

Should You Welcome Visitors at Church

Some members still do not understand about inviting, or welcoming, visitors to our Church services or bringing NON-members to the FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

by Herbert W. Armstrong

RECENTLY a non-member came as a visitor with a member to the Sabbath service of one of God's Churches. The visitor was a neighbor of the member.

At the close of the service, another member took it upon himself to speak to the visitor, and, it was reported to me, in a not too friendly tone, tell him not to come again! Naturally the visitor was hurt and offended.

I do not have all the details. It could be, I suppose, that the visitor was hostile to the sermon and showing a wrong spirit—but even so the proper conduct for a member would be to keep friendly, and call the minister or an elder. I do not know whether the member who brought this visitor had asked his neighbor to come, or whether the neighbor had asked if he might attend. It was reported, however, that the visitor was a radio listener—perhaps a reader of *The Plain Truth*—and supposedly “interested.”

IMPORTANT You Understand

I had thought that all members understood the Biblical teaching on this point, and our church policy based on it—and *how*, and *why*, this policy differs from the practise of the churches of the world.

However, when we realize our membership is increasing at the phenomenal rate of 30% a year—doubling each 2 years and 7 months—it becomes apparent that many of you have come in since this policy was last explained.

It is IMPORTANT that every member understand.

The Worldly Custom

It is the custom of the churches of this world to invite the public to come in and “worship” with them. Often you see signs on church buildings: “Strangers Welcome.” Driving your car through the main street of a town on a highway, you invariably will see signs pointing to a church a block or two to the right or left—inviting visitors.

If it is a fundamentalist evangelical type church, its members will *urge* friends, relatives, and strangers to attend. This is their way—but not God's way—of “going into all the world to

preach the Gospel.” Instead of *going* to the world, as Jesus commanded, they invite and urge the world to *come* to *them*. They think their church services are the places to “get people interested,” or to “get them saved.”

First of all, it is *very important* that our members realize just how almost all people, outside the few of us in God's true Church, look at this. You need to know, and understand, how **THEY FEEL**, and how they are going to react toward us.

Since the custom—taken for granted by them—is to urge the public to attend regular church services—since it is CUSTOMARY to “*make strangers WELCOME*,” most people will take offense if we do not invite them, and make them welcome—that is, if they know we have a Church.

If a non-member *does*, for any reason, happen to visit one of our services and does not receive a warm and friendly welcome, can't you see he will feel offended? He will go away saying, “They certainly are a cold, unfriendly group”; or, “So I'm not *good enough* for them, huh?” or, “I guess I can take a hint—I'm not wanted, there!” Or, “Well, I sure don't want any of *their* brand of religion!”

The established custom of the world's churches says, in effect, “World, come and fellowship with us. We **WELCOME** the fellowship of the world.” Of course they do not realize God's Word says: “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be the friend of the world is the enemy of God.”

But REMEMBER—to the natural, unconverted mind, this worldly custom **SEEMS RIGHT**. And if a stranger does come to one of our services and receive a “cold shoulder” he will certainly think we are **WRONG**.

THEREFORE WE NEED TO KNOW, not only about God's Way for our own services, but also **HOW** to TREAT the OCCASIONAL STRANGER IN OUR MIDST. So read every word carefully.

How We Are DIFFERENT

Right here is a basic, fundamental *difference* between God's Church and

the worldly churches—between the BIBLE way, and the paganized so-called “Christian” way.

First, Christ's Great Commission is to *take* the Gospel *to* the world—“GO YE,” He said. Have you ever noticed that nearly all of God's churches have to assemble in rented halls, while nearly all professing Christian churches of the world have their own church buildings? Even a small local church of no more than 35 to 75 in regular attendance will have its own church building. God's Church, obeying Christ's command explicitly, goes *to* the world—by radio and the printing press. This costs money—a lot of money, now that we reach people *on every continent, world-wide*.

We, therefore, use God's money God's way—in the purchase of facilities for the mass spreading of the Gospel around the world. So far, we have not been able to do both this and build local auditoriums for meetings.

But the churches of the world do the exact opposite of what Christ commanded. Instead of *going* to the world, they invite the world to come to them. Thus their “churches” provide the place for the world to come, to hear their various gospels. They spend their money on local church buildings and ornate cathedrals.

