

## Dressing Up for Church?

Is getting dressed in our “Sunday best” something that God has told us he wants us to do, or is it a way of worship which man has imposed?

It has often been said that if we were visiting the queen then we would wear our best clothes, so how much more should we do the same for God?

The trouble with this reasoning is that it is worldly reasoning. God has told us that it is MAN who is effected by outward appearances, but that He is concerned with what is in our hearts. 1 Sam 16 v 7

*“the Lord sees not as man sees, for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.”*

God has told us that he wants RIGHTEOUSNESS to be our garments “ *fine linen is the righteousness of the saints*” Rev 19 v 8

God has even gone further and condemned getting dressed up in costly apparel that is an outward adorning to impress. “*Let not yours be the outward adorning*” etc

Our adorning should be our righteous deeds which we don’t just wear on a Sunday morning, but all the time. Some make the point that God is not impressed by fancy Church buildings, yet persist in the belief that He is impressed by fancy clothes. Our bodies and clothes are our outward tents which rot and perish, it is our inner nature which is being renewed. Perhaps it is specially mentioned that John the Baptist wore a garment of camel’s hair to make a point. He was preparing the way for Christ and the greatest prophet born of woman, yet he did not wear fancy clothes, in fact the camel was unclean under the law yet John wore a garment of camels’ hair. Jesus commented on the clothing of John to the pharisees who placed great importance on their outward adorning and flowing robes which today would be the equivalent of suits and ties, the clothing worn to impress.

Luke 7 v 25

*“What did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, those who are gorgeously appareled and live delicately are in Kings’ courts. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes I say to you and much more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face... among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist”*

If we are born of the spirit we have a new way of seeing things, we have God’s spirit dwelling in us as we are told John did, and we will also see as God sees and not as man sees. If we don’t have God’s spirit dwelling in us then we tend to live by rules as the pharisees did who did not understand what should have been the motivation behind the rules God had given to Moses.

There are also warnings about those who despise what others wear and condemn them. When David danced before the Lord Michael despised him, and what he wore.

In 2 Sam 6 v 20 we are told

*“How glorious was the king of Israel today, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself. And David said to Michal, It was before the Lord, who chose me before your father, and before all His house to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel.*

David's heart was right before God, but Michal couldn't see what was in his heart, she couldn't get past judging him by what he wore. If we do the same then we have not been born or the spirit, we do not see things as God does.

Despite the many warnings and lessons there are still people who insist on making rules about what is worn to the meeting on Sunday. If they think that God is impressed by a shiny piece of material tied around their neck then that is their idea, it is not what God has said. If they make rules about how others dress when God has clearly said He is looking at our hearts and not our outward garments, then it can cause those who see the futility of this to become disillusioned with groups who make rules of men that are not God's rules.

God has told us that we came into the world naked and leave it naked. It is our characters that He looks at. It is PEOPLE who are impressed by fine clothing. The argument that we show respect to God by the way we dress is not a Biblical argument, rather God condemns those who place importance on outward show.

It is only when we are born of the spirit and begin to understand the things that really matter to God that we can get past living by rules and traditions of men which were the stumbling block for the pharisees.

Sis. Robin Jones (Hurstville, Australia)