rev 17:4) was considered a work of art and was very popular among Greek and Roman ladies, with the braided hair rising some inches above the head, and often intertwined with

⁶² Towner, Philip H. *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 223.

⁶³ H. Baldwin, 'An important word: αυθεντιν in 1 Timothy 2:12,' in A. Köstenberger & T. Schreiner (eds.), *Women in the church: An analysis and application of 1 Timothy 2:9-15*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 6.

⁶⁴ Alvin Schmidt, *Under the Influence: How Christianity Transformed Civilization* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 99.

chains of gold or strings of pearls.⁶⁵ Paul admonished the Christian women to major on the true beauty that only Christ can give. He did not forbid the use of nice clothing or ornaments. He urged balance and propriety, with the emphasis on modesty and holy character. Paul should not be interpreted to mean that Christian woman must wear old clothes and be out of style! Rather, he is emphasizing that the inner person is more important than the outer appearance. Modest apparel glorifies Christ; extreme fashions only point to the person and make the Christian look worldly. It is possible for the believer to be modern and still be modest.⁶⁶

ὑμᾶς is the general word for garments of any kind, but since women are being referred to, then 'dresses' will fit this context.⁶⁷ The word for costly can also mean 'valuable' in a positive sense, but it is here used in a derogatory sense of 'expensive,' 'exorbitant,' or 'excessively priced.'⁶⁸ Paul did not suggest that good works are a substitute for clothing (vs. 10), rather, he was contrasting the "cheapness" of expensive clothes and jewelry with the true values of godly character and Christian service. "Godliness" is another key word in Paul's pastoral letters (1 Tim 2:2,10; 3:16; 4:7-8; 6:3,5-6,11; 2 Tim 3:5; Titus 1:1). Glamour can be partially applied on the outside, but godliness must come from within.³⁰

⁶⁵ If this specific way of fixing the hair is unknown or strange in a receptor culture, the emphasis can be put on the fact that this is an extravagant way of fixing one's hair; in fact some translations reflect this adjustment; for example, in Today English Version (TEV) it is better presented as 'fancy hair styles' or 'elaborate hairstyles.' George Arthur Buttrick *The Interpreter's Bible* (New York: Abingdon Press), 1955, 404.

⁶⁶ Walter Scheidel, *The Most Silent Women of Greece and Rome: Rural Labor and Women's Life in the Ancient World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 204.

⁶⁷ M.W. Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretations of the Bible* (St Louis: Chalice Press, 2000), 24.

⁶⁸ Howard I. Marshall, *International critical commentary: The Pastoral Epistles* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 56.

Moral Decadence in Nigerian Society

The moral behavior of people may be shaped by their own moral character, their early learning experiences, life choices and the ideal towards which they strive.³¹ The Nigerian society is today awash with sexual immorality. The first testimonial to this assertion is the trendy styles of dressing which expose a large part of the female body. In the name of fashion and modernity, females, young and old in Nigeria today, dress in such a sexually alluring manner as to expose some vital female anatomy. Some of them are almost naked when they wear their clothes. The women are so bold in flaunting their sexuality with these types of clothes that they wear them to the church programmes and even ceremonies.³²

There is no gainsaying the fact that what our country Nigeria is suffering most is not only economical but also moral crisis.³³ The high rate of this moral decadence in Nigeria is caused by a combination of factors which range from ignorance, influence of western culture, poor leadership, the negative effects of electronic media especially the internet, the Nigeria home movies and above all, parental irresponsibility and taking of schools by the government from the Church. The door of moral decadence was thrown open from the time schools were taken over from the Church and traditional Christian values started to be neglected, given way to modern parochialism and influences.⁶⁹

Schools which have been known for centuries as the platform of morality and proper human formation have been disfigured to yield its opposite. What of the parents who spend most of their time in business, working in offices and industries, increasing their economic wealth leaving children in the hands of maids, baby sitters; they give little or no attention to their

⁶⁹ "The Moral Decadence In The Nigerian Society" *Catholic News Paper of The Year 2009* Vol. III Edition, 279 (November 29, 2009) Accessed online, May, 28, 2013.

