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Articles

God and Prayer

by Betty Schatzle (West Chester, Ohio)

"No, I love you too much". Have you ever prayed long and hard about a problem and never received an answer? Boy, I have. You wonder if God is even listening or if He even cares. The Lord of the universe is not obliged to answer our prayer in the affirmative. He will not act in ways that are contrary to His will even if He is besieged by fervent prayer. That can be good, however, considering some of the things we request. Many of us have found it to be true that God says "no" to our most heartfelt prayers. We just have to keep in mind that like our earthly father who says "no" for our own good, so our Heavenly Father does the same. God does not bow to our will, instead we should submit to His good will

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for our lives. Our minds cannot comprehend the things He has in store for us in the future. When we do not get an answer from our prayers right away it may be for several different reasons. God may be teaching us patience; we may be asking for something that is not good for us or for others. It may be something that will harm us, or there might be something better in the future for us.

Prov. 3: 5-6 says "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him. And He shall direct your paths". When we pray to God and follow His commandments, that is one way of acknowledging Him. Nevertheless, it still does not mean we will get an answer to our prayers. Only God knows where we are headed in the future, as He said, He directs our paths.

DEATH- the most undeniable reality there is happens to the most godly people, no matter how much or how hard we pray. Sept. 11th comes to mind, as do all the other terrorist attacks on America and around the world. God said "No" to the prayers of thousands. Why? We still live in a fallen nation. "In God We Trust? it says on our money but do we."

"Yes, I love you this much" Matt 7:7 says, " Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." When we pray we expect immediate answers. You want them and I want them. God does not always function that way. Perseverance and patience in prayer are essential. Sometimes we just have to wait for His answer to come. When it does come, it may be exactly what we asked for or something altogether different. Many people think prayer can bring you the miracle you're looking for when you need it. Some of God's answers to prayers are: " No, I love you too much". "Yes, but not now-soon"; "Yes, but even more or better than asked for"; "Yes, but not exactly what you asked for".

As a nation we need to do as the city of Nineveh did in the Old Testament times. Read Jonah chapter 3 for more information. My wish and desire is that the nation gets right with God.

Universal Basic Income

by Joseph B. Baity (Charlotte, North Carolina)



Regardless of one's perspective, the COVID-19 pandemic historically upended the global community. Of the many burdens the world has suffered in its wake, some of the greatest have been economic. In the United States, many businesses—large, medium, and small—were forced to shut down or dramatically scale back their operations for the best part of a year as much of society sheltered-in-place at home. Tragically, many of these businesses never reopened.

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Unemployment naturally skyrocketed to levels not seen since the Great Depression, and with that unemployment came widespread economic pain.

Responding to the many fiscal woes of the people, the federal government passed “emergency” legislation that authorized economic stimulus in the form of generous cash payments to the majority of all citizens, regardless of employment status. In addition to the cash payments, the government increased the weekly unemployment compensation payment and extended the duration of eligibility for receiving the benefit. In many cases, the monies provided by the government equaled or exceeded what an individual could earn by actually working. Many observers report that the political will exists to continue these stimulus payments as long as COVID-19 remains a threat to economic growth.

An additional “benefit,” quietly included in the federal legislation, is a drastic change in the child tax credit. Initially designed as a benefit (in the form of a tax deduction) for working, tax-paying parents, the credit has now been increased and changed into direct cash payments to the parent(s). More significantly, the legislation eliminates the work requirement. Once a tax credit for the employed, it is now a cash handout to all parents of young children, without regard to employment.

This proposed benefit is a colossal undertaking, especially if it is made permanent. All indications are that it will be if the Democrat party retains control over the executive and legislative branches of the federal government. The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank based in Washington, D.C., released a report describing the legislation:

If enacted permanently, the Biden cash grant plan would constitute the second-largest expansion of means-tested welfare entitlements in U.S. history. In constant dollars, its annual cost would dwarf the initial costs of the Medicaid, food stamp, and Aid to Families with Dependent Children programs. Only Obamacare would be more expensive.

Acton Institute’s Jordan J. Ballor surmises: “The creation of a new, permanent entitlement program for parents seems particularly unwise while our federal debt skyrockets and reform for already existing entitlement programs is so desperately needed.”

Oren Cass’ article, “The Biden and Romney Family Plans Go Too Far,” in *The New York Times* on March 2, 2021, opines:

To be clear, America should provide basic necessities to those who cannot provide for themselves. . . . But the safety net’s assistance should not replicate the income associated with engaging productively in the society. . . . A generous cash benefit disconnected from work can also be economically and culturally counterproductive. Work plays a critical role in people’s lives as a source of purpose, structure, and social interaction, a prerequisite for upward mobility and a foundation of family formation and stability.

The news and social media overflow with anecdotal reports from employers who have recently reopened their businesses but cannot rehire old employees or find new ones because they cannot compete with the cash “benefits” paid by the federal government.

