

# Bible Guidelines for Clothing

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**T**he thing I want to talk to you about tonight is Christian clothing. What do we mean when we say "Christian clothing"? Is that some particular article? No, we can't hang a particular suit or a particular dress up here tonight and say this is Christian. Rather, there are five questions that you need to ask yourself to answer the question, "What kind of clothing should I wear?" There are five questions, and I am going to support these by God's Word.

I hope you will get these down, because you are going to face this all your life. Fashions are going to change and new things are going to be brought out all the time. There is no use in me making up a list of what is good and what is not, because that would change next year. So these five principles from God's Word will help you to decide every single item, whether it be right or wrong to wear, male or female, adult or child.

## **IS IT WORN BY THE OPPOSITE SEX?**

The first question is this: Is it worn by the opposite sex? Turn back to Deuteronomy 22:5 for our beginning. Here is our first principle. When I am trying to decide whether or not I should wear a certain thing, my first question is "Is that item worn by the opposite sex?" In other words, I as a man should not wear anything that a woman would wear. And a woman should not wear anything that a man would wear.

"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God."

I am well aware of the fact that people resent using this verse because it is in the Old Testament. And many times people say we can't use that verse unless we are going to use the whole chapter. For instance, we wouldn't want to use verse nine. A lot of people violate that verse by planting two or three different kinds of seeds in the same plot of ground. Similarly, we've all violated verse eleven about wearing garments with different kinds of cloth. Nearly everything we have on is made out of a weave of different things. So how can we take verse five and not take verse nine or verse eleven?

Here is the principle for rightly dividing the Word of Truth: any principle found in the Old Testament which is repeated in the New Testament is for us today.

Let me prove that to you. Keep your place at Deuteronomy and go over to 1 Corinthians 10. In 1 Corinthians 10 we have a book written by a grace preacher. Nobody can deny that the Apostle Paul was a grace preacher. He preached that we're not under the law but under grace, and he wrote about that time and time again. Without a doubt he is a New Testament preacher. But I want you to notice that in this entire chapter of 1 Corinthians 10 he constantly uses the Old Testament Scripture to prove something. Look at verses one and two: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." That was taken from Exodus 13 and 14, in which passage we read about the cloud, and about the Red Sea parting, and how they walked across on dry land, which was similar to being baptized. They were covered with the water, even though not a drop of it touched them. Paul is referring to the Old Testament. Look at verse three: "And did all eat the same spiritual meat." That refers to Exodus 16, when God gave the manna from Heaven. That was called spiritual food. Verse four: "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." That refers to Exodus 17, when Moses took his rod and struck the rock, and God gave gushing water out of that flinty rock.

Notice that he is referring to several Old Testament incidents. Verse five: "But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness." That is referring to Numbers 13 and 14. They refused to go into the land of Israel and inherit it, and they said, "We can't take it," and so God overthrew them in the wilderness. Many of them died.

Now look at verse six. "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." You see. It's not wrong to use the Old Testament to teach New Testament Christians to do something right. Paul did it.

Let's keep on going. Verse seven: "Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." Here he refers to Exodus 22:6. The Apostle says, "Don't you be like that." Verse eight: "Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand." That is talking about Numbers 25. Verse nine: "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." That is talking about Exodus 17. You remember about the brazen serpent being raised in the middle of the camp, and so on.

Look at verse ten: "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer." That is found in Exodus 15, 16 and 17, among many other places; they murmured several times.

Now look at verse eleven: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." Two times in this chapter, in verse six and in verse eleven, he tells us without a doubt that those Old Testament writings were for us today. It is a foolish and fictitious objection when someone says that we can't use the Old Testament for us today. Here he very clearly outlines verse after verse, experience after experience in the Old Testament, to prove something that Christians ought to do right now. And that's not the end. In the rest of the chapter he does it again and again.

We can go by the Old Testament. What is our rule? Any Old Testament principle repeated in the New Testament is for us today. Now you won't ever find a New Testament verse that says observe the Sabbath day. That is the reason we don't do it. You won't find any New Testament verse that says we are to kill an animal and have a blood sacrifice. That's the reason we don't do it. But anything commanded in the Old Testament and repeated in the New Testament is for us today.

Having examined 1 Corinthians 10 to establish that principle, we now come to chapter 11 where he refers to the appearance of man and woman. Specifically he talks about hair, but very clearly in 1 Corinthians 11 the Apostle says that the man and the woman ought to have their appearance different. Notice verses four and five: "Every man praying or

prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven."

You see what he is saying? There is to be a difference between man and woman when they pray or prophesy. There is to be a difference. That is the same principle we saw back in Deuteronomy 22:5—"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment..." It is the same idea.

Paul goes on to talk about the length of the hair. Notice verses fourteen and fifteen: "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering." Once again he underscores the principle that the appearance of men and women is to be different. Consequently, we have the same principle in Deuteronomy 22:5 repeated right here in the New Testament.

Let me share something with you that is very interesting. I have in my library a book called *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*. It is one of the most beneficial books I have ever owned. It is simply a book of parallel references, just like the center reference column you have in your Bible, but it is greatly expanded. This book was printed over one hundred years ago, back when they weren't having many of the problems we are having today with women wearing men's clothes, and *vice versa*. So you couldn't say they were prejudiced about this subject when they put the cross references in that volume. *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge* at Deuteronomy 22:5 has a parallel reference of 1 Corinthians 11:3-14. That's interesting, isn't it? You know what that proves? It proves that men that study the Bible, not just in our day but years ago, have seen that 1 Corinthians 11 contains the same principle that is stated in Deuteronomy 22:5.

I don't hesitate to use Deuteronomy 22:5 to prove that women ought not to wear men's clothes, and men ought not to wear women's clothes, any more than I would hesitate to use Psalm 23 at a funeral. You see, the truths are repeated in the New Testament.

I was also interested in what I found in the Keil and Deileitch commentary regarding this matter. That commentary was first printed more than a hundred years ago. Charles Spurgeon refers to Keil and Deileitch. Yet Keil and Deileitch say that Deuteronomy 22:5 was written to maintain the sanctity of the distinction of the sexes which was established by the creation of man and woman. In other words, anybody who reads the Bible can see that all the way through in every age and every testament God has said that He wants men and women to look different. Consequently we ought not to wear clothing that applies to the opposite sex.

Of course, the main issue that we are facing here is the matter of pants on women. It matters not what you call them, whether blue jeans or slacks or pant suits. It is a main problem today. People like to argue about this. They say you can't condemn pants on a woman unless you are going to say that women can't wear belts, because men wear belts. Likewise you would have to say that women can't wear socks, or shirts, because men wear socks and shirts.

What do we say about this? Consider some simple things to keep in mind. First, we are talking about the obvious. We're not talking about some hidden thing, like a belt, that doesn't have anything to do with the sex of the person, that doesn't have anything to do with the body.

Second, what do you look like when you wear these clothes? What do you look like from a distance? You've had the same experience that I've had of being out in public and seeing somebody at a distance and not being really sure if that person is a male or a female. You can't tell by the clothes, because girls wear pants just like boys do. They wear T-shirts just like boys do. The boys often have their hair just as long as the girls [or the girls' just as short as the boys'], so you look at someone from a distance and you often cannot tell if the person is a male or a female. The only way you can tell is to look at those portions of the body that distinguish between male and female, and by the way, that is the Devil's reason behind all of it. That is what he wants you to look at. He doesn't want you to look at somebody's head; he wants you to look other places. That is one of the things that makes this so wrong, and we need to see that. We should not wear clothing which at a distance would make anybody wonder whether we are male or female.

The best place to start on this is when the child is born. If you start when the child is born, you won't ever have to make any changes. If you don't start then, you'll always be wondering when you should make this change. Just start right in the beginning. Cut the baby boy's hair like a boy's hair should be cut, and don't put feminine clothes on him. Put pants on him. And if it is a girl, don't put pants on her; put a dress on her.

You see, all these questions that people argue about can be settled just by plain old common sense. The principle is to let the appearance be different enough that folks won't have any doubt. That's the way to answer it all. You don't have to get everybody's O.K. on this piece of clothing, or that one, just draw the line and determine to wear something that no one will ever have a doubt about. It's going to look like man's clothing. It's going to look like women's clothing.