children. They do not have the time to teach their children the common traditional values like respect for elders, sitting well as for a woman; the taboos of the society, sex education etc. and some so called Christian parents today sees no evil in indecent dressing, they even help their girls to buy them.⁷⁰

The Church of God is expected to set the moral standard for the society. In the early days of Christianity, the society looks towards the church to learn the right moral conduct, however in the contemporary time, the reverse is the case, the level of moral decadence in the church today is very high, corruption which includes bribery, embezzlement, fraud, cheating, rigging of election and falsification of census figures is practiced by church members.³⁵ There are a number of evils that are being perpetrated in the church, a number of pastors, pastor's wives, pastor's children as well as church members are highly corrupt. Sexual immorality has become less than sin among the contemporary Christians to the extent that there are homosexuals and lesbians in the contemporary church.

In the contemporary times, attention has shifted from the preaching of the message of salvation to social gospel and as a result anything goes in the contemporary church, the ladies wear all kinds of dresses to the church, some goes there half naked and sometimes almost naked with different kinds of make-ups, the Christian brothers now sags to the Church, the Biblical injunction that women should cover their heads in the presence of God has been tagged 'old school.' Surprisingly, one now see a number of the contemporary pastors blowing their hairs, some will even perm it.

Marriage ceremony today is no longer a thing of honor because virginity has become a thing of less significance, a number of teenagers in the Church today are already dis-virgined and when asked, they are not dis-virgined by

⁷⁰ David T Ejenobo, "Sex and Marriage: a Critique of wedding ceremonies in Nigeria" in S.O Abogunrin *Biblical Studies Series 5, NABIS Journal*, (Ibadan: M. Alofe Nig. Enterprises, 2006), 217.

someone outside of the Church, some are even deflowered by their pastors, Sunday School teacher, Bible Study Coordinator etc. Youths even goes to the Church today for wedding ceremony on the altar with pregnancy; the societal slogan “*aye n se iru e*” in Yoruba language means ‘people are also doing it”, has now come on the lips of Nigerian Church and the fear of God is no longer in the heart of most people who claims to be Christians today, as a matter of fact, what is observable in the Church today in term of moral decadence is a sorry case.

Conclusion

In the early days of Christianity, the society looks unto the Church to learn moral conduct. Many of our fore fathers gives stories and testimony of how Christians are cherished and respected due to the high uphold of Christ commands which is morally sound; it is unfortunate to note how things have become so terrible today to the extent that the society is now pointing accusing fingers to the Church, contributing to the immense level of corruption in the society. Most ladies in the Church today are not in any way different from harlots on the streets by the virtue of dressing, a number of ladies shouldn’t have been raped if not for the way they dress. Instead of the Nigerian Church transforming the society, it is the society that is deforming the Church. Indecent dressing does not encourage the Christian faith; people are to be cautioned within and without the Church.

Nigerian Christian ladies are becoming addicted to extravagancy in their dresses and in the contemporary time in Nigeria there are churches that a lady from a poor parents cannot attend because of the social taste and the class of dress appreciated in those churches which are expensive attires and make ups, Christian ladies have graduated from painting of lips to eye lashes and of different colors. Gone are the days when harlots are recognized by the kind of dresses they normally wear, because what use to be harlot kind of

dress in the past is now found as out fits for both the pastor's wives and members of Christ's body.

Some ladies come to the church today with micro miniskirt such that they cannot even bend down and while sitting down they will have to use a hand towel to cover their laps so that one will not be seeing their privates parts directly, seduction is now well pronounced among Christian youths in Nigeria and in the name of civilization and modernity, the church is gradually turning to a social assembly rather than a spiritual one. This research concludes that Paul's admonition of in 1st Timothy 2:9-10 is relevant to the contemporary Christian youths in Nigeria. While it is great that Christian youth in Nigeria appear in good apparel in and outside the Church, there is for decency to be the standard. The purpose of believers is to glorify God in everything; therefore, pastors, parents, and Christian teachers must guide against indecent dressing in all forms, disallowing its platform for making the devil's mission succeed in the Church.

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