

# What does the Bible say about wearing make-up?

Anyone who is familiar with the UPC knows that the majority of UPC churches and their affiliates teach against women wearing make-up. The official position of the UPC on make-up is this:

*"Since the primary effect of makeup is to highlight sex appeal, we reject makeup as immodest ((United Pentecostal Church International, [Position Paper on Modesty](#), Accessed 2006-12-21 20:02:31))."*

However, since I spent my whole life in the movement I know from personal experience that this is not the view taught in the churches. (At least, I have never heard this view taught.) The argument against make-up that I always heard was taken from three Scriptures (2 Kings 9:30, Jer. 4:30, Eze. 23:40). The reason that it was taken from three Scriptures is because there are only three Scriptures in the entire Bible that say anything against make-up!

You see, make-up is a non-issue Biblically. Nothing was ever said about the subject positively or negatively. There are three Scriptures that make reference to make-up in passing, but none of the three even hint that make-up is a sin. Again, it's a non-issue.

Unfortunately, the UPC takes these three Scriptures, twists them out of context, and creates a doctrine out of them. That would be bad enough of its own, but the situation is made worse because many UPC churches teach that wearing make-up is a sin. In other words, it's not an optional doctrine in any UPC church that I've ever attended. (The one exception is a church that I attended for five years. The pastor—who I dearly love and respect—allows make-up as long as it does not change the base color of the skin. He is considered extremely liberal

by many other pastors.)

In this article I am going to show what the Bible says about make-up, and then respond to the UPC position on the issue.

## Is Wearing Make-up A Sin?

Now, if you've read my article on [Jewelry](#) then you read about how sin is defined. I'm not going to repeat it all here. Instead I recommend that you read the section of the article titled "Does the Bible Ever Say That Wearing Jewelry Is A Sin?" I will briefly recap the subject here by reminding you that the Old Testament Law (Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy) defines what sin is (Rom. 7:7). Everything that is a sin in the New Testament was also a sin in the Old Testament Law, but everything that was a sin in the Old Testament Law was *not necessarily* a sin in the New Testament.

The reason that I said that is to say this: The Bible never defines make-up as a sin. The Old Testament Law was completely silent on the issue, and the New Testament never mentions it at all!

## What Does the Bible Say About Make-up?

As I mentioned at the beginning of this article, make-up is only mentioned three times in the Bible (2 Ki. 9:30, Jer. 4:30, Eze. 23:40). Here is what these three Scriptures have to say:

*2Ki 9:30 NASB*

*(30) When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it, and she painted her eyes and adorned her head and looked out the window.*

*Jer 4:30 NASB*

*(30) And you, O desolate one, what will you do? Although you dress in scarlet, Although you decorate yourself with ornaments of gold, Although you enlarge your eyes with paint,*

*In vain you make yourself beautiful. Your lovers despise you;  
They seek your life.*

*Eze 23:40 NASB*

*(40) "Furthermore, they have even sent for men who come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and lo, they came—for whom you bathed, painted your eyes and decorated yourselves with ornaments.*

One does not have to be a Bible scholar to see that none of these Scriptures say anything about whether or not a person should wear make-up! However, there is also a fourth Scripture that I often heard used to preach against make-up. It is 1 Tim. 2:9, which says:

*1Ti 2:9 NASB*

*(9) Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments.*

You might be asking at this point how 1 Tim. 2:9 has anything to do with make-up, and that's a very valid question! The confusion seems to come from a misunderstanding of the KJV translation of the Scripture. The KJV uses the word "shamefacedness" instead of "modesty." As near as I've been able to figure out, many UPC preachers assume that "shamefacedness" means that a person shouldn't wear make-up. The logic seems to be that it has the word "face" inside of "shamefacedness" so therefore it must be talking about make-up. This is an example of the sort of shoddy Biblical study that is done by many UPC preachers and pastors.

## **Overwhelming Evidence?**

I think anyone will agree that these four Scriptures are hardly overwhelming evidence against make-up! The fact is, the Bible just doesn't say whether or not a woman can wear make-

up! We have to assume that if it mattered at all to God then He would have mentioned it at least *once*, right? Why should we have to take a few Scriptures that are hidden in the depths of the Old Testament and twist them together in a convoluted fashion to form a doctrine? It seems to me that God was pretty plain about the stuff that mattered to Him! For example, look at Gal. 5:19-21:

*Gal 5:19-21 NASB*

*(19) Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,*

*(20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,*

*(21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

That's pretty plain, right? I just don't think God's sitting up there seeing how many people He can trick into going to hell! A god who does that is the antithesis of the God of the Bible!