Secondly, they regard these *buildings* as their *churches*. In their language, *the people*—including the invited strangers of the world—*go to* the CHURCH. To them the CHURCH is the *building*. They call the building “the church.” But the Bible calls the *people* the Church—that is, the people who have been begotten by God's Spirit. In God's true way, the CHURCH goes to the building, the rented hall, or the auditorium. In the world's way, the PEOPLE go to the CHURCH. See how the world turns God's Holy Word completely upside down?

God's True Way

Now I would like for every member of God's true Church to notice carefully:

The second primary function of God's Church is to feed its members on the true spiritual food, and to protect them. The Church is called “Jerusalem above”—the MOTHER of us all—that is, of all

God has begotten into His Church.

Just as the physical human mother protects her unborn child from physical harm, and just as it receives the physical nourishment by which it grows to be born through its mother, so with the spiritual children in God's Church. For this purpose God has set in the Church apostles, evangelists, pastors, elders, deacons and deaconesses, to feed and protect the Church.

But, once converted, we are commanded *not* to be conformed to this world, but *to come out from among them* of this world, and to **BE SEPARATE**.

We are to be no longer **OF** the world, although we must live *in* it, and have certain contacts with it in *going to* it with Christ's Gospel. But we are forbidden to have Christian fellowship with the world. "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (II Cor. 6:14.) Again, "Ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (I Cor. 1:9), and "truly our fellowship is *with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ*"—and again, "if we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth" (I John 1:3,6).

Consequently, God's Church is called to a *separate* fellowship—**NOT** fellowship with the world, but with God and with Jesus Christ—and with one another only through them. For our worship services, therefore, God calls us to **BE SEPARATE** from the world.

The world talks about worshipping God "according to the dictates of your own conscience." But God will not accept that kind of worship. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him *in Spirit and in Truth*" (John 4:24). You cannot worship Him "in Spirit" unless you have been converted, and received His Spirit. And God gives His Holy Spirit only to them that **OBEY HIM** (Acts 5:32). To worship Him "**IN TRUTH**" means *according to the Bible*—since Jesus said "THY WORD IS TRUTH."

Of the world's worship, Jesus said plainly: "IN VAIN do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men . . . making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition" (Mark 7:7-8,13).

Never Unfriendly

Now it becomes very evident **WHY** we must *not*—according to **BIBLE TEACHINGS**—invite the world to the services of God's Churches.

It is *not only* that they, being as yet unjoined to the Father and to Christ

through real conversion, could have no true fellowship with God *nor* with us—*not only* that we must "come out from among them and be separate"—but our own Church services *might offend*, and therefore *harm them* or *prevent their later conversion!*

Neither Garner Ted Armstrong nor I preach the same kind of sermons **TO THE WORLD**, on the air, that we do before our own congregations at Pasadena, or Chicago, or London, or the Feast of Tabernacles. The sermons of God's ministers before our own members are *not evangelistic!* In our own congregations we are not trying to get worldly people converted—we are not preaching to the world—we are trying to feed on the deeper truths *those already converted!*

We do not write the same kind of articles for *The Plain Truth* we do for *The Good News*. *The Plain Truth* is written for the **WORLD!** Its purpose is to proclaim Christ's Gospel **TO THE WORLD, as a witness**. As an example, you will **NEVER** see an article like *this one in The Plain Truth!* This is written for you **CHURCH MEMBERS** whom God has already baptized by His Spirit into Christ's Body, the Church!

The sermons at our regular Church Services—**AND AT THE ANNUAL FESTIVALS**—are entirely *too strong* for the unconverted of the world! They would only prove a stumbling block. They would offend.

BUT—in spite of all this, a non-member visitor does occasionally attend. What should then be our attitude?

NEVER should it be UNFRIENDLY! **ALWAYS**, once a visitor has come, *be warm in greeting, cordial and friendly*. **NEVER** make one feel unwelcome. Would that be obeying God's Commandment to **LOVE** our neighbors as ourselves?

This is a delicate matter, and great tact needs to be used. So **NOTICE CAREFULLY** how to follow God's way in this.

The Church Policy

We **DO NOT, ever**, want to offend or cause hostility—if we can avoid it.

Therefore, the lay members should **LEAVE IT TO THE MINISTERS** to know whom to invite to attend, and when. **NEVER** invite anyone not yet a member to attend either a Church service or an annual Festival or Holy day. On the other hand, be careful **NEVER** to directly *forbid* an interested friend to come—that is, **NEVER OFFEND** others or make them feel unwelcome. Never give the impression we are "high hat" or "too good for them" or a sort of **EXCLUSIVE** set. If you tell a friend or neighbor **NOT** to come—or if undiplomatically you say "we are told never to

invite outsiders," what are such people going to think? In *their* thinking **ALL** churches are supposed to be friendly and welcome visitors. So immediately they would suppose **THE REASON** we do not invite them is because we feel *better* than they—that they are *not good enough* to come with us—or we are "high hat."

