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#14 - Dress to His Glory

Department of Health Education

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Keys to Total Health

PRODUCED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EDUCATION, SCHOOL OF HEALTH

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Dress to His Glory

Part of the everlasting gospel that is to go to all the world is to "give glory to Him." (Revelation 14:7) It is vital that we understand this message, because our eternal salvation hinges upon our acceptance or rejection of these important messages given by three angels flying in the midst of heaven. In this lesson we want to continue our consideration of what it means to glorify God.

Any place you travel in this old world of ours you will immediately be identified as an American. Whether in Europe, the Orient, Africa, or even South America, there are certain identifying marks which give you away every time!

First, your dress will distinguish you from the nationals in many countries. Our style of dress is a real contrast to the native costumes. Secondly, your speech will betray you. Most Americans can speak only English (and sometimes we even do a poor job of that). But if perchance we do learn a second language, or even a third, we generally speak with such an accent that we are identified immediately, even as we can tell a "Svede" by his accent, or even a "Southerner" from those "Northerners".

The third identifying mark is our money. Americans are noted for being very liberal with their money and many nationals have learned to take advantage of this fact and live just off the tourist trade. But there is one mark above all

others that identifies us as Americans. Americans are proud of their country! They are proud of the stars and stripes, proud of their heritage! Everything is bigger, stronger and better in America than anywhere else in the world. Americans are proud of what America stands for! Anywhere they might choose to travel, Americans carry their pride with them.

A Christian is identified by the same four identifying marks. Christians are different from other people of the world. They live differently, talk differently and spend their time in a different way than most other people. First, you can distinguish a Christian by his dress. There is a definite difference. Secondly, our speech betrays us. Christians talk differently and about different things than most other people. Thirdly, a Christian can be identified by the way he handles his money. Our next lesson will be concerned with the Christian and his stewardship. But there is one identifying mark above all these that distinguishes the Christian from all others! He is proud of his Christ! He is proud to be Christian and he is proud of the standards he holds. Anywhere you travel in this old world you can always identify a real Christian. There's never any danger of making a mistake because somehow a Christian just stands out from all the others.

The Apostle Paul emphasized this fact when he wrote: "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephesians 4:17,18,22-24) This is one reason for the difference, Christians are recreated in "righteousness and true holiness". The Apostle Peter wrote: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." (1 Peter 2:9,10) "A peculiar people!" A Christian is a bit "peculiar" to those who just don't understand spiritual things.

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Paul wrote again, "For our conversation (or citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Philippians 3:20) Jesus, as He was praying in the garden, spoke these words, "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: Thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." (John 17:14-19)

Why are Christians different? "Because they are not of the world." They "lift up a standard for the people." (Isaiah 62:10) The four areas of difference which we will explore in this lesson are: (1) entertainment; (2) dress; (3) deportment; (4) speech. Of course, there are other ways in which Christians are "different" but we will deal now with the four areas listed.

Christians Give Glory To God In Their Entertainment

The Bible test for all entertainment is summarized by Paul: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Philippians 4:8) This test applies to all forms of entertainment from television programs to reading material. Very little that is shown in the theater will pass this rigid standard. The Christian will not read some things in the newspaper, especially on the colored pages.

A friend of mine was visiting in a home in an Oregon coastal community where he was pastor. Instinctively his eye was drawn to a tiny hole in the center of the television tube. He kept wondering how that hole got there but he didn't say anything. Finally he drummed up his courage a bit and asked, "What happened to your TV? I noticed there's just a tiny hole right in the center of it." "Oh," said the lady, a little embarrassed, "our son Johnny was watching one of those shoot 'em up bang 'em up westerns and he was so excited that he took his bee bee gun and shot the culprit right in the head as he was riding over a hill. We decided not to get the set fixed." Johnny had become part of that program! He was emotionally involved. When we sow to the wind, is it any wonder that we reap the whirlwind? You can read down the TV Guide and half the programs listed will not pass the first test of Philippians 4:8, "Whatsoever things are true." You can throw most of the rests of them out on this one: "Whatsoever things are pure." The Bible test is a rigid standard, but it is the standard of the Christian. There

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are some television programs that are alright for preachers and laymen alike to watch. These are pretty good programs. But there are some programs that you switch off, or change channels, when you see the preacher coming up the walk. You just wouldn't want the preacher to know that you watch that kind of program. These programs are for laymen only. Then there are some programs you don't like for the children to see, but you watch them, after the children are off to bed. These are for adults only. Then other programs the husband watches after his wife has gone to bed. These are for men only. And some programs you watch when you hope that not even God is looking!

