

Christian Living – Entertainment and Fashion

PURPOSE: The Bible is a handbook for daily life that includes counsel on how to glorify God in our recreation, entertainment and dress.

FOCUS: Christ calls us away from the vanity and emptiness of a worldly lifestyle so that we can appreciate and understand spiritual things.

Introduction Novelist Jack Higgins was asked what he would like to have known as a boy. His answer: "That when you get to the top, there's nothing there." (see **Eccl 1:14**)

Christ knew the emptiness of a worldly lifestyle, and has warned us against its deceptions...

1 John 2:15-17 What three lusts are there in the world? Fleshly desires. Vanity. Pride. Should we love these? If the world fits, you are the wrong size. The worldly lifestyle, its pleasures, recreation, humor, dress etc. is different from a Christian's.

Let's get a bit more practical: What does the Bible say about entertainment?

2 Cor 3:18 If we behold the glory of Jesus, whose image will we be transformed into? If we behold the world, whose image will we be transformed into? What we behold will transform us for good or evil. IE: Idol. TV: Movies with violence and immorality; should a Christian be entertained by what crucified Jesus? (**Ps 101:3, Job 31:1**) IE: "It is only a movie" IE: Advertisement affect us subconsciously. Same thing with TV, novels, games and music.

Music is a powerful medium that can be used for good or evil...

1 Sam 16:23 Can good music drive away evil angels? Does music affect us spiritually? Can bad music drive away good angels? IE: Music = language of emotion.

What is the standard for our music and entertainment?

Phil 4:7-8 Do our hearts and minds need guarding? Feed your mind with good things.

Why is this important?

Rom 12:2 Should we conform to the world? What must we rather do? The purpose of this admonition is for us to be able to understand God's will. Worldly entertainment and music kills the relish for spirituality and the Bible. Are you willing to set a high standard for your music and entertainment?

One worldly lust is vanity. Today's fashion encourage vanity. What does the Bible say about dress?

1 Pet 3:3-5 How does Jesus want us to adorn ourselves? [*Merly* (NKJV) is not in the original]. Women want to be beautiful. That's good. But what makes a woman beautiful? Her outward appearance or her character? (**Prov 11:22, 31:30**).

How did the holy women of former times dress?

Gen 35:2-4 Gold and gems are not inherently evil (Gen 2:12). But when they are worn on the body for adornment, they can be an idol that leads to vanity.

After some time in Egypt, the children of Israel had adopted the Egyptian lifestyle and needed reform.

Exod 33:3-6 This happened when Israel literally had made an idol out of their jewelry (32:1-4). What was Israel's sin? Pride. What was the solution? Take off your jewelry. Can jewelry lead to pride? Vanity (**Isa 3:18-23**). IE: Sanctuary

The New Testament encourages the same modest dress code...

1 Tim 2:9-10 Does Jesus want us to adorn our exterior? This applies to men too. Did Jesus wear piercings or jewelry? (**Isa 53:2**) How does Jesus want us to dress? Sexy or modest? General principles of dress (**Gen 3:7, 21, 1 Cor 12:23-24, Exod 28:42**). IE: Men are visually attracted. No excuse for impure thoughts, but why be a stumbling block? Should we dress ugly or with propriety?

What about tattoos?

Lev 19:28 Are tattoos part of a Christian lifestyle? IE: Graffiti on God's temple?

Perhaps entertainment and dress seems to be something small; it might be true. But Jesus said...

Luke 16:10 Is it your desire to please Jesus in every aspect of your life? Would anything keep you from laying off jewelry or anything that does not please God?

APPENDIX

MEDIA

“My dear young friends, question your own experience as to the influence of exciting stories. Can you, after such reading, open the Bible and read with interest the words of life? Do you not find the Book of God uninteresting? The charm of that love story is upon the mind, destroying its healthy tone, and making it impossible for you to fix the attention upon the important, solemn truths that concern your eternal welfare. Resolutely discard all trashy reading. It will not strengthen your spirituality, but will introduce into the mind sentiments that pervert the imagination, causing you to think less of Jesus and to dwell less upon His precious lessons. Keep the mind free from everything that would lead it in a wrong direction. Do not encumber it with trashy stories, which impart no strength to the mental powers. The thoughts are of the same character as the food provided for the mind.” (Ellen White, *Messages to Young People*, p. 273)

MUSIC

“Music is a gift of God to inspire pure, noble, and elevated thoughts. Good music, then, enhances the finest qualities of character. Debased music, on the other hand, “destroys the rhythm of the soul and breaks down morality.” So Christ's followers will shun “any melody partaking of the nature of jazz, rock, or related hybrid forms, or any language expressing foolish or trivial sentiments.” The Christian does not listen to music with suggestive lyrics or melodies (Rom. 13:11-14; 1 Peter 2:11).” (*Seventh-Day Adventists Believe...*, p. 317)

“The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. ... Better never have the worship of God blended with music than to use musical instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp meetings. ... A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working. ... Those things which have been in the past will be in the future. Satan will make music a snare by the way in which it is conducted.” (Ellen White, *Selected Messages 2*, p. 36-38)

JEWELRY

“In view of these Scriptural teachings and the principles laid out above, we believe that Christians ought not to adorn themselves with jewelry. We understand this to mean that the wearing of rings, earrings, necklaces, and bracelets, and showy tie tacks, cuff links, and pins—and any other type of jewelry that has as its main function display—is unnecessary and not in harmony with the simplicity of adornment urged by Scripture.” (*Seventh-Day Adventists Believe...*, p. 321)

“Any device designed to attract attention to the wearer or to excite admiration, is excluded from the modest apparel which God's word enjoins.” (Ellen White, *Ministry of Healing*, p. 287)

“Self-denial in dress is a part of our Christian duty. To dress plainly, abstaining from display of jewelry and ornaments of every kind, is in keeping with our faith.” (Ellen White, *Testimonies 3*, p. 366)

“Many who profess to be children of God feel no scruples against conforming to the customs of the world in the wearing of gold and pearls and costly array.

Those who are too conscientious to wear these things are regarded as narrow-minded, superstitious, and even fanatical. But it is God who condescends to give us these instructions; they are the declarations of Infinite Wisdom, and those who disregard them do so at their own peril and loss. Those who cling to the ornaments forbidden in God's word cherish pride and vanity in the heart. They desire to attract attention. Their dress says: Look at me; admire me. Thus the vanity inherent in human nature is steadily increasing by indulgence. When the mind is fixed upon pleasing God alone, all the needless embellishments of the person disappear." (Ellen White, *Testimonies 4*, p. 644)

WEDDING RING

"Some have had a burden in regard to the wearing of a marriage ring, feeling that the wives of our ministers should conform to this custom. All this is unnecessary. Let the ministers' wives have the golden link which binds their souls to Jesus Christ, a pure and holy character, the true love and meekness and godliness that are the fruit borne upon the Christian tree, and their influence will be secure anywhere. The fact that a disregard of the custom occasions remark is no good reason for adopting it. Americans can make their position understood by plainly stating that the custom is not regarded as obligatory in our country. We need not wear the sign, for we are not untrue to our marriage vow, and the wearing of the ring would be no evidence that we were true. I feel deeply over this leavening process which seems to be going on among us, in the conformity to custom and fashion. Not one penny should be spent for a circlet of gold to testify that we are married. In countries where the custom is imperative, we have no burden to condemn those who have their marriage ring; let them wear it if they can do so conscientiously; but let not our missionaries feel that the wearing of the ring will increase their influence one jot or tittle." (Ellen White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 180).
The Bible mentions functional jewelry (Esther 8:8, Gen 24:22, 51-53, Luke 15:22).