



Cherreguine Bible Doctrine Ministries

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Separation in the Christian's Physical Life

Dress

The Christian's outward appearance is a matter of concern to the Apostle Paul, particularly in the case of Christian women for whom he lays down some guidelines: "In like manner also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel . . . (1 Timothy 2:9). Modesty in dress, especially today, requires careful discrimination. The Christian is not to be conformed to the world's sensuous standards, and must set aside the majority of the fashions of today. At the same time, the Christian ought to display good taste in the clothing he wears, and not draw attention to himself with extremism in either direction. Pastor George F. Parsons has set forth the following principle:

Whenever a new style or a new way of dressing or a new way of saying something is seen or heard by me, I will look to see if it pictures truth or error. I will see if it agrees or disagrees with God's Word and God's ways. I will see if it makes clear or confuses and clouds up God's Person and God's Word. I will see if it mixes truth and error. May nothing detract from the message I want to present: "I belong to the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me."

Physical contact

The Christian is most certainly to be discriminatory to the extreme, however, in the matter of whom he touches. Absolute separation is axiomatic for unmarried Christians of opposite sex. This is particularly true for the Christian worker:

A minister, especially a young one, who puts his hands, however innocent-mindedly on the person of womankind, particularly young girls, is in the mildest language I can command, an unmitigated fool (Homer A. Kent, Sr., *The Pastor and His Work*, p. 57).

The Christian is thus to be set apart in this regard, too.

Entertainment

While proper recreation and exercise are necessary for the Christian, the Christian must use discernment in the activities in which he engages in leisure time. The Christian is to be separate from "worldly amusements and unclean habits which defile mind and body." A chapel speaker recently gave a good rule of thumb for deciding about doubtful things:

Anything that dims my vision of Christ, or takes away my taste for Bible study, or cramps my prayer life, or makes Christian work difficult is wrong for me and as a Christian I must turn from it (Cited by Dr. David Nettleton, former President of Faith Baptist Bible College, in the Grace Seminary Chapel, November 27, 1973).

To “turn from” something is separation: we are beginning to see something of the scope of this subject!

Speech

Discrimination is also the order in the use of the Christian’s tongue. Every thought which comes to mind is not to be broadcast by the child of God. Paul makes this clear:

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers (Ephesians 4:29).

The Christian is thus to be drastically selective in his choice of words. Not only is he to separate out all vulgarity from his speech, but positively, his words are to be a blessing to the hearers.