

We are reading part-II from a Message given by our F.C.G. CHURCH 'Founding Pastor' (late Pastor A. Clark) given in 1920s & printed 1930.

AMUSEMENT, DRESS, AND FELLOWSHIP-II

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We have not spoken much on these subjects before (he said), but as they come so near to the everyday life of each human being, it is very important that we take the right attitude to God in these matters (which should be of much concern to a person seeking Eternal Life).

The question that naturally arises is, what should our attitude be toward worldly amusements, (modest) dress attire, the wearing of adornments, using man-made cosmetics instead of trusting on God to keep one's complexion clear and healthy, and then keeping Scriptural fellowship? We need to keep in mind that our attitude regarding these questions should (always) be the result of an inward 'divine life' not just a religious, self-righteous act that would not change our heart.

Part one of the Message reminded us regarding 'worldly amusements' and entertainment) that whole 'worldly system' is planned by the devil and man together. (Of course, the devil is back of it altogether), to take the place of God in everything. However (1 John 2:15-16) instructs us, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

However, Satan has the power to put desires in our heart for Unscriptural things such as Unscriptural amusements, entertainments, to dress immodestly or indecently, and engage unscriptural fellowship. But anyone who comes to know God will be well-satisfied with Him. God will be all the enjoyment and happiness one would ever desire and not care for those things from Satan. Our outward actions should be the result of an inward Christ-life. (a new inward nature).

On that subject of immodest attire, (1 Tim. 2: teaches) "I also desire that women should make themselves attractive by their discreet, quiet and 'modest dress'. They should not

indulge in wreaths or gold ornaments for the hair, or in pearls or expensive clothes, but as is proper for women who 'profess to be religious'—they should make themselves attractive by their good actions."

However, it has become the custom with men and women (with some exceptions), to follow 'the modes of the day', both in color and style (worldly men and women's 'styles of dress' that should not be worn by one living a Christian life). (Rom.12:2 instructs) "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

God's inspired Word remains the same (since His Word does not change but is everlasting) with regard to 'outward adornments' of wearing of jewelry, necklaces, using makeup, and other cosmetic things. Instead wanting to be unnoticed by others, and to be humble in God's sight.

When Jesus Christ was on earth, He (as example for us) walked around wearing ordinary clothes; (not to be noticed, but to have humble appearance). He dressed like the common people. But, all around us we can see how far the average person has drifted from the Bible standard in the 'matter of dress' (because of pride and wanting to be noticed, rather than 'a humble appearance' as our Savior portrayed and set example, (but instead, following 'styles of dress and appearance, and habits of living as those of the world follow).

When it comes to the subject of jewelry (necklaces, earrings, etc.), and makeup such as nail polish, hair dyes, rouge, powder, and lipstick (and we are not casting reflections on any person the Pastor said), but, when a woman or a girl begins to use lipstick and puts rouge on her face (and other makeup), to our mind it is a subtle 'snare of Satan', to sidetrack and get a person to depend on those artificial cosmetics (of which can harm a person's skin), instead of trusting God to make them attractive. God can give every person who trusts on Him alone, a beautiful complexion and clear smooth skin, without blemishes whatever. But we take ourselves out of God's hands when we try to improve our complexion and skin by 'artificial-means instead of trusting on God. When our dependence is on God alone, we will have such health of body, that our skin and

complexion will be clear, and it will be a kind that will be permanent and not subject to wrinkles, or any blemishes whatever.

This teaching may seem radical to some, but it is perfectly Scriptural as well as sensible. For us to take these bodies to the One who made them, is the only sensible thing anyone could do. However, our 'greatest desire' should be, to have a Christ-life enthroned in us, and when we do have Christ within ourselves, it will reach to our bodies and will keep us in perfect health.

Then we come to the 'Unscriptural Fellowship question'. We need to have clear understanding of this matter of vital concern, because some people have gone so far as to give a teaching that a person is not allowed to have anything to do with their own parents if they do not believe the way they do, or if they do not attend the same church they attend. However, the Bible gives us some clear teaching on this.