Try to remember **HOW THEY THINK**—and *how your answer will seem to them!* They do not **UNDERSTAND** the Bible teaching on this point—so they will not understand **WHY** you don't make them welcome, and may be offended.

Always, if you can, let a minister handle such a situation.

Yet many difficult situations may arise. In many cases, many of you are persecuted by your neighbors. They may call you "Jewish" if they know you keep the Sabbath.

First of all, it is better if you do nothing to advertise the fact that you keep God's Sabbath. I do not mean that you should ever deny it. But, for example, if you women make Sunday your wash day and hang out clothes for neighbors to see—or, if you men do work around the house on Sunday, mowing the lawn, or pounding nails or sawing or something that makes noise. Whether this *really* causes your neighbors any discomfort or not, some of them may *claim* you are annoying them—creating a **NUISANCE** on their Sunday. That only shouts loudly at them that you are a hated "Sabbath-keeper." You may reason that Sunday is the only convenient day to do such things—but where there's a **WILL**, there's a **WAY**, and *you can find a way* to avoid antagonizing neighbors on Sunday. You **CAN!**—*so be sure you do!*

At Headquarters, all our neighbors adjoining the campus, of course, learned long ago that we keep the Sabbath. For years the Sabbath services were held there. And it does become necessary for some of our work crews to do various kinds of work on Sundays—even carpenter work. But we restrain our men from making loud noises until after 10 a.m. on Sundays, to avoid disturbing neighbors who might be sleeping late. We have always tried to go out of our way as far as possible to be considerate of our neighbors.

A Few Examples

But suppose you have a neighbor who knows you keep the Sabbath, and is *not* hostile. Perhaps this neighbor will mention some day that he (or she) has heard the broadcast several times, and asks you to explain a question about the Sabbath—why we don't observe Sunday, or hasn't time been lost? or

isn't the law done away—or some other question. What should you do?

Unless you *know* that you thoroughly know the subject, and have the ability to explain it plainly and convincingly, it would be better to hand the neighbor a booklet—or booklets—that explain the subject. If you don't have one to spare, explain that you will write our office and have one mailed to the neighbor at once. Tell your neighbor that this booklet will explain it so much better than you could.

In case you do feel qualified to explain it yourself (as you should be—though most of you are not), follow this method: First, ask the neighbor into your home, or go yourself to his. Have your Bible. When seated quietly, free from interruption, open your Bible, turning to proper Scriptures one at a time. Instead of reading it yourself, hand the Bible to your friend and have him read aloud each passage. Then *you* carefully explain and expound it, and turn to the next passage and have your neighbor read that, and so on.

If your friend does not know we have a local church congregation, avoid all mention of it.

But, suppose your friend does know, or asks you directly whether we have a Church. You cannot refuse to answer. You cannot lie. So here is where you must use real tact! Don't hesitate. Don't apologize. Immediately answer, "We don't have PUBLIC church services—or any local church—that is, we don't have a local *building* called a 'church'—but we do have our own meeting on the Sabbath—*may I ask our minister to call and explain that to you?*"

Try, immediately, to get your friend to agree to let the minister call. BUT NEVER TELL YOUR FRIEND THAT VISITORS ARE NOT WELCOME. Just try, tactfully, to AVOID inviting, if you can.

Now, suppose all this fails. Suppose the friend refuses the minister's call, and asks again if he (or she) may visit your church meeting? Should you, then, refuse, or say, "No, visitors are not welcome"—or "we never invite visitors"? NEVER! Never insult or offend your neighbor. Of course, *if* the neighbor is hostile and offensive, and is *demanding* that he come, for the pure purpose of causing trouble, then you must *insist* politely that it be taken up with the minister—then, whether the neighbor objects or not, call your minister and inform him of all the facts, and ask if he cannot call at once. He will know how to handle the situation.

But suppose the friend is *not* hostile, but is friendly, doesn't want the minister to call, but does want to visit the church service with you? If it comes to this, then perhaps you cannot—*should*

not—refuse. BUT, even in this last-resort situation, do not agree *without also EXPLAINING*. And how should you explain?

