

DO OUR CLOTHES MAKE A STATEMENT?

By Keith Greer

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" {Romans 12:2}

Christians do not live in a "protective bubble". We live in a world that, for the most part, has no concern for God or His word. Nobody, even a child of God, is going to deny that the world we live in cannot influence our thinking. This must be something we are constantly on guard against. Does the world have a different concept of what clothing is acceptable to wear? Of course it does!

Recently, in some past sermons concerning clothing, I discussed our dress in worship services and in public life. **Do our clothes make a statement to the world?** Let us examine this for a few moments.

An age old argument that has been given by many brethren, goes as follows: "God does not care about our outward appearance but the inward." Passages such as Matthew 23:5-7 and 25-28 are given as proof text. How far are we going to take this reasoning? Are there limits?

Would you attend the worship service in a bathing suit? What if I came to preach in a pair of cut-offs and tank top? What would you think of a sister in Christ coming to services looking like a streetwalker? Remember, God does not care about our outward appearance. See my point? We do need to make some limits.

"And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account." {Hebrews 4:13}

"Not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." {Titus 2:10} How does one "adorn the doctrine of Christ"?

"In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. "{1 Timothy 2:9,10} For sure if we are gaudy or draw attention to ourselves, this would not be pleasing to God.

For many years I've heard the terminology "lay back attitude", concerning dress in worship service. How "laid back" can one get? Allow me to offer you an example.

On Sunday evening, at a certain congregation of the Lord's people, two men waited on the Lord's table. One had a Rambo T-shirt with a skeleton wearing a bow-tie; the other a yellow shirt with a pig's head on the front and his tail on the back. Add to this that an elder of the Lord's church chose these men that night knowing how they were dressed! Is this too "laid back"? Brethren, this is a true case, I was there!

In one case, I was waiting on the Lord's table and had to look away. Why? One of the ladies of the congregation, an elder's daughter, had her dress hiked up so far that her panty hose was beginning to show. What are we thinking? What has happened to common sense?

Can I dress in any way to come and worship God? Does how I'm dressed make a difference? Ponder this next question carefully. Does the external appearance give insight into the inner person? What are we saying to the world, brethren, and most importantly to God?

One more thought for you to ponder. In most congregations people dress very well on Sunday morning. Come Sunday night it is much more casual. Why? Could one be sending a message that Sunday night is not as important as Sunday morning? Where did this "dressing down" attitude begin? Believe me your clothes are talking! ***