

THE UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS MESSENGER

October 11, 2009

The Christians Choice Of Clothing Within The Assembly--1

Our examination of Romans 7 will be on hold for at least two weeks as we deal with a topic specifically requested.

In this bulletin and at least the next we will be discussing the Christians choice of clothing within the assembly, a topic that causes many to become quite emotional. The requester asked if I thought that God cared what His people wear in the assembly. There is no question that He does, and not just in the assembly. In this article we wish to examine the most common statements made by those who believe otherwise. This article is *not* designed to set forth the principles stated in Scripture that are to guide the child of God in their choice of attire for worship. We will discuss those principles in detail in the next article and another if necessary.

“God does not care what I wear.” While a common statement from some Christians relating to the topic at hand, I know of no Christian who truly believes it. A passage such as 1 Timothy 2:9-10 shows conclusively that God certainly *does* care what His people wear in the assembly and outside of it. Every time a Christian dresses themselves they need to do so with an eye toward respectability and modesty, constantly aware of the effect their choice of clothing can have on other people.

“James 2:1-4 shows that no one has the right to judge my choice of clothing within the assembly.” Please take a moment to read those verses. The point James makes is that Christians ought not to show partiality between the rich and the poor. To use these verses as an excuse to wear “shabby clothing” within the assembly is to do violence to the context and to “tamper with God’s Word” (2 Corinthians 4:2). The man of James 2:1-4 is a poor man who did not have any other option. What he wore was all he had. I have never heard a Christian use this argument who did not have options that were unavailable to the poor man. One thing we must do each time we use God’s Word is make sure that we are using it correctly.

Perhaps a more appropriate passage to the subject at hand is **Matthew 22:12**. Commentators tell us that a “wedding garment” did not necessarily refer to a special suit, but to clean clothes suitable for the occasion (Revelation 19:7-8). The king’s question shows that the man was expected to be dressed more suitably than he was. The man’s silence shows that he knew the king was right.

“1 Samuel 16:7 shows that God is not concerned with one’s appearance, but with their heart.” Please take a moment to read the verse. The first thing that we notice is that neither Samuel or God were considering in any way what Eliab was wearing. Rather, Samuel was impressed with Eliab’s physical presence, much like everyone had been impressed with Saul’s physicality. God was not concerned with his physical presence, but with his heart. We know that God *does* care what his people wear.

That God says He looks upon the heart of a man is indeed important information for us to remember. What we are on the inside is merely reflected in what we do on the outside, including what we choose to wear and the appropriateness of it in certain situations and circumstances.

“There is no dress code for the assembly in the Bible. I can wear whatever I want and no one has the right to question me about it.” Mr. Webster defines “dress code” as “*a set of rules specifying the garb or type of clothing to be worn by a group of people under specific circumstances.*” Does the Bible contain a verse indicating the *exact* clothing a Christian is to wear to the assembly? No. Does the Bible contain principles and guidelines that should aid and govern Christians in their choice of clothing to the assembly? Yes. We will discuss those in the following article or two.

The last part of the statement in bold is a symptom of a deeper spiritual problem and that problem is selfishness and lack of love for the brethren. At what time and under what circumstances would it *ever* be appropriate for a Christian to speak or think that way about their brothers and sisters in Christ? A Christian may approach me to express concern about my choice of clothing to the assembly, or about *any* concern they have, and I may agree or disagree with their assessment. Either way I will be cordial and willing to listen for we are brethren. Should they inform me that my choice of clothing hinders them from worshipping and serving as they should, I will not call them silly or disdain their concern. Rather, I will do what pleases them, provided it is not sinful, *because* we are brethren and my chief concern is for them, not myself.

In at least the next bulletin article we will examine some principles set forth in the Scriptures to help us decide what to wear to the assembly. As always, if you have a sermon or bulletin request, just let me know and I’ll try to deal with it immediately.

In Need of Prayers	In Need of Prayers
<p>Sharon Tirey continues her cancer treatments.</p> <p>Keep Kristen Osterling and her baby boy in mind as he continues to go through some difficulties.</p> <p>Remember David Blakeman.</p> <p>Lilly Fitzwater (Bill Morelan’s mother) is recovering in a care facility in Ohio. The contact information is posted on the bulletin board in the hall.</p> <p>Chuck McDavitt is suffering with diabetes and has now had to have both of his feet amputated.</p> <p>Ron Catchen had open heart surgery earlier in the year but recently had to have stints put in.</p>	<p>We will meet this Saturday at the building to knock on doors.</p> <p>If you have any additions to the sick list that you would like added to the bulletin, please give them to me in writing. Thanks!</p> <p>The men’s meeting will be next Sunday afternoon. Please make your plans to attend.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">University Height Church of Christ 445 Columbia Avenue Lexington, Ky 40508 859-255-6257 www.uheightschurch.com</p>