Richard Giacovas, reporting for Fox5NewYork.com on March 31, 2021, quotes restaurant owner Dean O’Neil, who has struggled to staff his restaurant recently: “I couldn’t work out really why. And then I found it was basically they could receive money without having to work.”

Tyler Durden from ZeroHedge.com opines in an April 9, 2021, article:

The trillions in Biden stimulus are now incentivizing potential workers not to seek gainful employment, but to sit back and collect the next stimmy check for doing absolutely nothing in what is becoming the world’s greatest “under the radar” experiment in Universal Basic Income. . . . Early in the Covid-19 pandemic, Melissa Anderson laid off all three full-time employees of her jewelry-making company, Silver Chest Creations in Burkesville, KY. She tried to rehire one of them in September and another in January as business recovered, but they refused to come back, she says. “They’re not looking for work.”

U.S. history is replete with the efforts of conscientious men and women rolling up their sleeves and working to overcome almost any crisis at hand. But powerful, secular, anti-God winds are blowing, and the era of big government is back in

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vogue in Washington, D.C. With that, we are witnessing a purposeful pivot away from our Judeo-Christian heritage and its conservative, capitalist roots toward liberal, interventionist, and even socialist policies that will eventually bankrupt the country—fiscally and morally. Moreover, if our incentive for employment is taken away, we oppose our Creator’s design for us and abandon one of His greatest gifts—work—while slipping into indolent oblivion (Genesis 1:26; 2:15; Proverbs 19:15; Ecclesiastes 5:18; John 5:17).

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Holy Days 2022

Passover – April 16, 2022 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)

Unleavened Bread – April 16, 2022 to April 22, 2022

Pentecost – June 5, 2022

Trumpets - September 26, 2022

Atonement – October 5, 2022

Tabernacles – October 10, 2022

Last Great Day – October 17, 2022

Cleavage in the Church

by Philip T. Derstine (Puckett, Mississippi)

“If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?” We can speak up, so that our silence does not cause us to become partakers of other’s sins (Ezekiel 33, entire chapter). In this post-911 world, the sword has already come on the land with worse judgments to follow (verse 3), so when we see the connection between certain sins and an even more certain judgment, it is our job to warn the people being lulled to sleep by the complacency of Church leaders:

The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him when he transgresses...though I [YHWH] say to the righteous he shall surely live, yet if he trusts in his righteousness (his Sabbath-keeping, tithing, feast-keeping, and abstention from unclean meats) and commits iniquity, NONE of his righteous deeds shall be remembered, but in the iniquity that he has committed, he shall die. (Ezekiel 33:13)

When one separates from the Worldwide Church of God and its offshoots for more than two decades and then returns, one is struck by how drastically the outward appearance of our young people has changed. In the Church of God’s rush to accommodate modern culture, the license that the leadership and parents are extending to the X-generation in their midst is storing up judgment and ensuring that all three will live beyond the Second Coming into the Day of the Lord. In that Day, circumstances will dictate a far more conservative approach to dress and overall righteousness.

How can a generation steeped in American culture be brought to understand the mind of God concerning dress and modesty? How can the foundations be restored? Several scriptural passages give insight into our Creator’s standard of modesty. The first is Genesis 9:20-28. Noah planted a vineyard and became drunk and was found naked in his tent by his son Ham, father of Canaan. Ham told his two brothers, but “Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. When Noah awoke and realized what had happened, he said, “Cursed be Canaan,” but he blessed Shem and Japheth.

This passage is a clear indication that prohibitions against nakedness, either codified or intuitive, existed long before Sinai. In the Torah are found specific statutes prohibiting nakedness. The priests were to wear britches under their garments, and “not go up by steps to my altar, that your nakedness not be exposed on it.” (Exodus 20:26) “And you shall make for them (the priests) linen trousers to cover their nakedness; they shall reach from the waist to the thighs.” (Exodus 28:42) Hear YHWH speaking through Moses, “According to the doings of the land of Egypt...and according to the doings

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of the land of Canaan, you shall not do....None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness; I am YHWH.” Leviticus 18:3-6. If almost an entire chapter in Leviticus warns against uncovering the nakedness of relatives, how much more displeasing to our Creator when we reveal our nakedness to brothers and sisters in the faith? As a people, we are thoroughly acculturated and corrupted by American society, and we have lost the innocence that comes with instinctive modesty. We must strive to understand the biblical definition of nakedness and make application to modern standards of dress. “Nakedness” is translated from the Hebrew word *ervah*, which according to the Strong’s Concordance means “nudity, especially the pudenda; the external genital organs, especially of the female.” Based on this definition, a conservative approach to dress would dictate that tight pants revealing the female form or short skirts (exposing the “pudendum” when sitting) are contrary to the mind and will of YHWH.

The leaders and parents who truly need to read and hear this message are not likely to “get it” this side of Christ’s return. Nevertheless, moved by the Holy Spirit, I set forth my window into the mind of YHWH in faith that 1) this Word, eventually, shall indeed find its mark among the “Left Behind,” and 2) His Word never returns to Him void.