Speaking of the "last days" Paul made this prophecy, "For men shall be lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." (2 Timothy 3:1-5) If you don't think this is so, count the people in church Sunday morning, then count the attendance at the ballpark on Sunday afternoon. When you add to the attendance figure the television audience at home, I think you can grasp what Paul meant, "Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." Tragic but true! "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John 2:15,16) The Christian enjoys life. But he finds entertainment that is character building, body building and uplifting. He avoids dancing, card playing, gambling and other questionable activities.

Fun is the devil's substitute for happiness. Excitement, foolishness and fun usually end up in the morning as a headache and a sour stomach. But happiness, peace, contentment, this is God's gift to man. You don't have to run, search, do, to find it. Only submit to God's will and it's here. How few know what true happiness really is. So in desperation, they go pleasure seeking, but fun and pleasure are like the proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Just when you think you've found it, you wake up and it's gone. Fun lasts only for a night, happiness is forever.

The Christian looks forward to a better world where "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (1 Corinthians 2:9) So the Christian does not look for fun (which lasts for a night and ends up with a sour stomach and a headache in the morning) but for happiness, contentment and peace. (See John 14:27; 16:33)

God is Glorified by the Way We Dress

The Christian is more conservative in dress than people of the world. Christian ladies do not wear jewelry. Isaiah gives a long list of jewelry which is "an abomination" unto the Lord. "Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks

"DRESS TO HIS GLORY"

Revelation 14, page 174

1. Is a Christian different from other people? (Ephesians 4:17, 18, 22-24 page 135; 1 Peter 2:9, 10 page 160)

2. Why is a Christian different? Just to be different? (Philippians 3:20 page 138; John 17:14-19 page 78)

3. What is one way in which a Christian is different? (Philippians 4:8 page 139; 2 Timothy 3:1, 4, 5 page 148; 1 John 2:15, 16 page 164)

4. The title of the lesson is: "Dress to His Glory." Does the Bible give guidelines on the Christian's dress? (Isaiah 3:16-24 page 430; 1 Peter 3:3 page 161; 1 Timothy 2:9 page 145; Revelation 17:4 page 175 vs. 12:1 page 173)

5. What about our deportment - the way we act? (Romans 12:17, 18 page 113; 1 Peter 2:12 page 160; 1 Thessalonians 5:22 page 143)

6. Does the Bible say anything about our speech? How should we talk? (Exodus 20:7 page 50; Matthew 12:36 page 9)

APPEAL: Galatians 2:20 page 131

Now move on to the Worksheet in the lesson

and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls (hair nets of silver or gold), and their round tires like the moon (necklaces), the chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings, and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, the glasses (transparent garments), and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils. And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty." (Isaiah 3:16-24) The New Testament sets forth the same principles. Speaking of "wives" Peter says, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel." (1 Peter 3:3) "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." (1 Timothy 2:9) The Bible expressly forbids the wearing of gold or pearls or costly array.

"For men shall be lovers of pleasers more than lovers of God."

Christians who love Christ supremely will not seek to draw attention to themselves, but to Christ adorning "themselves in modest apparel." Gaudiness in appearance is the very symbol of apostasy. "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication." (Revelation 17:4) Simplicity symbolized purity. "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." (Revelation 12:1) Nothing gaudy here, no "gold and precious stones and pearls." No "filthiness" or "fornication" either.

A city boy was showing a country boy around the big city. They had seen the traffic, the skyscrapers and other sights which seemed to fascinate the country boy. Finally they stopped in front of the beauty parlor, and there she was! All decked out with earrings, eye paint, lipstick, powder, rouge, a hairdo out of this world, necklaces and all the rest. They both just stood and stared for a moment, and then the city boy asked, "There! What do you think of that!" After a moment the country boy drawled, "Well it seems to me that it must be mighty poor soil to require so much top dressing!"