Try to make it plain something like this: Explain that, first of all, *we go by the Bible*. Explain how the Bible commands us to *go to* the world with the Gospel—but to be *SEPARATE, by ourselves*, in our own worship services. Explain that so far as WE are concerned, visitors most certainly are WELCOME—but we try to obey the Bible by meeting SEPARATELY, BY OURSELVES—and that often our ministers preach Scriptures before our own congregations that do reprove and rebuke the audience, and we are not sure whether visitors might not take offense, and we surely don't want to offend anyone—but our ministers DO preach pretty strong sermons.

Now, after that much explanation, if your neighbor is friendly and still wants to come, you have prepared the visitor's mind to expect pretty strong preaching, and explained that it is not intended to cause offense. That is the best you can do. BUT—in such a case, be sure you telephone your pastor *before* the Sabbath service, and explain, so he will immediately come to be introduced to your visitor *before the service*—and from there on, *just let your pastor handle it*. Continue to be friendly in every way—introduce your visitor to several friends, so that we do, in every way, show the visitor we are friendly.

If You Meet a Visitor

But suppose that although you, yourself, did not bring a visitor, another member does. You merely *see* a visitor there for the first time. WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?—walk away, and avoid meeting the visitor? NO! Go up, introduce yourself with a smile—BE FRIENDLY—make the visitor feel welcome!

But someone in every church is *sure* to go to the opposite extreme. Often we seem to have a member who will rush up to the visitor, introduce himself profusely, and immediately start EXPLAINING THE BIBLE to the visitor, or getting into a religious discussion. But DON'T!!! Never do this!!! To the one who does this, let me say candidly, this is one strong reason why *YOU* are not the minister! It is the minister's place to do any explaining. He has been trained to know how. God has called him, and therefore the Holy Spirit leads and guides him. DON'T TRY TO MAKE YOURSELF THE MINISTER, or the minister may rebuke *you* very strongly!!

You who meet a visitor at church service, just be friendly, smile, but *do not* start a conversation about the sermon, about religion, or about the Bible.

If the visitor asks about such things, *call the minister or assistant* or a deacon at once, with a smile, introduce him and mention the question—then let him take over, and excuse yourself to go meet and shake hands with others. And when introduced to—or introducing yourself to—a visitor, NEVER—and I mean NEVER take it on yourself to *either* say "Don't you ever come again!"—or, the opposite extreme, "I want to invite you to come again."

REMEMBER—it is not your place—but the minister's—to invite visitors either to come again, or to forbid them to come. Don't try to be a self-appointed minister when God has never called you! God may deal with you *through* the minister, if you do!

At Feast of Tabernacles

After the last Feast of Tabernacles, one woman member wrote that her non-member husband had attended with her. He had been somewhat "interested" before attending, but at Gladewater he saw a few things which he completely misunderstood—no one knew about it to explain the true facts to him—and "that finished him." He was completely turned against us. He was "disgusted." It came to my attention, and I tried to explain the true facts which he did not understand, and which should have caused no offense whatsoever. But once a natural-minded person becomes embittered, his mind is seldom any longer open to facts! He believes what he has decided he *wants* to believe!

I am sure that this situation has occurred many times. Many of you have husbands—or wives, as the case may be—who are not members. Some of them are hostile. If they are, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should they come to the Feast of Tabernacles, or any of God's holy Festivals. They will only find fault. Whatever they hear, they will disagree. Whatever they see, will be *sure* to be WRONG, as they will paint it. Some such husbands have brought their wives, left them at the Tabernacle grounds, then driving back to pick the wives up and take them home when the Feast is over. This, of course, is perfectly all right.

If you are a wife, and the only way you can come is to have your antagonistic husband bring you, then DON'T COME! And I am thinking of HIM—not the welfare of the Church. The Church of God will go right on and on—and keep GROWING, regardless, because it is empowered by the SPIRIT OF GOD. But it will make your husband unhappy. He won't enjoy it. He will see and hear only that which will appear WRONG to him.

If you are a husband, and your wife

is antagonistic against the Church and its doctrines and practises, **DO NOT, under any circumstances, allow your wife to attend.** If you are a man, *be a MAN!* God made you the head of your wife. God commands *you* to come. Therefore you *must come*, yourself! You must obey GOD. But you must, if necessary, make your wife obey you and stay home. If she threatens to leave you, you may have to decide between her and God. Will you obey her, or will you obey GOD? Your ETERNITY may be determined by your decision.

