

BEFORE 1727

David Halbrook

I was recently invited to visit a Baptist revival and, since Aquila and Priscilla visited a synagogue, I went and was kindly welcomed. Before the revival began, I read from the Foreword of a well-worn hymnal (“REJOICE! The Free Will Baptist Hymn Book”) which said “Free Will Baptists have always been a people of song. From our 1727 beginning, we have delighted in offering praise to God.” Notice that according to this hymnal, before 1727 there were no Free Will Baptists, thus no Free Will Baptist Church existed. Before 1727, God already revealed the gospel (Acts 8:25), His offer of salvation (Rom. 1:16), Jesus’ blood (Rev. 1:5), Christians (Acts 11:26), the church (Acts 2:47), etc.

If we need no new kind of gospel, blood, or grace, why did the people of 1727 need a new kind of church? Can you or your preacher explain? If so, we would be willing to listen to your or his explanation. Could we be united if we taught about Jesus’ gospel, blood, salvation, and church? By this, God will make us all of the same mind and judgment (1 Cor. 1:10). The unity of Christ is our goal (Jn. 17:20-21), is it yours?

-- *Editor’s Note:* I mailed a copy of this article to the local Baptist church which I visited, asking if anyone would study and discuss these things with me more thoroughly, in the spirit of Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla (Acts 17-18). We hope they view it worth the effort. Is it worth your time, effort to aid our effort to spread the gospel in *Arkansas Weekly* by clipping and handing out these articles?

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

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LISTEN TO THE SONS OF THIS WORLD

John R. Gibson (www.pepperroadchurch.org; 5-25-11)

Did Jesus commend dishonesty? Some have mistakenly reached that conclusion when they read the parable of the unjust steward in Luke 16:1-13, but read the parable again carefully. Jesus did not commend the man for being a poor steward or for cheating his master; instead, He urged His disciples to note the way the man assessed the situation and took action to make certain he did not have to beg or resort to digging. And in His commendation of this man’s quick thinking the Lord made an observation that I want to make the basis of this brief article: “For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light” (Luke 16:8).

I will come back to the thought of Luke 16:8 later, but before doing that I want us to be reminded of some Scriptural principles that should shape the way we dress.

1. We are to be a holy people. “Be holy, for I am holy.” (I Pet. 1:13-17)
2. We are to “flee sexual immorality.” (I Cor. 6:18)
3. We are not to engage in lewd, lustful, lascivious or licentious conduct. “Let us walk properly, . . . not in lewdness and lust . . .” (Rom. 13:13, 14; II Cor. 12:20, 21)
4. We must avoid putting a stumbling block before others. “For whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depths of the sea.” (Matt. 18:6, 7; 1 Cor. 8:9; 10:31-33)
5. We are charged with being an influence for good (salt and light) in a world that is corrupt and filled with darkness. “Children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.” (Matt. 5:13-16; Phil. 2:15, 16)

(continued inside)

What does all of this have to do with the parable of the unjust steward? Simply this, the sons of this world know full well the power and provocative nature of indecent dress and continually exploit it. Why does the swimsuit issue of Sports Illustrated sell more than any other issue during the year? Why is every product imaginable sold by a man or woman wearing clothing that leaves little to the imagination either through its briefness, sheerness or clinginess? Why does Hollywood so often feature characters in clothing that no one would ever describe as modest? Is it possible that the sons of this world in the business of publishing magazines, selling products through advertising, and producing entertainment know something the sons of light are either ignorant of or willing to disregard?

The sons of this world use terms such as sexy, alluring, provocative, daring, etc. to describe fashions many “sons (or should I say daughters?) of light” seem all too willing to don, but should our clothing really be described by such terms? Would it not be better for our clothing to be described as modest and proper for those professing godliness (1 Timothy 2:8-10)? In a world filled with immorality and lust we cannot always prevent evil men and women from thinking evil thoughts, but we can make the choice to dress ourselves and our children in clothing that is not designed to stir passions of lust.

Before you leave the house, ask yourself or another family member the following questions:

- ◆ Is this too short? ◆ Is it cut too low? ◆ Is it too sheer?
- ◆ Is it too tight? ◆ Is it too brief?
- ◆ Is it possible to sit down and still retain my modesty?

And before you answer, stop and ask yourself what the shrewd sons of this world might say.

HOW CAN WE DEVELOP MORAL & SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME? PART 1

- Based on an article by Ron Halbrook in *Guardian of Truth* XXXV, 11 (June 6, 1991):330-331

A. Personal and Individual Growth Must Come First.

1. Obey the gospel (right relationship with God is basis for every other right relationship). Must do what is right, if to lead others to do what is right (**Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:14**).

2. Private, personal Bible study (**1 Pet. 2:1-3**).

3. Private, personal prayer (**Matt. 6:6; Phil. 4:6**).

4. Attend public worship with interest and enthusiasm (**Heb. 10:23-25**).

5. Participate in worship according to ability (**Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 2:8,12**).

6. Prepare Bible lesson for classes (**Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15**).

7. Be courteous, kind and considerate (**Matt. 7:12; 22:39; 1Pet. 3:7; Col. 3:19-21**).

8. Be a good example in all things (includes attitude, word, and deed; avoid profanity, pornography, gambling, drinking, immodesty, etc.) (**Matt. 5:13-16**).

9. Show respect for others by the way we speak to them and treat them (relatives, friends, neighbors, etc.) (**Matt. 7:12**).

10. Provide for family's physical needs to best of ability (**1 Tim. 5:8**).

11. Keep your word (do what you say and say what you mean) (**Matt. 7:12; Col. 3:9**).

12. Proper attitude toward others outside family (includes helping them in any way we can; avoid gossip, bitterness, etc.; control temper and tongue) (**Matt.7:12; 22:39**).

13. Be strong in the Lord and serve him willingly (**Rom. 6:17; Eph. 6:10-11**).

14. Right relationship to civil government (obey laws, pay taxes, etc.) (**Rom.13:1-7**).

15. Right relationship to employer or employee (**Eph. 6:5-9**).

16. Right relationship to neighbors and community where we live (patient, compassionate, humble, honest, peaceable) (**Rom. 12:14-18**).

17. Talk to people about the gospel, invite them to church, and arrange private Bible studies with them when possible (**Eph. 5:23; 6:4; Acts 8:3-4; Phil. 2:15-16**).

18. Be honest, sincere, and above reproach in all dealings with everyone (including family, saints, and sinners; leave no room for doubt) (**2 Cor. 8:21; Rom. 12:17**).

19. Be content with your role and possessions—don't be materialistic (**Matt. 6:24; Heb. 13:5**).

20. Show patience toward family and others (**Matt. 7:12; Eph. 4:1-3, 31-32**).

THE FOOLISHNESS OF MAN (*The Greenwood (IN) Bulletin*, 5-31-09)

...If ever man has bought one of Satan's insidious lies, it surely is that “one sin just doesn't matter.” There are, obviously, many problems with that bit of reasoning. For example, it assumes that the law is waived if only violated once. And beyond that, the simple fact is, we seldom violate the law “just once.”

Let me tell you what one sin can do. It can---ruin your reputation---destroy a family---consume you with guilt---take a life---cost you the respect of your brethren--separate you from God.

But let me tell you that one sin does not have to be fatal. You can repent and be forgiven. You can learn not to listen to Satan's lies – this would then be a man of wisdom!