COSTUMING FOR THE GOSPEL MAGICIAN AND ASSISTANT

Copyright - Duane Laflin
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Published by Laflin Magic
Pigeon Forge, Tennessee
Montanawondertheater@yahoo.com
Laflinmagic@yahoo.com
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“Do All To The Glory Of God!”

1 Corinthians 10:31
INTRODUCTION

I do not consider myself an expert on the subject of costuming. I can only present myself as one with well formed opinions and as one who is experienced. My wife Mary and I have been on stage for many years. Our work has taken us to five continents and many countries of the world. We have had performing opportunity in a large variety of venues including stages in Las Vegas and some of the finest theaters in America. Yet the bulk of our work has always been with churches and/or related ministry events.

I believe what I offer on these pages is worthy of serious consideration. If I did not believe such a thing I would not take time to write it all down. I also realize that there are no authorized rules on the subject of costuming and there are individuals who will do things differently than I do and still find success.

So my way is not the only way. Yet I think many will find it to be a way that works for them just as it has worked for us.

I must also mention that although I am the writer of this booklet, much of what it contains actually comes from Mary. She is the one who has paid special attention to the matter of costuming. She is the one who mostly talks to other entertainers about what to wear and why. She is the one who sews costumes, makes alterations, and adds the “spangles”. Many of my conclusions come from what she has learned and shared with me. It is definitely true that before I walk out on stage I need to find out from her whether or not “I look all right”. On my own I have paid some attention to the subject, but she is
the expert.

As well I want to express appreciation to Marty and Brenda Hahne. Marty is a great magician and truly knows the business. Brenda is one of the best assistants I’ve ever seen, a great performer in her own right, and really has an eye for what looks good. Marty and Brenda have supplied us with much valuable input about costuming decisions.

Finally I must mention Fukai and Kimika from Japan. They too have shared much of their thinking with us about what looks good on stage. In particular, Kimika has given Mary many practical tidbits of information about such things as how to keep high heels from falling off when moving quickly across the stage and what kind of jewelry shows up best from a distance. Fukai has counseled me on the need to “look like a star” without looking ridiculous.

It is with gratitude to many that I put to paper my thinking about gospel magicians and what they wear.
Chapter One: The Issue Is Not That We Should Be Better Dressed Than Our Audience, It Is That We Should Look Professional and “Special”

Common advice is that a good rule to follow is that of always trying to be at least somewhat better dressed than your audience. I don’t think this is bad advice, but I also think it misses the point.

When it comes to giving attention to someone who is making a presentation, people like to be able to relate to a presenter and they like to think that they could be good friends with the presenter if circumstance were to allow. However, they also want to believe that a presenter is somebody special.

Usually, it is even more important to an audience that a presenter be “special”, than it is for the presenter to be someone whom they think could be a friend. (I am not advocating the idea of a performer being aloof. I am only emphasizing the reality that audiences want a person on stage to be “special”.) Think about how people get excited over the idea of seeing someone whom is known to be a “star”. Consider the popularity of magazines like PEOPLE and US and the interest most humans have in celebrities. People like to be exposed to other people who are deemed to be unusual, heroic, or uniquely skilled and/or talented.

Your appearance needs to suggest that you have something worthwhile and even exciting to offer. Dressing as if you are “one of the audience” may make it difficult for the audience to take you seriously. If you look no different or better than your audience, it is easy
for them to assume that you don’t have anything to share that is different from what they already know...so why should they give you their attention?

The goal is to convey the idea that you do have something interesting to offer and that you do possess a particular expertise.

To state the matter plainly; there is nothing wrong with looking like a “star”. It is contrary to the teaching of Christianity to be egotistical and vain, but this is not that. It is possible to have a humble heart while employing wisdom to attract an audience. This would fit with the challenge of Jesus Christ in Matthew 10:16 “be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves”.

To a large degree people will treat you in accordance with what you appear to be. If you look like an amateur, they will treat you like an amateur. If you are dressed in a manner that reflects a casual attitude, people will respond to you with a casual attitude. On the other hand, if you make an effort to look like you belong on stage, you will find that your programs are received with more respect. (If, at the present, you feel like people do not properly respect what you do, it may be because of how you dress).

This is why it is wise to take time to find out how most people in your audience will be dressed and then do something that will, in a reasonable and credible manner, distinguish you from the rest of the crowd and make you look “special”.

In doing this remember that there is no one kind of costume that works for all occasions. Various venues require a variety of “looks”.