What about women working out in the field? What about women working in factories? What about women who have to climb ladders? Don't they need something modest? Yes, they do need something modest. I used to see women out in the field picking cotton and so on. I used to see them wear overalls, but I also saw some of them put dresses on over their overalls. That was a common thing when I was a boy. Now I know that some of them didn't wear dresses over their overalls. Some of them did other things that were wrong, too. You know, too, there are some other things to wear, such as culottes, which are just as modest and still look feminine. That's what you ought to wear. If you can't buy any, get a sewing machine and learn how to sew. It's worth the expense and trouble to make that adjustment if you are going to have convictions.

Do not wear clothing that the opposite sex wears. And if you are in doubt about it, just don't and you will be safe. Just make sure that what you wear identifies you as a male or as a female, and not in a way that a person would have to look at the tempting zones of the body to tell whether you are a male or female. That is what the Devil wants you to do, and surely you don't want to cooperate with the Devil on this matter.

#### **WHAT DOES IT MAKE OTHERS THINK OF ME?**

Here is the second question you need to ask yourself about Christian clothing: What does it make others think of me? Lest you say it doesn't matter what other people think, let me read a verse or two of Scripture, and then let me read you some illustrations from modern literature which say that it does matter. In Proverbs 7:10 the Scripture has a warning to a young man against immorality: "And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart." God is warning about a woman dressed like a harlot. Now the question we ask is how is a harlot dressed? Have you ever seen a program on television in which they show a woman posing as a prostitute? If you have watched any of the police shows you see that. She may be a prostitute; she may be posing as one; she may be an undercover agent; she may be the hero; she may be the victim; she may be the bad guy, whatever. You have seen that and you know how they are dressed. You know exactly that she is a prostitute before they ever tell you. Of course, they don't use that term; they use the word "hooker." Perhaps you have seen a television news broadcast which shows these women on the streets as they're out searching for business. All you have to do is look at the way they are dressed. The bad thing about that is some Christian people dress the same way. Now, you don't want anybody to think that about you. You might wonder if people really think that about you. Yes, they do.

Here's an article from *McCall's* magazine. *McCall's* is not a Christian magazine. The editors are not trying to defend the Christian faith or propagate the Bible. Here's an article in *McCall's* magazine entitled "What Your Intimate Behavior Says About You." I'm going to read this. It may be offensive to some, but the words are not nearly as offensive as the way some people dress. We need to be honest and frank about this thing. It's not going to be vulgar, but plain. The writer says,

"The female legs have also been the subject of considerable male interest as sexual signaling devices. The mere exposure of leg flesh has been sufficient to transmit sexual signals. Needless to say, the higher the exposure goes the more stimulating it becomes for the simple reason that it then approaches the primary genital zone."

That's what it's all about folks, and we had better wake up and realize it. He goes on to say, talking about the primary genital zone of the body,

"The first way to accentuate is to employ articles of clothing which underline the nature of the organ hidden beneath them. For the female this means wearing trousers."

Now the fellow that wrote this is not a preacher. As a matter of fact, in this article he is telling you how to send sexual signals by the way you dress. He continues:

"The way to emphasize the nature of the organs of the body is by wearing these clothing: trousers, shorts, or bathing costumes, that by their tightness reveal..."

This is what people think when they see you dressed this way. In the *Family Weekly* magazine they had a true or false question and answer section.

"Question: What you communicate wordlessly has more effect on people than what you say? Answer: This is true. ... Question: People use clothes as a means of communicating with others? Answer: True. Psychological studies at Britain's University of Newcastle have demonstrated that people use clothes to tell others what they want them to believe about them."

In other words the wearer is not trying to tell others what he is really like, but is trying to communicate his ideal self-image, the kind of person he wishes he was. That's what these experts say. What you wear says something about you.

I know very well that not everybody who wears the items of clothing mentioned in the *McCall's* article has an immoral motive. Here's what I'm trying to get you to see: Whether you like it or not, this is what other people think. As a Christian, somebody interested in holiness, in winning people to Christ and getting people's minds off of sin, we need to go entirely the other way.

Whether you realize it or not, men look at certain portions of the body; and it doesn't matter whether you think that is good, bad, or otherwise, they are going to do it. And if you wear clothing that attracts attention to that, you are just helping them in their sin. That's why a dress, unless it's too tight, is better than pants; because a dress does not draw the attention to that part of the body that people look at and lust after.

I have a lot of other articles, but I have time for only one more. An article appeared in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, Richmond, Virginia, and the writer of the article was Anthony Surbony, a personnel manager for a large corporation. He had interviewed more than 14,000 men for jobs in the past years that he had been there. He said that the length of a person's hair tells a lot about him. Here's a man after 14,000 interviews. He said the left-wingers generally have long hair.

"They reject self-discipline, authority, regulation, proven logic and reasoning. They are more easily swayed by popular opinions and propaganda. They tend to accept and do anything if somebody simply suggests it's a style. Many employers find that they tend to be more dreamers than doers, where the reverse is the trend on men with short hair. Why is it so? Mainly it is due to a self-centered personality."

I have been saying that for a long time.

There are certain things that I like about women that I don't like on men. I like for women to look nice, and it doesn't bother me at all to see a woman in front of a mirror primping and fixing her hair. But it just about makes me want to throw up to see a man do that, and I've seen men do that very thing, just like a woman.

I quote further from the article mentioned above. He said long hair indicates a self-centered personality.

"The liberal left-winger seems to be more selfish and only aspire to goals that will benefit them individually, regardless of what it costs to others. They actually believe that long hair is beautiful on a man and they feel naked without it. They try to make up for lack of ability by attracting attention, or becoming a sex symbol. Longhaired liberals also reject the basic

hunter/warrior responsibilities of man. They seem to think that society should provide for them and that someone else should guarantee protection. Or else they don't really believe that there are any enemies. In fact, some tend to bow before enemies, hoping to gain friendship."

Men have lost the basic responsibility that God inbred into a human being to fight for what is his and to provide for what is his. Men reject that, and the first thing you know, they think the government owes them a living. They don't feel responsible to go out make a living any more. It all goes together. We must remember that this man is an expert in analyzing people.

When I am considering what kind of clothes to wear, I need to ask myself this question: What does it make other people think about me?

### **PREDOMINATELY, WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE DRESS THAT WAY?**

Here is the third question we need to ask: Predominately, what kind of people dress that way?

Do you think that a policeman who is going to be an undercover agent would dress like I am dressed? Do you think his hair would be as short as mine is? No, sir. Every policeman that I have ever seen or heard about in the last twenty years that became an undercover agent around the bars and gambling dens let his hair grow long, and wore sloppy, slouchy clothes, because that is the kind of people they are trying to catch. I don't want to look like that kind of person. It's not because I think I'm better than they are. It's because when Jesus saved me, He jerked me up out of that. That's what I used to be. I don't want to be that anymore. I don't want folks to think I've gone back to that.

See, here is the third question. Predominately, what kind of people wear the kind of clothes you are thinking of wearing? If it's the wrong kind, you surely don't want to identify yourself with it.

### **MUST I USE THE ARGUMENTS OF THE WORLD TO JUSTIFY IT?**

Here is the fourth question: Must I use the arguments of the world to justify it?

"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" I Cor. 1:20

"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." I Cor. 2:5

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Col. 1:9

If you read these verses you find out there is a difference between the wisdom of the world and spiritual wisdom. A Christian is in trouble when he has to resort to the wisdom of the world to justify what he is doing. We ought to be able to use the wisdom of God. If I am going to defend my position I ought to be able to go to the Bible and use spiritual wisdom to do it. God help us if we have to use worldly wisdom to justify our clothing or actions.

### **WILL IT CAUSE OTHERS TO STUMBLE?**

Here is the fifth question: Will it cause others to stumble?

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." Rom. 14:21

King David walked on his roof top. He was lazy; he was disobedient; he was out of God's will. But also he saw a woman washing herself. She was either out in a yard where everybody could see her, or else she was in the house without the curtains drawn. And she was equally guilty in that lusting experience. I know David was out of God's will and should have been out fighting the battles, because the Bible starts off that chapter by saying that it was the time that kings went out to war that David stayed at home. I know that was wrong, and she likewise was wrong in taking a bath where a man could see her.

What you do or what you wear, will it cause somebody to stumble? Now you might say the other fellow has to look out for himself. That is not what the Bible says. The Bible says, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." We are responsible.

## CONCLUSION

We have considered five good tests regarding clothing. Is it worn by the opposite sex? What does it make other people think of me? What kind of people dress that way? Must I use the argument of the world to defend it? Will it cause anybody else to stumble?

In closing, let me encourage you to have some Christian convictions, and let me make some strong suggestions to you about these.