God is Glorified by Our Christian Deportment

The Christian is honest and peaceable. "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." (Romans 12:17,18) The Christian lives a pure life. He no longer does those things which perhaps at one time held such a grip on his life (see 1 Peter 4:2-4). The Apostle Peter admonishes us to live above reproach. "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." (1 Peter 2:12) Paul says, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

God is Glorified by Our Speech

The Christian does not curse or swear or use God's name in vain. The third commandment states: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." (Exodus 20:7) A good rule to follow is this: "When the mouth goes into operation, make sure the brain is in gear." It would save us much regret if we would always follow this rule. Jesus said this, "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." (Matthew 12:36) I sometimes wonder about the idle words we listen to in front of the television screen evening after evening. Will we have to give account of those "idle" words also? Slang certainly should not be a part of the vocabulary of the Christian. Slang expressions are nothing but "idle" words at best, and, even worse, they are generally poor substitutes for outright profanity. "Gosh, darn" is used instead of the divine name coupled with "damn." A careful analysis of other slang expressions will yield this same conclusion.

While attending Walla Walla College in Washington, I worked in the pea harvest at night to help meet my college expenses. I'll never forget a character who was also driving a pea truck. Every other word he spoke was either profanity or slang. It was terrible! He never said anything worthwhile, but what he did say could be cut down fifty percent and you still had a hard time finding very many definable words. Christians talk differently. They don't use foul language.

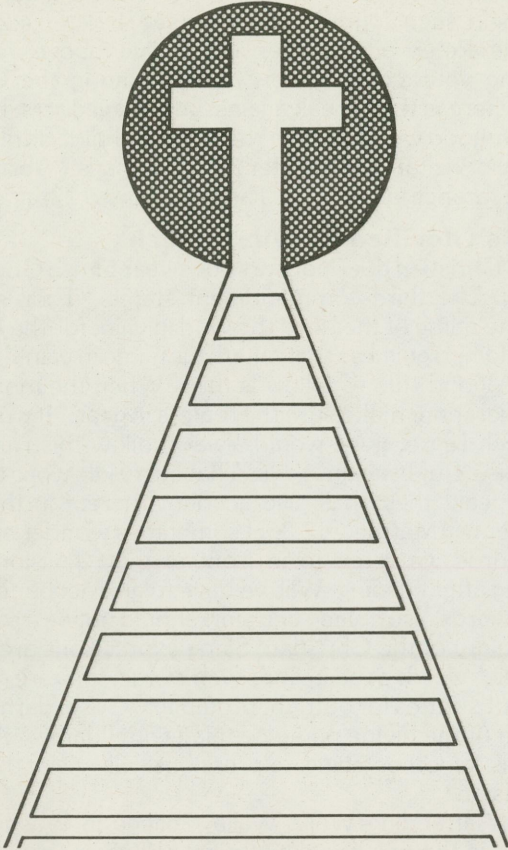
The world jokes about the sacred. Especially has marriage, that sacred institution which even antedates the holy Sabbath day, become the brunt of jokes. We talk about hen-pecked husbands, mothers-in-law, and all the rest. No wonder our children have such low esteem for holy matrimony. The Christian cannot make fun of that which is divine. So the Christian is different in even some of the things he jokes about!

The Christian is different, because he always strives to represent his Lord to the world in the right way. He is not afraid to say, "I am a Christian" by the way he dresses, by the way he conducts himself, by the way he talks and by the entertainment and his deportment, he "gives glory to God."

Fun is the devil's substitute to happiness

DRESS TO HIS GLORY

For each of the following statements which is true about yourself, fill in one rung of the ladder.



1. I dress simply, to avoid drawing attention to myself.
2. I avoid the use of jewelry and other self-adornments.
3. I avoid the use of slang and profanity.
4. I often speak about Christ, Scripture or God's will for mankind.
5. My use of money reflects a responsible stewardship of God's blessings.
6. I feel proud of the Christian standards I hold.
7. I would not compromise my Christian standards in friendship, recreation or entertainment.
8. I would not compromise my Christian standards in marriage or business.

How do you feel about your responses to these questions? What have you learned about yourself?

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Phone _____