

When Modesty Left the Church: Pastor Jamal Bryant Fires Back After Outrage Over Wife's Controversial Dress

Is modesty officially dead in the American church?

Atlanta megachurch pastor Jamal Bryant is firing back after he and his wife, Dr. Karri Turner, found themselves in quite a scandal regarding a dress.

That's right, a dress. However, this wasn't just any dress. Turner wore a nude-and-black formal gown that appeared sheer. Turner wore the dress to a fundraising event, according to People, last year's 2025 UNCF Atlanta Mayor's Masked Ball, held at Signia by Hilton.

Bryant then took to the pulpit during a New Year's Eve service to discuss the matter.

"The other day, the internet went crazy about a dress my wife had on," Bryant said in a video posted to Instagram. He said that instead of focusing on the money that was raised for HBCUs at the event, people focused on a "false barometer of holiness based off of a dress." He also said that the "dress was not see-through. It was flesh color."

Bryant also made it clear that he purchased the dress for his wife.

"I don't care whether you like it or not," he said. "She ain't

married to y'all. She's married to me."

The caption of Bryant's post also stated that, "we must ADDRESS black unemployment, protection for the undocumented, health care for the underserved and access to higher education..."

The reality is that Scripture is quite clear about how we should dress, and those in leadership, whether inside or outside the church, should model this above all else.

1 Timothy 2:9 tells us that women should have "modest clothing, with decency and self-control, not with braided hair, gold pearls or expensive clothing, but with good works, which is proper for women professing godliness."

1 Peter 3:1-4 also emphasizes for women to not only seek after modesty, but to also "let it be the hidden nature of the heart, that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God," (v. 4).

God doesn't call us to draw attention to ourselves, but to glorify Him in all that we do. Those like Bryant and Turner should consider the reasons as to why a flesh colored outfit is far from glorifying God and instead is literally glorifying the flesh and all the heart's wicked desires.

Yet, there's something even deeper here as well. The symbol of Bryant's church, New Birth Missionary Baptist, as the Black Lives Matter hand symbol shows that the heart of this church isn't about the gospel at all, but rather a political agenda.

When we are so deeply rooted in culture and identity politics that they govern our messages, the eyes are no longer on the gospel. Instead, they are on our version of the gospel. Instead of the focus being on Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life, we make it about whatever we want.

Ultimately, moments like this should serve as a reminder that not everyone who occupies a pulpit is faithfully stewarding the truth of God's Word. Scripture repeatedly warns believers to be discerning, to "test the spirits" (1 John 4:1), and to be on guard against false prophets. When leaders dismiss clear scriptural principles or redefine holiness to suit the moment, the danger is not merely controversy—it is deception. The church must remember that influence or social activism can never replace obedience to Scripture and reverence for God.

True Christianity is not centered on self-expression, cultural trends, or worldly applause, but on repentance, humility, and transformation by the Holy Spirit. As cultural pressures intensify, the need for biblical discernment becomes even more urgent. The true measure of a pastor or prophet is not how well they clap back at critics, but how faithfully they exalt Christ, preach the full counsel of God, and point people—not to themselves—but to the cross, where truth, holiness and grace meet.

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