We are told (Eph.6:1) "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." And (vs.2 says) "Honor thy father and mother; *which is the first commandment with a promise.*"

(The late Pastor said) "We want to say that it is unscriptural to give out such teaching. The Bible forbids us to have fellowship with 'two classes' of people. If a person is an un-Believer, we are not to make a close friend of them, nor to partnership with them. A girl should not keep company with any young man, and a young man should not keep company with a young woman, who is not already in the Truth of God's Word.

If Christ is in our heart, we would not want to keep close fellowship with a person who cares not for God's Truth. Of course, there are some young men who will make an effort to come into the Truth just to get the young woman they desire for a wife, and some young women will do the same to get a certain young man. But after they do get them (since they were not sincerely repentant), they will then act worse than they did before.

A young girl should not try to reform a young man and get him to come into the Truth by keeping company with him. She should stay away from him, until he is truly inspired to come into the Truth right. One cannot 'mix the Truth' with 'the world', for that will not and does not work out for the best, when a person tries to 'run ahead of the Holy Spirit' by 'charting their own

path' in any part of their life (instead of, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide them in doing His Will, which is always the best thing for each one of us in every circumstance of our life).

The Bible says that we are to 'keep separate from' all such wrong fellowship. This means we could not partner with anyone who is not in the Truth of God, nor go to various places with them; (we are not to tell them our 'troubles' and have them tell us their 'troubles'). We cannot afford to do that, as Apostle Paul brought that out clearly (2 Cor.6:14-18) "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth, with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty." (This does not mean that we cannot be pleasant with outsiders, nor bid them the time of day, but we should never make a close companion of them).

Then there is another class of people we could not Scripturally fellowship with, and that is, a railer (a person who rails with harsh and bad language), a fornicator, or one who commits secret vice. If they are covetous or if they are living in sin and will not repent of it (such as a young woman and young man who are not married) if they were living as married man and woman (the apostle taught that we should not even eat with them).

In (1 Cor.5:) it says that a man was living as man and wife with somebody else's wife, and Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church that if that man would not repent, they were to put him out from among them, which they did. Then, later it seems that the man had repented. So, in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, he said: "The man to whom I refer has been sufficiently punished by the penalty inflicted by most of you; so that now you must take the opposite course, and forgive and encourage him, or else he may be overwhelmed by the intensity of his pain. So,

I beg you to assure him of your love.” (2 Cor.2:6-8). (Paul told them to do what they could to make his life pleasant, or he would become discouraged and leave the Truth altogether.)

While a person is living in adultery, or if they are a railer, an extortioner, or covetous, Paul tells us that we are not even to eat with them while they are doing those things. (1 Cor.5:9-11) “I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye need go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner with such a one no not to eat.”

Paul does not mean we are to treat them as an enemy, but if we had the opportunity, we should admonish them as a brother and not have fellowship with them until they repent. After they have repented, (whether they had been covetous, immoral, or idolatrous), we are to treat them as if they had never committed the act. We should treat them the same as the ‘prodigal son’ was treated. For, when he was willing to repent and come back to his father’s home, he was received with open arms. He said (Luke 15:18-24) “I will arise and go to my father, and will say, unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.”

“And the son said unto him, Father”, ‘I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found. And they began to be merry.’” (Luke 15:18-24).

(The Pastor said) “I have heard of a teaching that says if a person has committed any of those sins, their own children should not have anything to do with them. That kind of teaching is un-Scriptural! While we are

commanded not to fellowship with anyone who is ‘living in sin’, this does not include one's father and mother. No command in the Bible says that one should cease relations with their parents. The Bible teaches just opposite. The first command God gave with ‘promise added to it, was: “Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou may live long on the earth.” (Eph.6:2-3).