Suggestions

- If you are performing for a church picnic in the summer and everyone else is wearing t-shirt and jeans, you might wear a fancy shirt with long sleeves, or you might go with a colorful vest over a dress shirt.

  There is no need to wear a tuxedo or suit coat outdoors in hot weather, but there is a need to look like the person who is there to do something different from what everyone else is doing.

- If you are performing for a youth event where the kids will be wearing whatever kids consider popular at the moment, you might look at what popular singers and actors are wearing at the time and consider something similar to that. Often a long sleeved shirt that is a solid bright color works well for youth events. A bonus is when the shirt has a bit of glitter or “flash” to it.

- If you are performing for a Sunday evening service where some will be in suits, but many will be in slacks and shirts, you might choose to wear a suit coat with a flashy tie, or a sport coat that has a unique and appealing color.

- If you are performing at a corporate event where everyone will be dressed nicely (men in suits, ladies in dresses), you might choose to wear a tuxedo, or your best suit with a unique tie, or a specially made costume.

- If you are on stage at a theater or performing in a setting that is intended to be a show that will attract a secular crowd you can bring out garments with a really showy look to them, maybe even a coat with rhinestones or spangles on it.

  Normally clothes that are truly showy should be reserved for occasions when what you are doing is designed to be a strong “show” type event.
This isn’t a hard thing to understand. Give yourself the advantage of looking like you have something special to offer. Do this by dressing at least one step up from what is normally appropriate for the occasion and then adding to your “look” something fun and/or fancy. If you look like a hobbyist, you will be viewed as a hobbyist. If you look like a professional, you will be viewed as a professional. If you look like an entertainer, you will be viewed as an entertainer. It is the way life works!

Caution

If we look like we know what we are doing, and if we are good at what we do, we are likely to gain a kind of celebrity status. This is not bad. Being viewed as a celebrity may provide extra opportunity to be heard when we speak. However this opportunity brings with it spiritual dangers. It calls for us to especially guard against pride, self-centeredness, and arrogance.
Chapter Two: Remember that the goal in costuming is not just to be different. It is to have an appearance that attracts interest and indicates credibility.

There is a need to be different. A costume should give a performer distinction. This distinction needs to be positive and appealing.

It is not uncommon for inexperienced (or just plain unwise) performers to adopt a costume that makes them different, but not in a good way. I know of a magician who wore a black tuxedo and red tennis shoes. I’m sure he viewed his sneakers as a sort of trademark and they were, but not a good one. They did not help his image. He was viewed as an inept wannabe who was not bright enough to realize that his combination of tuxedo and shoes looked stupid.

If he was a comedian or clown, his choice might have worked. But he was not a comedy performer. He tried to perform as a regular magician. When his name would come up people would say, “Isn’t he that weird guy who wears those red tennis shoes?” The shoes give him an identity, but the identity was that of being weird rather than being clever and entertaining.

If you wear a bright orange t-shirt to a gathering where everyone else is dressed formally, you will definitely stand out from the crowd. This same crowd is likely to assume that you are a goof-off who is there to waste their time.

A costume should communicate both a sense of entertainment and competence.

For this reason, finding the right thing to wear can be
a challenge. It would be nice to just grab a comfortable shirt that has an unusual color pattern and go off to do a show. We should not do this. Instead we must analyze the nature of the audience that will be before us, and choose a look that we know will make a good impression.
Chapter Three: Identify your audience to decide how to dress

When it comes to costuming, probably the easiest mistake to make is that of thinking that one costume will work everywhere. This may be true for some exceptional performers, but generally speaking, it is not.

Many Gospel Magicians have seen me lecture wearing a purple sport coat, and have later seen me on stage in a formal tuxedo. They may assume this is what I wear when I perform.

The truth is, what I wear depends on the occasion and situation. If I am doing a program for a Sunday Morning adult church service, I wear a double breasted suit with an unusual tie. It gives me an interesting and professional appearance, but still is appropriate. (Churches are becoming so casual about dress that nowadays I often can just wear an open collar solid color shirt and black jacket. This is enough to set me off from the rest of the crowd).

If I were to come into the church dressed in a silver jacket covered with rhinestones, it would be too much. People would view me as being “show business” to the point that they might doubt the spiritual strength of my presentation.

My black tuxedo is also “too much” for most Sunday morning situations. There have been circumstances when I have worn it for a church service, but generally speaking it just doesn’t seem to fit in with the Sunday morning atmosphere.