Anyway, regardless of tantrums and threats, I don't know of any wife who wants her husband to be a MOUSE, instead of a MAN! If you haven't been a MAN before, and ruled your own household as God commands, *it's time to start!* But be *kind*, not domineering. Remember, although many won't admit it, every woman, by nature, wants to be DOMINATED by a MAN! But *never domineered!* There's a tremendous difference. God teaches every husband to LOVE his wife—to be kind and considerate, *yet to be firm*, and to dominate, when necessary!

Let me tell you a little personal experience about one of God's ministers. Like many others, both this minister and his wife were Ambassador College students. This particular wife was one of our very finest girl students—a leader among girls. A few years after their marriage, I asked her, in a spirit of humor, and with a smile, whether she had ever succumbed to temptation and tried to “wear the pants.”

She grinned. “Yes, I did, once,” she replied.

“And,” I pursued, “did you find out who was boss?”

Her eyes *gleamed* with pride. “Are you telling *me!*” she replied.

This young woman is a very competent minister's wife, and an efficient mother. But she could never hold her husband in the high esteem and respect that she does if she could dominate him. Thousands of people hold this particular minister in *very* high esteem and respect—but I assure you that, if he did not have the strength of character to obey God in being the head of his wife and family, he would not hold this high honor in God's Church that he does.

If your wife is so unreasonable and bitter that she really leaves you for obeying God, then read and obey I Cor. 7:10-15. Let her leave. Such an ending is a tragedy—but if *you* have obeyed God's instruction, in love and consideration, and cannot prevent it, it is the *least* of the evils.

But those of you who have the wife of your youth, who *believes*, and obeys God, and is with you in God's Truth,

have MUCH to be thankful for—as I have, in the lovely woman who has been my wife for over 45 years! Yes, this is the greatest material blessing God has lavished on me!

WHAT a blessing is a loving and competent minister's wife! One of the PROOFS that this is GOD'S CHURCH is the fact that every minister is blessed with a wife who is a REAL HELP!

But to you husbands with unbelieving wives, I say, **BE CAREFUL** never to give your wife any *just cause* for recrimination!

Unconverted Mates

Many of our members have mates who are unconverted or members of another church. Some of these are hostile—some are not.

But to all married members whose wives or husbands are *not* in the Church, I say—with *emphasis*—*try to avoid causing antagonism!* In entirely too many cases, all this bitter strife and hostility has actually been *caused*, unthinkingly, by our member. And how? **BY TRYING TO EXPLAIN THE BIBLE**, or to get the other converted, or to *talk about* religion or our religious beliefs!

DON'T DO THIS!! NEVER DO THIS!!!!

Never try to explain any doctrines or beliefs, **UNLESS** your wife or husband is friendly, open-minded, and in such an attitude *asks you to explain*. Even then, make the talk loving—kind—and *watch* to see when your mate begins to lose interest or become tired—and **STOP** the subject, or *change* the subject, at that point as soon as possible.

Remember your husband or wife has just as much right to his or her religion as you have to yours! God made each of us a free moral agent. Each must *make his own decision!* And one thing you **CANNOT DO**—you cannot argue or talk anyone into seeing, or accepting God's Truth, or being converted.

TALK TO GOD about your unconverted mate, in prayer—never to the mate, except when asked in a good spirit. Intercede for them in PRAYER! **NONE** can come to Jesus Christ, unless the Spirit of the Father draws him. Your arguments can't draw him—only GOD'S SPIRIT can.

Now suppose you are a man with a hostile wife. When one of the annual festivals comes up, use all the tact you possibly can. PRAY over it. Ask God to give you wisdom, to say the right things to her. Try to be kind, considerate, loving. **REALIZE** that she probably is entirely sincere in being unable to see what you see. If God hasn't called her, she can't help that! Try to explain, kindly, that you give her the full right to her own religious views and actions—and that you have the same right to yours. As you are not going to allow

her to interfere with your obeying God and attending His Festival, you allow her the same freedom of religion you demand for yourself. Marriage is a *physical* union, not a spiritual one. You can be ONE FLESH, as God joined you to be together, in love and mutual tolerance, *without* religious INTOLERANCE.

Do all in your power to preserve your marriage in LOVE, in tolerant consideration for HER. Still, be FIRM—yes, calmly, but 100% *determinedly firm*—in obeying God rather than any human, and in being head of your wife and family. However, bear in mind that God makes you the head of your wife in the human and fleshly sense—you are ONE FLESH, *not* one spirit. You are NOT head over her *in her religion*.