**Number one**, make sure your convictions are biblically based. When you believe something is wrong, you had better have a good Bible reason for believing it. You ought to know where the Bible talks about that, and if you don't think you can remember it, write it down so you can show people. Have biblically based convictions, not just opinions.

**Number two**, when you have a conviction, be firm. Don't waver no matter what crowd you are with, no matter what environment you find yourself in. If it is wrong to wear a bathing suit walking down the street, it is wrong to wear one in the swimming pool. The water doesn't have anything to do with it. That is why you have to be careful about where you go swimming. Do you expose your body to the lustful thoughts of others? They are going to think it whether you like it or not. Be firm in your convictions.

**Number three**, be kind when you have convictions. Don't be a smart aleck. When the time comes to express yourself, or to say no, or to give a reason, be kind about it. Learn your reasons, and know them, and don't be nervous, and don't be angry, and don't be snappy. Be kind about it.

**Number four**, don't act superior. Don't act like you are better than somebody else. That's the first charge they are going to make against you, I guarantee you. Anytime you ever have a conviction about anything, whether it be about music, or drinking liquor, others are going to say that you think you are better than they are. People have been saying that for centuries. That is not anything new. So don't act superior. Just let them know you aren't going to do that thing.

**Number five**, if you have to talk to somebody about these things deal with the heart first. All of this is a matter of the heart. You might get somebody straightened out on the matter of the clothes they ought to wear and they still be just as lost as they were before you met them. Before I talk to anybody about clothes or anything else, the first thing I want to know is what about the heart? Have you been saved? Acts 15:9. Has your heart been purified by faith? Romans 10:9. Have you believed in your heart that God raised Christ from the dead? The first thing I want to know is about the heart and salvation. All that I said here tonight applies to those who are saved. If you haven't been saved, it's not going to help your soul one way or the other to change your clothes. It's not going to help at all. If Jesus does not live in your heart, that is your first need. You first have to come to Christ.

If you are saved it is still a matter of the heart. If I were talking to a Christian about this, the first thing I would want to talk to him about would be the heart. Is your heart right with God? If your heart's not right with God, you are not going to be able to understand any of this. You're going to resent every argument, and resent anybody even bringing up this discussion.

The Bible talks about the heart. Hebrews 10:22—"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." God is talking to Christian people there. And in verses 24 and 25, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." It's a matter of the heart.



# To Tattoo or Not To Tattoo

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Terry Watkins

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## PART 5 TATTOO: THE MARK OF REBELLION

**T**he Bible, from cover to cover, and over and over, condemns rebellion. The Lord God considered rebellion so serious – He compared rebellion to witchcraft. And may I remind you, witchcraft was punishable by death!

"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft..." 1 Samuel 15:23

"Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Exodus 22:18

**And if there's one message the tattoo cries out – loud and clear – it's rebellion.**

Throughout history tattoos have symbolized rebellion. There's nothing normal about a tattoo. A tattoo screams of unabashed rebellion and deviancy.

Every tattoo book, and every article, I researched, both old and new, openly affirmed the deliberate rebellion symbolized by the tattoo. Book after book, article after article, sung the same song – tattoos are open rebellion. It's worth noting – all the following quotes are from pro tattoo books.

"Since body art is still not mainstream, having marks on your body that you put there on purpose shows the world **your rebellious and unconventional nature**". (Jean-Chris Miller, *The Body Art Book: A Complete, Illustrated Guide to Tattoos, Piercings, and Other Body Modifications*, p. 32)

"In this culture, **a tattooed person is still looked at as a rebel**, as someone who has very visibly stepped **out of the bounds of normal society**..."(Michelle Delio, *Tattoo: The Exotic Art of Skin Decoration*, p. 75)

"**Unquestionably tattoos are socially unacceptable.**" (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 179)

### TATTOO: A MARK OF DISGRACE OR REPROACH

Steve Gilbert, in the very popular, pro-tattoo book, *Tattoo History: A Source Book*, documents that even the word "tattoo" means "... a mark of disgrace or reproach".

"The Latin word for 'tattoo' was stigma and the original meaning is reflected in modern dictionaries. Among the definitions of 'stigma' listed by Webster are a 'prick with a pointed instrument,' . . . 'a distinguishing mark cut into the flesh of a slave or a criminal,' **and 'a mark of disgrace or reproach.'**" (Gilbert, Steve, *Tattoo History: A Source Book*, p. 15)

In fact, for most of its slimy history the tattoo was used to mark the criminal, adulterers, traitors, deserters, the deviant and outcast. The tattoo was a dreaded mark of reproach and disgrace.

"Adultery, also, was punished in this way [tattooed] in some parts of Britain, and 'bad characters' were marked BC. . . In 1717, branding was abolished in the Army and **replaced with tattooing**...with the letter 'D' deserter" (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 162)

#### **TATTOO: THE MARK OF THE 'SIDESHOW FREAK'**

As late as the early 1900's, the tattoo was so far "out of bounds" of normal, civilized society, the tattooed was mainly found freaking people out as an attraction in the circus "freak show".

"By 1897 tattooing had reached the United States, **where it immediately became a circus sideshow attraction.**" (Laura Reybold, *Everything you need to know about the dangers of tattooing and body piercing*, p. 17)

"The popularity of tattooing during the latter part of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century **owed much to the circus.**" (Gilbert, Steve, *Tattoo History: A Source Book*, p. 135)

#### **TATTOO: THE MARK OF INDECENCY**

Tattoos are so rebellious and disgusting to most people – they compare a tattoo to filthy pornography – "dirty, indecent and subversive to morality".

"In a society that considers nudity as dirty, indecent, and subversive or morality...**it is not surprising that decorations to the body are allocated to the same category.**" (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 179)

Even in the barbaric and immoral ancient Greek and Rome, the tattoo was considered "barbaric" and used primarily to mark slaves and criminals. It's interesting, they promoted slavery and other forms of depravity – but felt tattoos were barbaric. What does that testify of today's barbaric Christian tattooing craze? Is the next step in Christian depravity – slavery?

"Respectable Greeks and Romans did not indulge in decorative tattooing, **which they associated with barbarians.** The Greeks, however, learned the technique from the Persians, and used it to mark slaves and criminals so they could be identified if they tried to escape." (Gilbert, Steve, *Tattoo History: A Source Book*, p. 15)

#### **TATTOO: THE MARK OF DEPRAVITY**

Criminals, drug addicts, sex perverts and social outlaws are the overwhelming majority of the tattooed. Statistics, both old and recent, clearly reveal tattoos are largely worn by the rebellious and deviant.

**"In addition to being a form of self-destruction, the tattoo seals the wearer off from the rest of normal society forever.** It's not all that surprising to note that the largest number of tattooed in Japan belong to the underworld, and **in America tattoos are most prevalent either in jail or hard rock bands.** (Danny Sugerman, *Appetite for Destruction: the Days of Guns N' Roses*, p. 40)

"It was ancient Japanese tradition **to tattoo convicted criminals**. . ." (Laura Reybold, *Everything you need to know about the dangers of tattooing and body piercing*, p. 15)

"A study of young offenders on the West Coast of America **concluded that delinquents tattoo themselves significantly more often than non-delinquents**, and that the inclination develops at an early age without any thought for the future." (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 113)

"In the Borstal institutions [criminals] it has been estimated **that the incidence of tattooing can be as high as 75 per cent**." (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 113)

Comprehensive studies performed in Denmark, revealed the following enlightening statistics concerning tattoos:

- 42% of homes for short-term detained were tattooed
- 60% of homes for young men with behavior difficulties
- 72% of prisons for young men
- 52% of prisons population (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 114)

"The same Denmark studies also disclosed less than 4.8 in the general population were tattooed." (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 114)

Investigations by law enforcement officials also came to the conclusion that:

"the presence of ornamental body tattoos could serve **to indicate the existence of personality disorders which are liable to manifest themselves in criminal behaviour**". (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 117)

"Therefore, many authorities **link tattooing with aggression, i.e. anti-authoritarianism, and it cannot be disputed that gangs and delinquents, juvenile or otherwise, display massive evidence of aggression**". (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 114)

According to study after study, a tattoo so personifies and establishes a "rebellious atmosphere" that one of the most important steps in prison rehabilitation is the removal of the tattoo. According to many serious studies, a tattoo is linked so strong to criminal behavior and delinquency, that without question, the mere decoration of the tattoo inherently contributes to the criminal behavior pattern.