A word to the wise: Concern yourself with these matters now, or concern yourself with them later, but you will deal with them. Hosea 5:5 says: “The people that doth not understand [because their leadership did not raise the issue] shall fall.” What we are talking about here is a grievous sin of omission on the part of parents and pastors, and the unwitting sin of commission on the part of teenagers taken in by the culture around them.

The word ‘**gap**’ only occurs one time in the scriptures, in Ezekiel 22:30 (RSV): Her priests (ministers, those in Church authority) have done violence to my law and have profaned my holy things (such as the concepts of virginity, modesty in dress and dating, failure to uphold chaste standards)...they have made no distinction between the holy and the common (even mocking the idea that God’s people should look and dress differently than the world)...and I sought for a man *among them* who should build up the wall and stand in the breach (KJV says ‘**gap**’) before Me...that I should not destroy it; but I found none,

I do not fancy myself as fulfilling this scripture, because I am not *among them*, and have no power or standing in the Church of God, or any other church, with which to have any kind of influence. The Church is a closed shop. The commentaries tell us that Isaiah also lamented his inability to get the attention of his people, so he addressed his message in a remarkable way:

Give ear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for YHWH has spoken: “Sons have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against Me. The ox knows its owner, and ass its master’s crib; but Israel does not know, My people [the Church of God] do not understand.”

Nevertheless, Almighty YHWH has His ways of getting the Church’s attention and get it He will. If YHWH can use this particular writing to turn away a few from unrighteousness, then the effort will have been well worth it.

If one reads through the Ezekiel 22 passage quoted above, a Sabbath-keeper should be struck by the fact that Ezekiel, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit., prioritizes a whole list of sins long before he gets around to our Sabbath-breaking, nor is this the last sin mentioned. It is surely true that the New Testament apostles prioritized sins of fornication, unholiness, sexual uncleanness¹, and modest apparel (I Peter 3:3) in their ministry to the Gentiles (Acts 15:20, 29), before binding the Sabbath and holy days on them (though I don’t deny that the Gentile churches kept the latter).

Webster’s defines gap as an empty space, a breach. That breach in the wall of God’s Law which Ezekiel rails against is, ironically, symbolized by the deterioration in dress standards that has occurred in the past generation in God’s Church. In fact, believe it or not, the prophets of Father YHWH speak rather graphically and pointedly to that which epitomizes this breach. My first piece of evidence against the Church I present from the book of Hosea. The Church of God is fond of applying these prophecies to the nations of Britain and America, but rather blind to the suggestion that they describe YHWH’s beef with His Church. Hosea 2:2 (Concordant Literal):

Contend with your mother (the Church), contend—
For she is not My wife (not the Bride of Christ, for reasons about to be stated),

¹ Acts 15:20, Ro. 1:29, I Cor. 5:1, 6:13, 10:8, Gal. 5:19, Eph. 5:3, Col. 3:5, I Th. 4:3, Jude 7, Rev. 2:20, Rev. 17:2-19:2.

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And I am not her husband.
And she WILL take away the signs of her prostitutions from her face,
And her adulteries **from between her breasts.**
Lest I should strip her naked
And put her forth as on the day of her birth
And make her as a wilderness
And set her as an arid land
And put her to death with thirst.

The underlined portion above is rendered by the Septuagint “I will remove her fornication (porneia) out of My presence.” Porneia is the same word used throughout the NT for ‘fornication’ and is the etymon for the English word pornographic. There was, of course, a time in English and American history, when the display of cleavage by a female was considered downright pornographic. Hosea has chosen his words very carefully to make it plain to God’s people that YHWH considers the uncovering of the gap between a woman’s breasts to be pornographic and adulterous--a violation of Torah. It is, after all, part of her sexual apparatus, as any married woman knows. Furthermore, it is that part of female anatomy that appeals to a man’s prurient interest and entices him. It would be very poor hermeneutic for the Church to say that Hosea is simply being metaphorical, and then ignore the clear implications of his phraseology.

The so-called command-keepers of the Church of God have become rather lackadaisical with regard to righteousness. She—the woman of Hosea 2--has become like the loose woman of Proverbs 5, in that “she does not take heed to the path of life; her paths wander, and she does not know it.” Speaking of one’s wife, Proverbs 5:19 says— “Let *her* breasts satisfy you at all times.” At winter family festivals, and at the fall feasts, an awful lot of men--married and unmarried—are gazing on and deriving pleasure, not from their own wife’s breasts, but from nakedness that does not belong to them. Parents by the hundreds, who would never think of uncovering a daughter’s nakedness in violation of Leviticus 18, suffer them to divulge a portion of their nakedness to married men, ministers, and the boys in the Church of God. Let everyone who beholds this phenomenon come to see the significance of this display...the Church is fallen from grace (Galatians 5:4). The unveiling of female cleavage in the Church is a metaphor for the breach which the Church has inflicted upon God’s Law. Instead of her faith victoriously overcoming the world (I John. 5:4), America’s culture has overcome the Church. The Church of God, which prides itself as being the Philadelphia era of the Church (Revelation 3:7ff), has backslidden to Thyatira, because “you tolerate that woman Jezebel,² who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to commit fornication.” (Revelation 2:20)

