

A Few Make History

Some brethren assume the continuity of a faithful, visible, functioning church, from the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection until now. It must be "assumed" — it can not be proven — nor do I believe either is essential. But on that assumption, there is a "necessary inference" that should shake us up a bit.

If there has always been a "faithful few" it is because there has always been a few who acted independently of the majority — who thought for themselves — who refused to go along with the elders or the preacher "for the sake of peace." History is filled with proof of continual change which constituted apostasy from the divinely ordained standard. Such changes (we do not refer to changes of no scriptural consequences) had to be resisted — by people who knew the difference in essentials and non-essentials, and who refused to accept as a matter of faith or standard for fellowship anything for which there was no divine authority.

In every generation there had to be a few who endured the name "Anti" or its equivalent, and went about the

By Robert Turner

business of maintaining a small (minority) scriptural church regardless of how this affected their secular business and social relations.

The key was, of course, independent Bible study, which directed dedication to Christ rather than to the "party" or popular opinion. The faithful few knew both who and what they believed (2 Tim. 1:12-14), and on this basis they both spoke and acted (2 Cor. 4:13). They had convictions — vital, personal, motivating convictions.

But the folk today who rest their hope upon party affiliation, and seem most anxious to assume the historic continuity of such a party; are often the least informed, and less likely to have strong convictions based upon independent Bible study.

Had you lived in the "dark ages," would you have been among the "faithful few"? We all like to think that we would have been; but the truth can be read in our present day record. Do we stand with the "faithful few" today, regardless of consequences?



The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

Volume 1, Issue 2

November 8, 2009

The Christian's Apparel — Inside and Out

By Larry Rouse



Thought to Ponder

Nothing can atone for the lack of modesty; without which beauty is ungraceful and wit detestable.

The real measure of a Christian lies on the inside. Jesus repeatedly warned those who admired the hypocrites of that day that it was "out of the heart" that one's actions arise (Mt 12:34-35, 15:18-19). Later, our Lord confronted these men with the plainest and strongest words of His ministry. "For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also" (Mt 23:25-26). In every application we make of God's word we must first start with the heart.

In recent years, with the advent of the "non-traditional" services, has come the philosophy of "come as you are." It is common in these gatherings to see an open display of immodesty by those who claim to be Christians....But when a gathering of Christians has become a demonstration of a people that no longer "know how to blush," then a serious examination of hearts needs to take place (Jer 6:15; 8:12).

Does it Matter What a Christian Wears?

The subject of clothing is a highly personal one and one that commonly provokes great emotion. Many who claim to be Christians place this subject as off-limits to the Lord and especially to those who teach His word. How many times have I heard someone say: "It doesn't matter what you wear, but what is inside your heart is all that matters!" Is that really what the scriptures teach?

not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Timothy 2:9-10 KJV). What is the condition of the heart described in this verse, and what is the kind of dress that will follow?

Essential Elements in the Heart of the Christian

Modest apparel is a product of **shamefacedness** and **sobriety**, qualities that ought to be in the heart of every Christian. The English word "shamefacedness" is a good translation of the Greek word "aidos." Greek lexicons define this word as meaning "the

(Continued on page 2)

Do You Have a Bible Question?
Call (334) 734-2133 or
E-mail:
LarryRouse@aubeacon.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

Check Us Out On the Internet: www.aubeacon.com

Special Classes This Week

Monday Night at 7:00

Men's Class will meet at the Davis Home

Thursday Night at 7:00

Monthly Ladies Class will meet at the Pender Home

Sick

Jim and Barbara Kicker

Pam Dial
(Laura Weldon's Mother)

Heather
(Luke Bridges' Cousin)

Frank Hand - (Laura Humphrey's and Ryan Hand's Father)

Rose Tate
(Toni Herd's Cousin)

Keith Lee
(Megan Lee's Father)

Dave Bradford, Sr.

Everett Chandler
(Sarah Chandler's Father)

To have names added to this list please call Yvette at 734-2134

News and Notes

- Please give e-mail addresses to the Rouse's for our new e-mail bulletin mailing list.
- Audio CDs of Today's Sermon will be immediately available
- Let's remember our expectant mothers: Jana Hall, Laura Humphrey and Joy Liu
- Check out our new website at www.aubeacon.com
- Mitch Davis will be in a weekend meeting at the Lagrange church, Nov 13-15
- Larry Wright will be in a meeting with the Southeast church, Nov 8-13. Weeknight services will be at 7:00
- Let us be sure to recognize and greet all visitors!

(Continued from page 1)

idea of downcast eyes; a sense of shame or honor, modesty, bashfulness, reverence, regard for others, respect." The word "sobriety" indicates "soundness of mind, self-control." In essence, the Christian will not seek to draw the attention of others to themselves through their clothing. They will not be trend setters, seeking the latest fashions regardless of the message conveyed to others by those fashions.