On the other hand, if I am working in the children’s department for a junior church program on a Sunday
morning, I am likely to wear a bright purple coat. I may or may not wear a tie.

Children like the purple coat. It is a color that they think is neat and fun. (I almost always have children say “cool” and “neat” when they see me in purple).

At the same time, it has enough of a formal look that they view me as someone to take seriously.

You may be wondering, “How do I decide whether or not to wear a tie when working with children?” The answer is based on two things: Comfort and whether or not I will be dealing with adults.

If, along with being involved in children’s ministry, I also am going to be meeting with a lot of grownups, I will wear a tie. The children don’t really care either way…as long as I have the purple coat. To the adults, a tie makes me seem a bit more professional. (When I know I will see adults who might book me for other events in the future, I will be especially careful to wear a tie).

If I’m not going to be spending much time with adults, I will dispense with the tie for comfort sake. A black knit shirt worn beneath a purple jacket looks fine and feels good to me.

I do have a black and silver jacket that is covered with rhinestones. When do I wear it? When I am doing outreach programs in high school auditoriums, shows for a local theater, or secular programs where the audience is expecting to see a top level magician.

In settings like this, part of what brings people in is the fact that I am an “attraction”. People come expecting to see a fancy production and I don’t want to disappoint them.

This means…costuming can and should be adjusted for changing audiences.
Chapter Four: Dress in a manner that is suitable for your own physical structure and appearance

This is another place where it is easy to make a costuming mistake. Face this fact: Just because something looks good on another person doesn’t mean it will look good on you!

Lance Burton looks great in a tuxedo with tails. Lance Burton is also slim, graceful, and well groomed.

A person who is not slim, not graceful, and who does little more with his hair than wash it and pull it away from his face, will probably not look good in a tuxedo with tails.

When I was younger, I wore a tuxedo with tails. After several years of examining pictures and watching video of our show, I decided that a different coat would be better for my build. I am not tall. I am built more like a line-backer than a ballet dancer. The long lines created by the tails didn’t fit my proportions. Now I wear a double-breasted tuxedo, with no tails.

I have been told by several who are experts in the field of costuming that many male performers do not look good in double-breasted coats. So what has turned out to be ideal for me can be a mistake for others.

This means each performer must experiment with different styles and looks in the effort to find what works for him or her as an individual.

Some years ago I had a friend who had a gold jacket. It was spectacular. I loved that jacket.

One day I walked into a store and found a gold jacket that would fit me. Fortunately, before I bought it, Mary
made me hold it up next to my face in a mirror. For some reason the golden color made my skin look yellow. When my skin looks yellow, I look like I might be sick.

I tried as hard as I could to make that gold color look good on me, but it wouldn't work.

Recently we were consulting with a costumer in Las Vegas and she thought gold would be a good color for me to try. I told her it was a mistake, but she insisted on trying anyway. She took some gold fabric from her collection of samples and draped it over my shoulders. She then immediately said, "I’m amazed. You are right. Gold makes you look ill!". Gold looked great on my friend, but not on me.

I don’t know much about this, but I understand that there is such a thing as a “color-wheel”. It is based on the idea that different people respond well to different colors. We would be wise to identify our personal color strengths and weaknesses. I find that I get in trouble if I stray far from blue, black, silver, or purple. Once in a while I can wear red.

What’s the point? Even if you really like seeing a pink jacket (or whatever color) on someone else, before you purchase one for yourself, hold it up to your face and make sure it is suitable for your coloring. Clothes that look great on the rack, don’t always look as well on our bodies.

One more thing on this matter: Remember that things change with age. What looks good on us at thirty may not look good when we are fifty. Surprisingly, the reverse can also be true. I can wear some things now that I could not wear when I was younger.
Chapter 5: Realize that physical activity does provide some latitude in choice of costume

People understand that jugglers might work up a sweat. The movements of a juggler make it obvious that he would be uncomfortable in a coat, so a juggler can get by with a “not so formal” appearance even when performing for a formally dressed group.

Magicians who work with large illusions that require a lot of physical action can get away with an opened necked shirt and black jean look. Just as it doesn’t make sense to play baseball while wearing a tuxedo, audiences will understand that a magician who is being chained to a pole, or stuffed into a small box, shouldn’t be wearing his best clothes.

A clownish type of performer who does lots of physical comedy will need a different kind of costume than does a classical magician for whom “every move is a picture”.

