

# The University Heights Messenger

March 27, 2011

## Reflections On A Tie Rack

By John Smith

Hanging in the back of the building at the Priscilla Street church of Christ, Freetown, Sierra Leone, is a rack of ties. The ties are provided for the use of any man serving in a public role during worship. The brethren at Priscilla Street do not demand that a man wear a tie if serving, but do strongly suggest it and want to make them available to those who do not own one. They are not trying to establish man-made dress codes, but do want to encourage respect and dignity during worship.

Is that dignity and respect something that we have lost in our culture? I fear that we have become intoxicated and deceived by the casualness of our society. No longer is God held in awe and respect, but is more likely to be viewed as some kindly old grandpa or Santa Claus who will laugh at anything we do or say. We have been told by so many worldly sources (and come to believe them) that God is only interested on what's inside and not what's outside that we take that as license to dress anyway we want to when we come to worship the Almighty Jehovah.

Yes, God is interested in "what's on the inside," but not to the exclusion of the outside. Look at the details in the Law of Moses for the attire of the priests. Is God interested in what man wears when he comes before Him in worship? It would appear that He was in the days of Moses. Adam and Eve attempted to fashion clothes for themselves after acquiescing to the temptations of Satan, and God had to make them new clothes that suited Him. God appeared to be interested in what Adam and Eve put on the outside. God instructs women as to how they ought to attire themselves in 1 Timothy 2. Yes, God is interested in our "outside."

The word "God" means mighty, strong, or prominent. Jehovah, God's "personal name," was held in such reverence by the ancient Jews that they refused to write the entire word. He is referred to as the "Lord most High" (Deuteronomy 26:29), the

"Mighty One" (Genesis 49:24), and the Holy One" (Isaiah 40:25) among many others. One name cannot capture the glory and grandeur of our Almighty God. His very name(s) evoke respect, awe, fear, and dignity. We ought to show respect for the God of the universe by our actions and dress when we come into His presence.

When John saw a vision of the glorified Jesus, He fell down as if a dead man (Revelation 1:17). Daniel saw the angel Gabriel and fell down on his face in fear (Daniel 8:17). After Moses spent forty days on Mount Sinai, his face shone with such brilliance that the people had to put a cover over the face of Moses (Exodus 34:29). When Balaam's donkey saw the angel, he fell down beneath Balaam (Numbers 22:27). Whether a manifestation of Deity or an Emissary from heaven, they always caused men to fall before them in fear and trembling. Why is it then that we think we can take a light, casual attitude toward God when we come into His presence?

I am *not* advocating the establishment of an arbitrary, man-made dress code for worship. I *am* advocating a manner of dress in worship that manifests respect, reverence, and awe when we assemble to worship Almighty God.

"USA Today" (August 17, 2010) carried a report that judges all across the country are cracking down on what people wear to their courts. Traffic court in Bakersfield, CA, no longer allows flip-flops. An Inkster, MI, district court has banned jeans. Shorts are not allowed in Dover, DE courthouses. Their reason? According to Delaware Superior Court Judge William Witham, Jr., the courts are a place for serious business to be conducted and that demands appropriate attire. Gayle Fischer, a professor at Salem State University states that, "dress codes are the product of the casual society and ignorance of court culture."

So let me see if I can understand this: When appearing before a fallible, flawed human judge, I must dress in a way that shows respect for the court, the judge, and the process of jurisprudence. Judges all across the country are cracking down on what

they consider inappropriate attire in an effort to maintain decorum.

If I must dress in a manner that shows respect when I appear before a fallible, flawed human judge, shouldn't I dress in an appropriate manner showing respect and maintaining decorum when I appear before the Judge who will determine my eternal destiny? Why would a person want to appear in the presence of an omnipotent, omniscience Judge without being attired in a manner that shows respect?

Borrowing Judge Witham's words, worship "is a place for serious business and that demands appropriate attire." Coming into the presence of the Creator demands that I demonstrate respect for Him. That includes my actions and my dress. I fear that some brethren have become so intoxicated by the casual society in which we live that they think nothing of dressing as if they were going to a ballgame or out shopping. Some sisters show enough flesh when they appear in worship that it is difficult to look at them when speaking to them or serving them the Lord's Supper. T-shirts and jeans are appropriate to wear for the grocery store, but are they appropriate to wear when appearing before the Great I AM?

Am I advocating a dress code? No. However, I am challenging you to look into your heart **and mirror** and determine what your dress tells God when you bow in His presence. Brethren, we can do better!

### IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

**Jeff Howerton** continues to convalesce. His new address is posted in the back.

**Tom Curtis** received the much prayed for news that his cancer is officially in remission and should remain that way for at least the next 10-15 years.

**Rachel Knollman's** scans all came back clear. She is now one year and seven months cancer free.

Let us remember the men laboring for the Lord in other parts of the world whom we financially assist.

Let us also remember our brethren throughout the world who are currently suffering due to natural disasters or fighting in their homelands.

Our members: **Jim Edwards, Glenn Davis, Glenn Kimberlin.**

Others: **Edith Tirey, Linda Hill, Robin Miller, Vina Krassow, Tom Curtis, Shelly Stewart, Courtney and Aubree Reeves, Tabetha Lynn, Tom Curtis, John Bennett, Dennis Brennan, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Wes Kidd, Gail Stein, Shannon Gilbert**

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

The information meeting will be today at 5.

Our spring meeting with Mark McCrary is April 17-22. Let's all make our plans to attend that meeting and begin inviting folks today!

Remember the streaming Bible study each Tuesday at 7. Tell your friends!

### BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

**Sun:** Lev 12-13, Ps 51, Luke 15  
**Mon:** Lev 14, Ps 52, Luke 16  
**Tue:** Lev 15-16, Ps 53, Luke 17  
**Wed:** Lev 17-18, Ps 54, Luke 18  
**Thu:** Lev 19-20, Ps 55, Luke 19  
**Fri:** Lev 21-22, Ps 56, Luke 20  
**Sat:** Lev 23-24, Ps 57, Luke 21

### SERMON TOPICS:

Sunday AM. We can still do the work!  
(Judges 7:2)

Sunday PM. What's in a name?  
(Acts 11:26)