"**This [tattoos] is one of the problems behind prison rehabilitation**. Hence the reason why some plastic surgeons associated with prison **service are prepared to spend an enormous amount of time removing tattoos**, especially those on exposed areas. . ." (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 181)

The famous architect, Adolf Loos, who also studied the connection to tattoos and crime, blatantly wrote:

"Tattooed men who are not behind bars **are either latent criminals or degenerate aristocrats**. If someone who is tattooed dies in freedom, then he does so a few years **before he would have committed murder**". (Adolf Loos, 1962 *Ornament und Verbrechen*. Samtliche Schriften, edited by F. Gluck. Vienna: Herold, 1962, cited at [www.into-you.co.uk/contents/misc.htm](http://www.into-you.co.uk/contents/misc.htm))

#### **TATTOO: THE MARK OF PERVERSION**

Studies have linked tattoos to homosexuality, lesbianism, and gross sexual perversion.

"To be fair to those who maintain that tattooing is linked to homosexuality, investigations conducted in a New Zealand Borstal for girls revealed **that of the 60 per cent tattooed, 90 per cent admitted to lesbian behaviour** during corrective treatment. . . Yet further analysis indicated a ratio of aggression to the number of tattoos, **and that the most heavily tattooed girls were unstable and insecure and tended to take the masculine role in their sex encounters.**" (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 87)

"[associated with tattoos] Among these conditions Raspa cited: impulsiveness, low self-esteem, lack of self-control, **homosexual orientation, sexual sadomasochism, bondage, fetishism, bisexuality, lesbianism**, antisocial personality, borderline personality disorder, schizotypal personality disorder, mania and bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia." (Raspa, Robert F. and John Cusack 1990, *Psychiatric Implications of Tattoos*, American Family Physician. 41: p. 1481 cited in Gilbert, Steve, *Tattoo History: A Source Book*, p. 159)

### **TATTOO: AND PERSONALITY DISORDERS**

Studies also show that "self-inflicted" tattoos are frequently associated with people with personality disorders, troubled backgrounds and self-mutilation tendencies.

"Evidence indicates that it is **the mere presence of the tattoo**, not its artistic content, that correlates with certain diagnoses. **Thus, any tattoo can be viewed as a warning sign that should alert the practicing physician to look for underlying psychiatric conditions.**" (Raspa, Robert F. and John Cusack 1990, *Psychiatric Implications of Tattoos*, American Family Physician. 41: p. 1483)

"...studies suggest that people with personality disorders frequently have multiple small tattoos..." (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 115)

Research clearly indicates "...the presence of tattooing was often indicative of **a deprived and troubled background**..." (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 117)

### **BUT WHAT ABOUT THE TATTOOS OF TODAY?**

I know what some are thinking. . . Sure, in the past tattoos were linked to criminals, depravity, and immoral behavior – but not today.

Today, the tattoo is worn by celebrities, athletes, politicians and business people. It's adorned in high fashion mags and sports mags. There's absolutely no data to even remotely suggest tattoos are linked to criminal or immoral behavior. No sir. Today's tattoo is high-fashion and cool.

### **Oh. . . Really?**

A very comprehensive study and analysis of tattoos, was recently published in April, 2001. The study was performed by Dr. Timothy Roberts, a pediatrician at the University of Rochester Children's Hospital. The detailed analysis was taken from a study of 6072 young people, ages 11 to 21, from all over the United States, from all different ethnic groups, and from all economic and social backgrounds. In other words, very thorough and reliable data models were constructed for the study. In fact, this study is probably the most comprehensive and conclusive analysis of tattoos ever conducted.

According to the study, today's tattooed young people:

- Are nearly four times more likely to engage in sexual intercourse
- Over two times more likely to experience alcohol related problems
- Nearly two times more likely to use illegal drugs
- Over two times more likely to express violent behavior

- Over two times more likely to drop out of high school

Dr. Roberts writes, that the results of the study reveal:

"Tattooing in adolescents was **significantly associated** with **sexual intercourse, substance use, violence** and school problems in bivariate analyses and in logistic regressions adjusting for sociodemographic factors and peer substance use." (Timothy A. Roberts, M.D. and Sheryl A. Ryan, M.D., *Tattooing and High-Risk Behavior in Adolescents*, Division of Adolescent Medicine, Strong Children's Research Center, University of Rochester School of Medicine, Rochester, NY)

Dr. Roberts, writes in the "conclusion" of the study that tattoos "**have strong associations with high-risk behaviors in adolescents**"

"Conclusion: **Permanent tattoos have strong associations with high-risk behaviors in adolescents.** The presence of a tattoo during examination of an adolescent should prompt in-depth assessment for high-risk behaviors." (Timothy A. Roberts, M.D. and Sheryl A. Ryan, M.D., *Tattooing and High-Risk Behavior in Adolescents*, Division of Adolescent Medicine, Strong Children's Research Center, University of Rochester School of Medicine, Rochester, NY)

It is worth mentioning, Dr. Roberts, himself has a tattoo. And before the study, Dr. Roberts admittedly believed that people with tattoos were unfairly stereotyped. One of his purposes of the study was to prove that point. After the overwhelming results, Dr. Roberts, admitted, "**I was more than a little surprised at the result.**"

After evaluating the data, Dr. Roberts says, "A tattoo is a sign that doctors, parents, teachers ought to be asking about the teenager's behaviour."

#### **BUT WASN'T JESUS A REBEL?**

I hear this "rebel-party-line" from Christians:

*"Hey dude, yea man, I'm a rebel just like Jesus. Yea, man, He was the real rebel. He rebelled against the system, man. Yea, man, He's the ultimate rebel. Man, like, that's why I wear my tattoos – I'm rebelling against the system."*

Heavily tattooed, Sonny of the "Rastafarianism-Christianity-AND-God-Knows-What-Else" punk-rap-metal rock band P.O.D. claims Jesus Christ was the first rebel — and the "first punk rocker"!

"We believe that Jesus was **the first rebel**. He was the **first punk rocker** going against all the rest of it" Sonny, P.O.D. (<http://www.shoutweb.com/interviews/pod0700.phtml>)

Let's get something straight! The Lord Jesus Christ was NOT A REBEL! The Bible is very clear. The Lord Jesus Christ was **OBEDIENT unto death – even the death of the cross!**

Phil. 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, **and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.**

Even in the Garden of Gethsemane, knowing that every wicked, abominable sin committed in history was going to be placed upon Him (2 Cor. 5:17), knowing that He was going to drink the cup of wrath of God, and in great agony, His sinless sweat was dropping as it were great drops of blood — even then, Thank God, Thank God — **HE DID NOT REBEL! As He prayed, "...not my will, but thine, be done."**

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: **nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.**

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

44 And being **in an agony he prayed more earnestly**: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Luke 22:42-44

Yes. The Lord Jesus Christ was 'against' the world and the system – but it was because the world was the REBEL – not the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank God – He was OBEDIENT to the will of God. The world, the flesh and the devil REBELLED and is REBELLING against the Word of God. Just like anyone that disgraces themselves with a "God-forbidden" tattoo.

Oh my friend, aren't you glad that Jesus Christ was NOT a rebel. That He was OBEDIENT unto His Father's will. Aren't you glad that Sonny of P.O.D. is so wrong? If Jesus Christ REBELLED, one second, one thought, one sin, there would be no hope. Aren't you glad Jesus Christ loved you so much that He died for you on Calvary?

**Have you ever received the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour?**

## **PART 6 TATTOO'S DEADLY LITTLE SECRET**

That harmless little "innocent" tattoo may have a little secret hiding inside.

***A very deadly little secret. . .***

Underneath that harmless tattoo is a very serious risk of acquiring a deadly blood-borne disease such as AIDS, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, tetanus, syphilis, tuberculosis and other blood-borne diseases.

### **FACT:**

Michael Machetti, a California tattooed biker seeking to have a very-vulgar neck tattoo re-tattooed-covered up with the number "666" has filed legal action against Bull's Eye Tattoo Studio for infecting him with a "flesh-eating virus" during the tattoo procedure. Machetti claims the tattooist utilized unsanitary equipment that consequently infected him with the virus. Machetti has required several serious medical operations on his neck and both arms to remove huge portions of eaten skin. According to Ron Bakal, Machetti's lawyer, his client's medical bills are currently over \$580,000. (Case RIC391550, *Michael Machetti v. Bull's Eye Tattoo Studio, Sam Enriquez*, Superior Court of California, County of Riverside, file date April 11, 2003)

An alarming research study recently published by Dr. Bob Haley and Dr. Paul Fischer at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas uncovered that **the "innocent" commercial tattoo may be the number one distributor of hepatitis C**. The study was published in the journal *Medicine* (Haley RW, Fischer RP, *Commercial tattooing as a potentially source of hepatitis C infection, Medicine*, March 2000; 80:134-151). Dr. Haley, a preventative medicine specialist and a former Center for Disease Control (CDC) infection control official, is exceptionally knowledgeable to prepare the study.