Some gospel magicians mainly work with children and, along with doing tricks for them, play games and enter into other activities. These performers might do fine wearing tennis shoes and a colorful jersey.

The principles discussed earlier, such as “dressing better than the audience” and “dressing to make a positive distinction” cannot be disregarded, but there also must be the application of common sense. Audiences are intelligent enough to comprehend that certain actions require a style of dress that otherwise might not be appropriate.
Note: This is one of the reasons why magicians who present long stage shows often have costume changes during the course of the show. Along with making the show more interesting, the costume changes allow the performer to comfortably switch from various kinds of action. When doing a “stand still” manipulation act a tuxedo is perfect. Later, when doing the substitution trunk, there is a need for jeans and a swashbuckler type shirt.
Chapter 6: Seek help when making costuming decisions

To make good choices about costuming we must select apparel that is consistent with our performance style, makes sense in light of our physical activity on stage, compliments our physical features, and gives the message that we are competent and credible.

How do we know whether or not the “look” we have chosen for ourselves properly does this?

The best way to know may be by getting feedback from others. Find some people that you trust and that you know care for you. Make sure these advisors understand your goals and have enough maturity to objectively offer their opinion. (Another good criteria is to find someone whom you think really does know how to “look good” himself or herself).

The matter of understanding your goals is vital. People who do not have any sense about show business are likely to try to make you dress just like another business or professional person. They will not understand that you are trying to accomplish more than that.

Once you have a counselor who understands your needs, ask him or her, “Is my costume appropriate for me? Do you like what you see me wearing on stage? Do you have any suggestions that would improve my appearance as a performer?”

It isn’t always easy to hear what others have to say, especially when it relates to our appearance, but it may be just what we need to hear. If we take what they say to heart, it may, by allowing us to establish better rapport with our audiences, improve our ministry.
Note: When purchasing costumes, remember that clerks want to make sales and therefore are tempted to tell you that something looks good...even when it doesn’t. It is wise to bring someone with you who can provide an unbiased perspective.
Chapter Seven: A Collection Of Brief Thoughts About Costuming

A. A great costume does not compensate for poor hygiene.

This is one of those things that should be so obvious it doesn’t need to be said, but it seems some still don’t understand it. If your costume gets dirty, if your tie gets stained, if your shirts have been worn in shows enough times that they have an unpleasant smell, you will not be viewed as professional no matter how classy your garments might otherwise be.

Be physically clean and wear a clean costume…always!

Note: It is a wise practice to not wear your costume in route to a show or on the way home. Beyond that, it is good to change out of your costume before loading your vehicle after a show. This is a way of protecting it, keeping it clean and crisp, and reducing the amount of sweat it must absorb.

F. It is normally wise to stick with solid and primary colors. Patterns and designs can be a problem. Pastels rarely look good on stage. Greens and browns, even though they are primary colors, also rarely look good on stage. Black, blue, purple, gold, silver, red, yellow, white, and pink are the main colors to consider. (Be cautious with pink. Sometimes it is terrific, sometimes it is terrible).

Red is a strange color. It can be spectacular and it can be dreadful. Much of it has to do with whether or not
the shade of red is a compliment to the performer’s skin tone. Carefully experiment before you wear red...it might be a superb choice or it might be a disaster.

C. Most male magicians will do well to stick with basic choices such as a tuxedo, two-piece or three-piece suit, bright colored sport jacket, or shirt and vest. You can add personality to these choices with accents such as ties, pocket squares, button covers, and maybe fancy shoes. We do recommend adding extra touches to your appearance by way of accessories.

(I have a friend who, when performing on stage, wears shiny black and white saddle shoes and a tie which is black with a large white circle on it. There is nothing unusual about his suit, but the matching shoe and tie combination makes the outfit pleasing and impressive).

D. Most female magicians will do well to wear a dress or combination of dress slacks and jacket. For a big stage show it is also nice for women to have a gown or “prom type” dress to change into for at least one or two routines. Jewelry, unique shoes, scarves, and even a hat can be used to accessorize.

At times it is possible for younger women to have a professional appearance in a showy top and slacks. Size and age seems to have more of an impact on what women can wear than it does on men.

Obviously, as Christian performers there must be care about outfits that are too tight or revealing.

E. Women who work as assistants may wear a dress or pant suit. If a lot of “box-jumping” (getting in and out of
big illusions) is going to be done, a body suit or tights (like dancers wear) should be worn beneath a dress. Some of the girls in our show like to wear running shorts as an undergarment when doing something active in a shorter dress or gown.