Consider the importance of shame. Shame comes from previous instruction concerning right and wrong. For shame to profit you, there are two things you must possess: proper teaching and a good conscience. Someone has likened the conscience to an alarm clock. If you heed its alarm and then act, then you will be "awakened" and thus helped to fight sin. However, if you chose to ignore it, by "going back to sleep," or in other words, by continuing in your sin, then you will, in time, no longer hear the alarm of your conscience. Paul described the terrible consequences of those who reject sound teaching as "speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Timothy 4:2).

Too Much Clothing or Too Little

Shame will keep a Christian from seeking attention by distinctive displays involving "broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array" (1 Timothy 2:10 KJV). It also will avoid attention by having too little clothing, which is a great problem in our culture.

The scriptures teach that public nakedness should always produce shame. When Christians had given in to a practice of sin, God likened the shame that they should have felt as being like the expected shame found in physical nakedness. God described them as being: "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked." He then urged them to "buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see" (Rev 3:17-18).

In the scriptures, nakedness is insufficient clothing, not a complete absence of clothing. The priest, while clothed, could still reveal his "nakedness" by not properly covering from "the waist to the thighs" (Ex 28:41-42). In the Garden of Eden, after the first sin, Adam and Eve were **still naked** when

they made the equivalent of men's swimming trunks (Gen 3:7, 10-11)! God provided sufficient clothing when he had made them "tunics of skin". This tunic is defined in lexicons as being: "generally with sleeves, coming down to the knees." If you want to be sure to avoid nakedness, then this example ought to provide us a safe guide to follow.

You Clothes Convey a Message

The Old Testament describes the "attire of a harlot" (Prov 7:10; Gen 38:13-15). A woman can dress in such a way as to encourage men to pursue immorality with her. Here is where many women fail to understand how their dress can affect men. The scriptures give emphasis towards the woman concerning her dress (1 Tim 2:9-10) and give emphasis towards the man in how he looks at a woman and thinks (Mt 5:27-30). As a rule, men are more susceptible to visual stimulation, and as a result, the modern day pornographic industry has geared its primary attention to men. Ladies, please do not judge your clothing on "how it looks to me," but also be open to teaching concerning how it affects others.

Clothing during Worship

It ought to go without saying that men and women should always dress modestly in public settings and especially when gathering together to worship God. In recent years, with the advent of the "non-traditional" services, has come the philosophy of "come as you are." It is common in these gatherings to see an open display of immodesty by those who claim to be Christians. I understand that for the new Christian, and certainly for the visitor from the community, that they may not yet have received the proper teaching to guide their consciences. But when a gathering of Christians has become a demonstration of a people that no longer "know how to blush," then a serious examination of hearts needs to take place (Jer 6:15; 8:12).

Should we then have a dress code? When we have shamefacedness and sobriety in our hearts, along with a willingness to talk with mature Christians about these things, then I am sure our clothing will reflect it. When we come to worship with the people of God with a heart of reverence and love, with a desire to pursue holiness, then our clothing will reflect it (Heb 10:23-29).

Be honest, what message does your clothing reveal about your heart?



The Booing Spectators

By Bill Hall

Have you ever noticed who does the booing at a ball game? It's not the players on the field. They make their own mistakes and they are not inclined to boo their fellow player when he makes his. They are pulling for one another, encouraging, helpful. They play as a team, win or lose as a team. It is the spectators who boo. So it is in every walk of life: it is the spectators who, as a rule, do the criticizing, not the participants.

Unfortunately, in every congregation, there are the spectators and the participants. The spectators never teach a Bible class, preach, lead singing, or preside at the table; they really don't get that much involved in the worship itself. But more often than not, they are the very ones who are found criticizing the preacher or song leader or Bible class teacher. They are the ones who are so embarrassed and incensed when someone inadvertently commits an "error" in his efforts to lead the group. They come wanting to hear something that is interesting and that will make the time fly by. If they hear it, they "cheer"; if not, they "boo."

Not so with the true participants, those who are really involved in the Lord's work. They are the ones "cheering on" that "rookie" who is preaching his first sermon or leading his first song. When a brother attempts to teach his first Bible class, they are looking for ways to be helpful. They are sympathetic; they rejoice in the success of others; they mourn

Spectators need to become participants and find out what it's like out there "on the field." Participants need to keep on doing their best, ignoring the "boos" while looking to their all-seeing and understanding "Manager" for approval.

over the sorrows of others; they feel for the one who has failed, make allowances for him, encourage him to try again, and assure him that he will do better next time. They rejoice especially in the development of the young men and women in the Lord's work. They are just as nervous and excited when the young people make their first attempt at presiding at the table or teaching a class as they would be if it were their own children.

How many preachers have decided to move because of the booing spectators, right at the time when the participants were enjoying their greatest spiritual growth? How many elders have planned the work around the demands of the spectators rather than the needs of the participants?

Spectators need to become participants and find out what it's like out there "on the field." Participants need to keep on doing their best, ignoring the "boos" while looking to their all-seeing and understanding "Manager" for approval. All need to be preparing for judgment, where it will be the "doers of the word," not the critics, who will be saved. "Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous" (1 Peter 3:8).

Christians, like ball players, make a sad mistake when they listen too closely to the "boo-birds".