As we know, most fornication is committed with the eyes. Christ said whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery already with her. And so, the only solution for righteous males is that they do as the patriarch Job did (Job 31:1):

I made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I look upon a maiden? What would be my portion from Elohim (God) above, and my heritage from the Almighty on high? Does not calamity befall the unrighteous, and disaster the workers of iniquity? v. 7--If my heart has gone after my eyes...then let me sow, and another eat; and let what grows for me be rooted out.

You would think after seeing all the billions of dollars’ worth of Church of God tithes plowed into infrastructure and buildings on three college campuses, all of which has been *rooted out* and given to Sunday-keepers like Benny Hinn (Pasadena), and Catholics (Big Sandy), that someone in a Church of God pulpit would have had the gumption to put two and two together by now, based on Job 31 and similar passages. YHWH’s way is in the storm and the whirlwind (Nahum 1:3), and in 2004 He demonstrated his sore displeasure with all the lewdness of Floridian feast-sites by crisscrossing it with four hurricanes in the space of one month just prior to the Feast of Tabernacles (forcing cancellation of every one of those feast sites). Yet I have not heard one minister make the connection to the Church of God’s tolerance of bikinis and teenage girls uploading such photos onto their personal websites. Again,” the people that doth not understand shall fall.” Worse, Yahshua’s own prophetic words to Thyatira threaten to throw the Church of God, and those who commit fornication with her, into great tribulation, unless she repents of her doings (Revelation 2:22). “And I will strike her children

² Prophecy buffs in the Church of God are fond of misapplying this prophecy to Thyatira to the 7th Day Adventist Church and their prophetess, E.G. White. However, she taught Victorian modesty in all areas, and it is difficult to see how she became the subject of Christ’s warning to Thyatira.

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dead.” The sequence of statements by Christ in this passage is most remarkable, suggesting that the young people, who have bought into the culture of lewdness and fornication, are NOT GOING TO REPENT, and so death is God’s only option in the end-time. The haughtiness of these same ‘daughters of Zion’ is described in Isaiah 3:16, a verse that the Worldwide Church of God used to quote often in years past to curb seductive glances and dress in its young people. And like the other prophetic passages quoted in this paper, the language used suggests that YHWH plans to march those who commit such lewd-ness *naked* on their way to being scattered among the nations. (Ezekiel 22: 9, 15 and 20):

So will I gather you in Mine anger and in My fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you [like lead, tin, brass, and iron in a furnace].

That is what your parents and pastors in the Church of God are doing to your children. You are winking at your children’s iniquity just like Eli the high priest did in I Samuel 1-4. Some of you are turning your children into sons of Belial (I Samuel 2:12), convincing them by your ongoing silence, month after month, one Church social and athletic event after another, that it is O.K. to be unrighteous in the display of one’s body. In so doing you have bought into a very Greek mindset.³ Well did Moses’ prophesy of our time in Deuteronomy 31:29:

For I know that after my death ye will utterly *corrupt yourselves* and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of YHWH, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.

Isaiah 1:4 prophesies of our day:

Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity,
offspring of evildoers, children who are *corrupters* (SH # 7843, same word as Deut. 31:29)
They have forsaken YHWH, they have despised the Holy One of Israel...

The idea conveyed by the Hebrew word (ths=shachach) translated *corrupt[er]* is one of spoilage, decay, ruination, the same root used for *grave*, *pit* and *ditch*. It connotes uselessness. When this end-time generation has shown its disdain for every good and noble moral foundation of decent society and thus succeeded in rendering itself useless for YHWH’s purposes, thankfully the end of the Age cannot be very far behind. Meanwhile, the teenagers, with the tacit approval of adults in the Church of God, are fulfilling this very prophecy, turning it into “America plus the Sabbath and holy days,” instead of insisting that our dress reflect our desire to honor God’s Law.

America is a nation full of Christian churches, and headquarters for almost every major Sabbath-keeping Church in the world. The same thing is happening here as in every third world country receiving satellite television. American culture, via television and DVD, is undermining the moral foundations of many generations. Americans are so out of touch with the culture of historical Christianity and the apostolic holiness of the early Church, that Christ has no choice but to spue us out of his mouth (Revelation 3:16). Welcome to Laodicea, Church.

The Greek Mindset

In the previous section we spoke of the display of the human body as representing a completely Greek mindset. The Greek word *gynasion*, from which we get gymnasium, was a place where exercise and games were performed in the altogether, albeit women were not allowed in such arenas or in attendance at Olympic games in the early stages of antiquity.

