

I KNEW I MUST BE PLAIN

by Ellen G. White

When twelve years old, I wished to be immersed. The minister reluctantly consented to go into the water. He chose to sprinkle the candidates. It was a very windy day. The waves ran high, and dashed upon the shore; but I felt perfectly calm. My peace was like a river; and when I arose out of the water, my strength was nearly gone, for the power of God rested upon me, and my soul was filled to overflowing with his love. Such a rich blessing I never experienced before. I felt dead to the world, and that my sins were all washed away.

The same day a sister and myself were taken into the church. I felt calm and happy, till I looked at the sister by my side, and saw gold rings on her fingers, and large gold ear-rings in her ears. Her bonnet was filled with artificial flowers, and was trimmed with costly ribbon, which was filled with bows upon her bonnet. My heart felt sad. I expected every moment that a reproof would come from the minister; but none came. He took us both into the church. My reflections were as follows: This is my sister, must I pattern after her? Must I dress like her? If it is right for her to dress so, it is right for me. I remembered what the Bible said about adorning the body. [1 Tim. 2: 9, 10.] For some time I was in deep trial, and finally concluded that if it was so sinful as I had thought it to be to dress like the world, those whom I looked up to as being devoted Christians, and older in experience than myself, would feel it, and would deal plainly with those who thus went contrary to God's word. But I knew that I must be plain in my dress. I believed it to be wicked to think so much of appearance, to decorate our poor mortal bodies with flowers and gold. It seemed to me that we had better be humbling ourselves in the dust; for our sins and transgressions were so great that God gave his only beloved Son to die for us.

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