

CHURCH SERVICE ETIQUETTE

ATTIRE

To conclude our series on Church service etiquette, we ask as an audience, "How are we to dress?" While we find no strictly outlined dress code in the Bible, we are given some instruction in 1 Timothy 2:8-9.

"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;"

We are told to dress modestly, which means our clothing should not be revealing or such that it gets attention for the wrong reasons. However we often find this ignored in the Church service. Many of the clothes we see in the Church today do not cover enough of the wearer's body to be considered "modest." Many of the popular clothes worn to services would not even pass public school dress code regulations. If what you are wearing would not even pass the dress code of a public institution which has outlawed teaching the Bible, should you be wearing it to Church? No.

We consider the Church a safe environment, but we are not immune to temptations even then. *"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."* (Matt 5:28). Are the clothes we are wearing in the Church services causing another to lust? We are not to lust after another person, nor are we to encourage another person to lust after us. As a blunt message to young women, the more skin you are showing, the more likely you are being lusted after. Do not encourage this on purpose. Satan wants to distract us during the worship service, and sometimes this distraction appears as a revealing little black dress.

Most young people are quick to ignore this topic. They ignore the lessons and articles on the subject because they just claim there's nothing wrong, fashion and style have just evolved over the years, and they think the Bible should catch up to the times. The Bible does not need to catch up to modern times. The modern times need to get back to the Bible. As Christians we are a peculiar people (1 Pet 2:9). As we are not to talk and act

like the world, we should not look like the world either. Just because something is in style and popular it does not mean it is right. Remember, the majority of the world is headed down the path of destruction.

Sometimes due to work and other obligations or circumstances, we are forced to attend services without much choice of what to wear. If you have to come into Church wearing your work clothes because you can only take an hour and a half off to attend or have to come straight from work, that is completely understandable. Everyone is just thankful you have the opportunity to attend. What about those of us who have the time to choose and control our attire?

There has been debate about what is acceptable to wear to Church services. Unlike many "denominations" we have no formal "dress code". We know that we are to dress modestly, and this goes for both males and females. A good question to ask yourself when choosing your attire for Church services is "Would you wear it to a funeral?"

Every Sunday morning is a funeral. We come together and partake of the Lord's Supper all in remembrance of Jesus' death. Every Sunday morning is a memorial for Jesus, and we should dress accordingly. Is what you wear in the services something you would wear to a visitation or funeral? I've never seen a male at a visitation or funeral wearing plaid shorts and flip-flops, or a female leaning over the casket in a strapless dress with a slit up to there. Yet we find this to the left and right of us in the pew on Sunday morning. We wouldn't walk into a funeral home wearing jeans with holes everywhere in them and a baggy T-shirt, so we shouldn't walk into Church on Sunday morning dressed similarly. Some of us dress more like we are going to a fraternity party than a Church service.

We often ask the question, if Jesus were to come to our house for lunch, would we have to hide some magazines, movies, and then dust off the Bible? Now, what if we were going to Jesus' house for lunch? What would you wear? If we were going to Jesus' house, we would all dress modestly and respectfully. On Sunday mornings are we not in the presence of the Lord? I'm not saying that females need to wear a nun habit and that males need to wear a tuxedo. But when God is among us in the Church service and he looks down on us, he doesn't want to see boxers and bra straps. God wants to see us dressed modestly, worshipping in the proper mindset.

APOLOGIA

QUESTION: In Exodus 20:13 the sixth of the Ten Commandments is given, *"Thou shall not kill."* Why did the Children of Israel kill so much after that commandment was given to take the land?

ANSWER: The command to not kill (Exo 20:13) was a command that forbade the killing of a fellow human being, and the command was to be strictly carried out in civilian life. Notice the way it, along with other human relationship commands, was repeated by the Apostle Paul and then these collectively were summarized with the command, *"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."* (Rom 13:9) Love would prohibit murder just as it would stealing, etc.

However, this command to not kill carried with it a penalty that the one who kills must in turn be killed. *"He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death."* (Exo 21:12) *"And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death."* (Lev 24:17) The first killing would be murder. The second killing, unlike murder, was the carrying out of God's judgment.

This "death penalty" was to be carried out not only for murder but for other sins of a serious nature as well. Notice for example, in Leviticus 20, that starting with verse 2 and then going on to verses 9 through 16 they were commanded to kill a fellow human.

"Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones." (Lev 20:2)

"For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother; his blood shall be upon him."

And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death."

And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them.

If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.

And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast.

And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman, and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them." (Lev 20:9-16)

Again, in each of these, such a killing would not be murder but would be the carrying out of God's judgment on the person because of his sin.

We must note also that God brought judgments of a much lesser degree on many whose sins were of less serious nature as is seen in the remaining part of that same chapter, Leviticus 20.

