



# The Worldwide Church of God

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## HOW YOU DRESS FOR CHURCH-- Could it keep you out of the KINGDOM?

By Herbert W. Armstrong

**A**RE SOME OF our members going to be kept out of the Kingdom of God, because of the way you dress for church services?

**THIS IS SERIOUS!**

In some of our churches members never think of dressing up, but come in slovenly attire, overalls, blue jeans, tennis shoes, any kind of slouchy sport clothes.

In the state of Israel people do not dress up much. Men wear sport shirts with open collar and no necktie.

In Dec. 1, 1968, we were having a meeting with the president to announce our decision to go ahead in full cooperation with Hebrew University and the Israel Archaeological Society on the large-scale archaeological project at the temple mount adjoining the eastern temple wall.

With Professor Binyamin Mazar, Mr. Stanley Rader and I had first stopped in for a short chat with Dr. Yosef Aviram, who was going with us to the presidential palace. We had left Dr. Aviram's office, when he stopped midway down the corridor, saying: "Wait a minute. We're going into the presence of the president of Israel. I must wear a jacket."

He had started with us with only a sport shirt, unbuttoned at the neck. But, going into the presence of the head of state, he knew he must have on a jacket.

One time several years ago, I preached a sermonette, prior to the main sermon — I believe it was by Mr. Charles Hunting. We were at Big Sandy, Tex. Graduation day was coming up, and I had noted that people came to church services in any old kind of sloppy, unkempt clothes.

I wanted those people to at least be moderately well dressed at the graduation ceremony. I had noticed that brethren were coming to church services very sloppily dressed. I knew they all had better clothes — I did not mean they should purchase new and finer clothes.

**Christ not indifferent to dress**

Jesus spoke of the Kingdom, when the dead in Christ shall rise

first, and we who are then alive shall be caught up to meet the returning GLORIFIED CHRIST in the air. Then, descending to the Mount of Olives, will follow the GREAT WEDDING between Christ and the Church. Jesus' parable spoke of this.

Jesus pictured His Father as a great King calling many people to the wedding with Christ. But many or most of those called made light of it, gave excuses, rejected their calling and salvation. The King then sent His armies to bring in others. "And when the king came in . . . he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:

"And he said unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness" (Matthew 22:11-13).

Of course, in the parable, Jesus was using garments we wear as symbols of righteousness or of unrighteousness. The lack of a wedding garment symbolized unrighteousness. Nevertheless, Jesus would not have used this symbolism if He was indifferent to how we come dressed into HIS PRESENCE! When you come to church services,

YOU ARE COMING INTO THE VERY PRESENCE OF GOD!

**It makes a difference**

Brethren, IT DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO GOD HOW YOU COME DRESSED TO CHURCH SERVICES!

I know God expects me not only to inform you brethren, but so far as possible, to set you an example.

So let me ask you, HAVE YOU EVER SEEN ME COME TO A CHURCH SERVICE IMPROPERLY DRESSED? I don't believe you have.

When Dr. Aviram put on a jacket, he was merely following Israeli custom. They are a struggling nation, with a heavy percent of national income going for armed forces. They do not "dress up" for everyday occasions as much as other more prosperous nations.

But notice in I John 1:3 that when we come together in worship service, that "truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

When we gather together for a church service, WE ARE COMING INTO THE PRESENCE OF THE GREAT MAJESTIC GOD, and to have fellowship also with the living JESUS CHRIST.

THINK OF IT!  
For I know you have NOT

thought about it! When you come into the very presence of ALMIGHTY GOD and of JESUS CHRIST, YOU MUST COME WITH EVERY DUE RESPECT FOR THEIR SUPREME MAJESTY.

I say to you brethren, I know you have not *deliberately* come to church services in a slouchy, unkempt appearance — rather, you just never thought about it this way before!

Now that I have REMINDED YOU, you will have NO EXCUSE, and you will be INSULTING, and MAKING LIGHT of your Almighty Father and your Savior Jesus Christ.

**God does notice**

You do NOT need to go out and buy new clothes. But DRESS UP hereafter in the best you have! God will be watching you! Notice it in Psalm 33:13-15:

"The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation, he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth . . . he considereth all their works."

Actually — literally — God Himself does look upon you and notice how you come dressed in His presence in church services!

For years, I not only wore a freshly pressed suit, but even a white shirt and a befitting (not too

"loud" or flashy or too somber, but of proper character) necktie. In the early years of this Church, when I had only one pair of shoes (with holey soles) and one suit of clothes, I shined my shoes and got out my wife's ironing board and pressed my own suit Friday afternoons before going to church services.

I have always tried to HONOR GOD in the matter of personal appearance at church.

If you were in England and were invited to visit the Queen at Buckingham Palace, would you go with dirty shoes and sloppy, unpressed clothes? I hardly think so. Then do you consider that GOD HIMSELF does not deserve even the respect you would show to the Queen of England?

**Symbols of righteousness**

WHY did Jesus use the kind of garments we wear to represent righteousness or unrighteousness? He would not have done this unless it IS IMPORTANT to Him how you come dressed to church.

In Zechariah 3:1-7 the high priest Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and Satan standing beside him. Apparently Joshua (a type of one today) was in the grip of Satan, unable to wrest himself free from Satan. He was clothed with filthy garments, typical of SIN, under Satan's grip, unable to loose himself.

Then Christ came and rebuked Satan. Christ freed Joshua from Satan's grip on him. Then Christ gave order to remove the filthy garments on Joshua (picturing freeing him from satanic SIN, due to Satan's grip on him).

Jesus said he caused Joshua's sin to be forgiven and ordered them to clothe Joshua with clean garments and set a miter on his head, saying to Joshua, "IF thou wilt walk in my ways, and IF thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts" (verse 7).

Angels usually appear in white garments, as a symbol of purity and righteousness.

Yes, IT DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO GOD how you come dressed in His presence at church services! Surely, "'NUFF SAID!"

### CHURCH FORCED TO SUE GTA

**U**pon advice of the Worldwide Church of God attorney Ralph Helge and the Church's attorneys, Ervin, Cohen & Jessup, I have approved a lawsuit for the recovery of certain personal and ecclesiastical property, consisting of between 15 and 20 plain brown cardboard boxes.

These boxes contain sensitive and ecclesiastical confidential materials, including pastor general's and other confidential spiritual papers.

This suit was made necessary by Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong's refusal to return this property to its owners, the Worldwide Church of God.

My son is alleging that I am senile, my mind gone and that I know

nothing of this suit or what is going on. The living Jesus Christ is the active HEAD of this Church, directing it through His chosen apostle. Jesus Christ is directing all such matters through His chosen servant.

The above signature was penned by me personally.

5/22/79