That command does not qualify whether they are a good or bad father, or a good or bad mother. It does not say we should not honor them if they do not attend the same church we attend. The human relationship that exists between parents and children has all to do with it. Jesus severely denounced the Jewish rulers, as well as the Scribes and Pharisees, for substituting their traditions for God's Word. They came to Jesus and asked (Mark 7:5) “Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?” (vs.9-13) “And He said unto them, ‘Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, “Honor thy father and thy mother; and, Who-so curses father or mother, let him die the death:” “But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, it is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou might be profited by me;” “he shall be free.” “And ye suffer(allow) him no more to do ought (anything) for his father or his mother;” (Thus) “Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.”’”

(Or what He meant was), you teach according to your traditions that if a son has any money to give away, he should give it to the church, instead of giving it to his father and mother.’ However (the Pastor said), “God's Word says that we are not to neglect our father and mother, but we are to support and look after them as we can do so. We are never to allow a church or anything else to cause us to neglect our parents.”

There is another passage of Scripture that many people twist and pervert. It is in (Luke 14:26) “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and Wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.”

Many people think that the Bible contradicts itself. In one place it says we are to honor our father and mother, and in another place, it says we are to hate them. Well, anyone with any knowledge of the Scriptures would know that that is not the real meaning of (Luke 14:26). It does mean, however, that we should not permit our father or mother, wife, husband, or children, or even something in our own life, to cause us to disobey God's Word. Jesus meant that we would be called upon to do things that an unbelieving mother or father would not agree with. And that they would do things that we would not approve of, (or something else to get us to disobey God.)

However, we are not to cut fellowship with them, and, on the other hand, we should never allow them to get between us and God, as far as His Will is concerned. If our mother or father were attending some denominational church, and we had accepted the Truth, the question arises, "how far should I go in honoring them? As far as I can see, we should go to the limit in helping, honoring, and treating them better than if they had not opposed us. We should never cut fellowship with our parents, regardless of what they do. We are not privileged by the Scriptures to cut fellowship with them. So, in dealings with our parents we need divine wisdom and guidance, so as not to endorse or condone, nor do we do anything un-Scriptural that they may be doing.

This would also include our loved ones who are not in (or have left the Truth). That is, we are not to say or go along with, or give our approval to any 'Unscriptural plans' they have or are doing, or that they may be mixed up in. Rather than visiting or inviting unbelieving relatives to our homes, we are to put them fully in God's hands to convict, and to bring them to a full and complete repentance.

(He said that) "Many years ago, we were in touch with a woman whose mother was living in open sin; (with a man who was not her husband). This was not going on for long before she became very ill. According to 'some teaching I had heard about', she could not have anything to do with her mother. Instead of that, she took her mother in her own home, gave her the Truth, and she repented right. Her mother was prayed for, and she was fully healed. If she had cut fellowship with her mother, and if she

would have died in that un-repentant condition, she would have gone straight to the Lake of Fire.

So, there is no qualification in God's command to not honor our father and mother. The only place where we are privileged to do contrary to their will or displease them, is where the 'Will of God' is involved. In that case we cannot forsake His Will. God is Omnipotent, and 'His will' is unlimited, and is of all-authority. So, for each one of us, it must come ahead of our parents, our family, and friends, and even our own selves. God's Will comes ahead of every other consideration.

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SOME MAIN POINTS:

As it is our desire to follow Bible instructions and the command to 'not follow nor conform to customs of the world' (Romans 12:2), Then the question that naturally would arise with us, is, what should our attitude be toward worldly amusements, entertainment, dressing modestly, and keeping Scriptural fellowship? And, we should always keep in mind, that our attitude regarding these questions, should always be the result of an inward heart attitude of the 'divine life'.

The message concludes by emphasizing "there is no qualification in God's command for us to not honor our father and mother. The only place where we are privileged to do contrary to their will or displease them, is, where the 'Will of God' is involved. In that case we cannot forsake His Will. God is Omnipotent, and 'His will' is unlimited and is of all-authority. So (for each one of us), it must come ahead of our parents, our family, and friends, and even our own selves. God's Will comes ahead of every other consideration.

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