A pant suit is often the right choice. When properly designed, they look fancy. They allow for comfort in physical motion and also allow for modesty when climbing up on tables or jumping in and out of boxes.

F. When trying on new costumes, get as far away from the mirror as possible and then take a look. Some patterns and colors which look fine up close become lost or blend into less appealing colors when viewed from a distance.

Usually it is good to avoid garments with patterns in them because of this fact that distance diminishes the pattern and sometimes even drastically alters it.

G. Men should consider wearing dress boots rather than shoes. Dress boots do not come untied, which is nice. Better yet, you can’t catch the cuff of your trousers on them. It is a distraction to the audience for a performer to have one leg of his trousers “hung up” on his shoe and be unaware of it. Beyond being a distraction, it looks silly.

Yet another advantage of the boots is they create a nice line for the lower leg if you kneel on stage for any reason. As your trouser leg raises, more of the boot is seen rather than the unbalanced view offered by a shoe, an ankle, and then a trouser leg.
H. **Try to keep your costume as a surprise for the audience.** Most “show business” people live by the rule that a costume should only be seen on stage.

One reason for the rule is it makes things more interesting. Another reason for the rule is the fact that costumes do get sweaty and it isn’t always a good idea to let people get too close to you while you are wearing one (especially at the end of a vigorous performance). By changing clothes right away, you have a chance to “freshen up” before meeting the public.

Definitely there are situations (maybe many of them) where there is no opportunity to change clothes, so a costume must be worn off stage as well as on. There also may be occasions when producers want you to wear a costume off stage for the sake of pictures or making official greetings. Do what you must, but keep in mind that it is good to get out of your stage costume as soon as possible (try not to wear it in public).

**Note**

A practical way for men to deal with this is by having two suit jackets. The same black trousers can be worn with both. Wear one jacket when arriving at the site of the performance and meeting people. If there is a banquet, wear that same jacket for the banquet. Then, just before the show starts, change into the other jacket. After the show you can change back again.
Chapter Eight: The Big Question. 
Where to get Costumes?

I wish there was one simple answer, but there is not. However I can offer are several suggestions...

For men

A. When visiting large malls, and especially when visiting shopping centers in large population areas, look for stores that cater to young men. At times such stores promote themselves as specializing in “urban wear”.

You will rarely be able to walk into a J.C. Penny’s men’s department (or something similar) and find suits and shirts that work well for costumes. Traditional stores that sell fine clothes for men usually target businessmen as their primary market. Businessmen want to look serious and somewhat dignified. Flashy colors and fancy styles are not part of their agenda.

Conversely younger men, especially those who are dressing for parties rather than work, do like brighter colors and unique styles.

I found my purple jacket in a youth oriented clothing store in Fayetteville, South Carolina. Over the years I have found great ties and pocket squares, along with some wonderful shirts, in “downtown” places that businessmen would likely ignore.

B. If you visit Las Vegas, try out a store called “The Dealers Room”. (On Maryland Avenue, about ten or fifteen minutes away from the strip. You will need to check a phonebook for the exact address). Most magicians sooner or later make a short trip to Las Vegas
to see some of the magicians who are working there. While there, you might as well take advantage of the store that a number of Vegas performers use.

This store doesn’t carry a huge selection of items, but it always seems to have a line of items that would look great on stage.

C. In Branson, Missouri, check out a store called “A Touch Of Class”. The people in this store provide costumes for many Branson performers. They understand the unique desires and requirements of people who work on stage. I especially recommend them.

D. In Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, there is a place called “Stage West”. I have found some wonderful shirts there. I also learned something from this store; places that offer apparel for those who do Square Dancing often have good shirts for male performers. The petticoats and such mean they are not as good a source for ladies, but there still is a chance that Square Dance costume suppliers will have something a female performer can use.

E. Another source for costuming possibilities is a mail order company called “International Male“. (See Internationalmale.com or call 1-800-293-9333 and ask for a catalog). Be prepared for the fact that the underwear section of the catalog is rather shameless and obviously appeals to a section of society that is “alternative”. Some may find it offensive. There are a lot of interesting garments in the catalog that will work for performers.

The only problem I have had with “International Male”
is the fact that I have a hard time fitting into normal sizes of clothes. It is difficult for me to order something that is actually going to fit right.

If you are a person who can buy something right off the rack and have it fit well, then a catalog company like this might be a great resource.