Of far greater importance, however, is the depiction of Zeus and the other Greek gods in the nude. Christian paleographer Robert Bowie Johnson, Jr. has shown that the major purpose of Greek sculpture at the Parthenon and Greek pottery was to dramatize and symbolize the success of Greek culture in throwing off the restraints of Yahweh’s religion, depicted by Nereus, who is none other than Noah. Johnson’s book [The Parthenon Code](#), shows how the Greeks retold the story of the Noachian Deluge and its aftermath, as well as the story of Adam and Eve, from the Serpent’s point of view! In fact, the whole idea that Adam and Eve partook of an apple⁴ tree comes to us strictly via the Greek depictions of paradise (the

1. gumnov, from which we get the English word gymnasium, means naked. The Greek Olympics involved naked exercise and competition.

1. Nothing in the Hebrew account of Genesis suggests that it was an apple tree.

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Garden of the Hesperides). The Greeks remembered this original paradise as featuring a *serpent-entwined* apple tree. On one vase, Eve/Hera is shown giving ear to the serpent, and willingly partaking of the forbidden fruit.⁵ She thereby is credited with bringing enlightenment to the human race. Amazingly, in all of Greek mythology, there seems to be no place for a Creator God, according to Johnson. It is, in fact, nothing more than a sophisticated form of ancestor worship, whereby the parents of the human race and the Greek race are apotheosized.⁶

The shameful Greek pre-occupation with nudity in their gods and heroes of the ancient world is thus seen as blatant rejection of Yahweh, who clothed Adam and Eve (their Zeus and Hera) after their disobedience (Gen. 3:21). Athena, the post-flood re-birth of Hera/Eve, means *without death*, the false promise of the serpent⁷, and the false premise of every pagan-inspired religious philosophy. The huge statue of Athena in Nashville’s Parthenon has an upright serpent standing beside her, reminding one of a faithful pet. Of course, this is totally at odds with womankind’s natural aversion for snakes. Yet snakes, like nudity, figure prominently in Greek art and mythology. The Parthenon Code shows how the Greeks “changed the truth of God into a lie and worshipped and served the things created more than the Creator.”⁸ “They changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man (Romans 1:23).” Yahweh then “gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, [causing them] to dishonor their own bodies between themselves (vs. 24). Taking nudity out of the bedroom and into the public sphere of sculpture, art, and sports was the essence of Hellenism. Rather than glorifying their bodies, they dishonored their bodies thereby. Stated another way, Yahweh’s intent was that man appreciate the beauty of the female body via his wife and his wife alone.

The Hebrew Mindset

The Hebrew Scriptures never taught the platonic dualism which pictured the body as evil, and the soul as separate and spiritual. In the scriptures, body, mind, and spirit are presented as an inseparable whole. The Hebrews were emotional, passionate people who loved and lived life to its fullest. Paul’s depiction of husband and wife as a type of the relationship between Christ and the Church is an example of this kind of thinking.

Asceticism, a later development in Christianity, does not have scriptural precedent. And yet the early Church fathers like Jerome and Augustine claimed that marriage did not sanctify children; all were born in sin. Sex, even in marriage, was viewed as only slightly better than fornication. Yahweh “gives us richly all⁹ things to enjoy.” (I Titus 6:17) The Song of Solomon and Hebrews 13:2 show the fusion of spirituality and sensuality within marriage. They stand as a witness against various forms of fanaticism, such as monasticism and Puritanism that would deny man the pleasures of the flesh. At the root of all such philosophies is Gnosticism and Greek dualism, which hold that everything of the flesh is evil. Yahweh’s Word sets boundaries for sexuality to protect the institutions of marriage and childrearing, and to cause men to imitate their Creator in all aspects of love. Therefore, the Victorian attitude toward sex which caused some women to withhold themselves from their husbands never represented the mind of our Creator.¹⁰

When it comes to dress, the ancient Hebrew mindset was very conservative and distinct from the Hellenistic culture, covering nakedness from the shoulders all the way to the knees, despite the subtropical climate. Perhaps it is not coincidental then that those Reformation movements which respected Old Testament Law—Calvinist/Presbyterian, Methodist/Wesleyan, and Anabaptist (Mennonite and Amish) movements, to name a few—fostered a dress code very much in keeping with principles described herein. Disrespect for the Word of God during the past century has been concomitant with an onslaught of public indecency and dress styles that would have made almost every other generation of Christianity *blush* but our own. Jer. 6:13-15:

For from the least of them even to the greatest of them everyone is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even to

2. I Tim. 2:14 indicates that Eve was thoroughly deceived; therefore Adam, who was not deceived, was far more accountable for what happened. Hence, the Bible does not depict Eve’s sin as willful. When Eve excuses her sin by telling YHWH that the serpent beguiled me, YHWH does not contradict her.

3. Webster defines this as “the elevation or exaltation of a person to the rank of a god; to deify or glorify.”

4. Gen. 3:4: “The serpent said unto the woman, ‘Ye shall not surely die.’ For God knows that in the day that you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods.” The false belief in the immortality of the human soul may be traced directly to this statement of the serpent.

