

#25 - A Peculiar People / Lifestyle and Adornment

Introduction/Purpose: To learn about the blessings God wants for us in the areas of lifestyle and adornment.

2Corinthians 5:20 Who is the ambassador for the King of heaven?

ambassador: highest-ranking diplomatic representative; authorized messenger. {*Webster's New Dictionary 1990*}

Our purpose in life, as fishers of men, is to be ambassadors for the King of the universe!

2Corinthians 3:18 (first question), Philippians 4:8 What should the ambassador for Christ behold?

What happens as we behold the glory of the LORD? Are our thoughts pure, hopeful, virtuous thoughts?

What are our thoughts towards family, strangers, or enemies? Perhaps we harbor entangling thoughts. Let us confess and surrender all to God.

Romans 12:1-2 What else does God want to purify and cleanse besides our mind? (v.1) Why is this called 'reasonable' service? (Jesus died for you and for me; God is always looking out for our best interest; He loves us.) What is the purpose of allowing God to purify our bodies and our minds? (v.2 - To be living proof of the benevolent will of God.) God wants to purify us; body and character - of everything unclean and unholy; everything that defiles.

2Timothy 4:6-8 Who gives this adornment? When, and why is it given?

Ezekiel 28:13-17 What word is used to describe Lucifer's ways before he fell? (v.15) Why was Lucifer's heart lifted up?

(H3314; Strong's - brightness/splendor; Moses' brilliant face: Exodus 34:29-35.) What was he covered with?

Genesis 3:1-6 Was self exaltation the temptation under which Eve, and consequently, Adam fell?

Romans 6:16, 23 Instead of God's, whose servants did they become? At what cost? (death and a fallen nature)

Romans 3:10, 7:7-25, Jeremiah 17:9 Does any person have an undefiled, unfallen nature?

God's anointed cherub, created perfect and covered in jewelry, fell because of pride; because of his beauty and splendor. Adam and Eve, who originally had a sinless nature, fell because of pride; because of a desire to be exalted to be more than they were. As members of a fallen race with 6,000 years of experience with fallen sinful natures, could self exaltation; even jewelry present a danger to us now?

Genesis 35:1-4 What two things did Jacob get rid of in order to worship God in Spirit and truth? (v.4)

Are strange gods and jewelry associated? Do they share commonality with uncleanness? Jewelry stopped them from being able to worship God properly, can jewelry ruin our worship also?

Exodus 21:6 Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever. Job 41:2 Canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn? (Ear piercing originally signified a slave.)

Exodus 33:1-6 What did the children of Israel need to do so that God would not consume them?

Why did God command the removal of all ornamentation? (v.5)

The Israelites had seen God's miracles firsthand over, and over, and over. Since ornamentation contributed to their pride and stubbornness, is it dangerous for us? Body ornamentation was a serious problem in the Old Testament. Would it not be the same for all generations? How about for those in the New Testament?

1Timothy 2:9-10 In the New Testament, is bodily adornment; ornamentation approved, or disapproved?

1Peter 3:1-4 In God's sight, what ornamentation is of genuine lasting value?

Genesis 4:3-8 Why was Cain's worship not respected by God? How dangerous was it for Cain to follow his heart?

1John 2:15-17 Who shall abide forever? (Remember: we are God's ambassadors.)

1Peter 2:9 What does peculiar mean? – Included in the Greek definition we find the words:

peculiar: "*acquisition*, obtain, purchased, possession, saving" 'peculiar' means wholly for God; involving intimate matrimonial qualities of Divine Ownership and belonging. Like Jesus, we are to be living evidence of the benevolent will of God.

Conclusion: The Word of God plainly warns fallen mankind to steer clear of worldly entertainment and adornment. Ours; a fallen nature, is prone to pride. It is our natural inclination to fall into the sins of self-centered pleasure-seeking, indolence, and self exaltation. Individuals may argue that they have overcome pride, and that when they take in worldly entertainment or wear fashionable apparel and dress like the world, it does not hurt them, for they have conquered pride. Even if it were true that we were beyond temptation, our witness to the world is either an influence of life unto Life, or of death unto death. Jesus is not seen wearing costly apparel or trendy fashions. In like manner, the Christian who fails to obey the Lord's instruction in regard to dress misrepresents the Lord, and sows seeds of pride and vanity. It is better to follow the instruction given and do away with entertainment and apparel defiled with self-seeking, pride, and vanity, than to misrepresent our Lord and Master in any way. Romans 14:13 ...that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

APPEAL: Let it be our desire to follow the Divine plan for living a Christ-filled life. By God's grace, let's live a life that pleases God.

"Christians are not to decorate the person with costly array or expensive ornaments. All this display imparts no value to the character. The Lord desires every converted person to put away the idea that dressing as worldlings dress will give value to his influence. The ornamentation of the person with jewels and luxurious things is a species of idolatry. This needless display reveals a love for those things which are supposed to place a value upon the person. It gives evidence to the world of a heart destitute of the inward adornment. Expensive dress and adornments of jewelry give an incorrect representation of the truth that should always be represented as of the highest value. An over-dressed, outwardly adorned person bears the sign of inward poverty. A lack of spirituality is revealed." "Love of dress and pleasure is wrecking the happiness of thousands. And some of those who profess to love and keep the commandments of God, ape this class as near as they possibly can and retain the Christian name. Some of the young are so eager for display that they are even willing to give up the Christian name, if they can only follow out their inclination for vanity of dress and love of pleasure. Self-denial in dress is a part of our Christian duty. To dress plainly, and abstain from display of jewelry and ornaments of every kind, is in keeping with our faith. Are we of the number who see the folly of worldlings in indulging in extravagance of dress as well as in love of amusements? If so, we should be of that class who shun everything that gives sanction to this spirit which takes possession of the minds and hearts of those who live for this world only, and who have no thought or care for the next." 1908/1898MS