

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

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**By Herbert W. Armstrong**  
Are 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.

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, 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 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. 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 righteous-

ness 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 beareth 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!'"

## HWA speaks to 400

(Continued from page 1)

Bjelke-Petersen, the premier of the state of Queensland, who flew from his son's farm in Rockhampton Thursday to meet with Mr. Armstrong.

### Visiting premier

When Mr. Armstrong heard that the premier would be 73 years old the day of the meeting, the pastor general ordered 73 red roses sent to the premier's office before the visit.

Mr. Armstrong was accompanied to the premier's office by his personal aide Mr. Dean, Mr. Morton and Mr. Noller, the SEP camp director and a family friend of the premier.

The outspoken premier has proven himself a strong leader, leading his state from being one of the poorest to one of the richest and most rapidly developing states in Australia. He asked Mr. Armstrong about his view of world conditions and related some of his personal experiences.

Mr. Armstrong told him that world peace would come, but not by human effort. After the discussion in the main conference area, Mr. Bjelke-Petersen invited Mr. Armstrong and his party into his private office for tea. There stood Mr. Armstrong's protocol gift of 73 red roses, and the premier said he appreciated Mr. Armstrong's thoughtfulness.

He planned to take them home to his wife, who is a senator in the

Queensland state government.

It is interesting to note that Premier Bjelke-Petersen called for a day of prayer during the 1982-83 drought here. A southern premier mocked him. How interesting to see that Mr. Bjelke-Petersen's state received rain, while devastating fires burned the mocking premier's state (see related article, "Australian Brethren Escape Hurt as Fires Incinerate Southern Coast," *WV*, March 7, 1983).

From the premier's office Mr. Armstrong went to the Brisbane airport and left for Melbourne, Australia. There he was greeted by Melbourne East pastor William Bradford and taken to the Melbourne Regent Hotel where he spoke to some of the area ministry before retiring for the evening.

Sabbath, Jan. 14, despite a lingering sore throat, fever and head cold, the pastor general conducted afternoon services in Melbourne. He began by explaining the importance of the YOU program, relating his experiences at the Lake Moogerah SEP. He went deeper into the origins of humanity's problems, finishing by recounting the doctrines God has restored to His Church.

### Perth address

The next day, Jan. 15, was a special day for brethren in Perth, on the

west coast of Australia. Because of a schedule change, Mr. Armstrong deleted a planned visit to Indonesia and flew to Perth, a place he had not been to. En route he worked on the Jan. 15 co-worker letter, which he completed after conducting a Bible study in Perth for about 550 brethren in a Sheraton ballroom. After the service Mr. Armstrong met with Perth pastor Robert Reggazzoli, his wife, Kathy, and area ministers.

After some discussion the meeting turned into an eight-hand Hearts game. The group appreciated the opportunity to spend time with the pastor general.

Monday, Jan. 16, Mr. Armstrong did further work on his new booklet about the true Church. After lunch with area ministers, he took a drive around Perth. He said he could see why many call Perth Australia's most beautiful city.

The next day, Jan. 17, Mr. Armstrong boarded the G-III he is using for this trip to begin the Southeast Asian portion of the trip.

He arrived at the Changi airport in Singapore at 3:30 p.m. local time.

At 7:30 that evening Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Morton, Mr. Dean, the pastor general's personal aide; and Mr. Dean, the YOU director; were joined for dinner by Lee Khoo Choy, senior minister of state from Singapore's prime minister's office, and the deputy chairman of the People's Association. The People's Association, with more than 130

community branches, offers a selection of cultural and educational opportunities to Singapore residents.

Mr. Armstrong described the concerts arranged in the Ambassador Auditorium by the Ambassador Foundation, and Mr. Lee asked the pastor general if he would like to hear a concert of Chinese music. Mr. Armstrong agreed, and Mr. Lee promised to see if he could set up a small concert.

Thursday, Jan. 19, was another special day. Mr. Armstrong and his group were joined for lunch by Yong Chin Gee, a minister who serves brethren in Malaysia and Singapore, and his wife, Yuet Siam. Mr. Yong spent the 1982-83 school year at Pasadena Ambassador College.

### Ministerial ordinations

After lunch the group returned to Mr. Armstrong's hotel suite where, in an emotional ceremony, Christ's apostle asked Mr. Morton to join him in ordaining Aaron and Kevin Dean to the rank of pastor. The Dean brothers were local elders.

Mr. Armstrong said that both ordinations were overdue, and commented that ordination to a higher rank in the ministry will help both men serve the Church under the pastor general more effectively.

The three men then joined Mr. Armstrong in raising Mr. Yong to the rank of preaching elder.

Friday morning, Jan. 20, Mr. Armstrong again met with Mr. Lee

to attend the promised concert. To the surprise of Mr. Armstrong and his group, the concert featured Chinese, Japanese, Thai and Western-style symphony pieces—all played on Chinese instruments.

Afterward, Mr. Armstrong discussed arranging a performance by the group in the Ambassador Auditorium.

On the Sabbath, Jan. 21, Mr. Armstrong and his group flew in the G-III to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where in 1982 the pastor general was denied the opportunity to conduct a *Plain Truth* readers' meeting because of the lack of proper permits.

This time everything went smoothly. Before the address Mr. Armstrong and his party met Mr. Yong and Lo Mong Chi, a deacon, for lunch in the Kuala Lumpur Hilton Hotel.

After lunch Mr. Armstrong addressed about 400 brethren and *Plain Truth* readers in the Hilton, exposing the majority of the audience for the first time to prophesied events and origins of the problems this world faces. He enlightened members on recently revealed knowledge. After the meeting the group returned to Singapore.

The next morning, Jan. 22, Mr. Armstrong and his group packed for the departure to Bangkok, Thailand, the next leg of the journey.

(Coverage of Mr. Armstrong's trip will continue in the Feb. 13 *Worldwide News*.)