## **A Few Questions for the UPC:**

Here's a question that I have for the UPC:

If make-up is evil because it enhances our sex appeal, then what other things are we not allowed to do?

- Are we not allowed to wear deoderant?
- Are we not allowed to brush our hair?
- Are we not allowed to wear color-coordinated outfits?
- Are we not allowed to wear matching socks?

You see, I really want to enhance my sex appeal! I'm 26, and I want to get married some day! Because of that I do all sorts of stuff to enhance my sex appeal! I brush my teeth twice a

day, I style my hair, I make sure my socks match, I exercise regularly enough to keep the worst of the flab off, etc. What's wrong with doing that? Just because a woman wants to make herself attracted doesn't mean that she's promiscuous! Every single one of us does things every day to enhance our attractiveness to the opposite sex!

Here are a few other questions:

- If 2 Kings 9:30 is saying that make-up is evil because Jezebel used it, then doesn't it also mean that we can't look out the window?
- If Jer. 4:30 is saying that make-up is evil because Israel wore it while they were backslidden, then doesn't it also mean that wearing scarlet is evil?
- If Eze. 23:40 is saying that make-up is evil because Israel wore it while they were backslidden, then doesn't it mean that it's also evil to take a bath?

Isn't this all a little bit ridiculous?!

## **Conclusion:**

You see, this is the problem with UPC theology: It's a house of cards. The UPC has made the claim that they and their affiliates are the only ones who possess Truth. But what happens when they find out that something they taught as Truth was wrong? It throws everything else into question! If they can be wrong on one point then they can be wrong on other points as well.

I believe that this is what is happening with make-up. The UPC has been backed into a corner. More and more people are seeing that there is absolutely nothing wrong with wearing make-up. There's no Scriptural basis for not wearing it, and there's no logical reason for not wearing it. Now the UPC is forced to defend a doctrine that makes no sense, because if they back off this doctrine then it might cause their members to doubt

other doctrines as well.

This is why I believe that the Bible should be the ultimate rule of authority. If I find that I've misunderstood something in the Bible then I have no problem changing my beliefs. I don't claim to have a monopoly on Truth. I claim that *Jesus* is the only way to God, not any one Christian denomination!

Folks, God doesn't care whether or not you wear make-up! If He cared then He would have put it in the Bible! If you are a woman who feels that God does not want you wearing make-up then that is between you and Him, but God never gave any organization the right to dictate a doctrine that has no Scriptural basis as being necessary for salvation!

---

## Featured Comment by Angela – May 22nd, 2012, 8:18pm ([Link](#)):

*Most of the comments above sadden me. I mean they really cause my heart to ache.*

*When are we going to realize that "being in the world but not of the world, "come out and be seperate", and "peuliar people", etc. have absolutely nothing to do with wearing make-up, a skirt, long hair, jewelry, etc.*

*It really makes my stomach turn to think that this is what the focus of salvation has become while the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. It wouldn't surprise me to discover the laborers are few because we're all squabbling over what Sister Suzy Q wore to church last Sunday.*

*Last year I felt like I was being prompted to search out the word holiness. Having been raised Pentecostal/UPC, all I knew that holiness meant (to them) was associated with a*

manner of dress. This didn't make much sense to me due to Hebrews 12:14. It reads, "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord." NKJV

I started with the definition of holiness since the Bible continuously states that God is holy, holy, holy. I had a hard time reconciling this to God wearing a dress. To be holy, according to bible.org is to be distinct, separate, in a class by oneself.

Exodus 15:11 says, "Who is like You, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders?"

It goes on to speak of His mercy and His strength and His redemptive power.

I then went on to look up the word holy in Hebrew. The word is kadosh, and means to be set apart from the common, habitual or profane. Just to make sure I wasn't missing anything, I then looked it up in Greek. Hagios (holy or sacred) means likeness of nature with the Lord, different from the world.

Yes. You are all correct. We are to be separate from the world. We are to be Christ-like. We have to be IN the world, but we don't have to be OF the world. I don't think phrases like Christ-like and nature with the Lord indicates in any way, shape, or form that it is to be translated into a state of dress. What makes me say that? Well, take a look at how the Word described the world.