Dr. Haley concludes, "We found that **commercially acquired tattoos accounted for more than twice as many hepatitis C infections as injection-drug use**. This means it may have been the largest single contributor to the nationwide epidemic of this form of hepatitis."

Incredible! According to Dr. Haley's research you are twice as likely to be infected with hepatitis C from getting a tattoo at a tattoo shop as shooting up dope! With over 20 million Americans wearing a tattoo – and growing by leaps and bounds – we are likely staring down the barrel of a mammoth deadly epidemic.

The study also found that people who get tattooed in a commercial tattoo **parlor were nine times more likely to get hepatitis C!** That's nine times more likely to be infected by a deadly, fatal disease. And Dr. Haley is not referring to "backyard-prison-tattoos" but a tattoo from a "sanitized" commercial tattoo shop.

Did you know the deadly disease hepatitis C kills over 10,000 people a year? And sky-rocketing...Currently 4 million Americans are chronically infected with hepatitis C and rising. . . And according to Dr. Haley, its number one channel -- the deadly tattoo. . . Courtesy of your friendly commercial tattoo parlor.

There is the documented case of a 22-year-old grocery store employee who simply received his \$45 tattoo. And four weeks later – needed a liver transplant! (Mryna L. Armstrong and Lynne Kelly, *Tattooing, Body Piercing, and Branding Are on the Rise*, The Journal of School Nursing, Feb. 2001, Vol. 17 No. 1, p.15)

When you consider hepatitis B can be transmitted with as little as 0.00004 ml of blood, and can live on blood contaminated surfaces, such as needles, tattoo machines, tables, etc. for over two months, the risk of hepatitis is very real indeed.

**IMPORTANT: It's strongly advised for people who have tattoos to get a Hepatitis check. And soon. . . Hepatitis can lie unnoticed for many years while doing serious damage. The sooner hepatitis is detected the better the chances for survival. If you have a tattoo – get checked.**



A tattooing machine can puncture the skin 3,000 times a minute. And every prick is an open door to fatal blood-borne diseases.

WebMD warns of the "Russian Roulette" tattoo procedure -- as each stick of the tattoo needle opens you up to contracting a deadly disease:

"Hepatitis C is spread by infected blood and infected needles, **which is the virus' connection with tattooing**. Tattoos involve lots of needles making lots of sticks in the skin. **Each stick carries potential for contamination -- and not just with hepatitis, but also HIV...**" (*Pamela Anderson Says She Has Hepatitis C*, WebMD Medical News, March 21, 2002, content.health.msn.com/content/article/1678.50634)

### ***Still want a tattoo?***

Ask actress Pamela Anderson about the harmless tattoo. Pamela contracted the deadly hepatitis C from a simple, small finger "TOMMY" tattoo.

The fact of tattoos spreading deadly diseases is nothing new. It's been known and documented for years.

According to the Hepatitis Control Report, Spring 2001, "Outside the United States, several studies have connected the practice [tattoos] to hepatitis B and C virus transmission. . ."

"Tattooing poses health risks **because the process exposes blood and body fluids**. Because of this a person who gets tattooed risks getting a disease or infection that is carried through blood. **These blood-borne diseases include hepatitis B and C, tetanus, and HIV.**" (Bonnie B. Graves, *Tattooing and body piercing*, p. 40)

"By the middle of the nineteenth century, **it was becoming more and more apparent that the practice was not without its medical hazards**. For instance, in 1853 the first case was reported of syphilis, transmitted not in the old fashioned way, but via the tattooist's needle." (Ronald Scutt, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, p. 133)

"In the late 1950's, a New York City boy contracted blood poisoning from being tattooed with an unsterilized needle." (Laura Reybold, *Everything you need to know about the dangers of tattooing and body piercing*, p. 17)

In 1961 an outbreak of hepatitis B in New York City was linked to the tattoo. And the "ultra-liberal" New York City outlawed the deadly tattoo from 1961 until 1997!

Did you know the American Red Cross prohibits donors from donating blood for 12 months - one complete year -- after getting tattooed? Their Blood Donation Eligibility Guidelines under "Tattoo" reads, "Wait 12 months after a tattoo. This requirement is related to concerns about hepatitis."

Get this. . . According to research published in the Journal of School Health, 70 percent of 642 adolescents surveyed in a study **reported hemorrhaging while being tattooed.** (Donald Staffo, *The Tuscaloosa Times*, January 10, 2001)

Despite the attempt of many tattoo websites to nullify the possibility of contracting HIV / AIDS from a tattoo, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) gives a different answer:

"Can I get HIV from getting a tattoo or through body piercing?"

**A risk of HIV transmission does exist** if instruments contaminated with blood are either not sterilized or disinfected or are used inappropriately between clients. CDC recommends that instruments that are intended to penetrate the skin be used once, then disposed of or thoroughly cleaned and sterilized." ([www.cdc.gov/hiv/pubs/faq/faq27.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pubs/faq/faq27.htm))

#### **Why are tattoos so vulnerable to deadly diseases?**

Simple. Because the tattooist is puncturing thousands of tiny potential disease bearing wounds with very little, if any, serious state or federal health regulations. And not only that, many of the customers receiving a tattoo are drug-users, criminals, rock artists, deviants and homosexuals who just happen to be the major carriers of the deadly blood-borne diseases such as AIDS and hepatitis.

And there exists no or very little federal or state laws enforcing any serious sterilization regulations. It is basically up to the tattoo shop owner to sterilize or not sterilize his tattooing tools and procedures.

"Where tattooing is legal, however **there is little or no government regulation** of tattoo artists. . . Since there is little regulation of tattoo artists, however, it is important to recognize that, as in any field, **there may be unscrupulous or incompetent practitioners. Tattooing opens your body to potential infection, disease, and scarring.**" (Laura Reybold, *Everything you need to know about the dangers of tattooing and body piercing*, p. 18)

On their web site, the world-renown, Mayo Clinic sounds a warning about the dangers of the commercial tattoo shop and lack of serious health regulations:

"Keep in mind that tattoo parlors and piercing venues are not held to the same sterility standards as doctors' offices and hospitals. **Few states have hygienic regulations to ensure safe tattooing practices in commercial tattoo parlors, and even fewer monitor and enforce standards.**" (*Body piercing and tattoos: More than skin deep*, Mayo Clinic, [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com))

WebMD also acknowledges the lack of sterile regulations missing in most tattoo shops:

**"By and large, tattoo artists and shops are not required** -- by state or local governments -- to follow the same sterile operating practices as other operations that use needles, like hospitals and doctor's offices." (*Pamela Anderson Says She Has Hepatitis C*, WebMD Medical News, March 21, 2002, [content.health.msn.com/content/article/1678.50634](http://content.health.msn.com/content/article/1678.50634))

Dennis Dwyer, executive director of the tattoo's industry voluntary-self-monitoring organization Alliance for Professional Tattoo Artists (APT) readily admits the problem, "Many people are trying their best to provide safe tattooing. **But this**

**industry has a lot of nonconformists**, "(Pamela Anderson Says She Has Hepatitis C, WebMD Medical News, March 21, 2002, content.health.msn.com/content/article/1678.50634)

Tattoo industry expert Professor Myrna Alexander of Texas Tech University, who has researched the tattoo industry for 10 years, warns, "There are some very reputable tattoo artists out there. They work hard, and their studios are as clean as medical clinics. They do a good job because they believe what they are doing is art. **The problem is, there are many who don't.**"(Pamela Anderson Says She Has Hepatitis C, WebMD Medical News, March 21, 2002, content.health.msn.com/content/article/1678.50634)

Most tattoo shops do not and will not advise you to the real potential for serious health dangers. Despite the vast amount of research available (just search the Internet) many tattooist still refuse to acknowledge the very serious health dangers the tattoo invites.

#### **OTHER LITTLE DANGERS**

Besides the possibility of killing you with fatal diseases such as AIDS and hepatitis, the "harmless" tattoo provides an arm-load of other ailments.