Do not argue religion. Do not try to talk her into God's Truth—you can't. Just don't mention the subject. So far as possible, God teaches, be at peace with all people.

Now, finally, remember—never try to talk ANYONE into salvation, God's Truth, Bible doctrines, or being converted. So far as non-member friends and neighbors are concerned, just try to avoid all mention of our church services. Try to keep the subject from coming up. It is better if they do not even know about our services—then there is no embarrassment about not inviting them to attend.

Try to prevent non-members from seeing, or knowing about, *The Good News*. But NEVER do as one member untactfully did. This woman had read in *The Good News* that this paper is for Church members ONLY. The paper was left out in plain sight in her living room. A neighbor picked it up, started reading it. She grabbed the copy out of her neighbor's hand, saying—“Oh, we've been told not to let outsiders read this. You're not converted. You're not allowed to read this.” Naturally the friend was insulted, offended, and decided she didn't want any of OUR religion!

If a non-member accidentally does see a copy of this paper, DON'T offend by telling them non-members are not allowed to read it. It is then too late for that. Let them go on reading it, but if they want on the list, tell them they can write and ask, but it is just our own Church paper for members, and not generally sent to non-members. But NEVER cause offense. Better just keep it out of sight in the first place.

But in all things, show LOVE, kindness, consideration. Be *friendly* to people in the world, even though we must not be *part* of the world. Always try to avoid offense. GOD is LOVE. God is merciful, considerate, compassionate. We must be!

WOMEN'S DRESS RULING

concerning too short and too tight skirts, and extra-low-neck dresses

by Herbert W. Armstrong

WHY does the Word of God confine His instruction regarding *modest apparel*, and the *adornment* of the person with clothes, to the **WOMEN**?

Did God desire to discriminate—to make women uncomfortable—to show partiality to men? Does God intend for *men* to show off themselves in ornamental and gay attire, while He commands women to make unsightly scarecrows of themselves?

Of course we know better than that. There is nothing in God's instruction to make women appear ugly, or to make them uncomfortable. On the contrary, many, if not most, women will suffer any amount of discomfort in their worship of the goddess Dame Fashion.

God's REASON

God never shows partiality. He never discriminates against individuals, sexes, races, or whoever. Yet God's Word does carry specific instruction for *women* to be modest in their dress—and no corresponding instruction for modesty in *men's* clothing is given. **WHY?**

There is a reason! I think, candidly, that the girls and women in God's Church *know* the answer. And for that very reason some of them seem to want to violate God's instruction!

What I am going to say applies only to *a few*. Women in God's Church are different from those of the world. But a very few need severe correction.

I do not mean that even these few go to the extremes of ridiculous fashion so commonly seen in the world. You won't see any member of God's Church wearing artificially striped hair, green eyelids, and a purple mouth, decked out in outlandish dress design and overdone wacky jewelry. But, in the category of too short and too tight skirts, and in excessively low-neck dresses, some of you women and girls need a sharp rebuke from God's ministers!

Now **WHY** does God's Instruction Book contain admonition regarding modesty in *women's* dress, and *not* regarding *men's*?

In both colleges—Pasadena and Bricket Wood, England,—I personally teach a class in *Principles of Living*. This class includes God's instruction in regard to sex and marriage. Sex responses operate in the *mind*, and the male mind does not react in the same manner as the female mind in relation to sex. Sex consciousness, and arousal, in the male, is brought about much more quickly than in the female, and is

stimulated by sight, or even by imagination, in a manner that has little affect on females.

God made the female body to be attractive to the male. This attraction may be, and *should* be, one of sheer beauty. But also it may be, and under many circumstances often is, a stimulation of **LUST**. Especially when certain parts of the female figure are emphasized, such as the hips and buttocks by tight skirts, the low neckline exposing portions of breasts, or too-short skirts exposing more than is modest of the female leg.

I am quite aware that it is the current fashion, in the world, to wear short knee-length skirts extra tight around the hips. But the women in God's Church have *come out* of the world, and are *different*—or else they have not been put into His Church by God. *God's* daughters do not find it necessary to conform to this world, going along in its extremes of daring, or wrong, styles.

Candidly, when I see a female with a skirt tight enough to call attention to the shape of her hips, especially when tight below the hips and under the buttocks, I know that she is either careless and needs sharp admonishing or else she is wearing it deliberately to attract male eyes and arouse lust toward her in men's minds.