I Corinthians 5:11 – sexually immoral, covetous, idolater, reviler, drunkard, extortioner...it's also interesting to note here who Paul was talking to and who he was speaking about and what he had to say in the following scriptures. The people he is describing here are "BROTHERS". We tend to do things the exact opposite of what the Bible tells us. We judge those on the outside, while "eating and drinking" with those on the inside who are committing

these sins and claiming to have Jesus in their hearts.  
Wow.

I Corinthians 6: 9-11 Unrighteous, fornicators, idolators, adulterers, homosexuals, sodomites, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners...AND SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU. Double Wow.

Galations 5:19-21 THE WORKS OF THE FLESH ARE EVIDENT, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries

Those are just a couple...

Folks, THIS is what the rest of the world is like and THIS is what we are to be separate from! We are to be a light! When I'm handed the paper at work and told, "See what your horoscope says!" My response should be, "No thanks, my future is in the hands of God." I'd label that as sorcery of a sort. Correct me if I'm wrong... When I discover that my husband has put my brand new dry-clean only dress in the wash after I've told him fourteen dozen times not to, do I yell, scream and throw a fit? Outbursts of wrath. When I join the praise team at church because I have such a beautiful voice and I want everyone to know it, and that guy who runs the local recording studio will be at church Sunday...wouldn't that be selfish ambition not to mention a few others?

We don't think of "sin" as being done in this type of scenario. Does it make it any less sin?

Grace – Josh, somewhere on this site, you made a statement that really blew me away AND gave me confidence to stop second guessing myself. You said something to the effect of because we are not perfect, we do the best we can and trust that God's grace is sufficient to cover what we mess up. I would sure hate to think that the tattoo I got while I was in the world (but knew enough of the truth to live right) was going to be the deciding factor as to where I

spent eternity. That's one (tattoos) I haven't studied enough to have an opinion on one way or the other, but I can tell you I don't regret getting it. I still like it! It would kill me to know that because I'm on my second (and last) marriage that I couldn't have a mansion just over the hilltop. What we refuse to recognize though is that God's grace doesn't end when you accept His gift of salvation. It is His grace that covers those little slip ups we make...just like His grace covers my having been married once already. Thank you God!

What we wear, what we apply to our faces, how we speak, how we treat others...it all comes back to one major point. It is a heart condition. When your heart is holy, you will live a holy life. Your dress will be modest, your speech will be holy, things will be ORDERLY (yes, God likes order) and in moderation.

There isn't anything wrong with wearing make-up. There isn't anything wrong with ladies wearing tasteful pants, blouses, jewelry, dying hair, etc. (I can not for the LIFE of me listen to Joyce Meyer and think, "It's just too bad she doesn't have the truth.") However, the minute you have applied any of the above mentioned with the the wrong motive in your heart, there's a problem. The great thing about the Holy Ghost is that if He indeed lives in your heart, THAT is when conviction falls. Choosing to ignore that conviction is the sin. Not the action itself. I'd also like to point out that the Holy Ghost DOES NOT convict with condemnation. I keep seeing comments posted from individuals who have stated they have felt condemned over something they did. If you feel condemned (as my Pastor says) that's the devil! My God is gentle and loving and kind and just. And yes, He is jealous and you don't wanna rile His wrath, but wrath doesn't come until you have repeatedly ignored His gentle warnings.

I read a few comments on here containing points I wanted

to address. I hope that's alright.

The first one was someone mentioning that her sister in law knew nothing of the Bible, but after receiving the Holy Ghost, threw her pants, make-up, etc. away. – My thought on that is this; if I were in a book club that met every Tuesday evening to talk about the chapter they read, I would make sure I was reading the same book they were. I wouldn't want to show up with *The Grapes of Wrath* if they were reading *To Kill A Mockingbird*. If someone from the world is going to join the Amish culture, I'm sure they wouldn't feel quite right about wearing bright red blouses and Guess jeans. I am by no means denying the power of a Holy Ghost conviction, nor am I doubting she has one. She very well may, but personally, I don't find that the argument that she threw it all out after receiving the Holy Ghost to be enough to convince me.

Second -make-up is not made by God... – neither are twinkies.