Tattoos can cause chronic skin disorders such as sarcoid, keloid scarring, allergic dermatitis, photosensitivity reactions, psoriasis, and benign or malignant tumors. ([www.saintmarys.edu/~health/dyk0010.html](http://www.saintmarys.edu/~health/dyk0010.html)) Many people experience infection and allergic reaction to the tattoo ink.

Also, the pigments in tattoo ink contain small metal fibers such as iron oxide. These metal fibers can cause intense burning pain during an MRI procedure. Some medical institutions refuse to perform MRIs on people with tattoos. The MRI is an important medical procedure and this risk should not be taken lightly And every prick is an invitation for blood-borne diseases such as hepatitis and AIDS. ([www.ezpermanentmakeup.com/IronOxideLetters.htm](http://www.ezpermanentmakeup.com/IronOxideLetters.htm))

#### ***Think before you get that tattoo. . .***

A tattooing machine can puncture the skin 3,000 times a minute. And every one of those thousands of punctures creates a hole 1/64 to 1/16th of an inch into the dermis that literally invites infection and disease. Every single puncture of the tattoo needle opens up the real possibility of AIDS, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, tetanus, tuberculosis and about any other blood-borne disease. With the average tattoo taking about 60 minutes that equals 180,000 tiny "Russian Roulette" puncture wounds providing a potential path to a very deadly infectious disease.

**Beware! Your tattoo could have inserted more than harmless ink in your exposed flesh.**

**5 My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness.**

6 I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long.

7 For my loins **are filled with a loathsome disease**: and there is no soundness in my flesh.

8 **I am feeble and sore broken**: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.

Psalm 38:5-8



# How to Recognize False Prophets

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By Grover Laird

From the *Mississippi Baptist* as printed in the *Northern Landmark Missionary Baptist*, 2012

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Matthew 7:15.

I feel that a study of false prophets is important mainly because our Lord warned us to beware of them, as we find in our text; also, because the Bible has considered them to be a problem through the ages.

When Moses and Aaron went down to Egypt on their Heaven-sent mission, there were two false prophets by the name of Jannes and Jambres who withstood them, 2 Timothy 3:8. Though their power was demonic, they were surely convincing as they worked wonders before the people. (Exodus 7:11, 8:7, 18-19). God permits false prophets to do mighty works as a test to His people's love and dedication to Him, Deuteronomy 13:1-3.

When Elijah sought to turn Israel back to God and the Bible, there were 850 false prophets who sought to keep Elijah from doing so, 1 Kings 18. When Micaiah gave King Ahab and King Jehoshaphat a message from the Lord that would have saved them from loss and death, there were about 400 false prophets seeking to persuade them to do otherwise, and they did succeed, 1 Kings 22.

False prophets often sought to hinder other prophets of God such as Nehemiah (Nehemiah 6:140, Jeremiah (Jeremiah 28:15-17), Amos (Amos 7:10-17), Paul (Acts 13:6-10) and many others.

Paul often warned God's people of false prophets. In his message to the elders of Ephesus we find him saying, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them," (Acts 20:29-30).

Paul also pointed out the danger of false prophets to other churches such as the Romans (Romans 16:17-18), the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 11:13-15), the Galatians (Galatians 1:7-9; 5:10-12), the Ephesians (Ephesians 4:14), the Philippians (Philippians 3:2) and the Colossians (Colossians 2:8, 18).

Paul also mentioned the danger of false prophets when he wrote to Timothy (2 Timothy 2:16-19), to Titus (Titus 1:9-12), and to the Hebrews (Hebrews 13:9). We also find a warning about false prophets in the writing of Peter (2 Peter 2), Jude (Jude 4), and John (2 John 10-11, Revelation).

The study of false prophets is actually more important now than ever before. I say this because Jesus spoke of an increase in the number of false prophets in the end-time, Matthew 24:11. He also said that they would be more convincing and harder to recognize, Matthew 24:24. Paul also warned of a greater danger in the last days, 1 Timothy 4:1.

If false prophets are more deceiving and dangerous in our day than before, we do indeed have a problem. For you see, they were very deceptive in Paul's day. In writing to the Corinthians he said, "For such are false apostles, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness: whose end shall be according to their works." (2 Corinthians 11:13-15)

Therefore, most of us need some help in recognizing false prophets. We need to know the characteristics of false prophets and how they operate. This is what I will try to point out in this article. Though some of God's true prophets may have some of these characteristics, people still need to know that they are the marks of a false prophet.

**1. THEY STRIVE TO BE RECOGNIZED AS BEING GREAT AMONG MEN.** Surely all of us have to fight the weakness of sinful pride. But seeking man's praise and glory is not a weakness that false prophets fight; it is one they cultivate. Consider two false prophets in the Bible who had this mark.

In Acts chapter 8, we see this same selfish, boastful spirit in a false prophet by the name of Simon. He carried on his deceptive work in Samaria. Though he was a false prophet, the Bible said that he was able to continue "a long time." People gave heed to Simon "from the least to the greatest." They really believed that he was "the great power of God."

Then we see the mark that identified him as a false prophet. He was "giving out that himself was some great one," Acts 8:9. But God be praised, the preaching of the gospel of Christ brought an end to his work of deceiving and blinding the people.

May I say here, that the marks of a true prophet are seen in men like Paul. Paul was a man who felt that he was "less than the least of all saints," Ephesians 3:8. He even considered himself to be "nothing," 2 Corinthians 12:11. According to the teaching of Jesus, we all should feel this way, John 15:5.

Though all false prophets may not be recognized by their desire to magnify themselves, and though some true men of God may have a problem with pride, all should know that this is a mark that is normally found in false prophets.

**2. FALSE PROPHETS ARE NORMALLY IMMORAL.** In the book of 2 Peter we find much said about false prophets. The second chapter of his book is given almost completely to a study of false prophets. In that chapter he gave us a noticeable mark of false prophets when he said, "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin," 2 Peter 2:14.

There is a reason that many false prophets are immoral and "cannot cease from sin." A truly false prophet is not a "born-again" Christian. He has never moved from the devil's family into God's, 1 John 3:10. He has never become a new creature in Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:17. He has never moved from darkness to light, Ephesians 5:8, The Holy Spirit does not abide and work in him, 2 Corinthians 6:19-20. Naturally, he cannot overcome the sinful, depraved flesh in which he lives. Though there have been some cases of this same immorality among true servants of God, all need to know that this is a mark of false prophets.

**3. MONEY IS A CONTROLLING FACTOR IN THEIR LIVES.** "Not greedy of filthy lucre" is one of the qualifications for those who are ordained to the full work of the ministry, 1 Timothy 3:3. It was to a young preacher that Paul wrote the familiar words, "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows," 1 Timothy 6:10. Though the love for money can bring unnecessary sorrow to all, preachers especially need to watch it. But it is common in false prophets.

In Paul's letter to Timothy he spoke of some false teachers who considered "that gain is godliness." When writing to Titus he referred to some deceivers "whose mouths must be stopped," and said they were preaching for the money, or "for filthy lucre 's sake," Titus 1:10-11. Jude used most of his book dealing with false prophets and he referred to this same problem, Jude 11.

Money is a need we all have, and God gives it to us regularly as a blessing, Philippians 4:19. But to make riches our goal in life is wrong and it brings "many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," 1 Timothy 6:9.

A man cannot "haste to be rich" and stay innocent, Proverbs 28:29. And while many of God's servants have some problems with this, all need to know that letting money be a controlling factor in their ministry is a mark of false prophets.

**4. WE CAN KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS.** When Jesus spoke the words of our text, warning us of false prophets, He went on to say, "ye shall know them by their fruits," Matthew 7:16. If the saying is true that "the fruit of a Christian is another Christian," then the fruit of any man's ministry would be seen in the people that he wins, the people that he pastors, and the people that he influences.

In Galatians 5:19-21, we have a list of things that the flesh produces. Then we have a list of the things which the Spirit produces, verses 22-23. Since the false prophet works in the flesh, we would expect to see things that are in the list of

"works of the flesh," showing up in his followers. And since the true servant of God works in the Spirit, we would expect to see things in the list of "fruit of the Spirit" show up in the lives of those he wins and teaches.

In other words, while hatred, emulation, strife, and envy would naturally show up in the followers of the false prophet, love, joy, peace, meekness and faith would show up in the lives of those who listen to the preaching of the true prophet. Looking at the fruit of one's ministry will therefore help us to know who is true and who is false.

