

CONCERNING MODESTY

—by Saint Nektarios—

Modesty is the quality or state of being unassuming in the estimation of one's abilities. Additionally, modesty is a term used to characterize behavior, manner, or appearance intended to avoid impropriety or indecency.

Modesty is a virtue. Modest is the person who does not think of himself "more highly than he ought to think" (Rom. 12:3). The modest person does not use boastful sophistry in his speech, he does not converse in a haughty and domineering manner; rather, in all things he avoids grandiosity. The modest person is useful to friends, gentle to servants, tolerant to the audacious. He shows compassion to the lowly, he consoles them who have suffered harm, he visits the afflicted. He never sees anyone from on high; he is sweet when he speaks, pleasant when he responds, prudent and easily approachable to everyone. He neither praises himself nor seeks praise from others. He does not accept unchaste talk, and he hides his virtues as much as possible. The humble minded person renders himself an example of chastity and a model of courteousness.

The modest person gains the love and respect of everyone. Everyone praises and honors him. The modest person humbles himself on account of his love for others, and, with his modesty, he defeats the haughty minded and arrogant. Modesty adorns people who possess it and clothes them with the splendor of decorum.