In all of these we can observe personal sin and then God's judgment on that individual. In other situations, we see God's judgment on entire cities or nations. In some of these God brought the judgment directly, that is without using or involving His people. The flood in Noah's day, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah , etcetera would be examples in which God brought judgment directly with no human being used in the process. Humans were used to warn but not to carry out judgment.

Many times God did the same in His judgments on individuals. Such would be the case with Lot 's wife (Gen 19:26) or Uzzah (2 Sam 6:7) and many others. Again, this is God's judgment with no people involved in carrying it out.

However, in the case of Israel taking the land, God was going to use people, His people, to accomplish both His judgment on these sinful nations and His promise to Abraham to give them this land. God was their (Israel 's) King.

"And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you." (Judges 8:23)

"And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the LORD your God was your king." (1 Sam 12:12)

He ordered battles, ordered the killing. He would carry out His judgment using His people. The people followed through and in turn did the killing as per God's command. If they did not kill as God had commanded them, God would in turn hold them accountable for not carrying out His judgment as He had directed them. Observe 1 Samuel 15:2-3,

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

Saul, for his own reasons, spared the king (vs. 8-9). Now notices verses 18 and 19.

"And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?" (1 Sam 15: 18-19)

Notice also the severity of God's judgment on Saul for his disobedience.

"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king." (1 Sam 15:22-23)

This is the pattern in God giving Israel the land. He commanded the destruction of these nations. The people of Israel carried out the instruction. This, then, was God's judgment on these people, these nations.

Observe that from God's perspective, these people's sins (as in Noah's time) were so great that God destroyed them. Notice too, that until such a time, God spared them. Ponder Genesis 15:16, *"But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."* Notice in verse 18 that He would give the land, not to Abraham, but to Abraham's descendants, one reason being that the iniquity of these Amorites was not yet at that extreme point that His judgment, His wrath must destroy them. After 400 years it would have become too great for God to tolerate them any longer. At that point He would give the land to Israel, destroying the Amorites. This accomplished, it was God's judgment; it was killing, yet not considered murder as forbidden in Exodus 20:13.

Coming to the New Covenant under Christ, we are commanded to leave judgment to the Lord. He, not we, will repay. (Romans 12:17-21) We are commanded to never render evil for evil to anyone. *"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men."* (1 Thess 5:15) Though a certain judgment must be carried out within the body of believers as stated in 1 Corinthians 5, it is far different from the death penalty carried out under the Old Covenant.

Furthermore, the command to take the land was for God's people who at the time were a nation, whereas God's people today in Christ, are *"of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues"* (Rev 7:9) and our "promised land" is eternal in the heavens. Observe the following verses.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (2 Cor 5:1)

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (Heb 4:1).

"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:" (Heb 12:28)

Also, today, though God does not use His people to execute His judgments, He does continue to use civil governments as His "avenger":

"For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." (Rom 13:4)

PAUL YODER
(Boyerston, PA)

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>DATES</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>
July 30 - Aug. 2	Tarleton Heights Congregation Stephenville, TX	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
August 2 - 5	San Angelo, Texas	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
August 6 - 9	Southside Congregation Springtown, Texas	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
August 10 - 14	Westwood Congregation Westwood, KY	Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY) & J.D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
August 14 - 16	Mount Carmel Rd. Congregation Gay, GA	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
August 23 - 28	Fairview Congregation Highway 70 Near Mt Vernon, KY	Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY)
August 28 - 30	Verona Congregation Verona, KY	J.D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

August 30 –
Sept. 2

Ashlock Congregation
Celina, TN

Joe Hill
(Hager Hill, KY)

August 31 –
Sept. 4

Blanchester Congregation
Blanchester, OH

J.D. McDonald
(Woodbury, TN)

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. How old was Joshua at his death?
2. Ezra left Babylon to travel to Jerusalem , a distance of about nine hundred miles. How long did this journey take?
3. Jeremiah said that in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem, cakes were being baked for whom?
4. In the book of Mark, what did the disciples think Jesus was when He walked across the water to their boat?
5. According to the Law, there is no remission of sin without what?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. Under the Old Law, how long was a woman "customarily unclean" after giving birth? SEVEN DAYS FOR A BOY BABY, FOURTEEN FOR A GIRL BABY (Lev. 12:2,5)
2. Ruth stayed with Naomi and returned with her to Naomi's homeland, which was where? BETHLEHEM (Ruth 1:1,22)
3. According to First Chronicles, who moved David to number Israel ? SATAN (1 Ch. 21:1)
4. What two things did Jesus tell the people to do when they fasted? ANOINT THEIR HEAD AND WASH THEIR FACE (Matt 6:17)
5. In Paul's letters to Timothy, who did Paul say was worse than an unbeliever? ONE WHO DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR HIS OWN FAMILY (1 Tim 5:8)