⁸ Rom. 1: 25

⁹ The exception being ‘the pleasures of sin.’ *Apolausis* (enjoy) is only used in Heb. 11:25 and I Ti. 6:17.

¹⁰ I Cor. 7:2-5 specifically prohibits withholding of sexual rights from one’s spouse.

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the priest everyone deals falsely...Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed. Nor do they know how to *blush*. So, they shall fall among those who fall. In the time of their punishment they shall stumble, says Yahweh. (Jeremiah 8:12)

In conclusion, the contrast between the Greek pagan views of human existence vs. the Hebrew mindset of the scriptures has been drawn. In Genesis, Yahweh made coats of skins and clothed Adam and Eve after disobeying. Noah's sons Shem and Japheth covered their father's nakedness. When reminiscing over the time when He entered into a Covenant with Old Testament Israel, Yahweh pictures Himself spreading His skirt over His People and covering their nakedness (Ezek. 16:8). The very same thing happens in the book of Revelation (in Heaven) when the Elect are pulled out of great Tribulation (Rev. 7:15).¹¹ By contrast, the Greeks see no need to cover their nakedness, because they have purposely glorified our first parents' disobedience in the Garden of Eden. Indecent exposure throughout Greek sculpture, art, and architecture becomes a metaphor for the triumph of fallen man over the religion of Noah.¹²

The implications of all this for the end-time Church, overcome by the osmosis of an all-pervasive Hollywood-inspired culture, become clear when Christ Himself has to warn the final era of His Church, Laodicea, “to buy from Me white clothes to cover your shameful nakedness.” Laodicea is not going to listen until she has been Left Behind and gone through the Day of Judgment. Having so endured, the Living Christ has these final words of consolation at the end of the Bowl Judgments— “Behold, I come as a thief! Blessed is he who keeps his clothes on him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed.” Revelation 16:15 NIV

A Word of Wisdom to Our Young Women

A woman's chastity, virtue, and modesty are the key to evoking the right response in the man. Women are in the driver's seat when it comes to sexuality...she can entice or moderate sexual desire depending on her attitude and dress. It is sad and shameful when what would have been considered the attire of a harlot (Proverbs 7:10) a few generations ago, becomes the norm of the end-time generation.

What you win him with is what you win him to. If you knew the power of virtue and of a cultivated femininity, you would not take the risk of creating a soulless knot and attraction based on mere lust. She that sows with her flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption (Galatians 6:8). Conversely, she that wins him with spiritual attributes lays a firm foundation for a lasting relationship. It is sadly true that when one lacks spiritual self-confidence, one is more likely to resort to physical means to attract. Indiscrete young women, oblivious to the effect of bare skin, cleavage, and tight jeans on guys who are trying to maintain a covenant with God (Job 31:1), are potentially robbing themselves of YHWH's blessing and provision of a suitable mate. Christ said in Matthew 18:7 (RSV):

Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the man or woman by whom the temptation comes...v. 6 whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

Girls, stop competing with your peers in the realm of fashion. If young girls, mothers, and the leadership of the Church would follow the Apostle Paul's directive in Colossians 3:17, what effect would it have on our standards of dress and morals:

Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Yahshua, giving thanks to God the Father through Him...All things whatsoever you may be doing, work from the soul, as to the Lord and not to men, being aware that from the Lord you will be getting the inheritance as your reward; you are serving the Lord Yahshua (Jesus). For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality with God. (Colossians 3:17, 23-24)

Everything in society is directed in one way or another toward destroying young men—from the proliferation of estrogenic compounds in our environment and endocrine disruptors in our plastics and pesticides, to world trade forcing heads of household to compete with slave-labor wages in China and Latin America. Considering the preparation, it requires nowadays for a young man to lay the groundwork for a successful life, he does not need his so-called “sisters in the faith”

¹¹ NIV— “they are before the throne of God and serve him continually in His temple, he who sits on the throne will spread His tent over them.”

¹² No book makes this truth more vivid than Robert Johnson's Parthenon Code, cited earlier.

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enticing him week-in and week-out with their ‘trendy’ dress, or lack thereof. Ideally, if, via a righteous Church and home environment, every young man came to the marriage bed never having viewed the female form, then *they would each think they had been blessed with the most beautiful woman in the world, having had nothing to compare her to.* This, in fact, was how the first husband Adam felt— “she is now bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh.” Let us not delude ourselves, having images of other women from magazine covers and TV in one’s mind is a curse on the marriage bed. The ironic thing is that ‘God’s Church government’ is permitting this spiritual onslaught to take place within the Church at the behest of girls who, in many cases, are not even baptized. The majority of them will never even marry a baptized member of the Church. Yet they are allowed to bring the spirit of fornication into the Church while nobody says a word.

Does the Church of God Have the Authority to Slacken the Torah?