F. If you are looking for “shoe boots”, Florsheim shoes usually has some nice ones in stock (for best prices go to factory outlet versions of Florsheim shoe stores). Also check out shoebuy.com on the internet. If you aren’t used to having much of a heel on your shoe, you may be uneasy about the fact that these boots do have a higher heel than does a normal shoe. Don’t worry about it. You will adjust quickly and there won’t be any problem with stability on stage.

For women

Mary says it is easier for women to find clothes that work as costumes than it is for men.

Her favorite approach to the matter is to wait for “After Christmas Sales” or else the end of the prom season. At these times of the year there are a lot of party clothes on sale. Many of the “party clothes” and “prom gowns” can easily become costumes.

Primary considerations in taking this approach to costume shopping are…

A. Remember to stay away from busy patterns and “cutesy” designs. This isn’t the time to purchase a top that has teddy bears or flowers on it. You aren’t dressing for a social occasion, you are dressing for stage. Distance makes it hard for people to make out what designs and pictures on garments are…so designs and
pictures become a blur to an audience. As a general rule, stay away from patterned material, when looking for clothes to wear on stage.

Usually it is best to go with a solid color garment and plan to accent it with jewelry. However you also can go with a garment that is a solid color with accents already in place. (Such as silver threads through black, or gold beadwork on blue, etc.).

**B. Hope for sales, but don’t wait them.** Instead, start looking in the party section of better stores during the early fall. At this time of the year, you can look over everything that is available, rather than having to hope for a good find among the after season “leftovers”.

**C. Remember that accessories are often the key to making a party garment into a good costume.**

Also remember that people will be viewing you from a distance so accessories can, and usually should, be bigger than what you would otherwise be comfortable wearing.

Dangling ear rings and a matching necklace can be all it takes to make a solid color dress appear spectacular. Costume jewelry is usually exactly what it is called, “costume”. It is intended to “dress up” a garment.

Fortunately, costume jewelry is also normally inexpensive. There is no need to spend a lot of money on accessories. They are not going to be subject to close examination. Look for inexpensive things that will look fancy and show up from a distance. (The word faux may help identify useful items. You want a bit of glitter and glitz…and the good news is, you don’t have to pay to pay a lot to find it).
D. The right shoes are also a key to making a party garment into a costume. If you are “box jumping”, you may have to wear dance shoes or flats. Apart from this, wear heels.

**Ladies, you always look better on stage in heels!**

Most of the time, if you don’t wear heels you will cheapen the look of what you are wearing.

Find a pair of heels that is not so narrow that they will be dangerous when you are moving back and forth across the stage, but they still should enough height to create a good line.

Heels make a woman look more graceful and give her better posture. Next time an award show is on television, and they take time to focus on how the celebrities are dressed, notice the women’s shoes. This observation process can lead to some good ideas. You will notice that the “stars“ wear heels.

**Consider “dance straps” for your heels.** They are available at most places that sell dance wear. They will make moving back and forth across the stage much easier and safer.

**Another note for the ladies**

If you are looking for costuming possibilities that go beyond having an elegant or basic showy look (as in needing something special to wear when going into a blade box or for “action“ type routines), places that specialize in dancewear often have access to interesting options.

They rarely have costumes on hand, but they do have catalogs or at least advertising material that can lead to useful discoveries. You may also try looking up “dancewear” on the internet.
For both men and women

Find a good tailor or seamstress who can do alterations for you. One secret to making an off the rack garment into a great costume is getting it properly fitted. Almost everything I wear on stage was purchased “off the rack”. It is also true that almost everything I wear on stage has had major alterations done to it.

A good seamstress can add bands of color, fancy buttons, and shiny stones to a garment that will transform it into something spectacular.

Bottom line on this matter is…buy apparel that looks good, but don’t let that be the end of the matter. Make the garment special by insuring that it is a great fit and then consider jazzing it up more with different buttons, jewelry, stones, strips of color, etc.

Conclusion

As Christians, choices about costumes have to be made with balanced thought. On the one hand we need to be modest and discreet. On the other hand, for the purpose of attracting a crowd and gaining attention that will become focused upon our message, we need to be interesting and appealing. We also need to have an appearance that says we are professional and credible.

It is possible to accomplish both goals. Commit the matter to the Lord, use common sense, consider the available options, experiment a bit, and you will surely find something that will seem “just right.”

Duane and Mary Laflin
Laflin Magic
Montanawondertheater@yahoo.com
Laflinmagic@yahoo.com
Christianillusionist.com