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of it. Young men are warned about the woman *“with the attire of a harlot”* (Proverbs 7:10), and cinema continues to portray the bad part of town with streetwalkers hooking in distinctively slutty outfits. After her husband Er died, Tamar *“put on the garments of her widowhood”* (Genesis 38:19); while this may only play out as a movie trope these days, an image of a woman in a black dress with a black veil instantly communicates the typical widow. Simon Peter had removed his outer garment while he was working a fishing boat (John 21:7). There is a difference between men’s clothes and women’s (Deuteronomy 22:5). Styles have changed over the millennia and across the continents, but it has always been true that what a person is wearing has the power to communicate what that person is doing. To ignore this is to ignore reality.

When I slaughter turkeys in November, I put on my overalls and a blood-splattered Carhartt coat. I don’t wear those clothes to worship. When I am picnicking on the 4th of July, tossing a frisbee, eating chips, and watching fireworks, I wear shorts and a star-spangled t-shirt with sandals or sneakers. I have another outfit in mind for Sunday. When I held secular employment, I wore my uniform with badge and a gun belt; unless I had no time to change between work and church, those were not the clothes I wore to assemble with the saints. When I am building a sheep paddock, I have my old boots on with my old jeans, and a t-shirt that is either old or I got for free. I would not do that job in a suit and tie, but I do have suits and ties for special occasions.

Worship is a special occasion, for it is written, *“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those around Him”* (Psalm 89:7). He is no less worthy of fear and reverence in the New Testament than He was in the Old (Hebrews 12:28). This is especially true on the first day of the week when disciples come *“together to break bread”* (Acts 20:7), because that bread and the accompanying cup amount to communion with Christ’s body and blood (1st Corinthians 10:16). The bread is to be eaten *“in remembrance of”* Christ and the cup is to be drunk *“in remembrance of”* Him, too (1st Corinthians 11:24-25). That makes *“the Lord’s Supper”* (1st Corinthians 11:20) a **memorial**. Specifically, it is how we *“proclaim the Lord’s death”* (1st Corinthians 11:26), so it resembles a funeral, a somber occasion when the living pay our respects to One who has died.

Unless it cannot be avoided, mourners try not to arrive at a funeral wearing the clothes they do in the shop, in the field, or on the beach.

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It is not that the survivors would turn away a mourner who had to leave work in the middle of the day to attend, but if the mourner had nothing else on his schedule and chose to put on grease-stained coveralls or sweatpants with flip-flops, many would consider it disrespectful. Likewise, worshipers. If someone owns no other clothes or must come straight from work, *“if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have”* (2nd Corinthians 8:12). However, if no obstacle prevents him from putting himself together for the occasion of honoring Christ’s death and he chooses a casual appearance, that choice to be casual may present a conflict with the reverence due the Lord.

I happen to enjoy dressing up and I do not expect every worshiper to dress the same as me. Some may wear the tie and forego the suit while some may wear the suit and forego the tie. Some may choose chinos and a polo shirt or their cleanest, least torn jeans with a short-sleeved button-down tucked in. The issue at hand is not the exact articles of clothing chosen for the occasion, but **the attitude whereby one recognizes there even is an occasion**. There should be nothing casual about presenting oneself before the King of kings to honor His death.

Some may take offense here, saying this is sinful partiality because it is written, *“My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, ‘You sit here in a good place,’ and say to the poor man, ‘You stand there,’ or, ‘Sit here at my footstool,’ have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?”* (James 2:1-4). First, there is a tremendous difference between a poor person being financially unable to upgrade their wardrobe and one who is able but decides to keep it casual. Second, dress clothes these days are not necessarily more costly than casual wear, and, in fact, they are often more affordable, depending on where the person shops; you can find a lot at thrift stores and yard sales. Third, no one will be turned away from church for wearing dirty clothes, nor will they be relegated to a lesser seat; all are welcome. This is not about Christians casting judgment on their brethren or on visitors for the quality of their wardrobe. What it is about is encouraging Christians to revere Christ, to honor His sacrifice, and to present oneself with purpose. Dressing the part is merely a reflection of that.

***"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"***

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

***"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"***

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY

Men's & Ladies' Studies @ 6:20 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

***"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"***

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

***"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN
SETTINGS OF SILVER"***

PROVERBS 25:11

"To pray 'Thy will be done', I must be willing, if the answer requires it, that my will be undone."

– Elisabeth Elliot

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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DRESSING THE PART

Bryan Matthew Dockens

On an ordinary Sunday, you can see me wearing a suit, with a buttoned and collared shirt, as well as a necktie or bow tie. There are infrequent exceptions. Since there is no pavement between my house and my truck, if rain or snow has muddied the ground, I will put on my nicest pair of boots, with my cleanest pair of jeans, along with a buttoned and collared shirt, and a bolo tie. If I am expected to hitch up the trailer to haul some livestock or hay before I can make it home to change clothes, then I will likewise modify my Sunday attire. Otherwise, I wear my best.

My decision to dress semi-formally rests on Scripture affirming the fact that clothing communicates purpose. There is such a thing as bridal attire (Jeremiah 2:32), and, despite drastic changes in culture, to this day, everyone recognizes a bridal gown when it is seen. Jesus acknowledged that guests attending weddings were expected to put on a "wedding garment" (Matthew 22:11-12); this practice may be in decline, but most wedding guests still dress up to some degree compared to their usual Saturday clothes. It may vary from country to country, but "judge's attire" exists and is recognizable (Judges 5:10); while only two of the fifty States in the U.S. legally require a judge to don a black robe, most judges in most States, and at the Federal level, opt to do so by tradition, and their role is immediately known because
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