By permitting this parade of stylistic promiscuity, the Church of God reveals its presumptive teaching that they have the authority to bind and loose the Torah, which is just what the Pope, Catholicism, and rabbinic Judaism all teach. HWA did this when he loosed the land Sabbath law from the farmers of the Church. Christ Himself forbade His very own apostles from exercising authority and lordship over the brethren after the manner of the Gentiles, and yet the Church of God is more hierarchical than many U.S. corporations and appeals to “corporate decision-making” to justify the dismissing of ministers, rather than giving due process and fairness a chance to retain those beloved by their congregations.

We are struck by antithesis in these and many other matters. Only Yahshua and YHWH have the authority to change the Law, and Matt. 5:17-19 says that cannot happen until heaven and earth pass away. Christ said that “unless our righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, we will NEVER enter into the kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 5:20)”. Merely playing catch-up with the latest fashions, “dressing to impress” and deluding ourselves so long as we remain slightly more conservative than the world, is not going to cut it with our holy Savior, who “gave Himself up for the Church’s sake, in order that He should be hallowing it, and so that He might be presenting to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any [unholiness], but that it may be a holy and flawless Church.” (Eph. 5:27):

Do not conform any longer to the fashion/pattern of this world but be transformed by renewing of your mind. (Rom. 12:2)

Truly, truly, I say this to any in the Church of God, Adventist, or Messianic movement: that the naïve Sunday-keeper and Christmas-observer who does not hold this doctrine will enter the kingdom of God before any Sabbath-keeper who ignores this kind of warning. The Church of God is besmirching YHWH’s name by linking Sabbath-keeping with ‘unrighteous decorum.’

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of the Father abides forever. 1John 2:16

The men at the helm of the Church of God today who are presiding over this glorified capitulation are the same men who were the student body and senior class presidents when I attended Ambassador College in the 1970’s. Other men were the top picks to be hired and sent into the field ministry, the cream of the crop of the second-generation Church of God. It is not that they are unfamiliar with the above scriptures, it’s just that we have always made the mistake of thinking they could only apply to end-time Israel (America), but not ‘the one and only’ true Church of God. And though the motives—fear of job loss, pride, spiritual blindness—may be somewhat different for different individuals, I must return to the Ezekiel 33 prophecy quoted in the first paragraph of this paper to identify the root cause for this spiritual blindness:

They hear what you say, but they will not do it; for with their lips, they show much love, **but their heart is set on their gain.** Ezekiel 33: 31-32

Jude 11 (RSV)—Woe to them, for they walk in the way of Cain, and abandon themselves **for the sake of gain** to Balaam’s error, and Korah’s rebellion [which was a rebellion against Moses]. These are blemishes on your love feasts, as they boldly carouse together, looking after themselves, waterless clouds, carried along by winds, fruitless trees in late autumn, uprooted.

Balaam’s error was that he “taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel” (Revelation 2:14), in order that they might practice immorality (KJV--commit fornication). So, Satan and Balaam were aware that the only way for YHWH to curse Israel was to find a way to entice Israel to commit fornication with the daughters of Moab (Numbers. 25:1-3). Apparently, the gifts of God’s people—their tithes and offerings—have blinded the wise (Heb.=those who normally

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see clearly) to the dangers of inappropriate dress. I suppose one could argue that when standards are not fixed, and love is not tough, the adoration of one's own children can cause us to relax our judgment. No doubt the desire for the status quo and a combination of the above factors are contributing to the delusion of spiritual safety in the Sabbatarian movement.

What Will It Take to Turn Away the Spirit of Whoredoms?

“Israel is defiled. They have not framed their counsels to return to their God, for the spirit of fornication (LXX=pneuma porneiav) is in them.” (Hosea 5:4)