**5. FALSE PROPHETS MAY BE KNOWN BY THOSE WHO HEAR THEM.** The Apostle John wrote much concerning false teachers. In chapter 4 of his first letter he admonishes us to "try the spirits whether they are of God." He then said, "because many false prophets are gone out into the world," 1 John 4:1.

He then gives us some ways to recognize false prophets. One thing he mentioned was, "they are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error," 1 John 4:5-6. John seems to be saying that it will be easy for the false prophets to gather large crowds from the lost and worldly, while the true may find it difficult.

I don't think John is encouraging us to become more like the world in order to grow. He had just said "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world," verse 4. But while it is tempting for a church to make some changes when they lose their spiritual power, they should be careful. I really think that the best thing to do is to weep our way back to God in true repentance and rededicate our lives to the work Jesus left us to do.

**6. FALSE PROPHETS ARE KNOWN BY THEIR MESSAGE.** If a man preaches "another Jesus" other than the Jesus of the Bible, he is not of God. This is one of the ways which John gave us to recognize false prophets, 1 John 4:2-3, The Jesus of the Bible was God's only begotten Son, John 3:16, born of a virgin, Luke 1:34-35, lived a sinless life, Hebrews 4:15, performed miracles, John 3:2, died for the sins of the world, Romans 5:8, was buried in a grave, John 19:40-42, rose from the dead, Mark 1:6, ascended back to the Father, Acts 1:9, is now interceding for us, Hebrews 7:25, and will one day return back to this earth, Acts 1:10-11. This is the Jesus of the Bible, and the Jesus we are to preach. And if anyone preaches another Jesus, he is without question a false prophet.

This little message is not written to encourage the practice of judging and condemning everyone who doesn't believe just like we do. It is written with the hope of helping some to find their way in this different day, and to encourage us all to "earnestly contend for the faith," Jude 3, until "these calamities be overpast," Psalm 57:1.



## The Opponents of Pornography Are Losing

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Compiled by Tom Strode, Washington bureau chief for *Baptist Press*  
Taken from the *Plains Baptist Challenger*, 2011

**T**he opponents of pornography are losing, and an onslaught of sexual attacks likely will result, Southern Baptist ethicist Richard Land believes. "We're losing this war. We haven't lost it, but we're losing it," Land, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said at a conference on porn and sex exploitation. "And if you don't think we're losing it, you spend time with college-age young people, and you'll find out we're losing."

A 2008 study of undergraduate and graduate students, ages 18-26, showed that 69 percent of the men and 10 percent of the women viewed pornography more than once a month. The study was published in the Journal of Adolescent Research. In 2009, the fourth most searched word on the Internet for kids ages 7 and under was "porn," according to data by OnlineFamily.Norton.com. For all kids —those up to age 18 —sex was No. 4, porn No. 5.

(ELB: This is the devil's plan to utterly corrupt society. When pastors and members of their staff are involved in this corruption, it is even worse. A *Time Magazine* story about a 2003 meeting of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers showed that, of the 350 attendees, 62 percent said the "Internet played a significant role in divorces in the past year, with excessive interest in online porn contributing to more than half of such cases." It is wrecking our society and flows from the pit of hell.)

He described hardcore, online pornography as "the greatest danger this country faces."

"[I]t is destroying our culture. It is destroying our families. It is destroying our children," Land said. Sexually graphic material online is destroying men's lives especially, he said.

"Their ability to be the husbands and the fathers God intended them to be is being shriveled and shrunk and stifled and twisted and distorted by exposure to ever more hardcore, Internet pornography," Land told conference participants.

The fallout in the next decade from the problem could be devastating to women, he said. "I believe that we are looking at, in the next 10 years, truly an avalanche, a tsunami of sex crimes against women and girls, because we've got a generation of boys that have been exposed at an earlier and earlier age to hardcore pornography," Land said. "And the mathematics are a certain number who view it will become addicted to it, a certain number who become addicted to it will eventually act out what they've seen on screen."

Land gave his warning at the Convergence Summit, an April 13-14 meeting in suburban Baltimore, focusing on the battle against sexual exploitation in a digital age. Government, business, education and religious leaders from across the United States gathered to address solutions to pornography via new technology such as mobile devices, as well as the related problems of prostitution and sex trafficking.

Christians and the Gospel ministry have not escaped the reach of porn, Land said. "Internet pornography is in your church. If your church has got more than 50 members, it's in your church," he told the audience. "I can tell you hardcore pornography is on the seminary campus. It's on the Christian college campus. It's in the pastorate. It's on the staff."

Its prevalence among staff members has been disclosed when some churches have decided to begin daycare centers to reach out to their communities, Land said. In preparing to provide coverage for churches, insurance companies typically research what is being viewed online in the church's buildings.

"I can't tell you the number of brokenhearted pastors who have called me when they have discovered what some of their trusted church staff have been looking at on church computers," he said.

His wife, Rebekah, and fellow psychologists focusing on marriage and family counseling say pornography is the leading cause of divorce in the United States, Land said: "They just routinely now ask the question, 'What have you been watching? What have you been looking at?' And the men are so surprised: 'How did you know?'"

#### **Statistics support Land's concern:**

- A 2008 study of undergraduate and graduate students, ages 18-26, showed that 69 percent of the men and 10 percent of the women viewed pornography more than once a month. The study was published in the Journal of Adolescent Research.
- A Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project survey released in December 2009 showed that 15 percent of those ages 12-17 who own cell phones had received a "sex" message.

- In 2009, the fourth most searched word on the Internet for kids ages 7 and under was "porn," according to data by OnlineFamily.Norton.com. For all kids — those up to age 18 — sex was No. 4, porn No. 5.
- A *Time* magazine story about a 2003 meeting of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers showed that, of the 350 attendees, 62 percent said the "Internet played a significant role in divorces in the past year, with excessive interest in online porn contributing to more than half of such cases."

There is no debate about pornography's addictive nature, Land said. "We know it's addictive," he said. "We know how it's addictive. We know how it rewires the brain. It requires [viewers'] sexual response, so that they become focused on self-gratification as opposed to the gratification of their partner. It reduces their sexual partner to the level of an appliance."

Churches need to address the issue, and a grassroots effort must take hold to persuade the government to act effectively to address the problem, Land told the audience.

"Our pastors need to talk about it from the pulpit," he said. "We need to talk about it in men's groups and in boys' groups. And we need to talk turkey."

Resources on pornography and sexual exploitation recommended through the Convergence Summit website may be accessed at [http://www.convergencesummit.net/pdf/Recommended\\_Resources.pdf](http://www.convergencesummit.net/pdf/Recommended_Resources.pdf).

The Religious Coalition Against Pornography and the Christian organization Pure Hope sponsored the summit.



## Let's Pull the Trigger

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Norman H. Wells

Taken from the book, *The Church That Jesus Loved, 1973, Chapter 6*

**D**r. Noel Smith is the able editor of the "Baptist Bible Tribune." This paper is published weekly by the Baptist Bible Fellowship with headquarters at Springfield, Missouri.

Dr. Noel Smith has written a book called, "Jews, Gentiles, and the Church." This book comes closer to putting the finger on the basic problem of this age than any I have read. I highly recommend it to all our readers.

In this book Dr. Smith has some things to say about independent Baptists.

On page 99 Dr. Smith says, "I believe in associations, in conventions, in fellowships."

On pages 106-107 Dr. Smith says:

"The fact that I believe in the New Testament independence of New Testament churches does not mean that I am an ecclesiastical anarchist. In this lunatic world today everybody has got to go from one fool extreme to the other — exactly what the Devil wants. With apologies to Horace Greeley, it is good to know that a lot of independents are self-made men; it relieves God Almighty of a lot of responsibility. There is no such thing in this world as unqualified independence."

On page 106 Dr. Smith says, "The New Testament churches not only had fellowship, they had method. They had 'machinery' if you please. In spite of all the hollering and whooping and stomping by the lathered 'independents,' nobody has ever done anything in this world without method, without machinery."

This is rather a severe indictment of independent Baptists. According to Dr. Smith an independent Baptist is iii "ecclesiastical anarchist." Dr. Smith believes that independent Baptists have gone to a "fool extreme." Dr. Smith hopes that God is not held responsible for independent Baptists. He pictures independent Baptists as "hollering and whooping and stomping." He speaks of independent Baptists as, "lathered independents."

I AM AN INDEPENDENT BAPTIST. I pastor an independent Baptist church. In this capacity I would like to look at Dr. Smith's book.