Neither is Accutane or Benzoyl Peroxide, but I can guaranty you that if you have the means, you will take your child to the dermatologist to aquire either to clear up a case of acne that your kid is being picked on at school about. Is that not vanity? Should you let your child continue to be made fun of because we are not to alter our natural state or because Jesus said we would be persecuted for His name's sake? I don't think the persecution he spoke of had anything to do with make-up or dress or jewelry, etc.

Third – Make-up makes you sexually attractive.- Umm...I'm simply going to say...REALLY think about that. I hesitate to make the comment I want to out of consideration for other's feelings and the way it may be percieved. I will say Linda Tripp before ...alterations.

Fourth – Man can not see your heart. – OF COURSE NOT!!  
Matthew 7:16 – You will know them by their fruit – and I

do not recall any one of the fruits of the Spirit being an attitude faced. Now back up for a second to the scripture I mentioned above. I Corinthians 5:11 – correct me if I’m wrong, but Paul WAS talking about those IN the church. How were the “righteous” to know not to associate with them? They were to test the Spirits! I’m sure most of the offenders were not walking around bragging on their exploits so that the “righteous” knew not to associate with them.

Fifth – Are you putting on make-up to entice someone or to look nice or better? – How many times have you stood in front of the mirror before Sunday evening church service or a date with hubby...or wifey, thought your outfit didn’t LOOK GOOD on you and changed? I will raise BOTH hands on that one!

When you were shopping and tried on that skirt that was so cute on the hanger, and it ends up being hideous on you cause it makes your hips look ten feet wide, are you going to go on and buy it cause it downplays your natural attributes?

Sixth – Pastor’s were given to us to convey these safety nets – Pastor’s were given to disciple what has ALREADY BEEN GIVEN! I recently read a FB post by a Pastor on this exact issue. He said, (and I quote) “The saints can NEVER make up the RULES. God does and he gives them to his ministers.” Again...the “rules” have already been given! If God decides to make new ones, it won’t be a secret for the ministers to impart to the congregation. The saints will have the revelation too, and if you disagree with me, then I’d say that you were thinking one in the body of Christ higher than the other.

Frankly, his comment sounded like a Pharisee to me. And no, I am not judging. I have formed an opinion. LOL!

Seventh – Pastor’s want real holiness – By who’s standards and definitions?

*I sometimes wonder what heart sins a man making all these rules for his congregation has. I question whether or not he is trying to keep himself out of trouble.*

*Eighth – Lust of the eye was mentioned – Lust of the eye is mentioned as one of the three sins. All sin falls into one of three. Lust of the eye, lust of the flesh, pride of life. All revert back to the heart. It's a heart condition. I think Chris Helmsworth is great eyecandy! I do not covet him. With that thought in mind, let me point out that the Bible placed emphasis on beauty when it was possessed. Esther was "lovely and beautiful" according to the book of Esther, and STILL had to go through 12 months of beauty treatment! Just for the sake of argument, let's say she refused make-up to enhance her natural beauty...to her face during those beautifying treatments for fear of sinning. She was still treated with oils and "preperations for beautifying women" on the rest of her body!*

*Rachel was "beautiful of form and appearance" according to Genesis.*

*Abram said to his wife that she was a "woman of beautiful countenance" in Genesis 12:11.*

*'m sure many would argue..."See. The women were beautiful in their natural state!"*

*What about Leah?*

*I have fasted, prayed and studied over the past few weeks while asking for wisdom and knowledge to find truth in the scriptures. Not what I want them to say, but what they actually say. I believe God led me to this site. Earlier this year, I received prophesy in which He stated that there had been many fragments and pieces of truth scattered here and there throughout my life, but He was going to bring them together in solidity and confidence. I know He is doing that.*

*I read this quote today actually, and find it very appropriate for all that this web-site encompasses.*

*"No man ever believes that the Bible says what it means; he is always convinced that it means what he says." George Bernard Shaw*

*When we as Christians wake up and realize that there is a hurt, lost world out there aching to know the Master, these issues will seem so minute. Let the walls of division fall. Jesus said in Mark 9:40 For he who is not against us is on our side. For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.*

*Read that story. When John tells Jesus, "we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name..." think about inserting a denomination in there. Jesus, we saw the Baptist casting out demons in Your name. Jesus, we saw the Protestants casting out demons in Your name... There had to be SOMETHING different about them if John referred to them as "someone who does not follow us".*

*In Love,  
Angela*