Do you want to know my personal reaction when I see such an example? It makes me feel that such a girl or woman needs either a good lecture driven home by a *sound SPANKING* of what she so brazenly displays, or to be classed as a fallen woman and a common prostitute.

THAT IS PLAIN LANGUAGE! I mean it to be plain, and I want the women in God's Church to know it is coming from God's Minister, who speaks by Christ's authority!

Recently some of our girls and women have been wearing skirts that are entirely **TOO SHORT!** Often I have felt I ought to speak personally to some of you. If this article does not quickly correct this evil—**AND IT IS AN EVIL!**—God's ministers will be instructed to begin speaking personally and in a manner that ought to cause a deep sense of shame and produce a very red face on any girl or woman who invites such sharp rebuke from a Minister of God!

When many of you women wear skirts as high as the knee, and which completely expose the knees when sitting, your skirts are an abomination in God's eyes. I wonder, frankly, if God

doesn't blush when *HE* sees you! Are you women who do this, deliberately trying to tempt men into breaking the spirit of God's law against adultery? Are you trying to make yourselves adulteresses? Are you not breaking the very spirit of that law, *yourselves*?

In our instruction to parents in proper child rearing we teach that when you spank your child, it must be sufficiently severe to impress the lesson—painful enough that he will not want to cause it to be repeated very soon. In this instruction to the spiritual children in God's Church, your Pastor is making this correction to those who need it, I sincerely hope, plain enough and painful enough that it shall not need repeating!

Neither Extreme

God's Church does *not* teach, nor does God's Word when rightly understood, that women should go to the opposite extreme of wearing ill-fitting, overly loose skirts that drag the dust and pick up germs. I am not saying that your neckline must be so high that all the neck is covered. God is not the author of **UGLINESS**, any more than of confusion or evil. God is the Great Artist who has designed all the beauty of **nature**.

Consequently, in conformity with the Word of God, God's Church encourages women to dress neatly, pleasingly, attractively within the bounds of proper modesty and good taste, and even with sufficient becoming style to express personality and individuality. God Himself expressed perfect artistry in beautiful design in nature—in the lily—the rose—beautiful trees, shrubs and plants—in prize-winning livestock—and even in the beautiful human body, when healthy and not degenerated.

For women to dress becomingly yet modestly, there is no need to disguise the human figure by grotesque ultra-modern styles that make them look like lampshades, T-squares, or triangles. The world goes either to that extreme, or to the extreme of undue emphasis on breast, hips, and legs.

But it is in this latter category that some—yes, too many—or our women offend.

More than once I have seen a few of our women, in evening dress, exposing entirely too much female breast—with neckline cut so low as to show a goodly portion of breasts, with a crease in the middle. On one or two occasions, I

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understood about God's Festivals, *every single one of you* should have SAVED a second tithe or tenth of your income—as God commands—to enable you to *keep and rejoice* in the Feast of Tabernacles. We have had many articles explaining this command in the past in the GOOD NEWS magazine. If any of you want further information on this, be sure to write us *immediately*.

But NOW, if any of you have *wrongly* "borrowed" from your second tithe or simply failed to save a full second tenth to attend God's Festivals—you should if at all possible *pay back* this tenth part of your income and OBEY God by attending His Feast of Tabernacles. If some of you newer brethren haven't understood about this command long enough or thoroughly enough to save this second tithe, then certainly God would *expect you* to use money from your regular income to attend IF it is at all possible and is not going to result in calamity for yourself or your family. The point is that Almighty God INTENDS that you be at His Festival!

There will be no miserable "excuses" accepted by Christ after He comes to personally lead us in keeping the Feast. We have already seen that revealed in Zechariah 14. And so—since Christ does not change, and since He is right NOW the living Head of the Church—*He will not accept any such excuses at this time either!* Unless illness or serious financial adversity would result from your attendance (and God knows what the situation *really is*), you should MAKE a way to attend the Feast of Tabernacles THIS YEAR! If you have genuine problems, write us about them immediately.

REJOICE at the Feast of Tabernacles!

Obedying these commands of God will bring greater blessings than you have ever experienced! Hundreds of you have written us asking, "How can we have fellowship with other true believers?" God in His infinite wisdom *knew* that His children should congregate for instruction and fellowship. That is *why* God *blessed* us by giving us His annual festivals.