The first chapter is called, "The Three Classes: As They Are." Attention is drawn to the fact that there are three distinct classes of people on the earth: Jews, Gentiles, and the church. The failure to recognize the Bible's classification, distinctions, and implications of these three is given as the basic cause of the religious, social, economic and political chaos that exists today. It is pointed out that the world does not recognize these three classes but instead insists on, "Everything becoming one thing!" (Page 12)

In this first chapter Dr. Smith looks at the Jews as they are today. He sees the Jews so hopelessly divided that it has become impossible for them to even agree as to a definition of a Jew. They are at war with the whole world, and at war with themselves.

Dr. Smith looks at the Gentiles. He traces the history of the Gentiles from Cain, Nimrod, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, the Dark Ages, etc. to this present generation. From the time that Nimrod, "gathered the Gentiles to Babel and tried to create a universal state," (Page 17) the Gentiles have lived in the open rebellion and defiance of God that is described in Romans 1:21-32.

In chapter two Dr. Smith points out that the Jews, as a nation, were chosen of God by love and grace to be a miracle nation, a separated nation, a peculiar nation, a nation with a land, a nation with a language, and a nation to endure forever.

The nation of the Jews was chosen to teach the Gentile nations of the true God; to write down, preserve and transmit the revelation of God; to save the world from moral putrefaction: to give the world a prophet and King-Priest.

Dr. Smith points out that the Jews turned from the Scriptures and their mission but that God in His sovereignty will accomplish His purpose in the Jews.

Dr. Smith begins with the origin of the Gentile nations and shows that their desire has always been to make all nations into one nation. This has always been contrary to the plan of God and has brought chaos.

What happened to the Jew and Gentiles? What went wrong? I believe that Dr. Smith comes to an accurate diagnosis. They left God out! They departed from God's plan and method! Judgment and chaos have resulted. **INSTEAD OF FOLLOWING GOD'S PRESCRIBED COURSE AND PLAN, THEY TRIED TO BUILD SOMETHING BIGGER AND BETTER AND GRANDER!**

The entire third chapter (a third of the entire book) is devoted to the church.

Dr. Smith has done an outstanding job. Not only if we are to have revival but if we are going to have survival we are going to have to recognize the truths that are presented in this chapter.

Better and with greater clarity than any other writer, Dr. Smith establishes that the original word that is translated "church" in our English Bible means "assembly."

Dr. Smith establishes that the church of the New Testament was a local, material, visible, corporate entity. 'HIS WAS THE ONLY KIND OF CHURCH ESTABLISHED. There is not one single indication in the entire New Testament of any other meaning for church.

Now, I would like to look at some quotations from Dr. Smith's book that strike a particular response from my own heart and which I could not possibly more heartily endorse.

The teaching of the New Testament is eternally at war with your ecumenical church and all your centralized ecclesiastical systems. (Page 100)

The New Testament churches were completely independent of all external human authority. (Page 101)

The autonomy and independence of the New Testament church is a corollary of its nature. (Page 101)

Genuine New Testament churches always have been autonomous and independent of external ecclesiastical authority. Genuine New Testament churches today are autonomous and independent of external ecclesiastical authority. Genuine New Testament churches always will be autonomous and independent of external ecclesiastical authority. (Page 103)

A wife packing up her glad rags and leaving her husband for another man is not one whit guiltier of adultery than the local church which turns from the authority of Christ to the authority of ecclesiasticism. (Page 104)

THERE IS NOT A LINE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT THAT GIVES THE LOCAL CHURCH THE AUTHORITY TO DELEGATE ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO ANYBODY. —AMEN, AMEN AND AMEN. [Capitalization and Amens are mine. Ed.] (Page 104)

What happened to the Jews, Gentiles, and the church? Listen again to Dr. Smith, "The ancient Jews tired of God as their King and demanded that He abdicate the throne and turn it over to Saul." The Jews rejected God and tried to build something bigger and better and grander.

The Gentiles left the nations that God established and have been trying to build "one world" ever since.

The Christian world has left the idea of the independent, local church and is trying to build a "one-world church."

DR. SMITH HAS THE PROPER DIAGNOSIS! DR. SMITH HAS THE PROPER REMEDY! THE TRAGEDY IS THAT DR. SMITH WILL NOT APPLY THE REMEDY! He tells us how to load the gun but he won't shoot. I WILL! I'll pull the trigger and fire his own ammunition.

WHEN THE TEACHINGS OF DR. SMITH IN THE BOOK "JEWS, GENTILES, AND THE CHURCH" ARE APPLIED THEY CONSTITUTE AN INDICTMENT OF THE BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP OF WHICH DR. SMITH IS A PART.

Let us look again at Dr. Smith's words as already quoted.

"The teaching of the New Testament is eternally at war with your ecumenical church and all your centralized systems." (Page 100)

Let's pull the trigger!

THE BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP IS A "CENTRALIZED ECCLESIASTICAL SYSTEM." It is an organization with which Baptist churches identify themselves and through which they do their work. The Fellowship has a constitution. It has officers. It owns property. Through the Fellowship the churches centralize the training of preachers, their missionary work, etc.

Dr. Smith says the teaching of the New Testament is it war with this kind of thing. We agree!

"The New Testament churches were completely independent of all external human authority." (Page 101)

Let's pull the trigger!

THE CHURCHES OF THE BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP ARE NOT FREE FROM EXTERNAL HUMAN AUTHORITY. The churches have a vote but are required to submit to the majority rule of the Fellowship or keep quiet...or get out. To remain an identified part of the Fellowship regards accepting the Fellowship's decisions. This is human authority.

Genuine New Testament churches always have been autonomous... today are autonomous ... always will be autonomous. (Page 103)

Let's pull the trigger!

THE CHURCHES OF THE BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP ARE NOT AUTONOMOUS! To be autonomous means to be completely self-governing. It means to have self-determination without outside control. When a centralized ecclesiastical system such as the Baptist Bible Fellowship uses its centralized schools, papers, youth camps, etc. to indoctrinate the members of the local churches with a greater loyalty to the central organization than to the church then the church is no longer autonomous.

There is not a line in the New Testament that gives the local church the authority to delegate its responsibility to anybody. (Page 104)

Let's pull the trigger!

THE CHURCHES OF THE BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP DO DELEGATE THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO THE CENTRAL ORGANIZATION. The Lord gave the church and the church only, the authority to send out missionaries. The churches of the Baptist Bible Fellowship delegate this authority to their Mission Board.

AN ORGANIZATION SUCH AS THE BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP IS UNSCRIPTURAL.

The only organization established and commissioned in the New Testament is the local church. There is not one mention or hint of any other organization.

Search the Bible! A Baptist is supposed to believe and abide by a "thus saith the Lord." By what authority are organizations such as the Baptist Bible Fellowship organized? One thing is sure . . . it is not Bible authority!

MAN-MADE ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP HAVE ALWAYS PRODUCED COMPROMISE. The proclamation of the great Baptist truths has to be softened and finally stilled in order to maintain unity in the central organization. THE BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP IS CALLED BAPTIST . . . BUT CANNOT EVEN IDENTIFY A BAPTIST! Does a Baptist church accept "alien immersion" as scriptural Baptism? Does a Baptist church practice open or closed communion? Are openly interdenominational churches that call themselves Baptist to be accepted as such simply because they support the Fellowship financially?

May I be permitted to give one more quote from Dr. Smith's book? He tries to justify the existence of the Baptist Bible Fellowship in the following quote.

I believe in associations, in conventions, in fellowships. We are told that in the New Testament we don't find any of them. No; and neither do we find the Sunday School or the Wednesday night prayer meeting. (Page 99)

Such things as Sunday Schools and the Wednesday night prayer meeting are in the individual church and controlled by the individual church and do not violate the principle and mission of the church. Organizations such as the Baptist Bible Fellowship are outside of the church and are a violation of the principle and mission of the church.

THE BOOK, "JEWS, GENTILES, AND THE CHURCH," BY NOEL SMITH IS AN ANSWER TO PR AYER.

For years I have been trying to present the position of the independent Baptist. I have desired to be able to present this truth in such a way that Baptists would understand the tremendous importance of the return to the local church . . . God's way. Mine has been a feeble, faltering attempt. It has long been my prayer that one with the ability HI Noel Smith would be presenting the position of the independent Baptist. God has answered that prayer. Dr. Smith accomplishes this in his book.

I WILL NOW BEGIN TO PRAY THAT DR. SMITH, THE BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP, AND EACH CHURCH IDENTIFIED WITH SUCH, WILL HAVE THE COURAGE TO FOLLOW THEIR CONVICTIONS.