- Solution #1 Admit that we have been focusing only on the narrowest definition of fornication at the expense of the spirit of the law. Our spiritual negligence has allowed the spirit of fornication to come into the Church.
- Solution #2 Admit that Sabbath, annual feasts of the Lord, unclean meat laws, and tithing, as important as they may be, have far less direct impact on the immediate psychological, social, and spiritual well-being of young people than do the issues touched on here. How is it that we are willing to dot the ‘i’ and cross the ‘t’ to comply with Sabbath observance, and yet set such a low standard in dress and alcohol use that other Christians are offended? We need to humbly admit that we in the Church of God have been so dead to true righteousness, that we cannot even sense when our souls are being vexed by immodesty. We adults are so busy interacting with each other that we refuse to talk about this elephant in the middle of the room.
- Solution # 3 Fathers, who often are not accustomed to commenting on their daughter's dress, need to become alert and speak out when their daughters dress provocatively. Women dress to impress other women and to imitate fashion. Teenagers dress to impress their peers. Mothers and daughters may not consider the effect their clothing has on men, who are visually stimulated. Fathers have a protective role to play in the fashion arena and need to exercise their authority!
- Solution #4 Admit that our low standards are a reflection on the older women and mothers in the Church, who are charged with instructing the younger women “to be chaste” (Titus 2:5)...“in order that the Word of God may not be discredited.” When the matriarchal instinct which inculcates a sense of modesty in its younger women is again allowed to flourish in the Church of God, then we will begin to turn this sordid situation around. The chauvinistic male-dominated culture of the Church of God needs to encourage the older women to step up, raise the bar, and create a consensus among themselves on how to re-educate and confront the girls in the Church. The new standards, for starters, need to at least address these main areas:
 1. Create modest swimming attire. For instance, wrap-around skirts to wear over bathing suits (the women will probably have to make these themselves) to cover the rump, thighs, and crotch areas. The upper part of the suits must not expose cleavage. Frankly, the best solution is one that segregates the females from the males at Church functions where there is swimming. This was the standard up until WWI.
 2. Families should use some forethought before planning an outing to the beach. The more they do so in privacy, the better, whether at the beach, or around their own pool. It makes no sense for righteous families to abide by the above Biblical guidelines, only to end up beholding their Canaanite neighbors parading their bodies all around them at a public beach or pool. The main question at this point is whether we can keep ourselves unpolluted from the world in these matters and have the moral fortitude to make a difference in our own circles.
 3. Dresses should extend below the knee to prevent exposure. The scriptural principle may be found in Exodus 20:36: “Neither shall you go up steps to my altar, that your nakedness be not uncovered there.”
 4. Slacks and tight jeans need to be exchanged for more modest apparel, such as longer dresses and skirts. The Biblical standard is that “the woman shall not wear that which pertains unto a man, neither shall a man put on a

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woman’s garment: for all that do so are abhorrent to YHWH Eloheanu.” (Deut. 22:5) In our post-modern culture, pants have become the norm. But this development has followed on the heels of our rejection of our Maker and His Word. We are not wiser than the dozens of Christian generations who saw fit to make dresses the appropriate attire of Christian women, and loose-fitting slacks the appropriate attire for men. Paul in I Cor 11 spoke about that which is naturally becoming to a woman (long hair).¹³ Conversely, he says that nature itself teaches us that long hair is dishonorable in men. Nature taught our Christian forefathers the same thing about dresses for women. Pants were quite naturally seen as immodestly revealing the crotch and buttocks area of women. Understanding that men are visual creatures, Christian culture would never have allowed that. Modern Christian culture wants to identify with the world, not with their Christian ancestors.

5. Let the brethren of the Church of God admit that for us to teach the Ten Commandments, tithing, and unclean meat laws, together with the holy day statutes while failing to support a righteous standard of dress puts the Truth that we do have in a bad light. Titus 2:10 says that we are to “adorn the doctrine that is of God, our Savior, *in all things*.” Jesus Christ gave “Himself for us, that He should be redeeming us from all lawlessness and be cleansing and procuring for Himself a People zealous of ideal actions.” (Titus 1:14, CLNT¹⁴)

I realize that many in the Church of God will perceive this attempt at bringing about change as overly idealistic. But ideals are what true religion is all about. But after you have suffered the fulfillment of the prophecies of Ezekiel 20, 22, 33, and 34, YHWH will set his hand a second time to recover the remnant of His people which survives the events of the book of Revelation:

For YHWH will vindicate His people and have compassion on His servants, When He sees that their power is gone, and there is none remaining. Deut. 32:36

In the nakedness of our captivity, YHWH lovingly declares “I will spread My skirt over thee and cover thy nakedness.” He will again swear unto us, enter into a covenant with our people, and we will become His again (Ezekiel 16:8). During the Day of Judgment, YHWH will purge out the rebels from among us during the wilderness ordeal (Ezekiel 20:38), and set up shepherds who will feed (teach) the youth YHWH’s ways:

I will set up shepherds (pastors) over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, says YHWH. Jeremiah 23:4

In the process, Church youth and parents alike will learn that YHWH all along was against the shepherds (Ezekiel 34:10), who were feeding themselves (hirelings) instead of teaching the flock. They were shepherds who could not understand (Isaiah 56:11¹⁵). To the ministers of the Church of God I say: What good does it do to say you understand Bible prophecy (theoretically because we understand the end-time identity of Israel), if you don’t understand how it might apply to you and your Church?

So now that the heavens and earth have heard this message, what will you do to stand in the breach? The Bible says the worldly “hate him who reproves in the gate”, but Isa. 58:1 commands us to “cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice like a trumpet, declare to My people their transgressions, and the House of Jacob their sins”. Together we can build up the wall of righteousness and make the Sabbath-keeping movement a beacon of holiness to the world, and a more complete example of purity to the Christian Church. If we embark on this holy endeavor of confrontation, we shall have opportunity to say at some point, “Remember me, O my God, and spare me according to the greatness of Thy mercy...Remember me for good,” as Nehemiah did. (Nehemiah 13: 22, 31)

¹³ I Cor. 11:13-15

¹⁴ Concordant Literal New Testament.

¹⁵ In fact, this verse describes the shepherds as dumb dogs incapable of barking any kind of warning.