Saving your second tithe will make the joyous privilege of attending these festivals possible. Because God has commanded this special tithe, He is *bound* to help you fulfill this command. If you do YOUR part, you can *know* that God will enable you to attend His Holy Festivals!

Do you realize what this means?

It means that God is commanding us, instructing us—and will BLESS us that we may take a *vacation* in joyous fellowship with His people! This is the

time to take *your* vacation. It is a time when God will make it possible for *all* His children to rest from their regular duties and to *worship and rejoice* together in His festivals.

So by all means *come to the Feast of Tabernacles!*

When? At the time God has set—at the Feast of Tabernacles, which begins this year on Friday evening, October 12 and ends on Saturday evening October 20.

How? By setting aside your *second* tithe regularly which God has commanded that you use in attending His Holy Days.

Why? Because your Creator knows that you *need* the spiritual fellowship made possible by these festivals. He has commanded you to attend.

Honestly, *you can't afford NOT to attend* God's festivals!

So, as we said last year: Come with an *open* mind and heart. Come with an *open Bible* and a *ready pen and notebook*. Come with a *warm handshake* and a *ready smile*. But COME—*obey your Maker*—and REJOICE!

DRESS RULING

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have instructed Mrs. Armstrong to speak to such women, telling them plainly that their necklines are too low.

Women's breasts, in plain language, were designed by God to nurse babies—not to be flaunted immodestly to arouse lust in men.

In the matter of too-tight skirts around the hips, the excuse often is that the girl has taken on weight—and she protests that she cannot help it. But she *can* help it, and if she is to remain in God's Church or enter God's Kingdom, *she must*—one of two ways: either don't remain overweight (fasting and proper diet will cure that quickly), or let out the seam.

We want our women to be beautiful—*naturally* beautiful, pleasingly attractive, in good style, *well groomed*—but not artificially so, and this may be accomplished WITH FULL MODESTY.

It is the *over-emphasis* of lust-arousing portions of the female body that MUST BE CORRECTED.

Feast of Tabernacles

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give us the big extra BOOST we ought to have at this time of the year!

So THINK about it, brethren. PLAN to give an offering, but SEND IN YOUR REGULAR OFFERINGS BESIDES! SURELY we are God's people! Let's keep PROV-

ING it to Him!

Don't Miss the Experience of a Lifetime!

Perhaps some few of you reading this are planning NOT to attend. Maybe there is a valid reason. Perhaps you are a *newcomer* to God's Church, and, even though faithfully saving your second tithe, you have not had enough to come simply because you learned of this principle of God too late. Perhaps you are a widow, who has been counseled not to attend this year, so that others may come.

But if there is NOT a *really* valid reason—then YOU SHOULD RECONSIDER VERY SERIOUSLY!

Brethren! If Almighty God were to APPEAR before you, and COMMAND you to do something—would you DO it? Think about it for a moment! *Would* you, *really*?

Many of you simply HAVE NOT TRAVELED much before. You are FEARFUL of travel to "far away" places. But will YOU GO TO PETRA WHEN GOD COMMANDS—LEAVING AND FORSAKING ALL BEHIND YOU—WITH NEVER A BACKWARD GLANCE? YOU SAID YOU WOULD, WHEN YOU STUDIED LUKE 14:25-33 AND DECIDED YOU WOULD COUNT THE COST!

Some have never been ON a bus, or a train, or an airplane. Some have older cars, and think they may not make it. Others need tires, or parts, or perhaps are fearful of traveling ALONE.

Brethren—*whatever* your problem—THINK IT THROUGH! Make sure your reason for thinking you might MISS this glorious Festival is a really VALID one!

Perhaps some of you, IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH SECOND TITHE OR OTHER MONEY TO GET TO THE FEAST AND RETURN HOME should *not* come. But be sure to write of your circumstances by *airmail, immediately*, and get wise counsel with your problem.

For *most* of you, attendance at this great Feast is only a matter of a little EFFORT, and exercising some real FAITH in God! It would be a real SHAME to have to miss these wonderful days of preaching services, special songs from really talented young people from Ambassador College. You would have to miss the student "fun" show, the finely done Ambassador Chorale concert (in Gladewater only) and all the jam-packed, fun-filled days of REJOICING together, as God's own people—away from the cares of this sin-sick world!

DON'T MISS it, brethren! PRAY about it—PLAN to come—ask God to MAKE A WAY for you to attend!

God willing—we'll all be meeting *together*, at the FEAST!