

The *Contender*

"CONTEND FOR THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS" JUDE 3

Vol 13 No. 1

Printed Voice of Faith Assembly

January 1981

Holiness vs. Tradition



Rev. Raymond M. Jackson

WHAT ARE YOUR CONVICTIONS CONCERNING HOLINESS? DO YOU BELIEVE IT IS JUST FOLLOWING A SET OF MANMADE RULES, OR IS IT A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EVERY INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN AND GOD? WHAT DO YOU THINK OF WHEN SOMEONE MENTIONS HOLINESS? WE INVITE YOU TO READ THIS ARTICLE

IN WHICH HAIR, TELEVISION, CLOTHING, MUSIC, ATTITUDE AND MANY OTHER THINGS WILL BE DEALT WITH. WE BELIEVE EVERY PERSON WHO READS THIS ARTICLE WITH A PROPER ATTITUDE WILL BE BLESSED.

DO NOT BE KEPT UNDER BONDAGE TRYING TO KEEP SOMEONE'S LAWS FOR HOLINESS, WHEN THE SIMPLE TRUTH FROM THE WORD OF GOD CAN SET YOU FREE. IF YOUR HEART IS RIGHT, YOU DO NOT HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT STRETCHING YOUR LIBERTY TOO FAR. KNOWING THE TRUTH DOES NOT CAUSE ONE TO SIN, IT JUST SETS US FREE FROM A FEELING OF CONDEMNATION IN THE PRESENCE OF NATURAL MINDED LEGALISTS. LET THIS ARTICLE HELP YOU EXAMINE WHAT YOU BELIEVE, AND YOU MIGHT FIND THAT YOUR CONVICTIONS DID NOT COME FROM GOD AT ALL.

Contents

WHAT IS YOUR MOTIVE?	3
WHITE-WASHED WALLS	3
SHOULD WE EAT MEAT?	5
USING LIBERTY WISELY	6
YOUR HEART CONDITION REFLECTS	8
WHAT ABOUT LONG HAIR?	8
HATS & VEILS DO NOT COVER FOR HAIR	10
SHORN - SHAVEN - TRIMMED	11
DISHONOR TO ONE - GLORY TO ANOTHER	12
GOD HONORS CONSISTENT CONVICTIONS	13
VEIL - SYMBOL OF MARRIAGE	14
PROPER ADORNING	16
INNER HOLINESS SHOWS OUTWARDLY	17
SARAH - A MODEL OF SUBJECTION	18
REGULATING "THINGS"	19
WHAT IS EVIL?	20
RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE SCRIPTURES	22
CHECK YOUR CLOTHING	23
OPEN TOED SHOES	24
HYPOCRITES - BLIND GUIDES	26
CHURCH BUILT UPON WHAT?	27
DO NOT PLAY WITH TRUTH	28
WORK OUT YOUR SALVATION	30
HOLY GHOST, NOT AN OPTION	31
DRESS CONSERVATIVE	32
JUMPING OVER BIBLE TRUTH	33
TOO HOLY FOR GOD TO LEAD	35
HOW DENOMINATIONS BECOME SUCH	37
WHAT ABOUT MUSIC?	38
WHAT ABOUT DOCTORS AND MEDICINE?	40
DO NOT BE LIKE CAIN	42

I have been pressured for a long time now, to print something on the subject of true holiness, but I have held back from such a message because it is such a controversial subject. Far too many people have taken it upon themselves to set forth a standard of holiness for others to abide by; therefore in our present hour people who profess to have the Holy Ghost are actually arguing and fussing among themselves about what true holiness is, and it seems that most of them use themselves as the standard for others to come up to. That is why so few people ever agree, as to what true holiness is. In other words, "If you are going to be holy; you must do everything exactly like I do." Have you ever noticed how many people actually have such an attitude as that? Do you know why? It is because they fail to allow the word of God to set their standards.

WHAT IS YOUR MOTIVE?

By God's divine leading, I will endeavor to give you something that will help every true child of God, have a proper attitude toward their brothers and sisters in the family of God. If you never learn how to consider others; you are cheating yourself, for the day will come that you will have to reap the results of your one-sided attitude. Furthermore, do not bother to say, I have the Holy Ghost; I know what true

holiness is, for we are going to read about some people who believed that they had the Holy Ghost, yet they missed the mark. They erred from the word of God. It is not what you eat, nor what you wear or look like, that makes you holy; it is what motivates you, that God looks at. You can be holy on the outside and very unholy on the inside, and maybe you can deceive me, but you can never deceive God. He is looking right into your heart. We do not mean to insinuate that every person who is missing the true pathway of holiness is a conniving hypocrite, for many of them are just following traditional teachings that have been handed down to them. These are they that have the best chance of receiving help from a message such as this. Our purpose is to straighten up some areas of confusion by showing that true holiness is a principle of morality, spiritual attitude, and conduct that comes forth from within the heart of man, and that the opposite of that is self righteousness. Anyone out here in the world can put on a robe of self righteousness, but only Holy Ghost filled children of God, manifest righteousness from within their hearts.

WHITE-WASHED WALLS

Let us go to the scriptures now and give the word of God a chance to speak to our hearts. First we will read

Romans 14:22-23, which we will use for a text scriptures. "Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." I am sure most of you are familiar with the situation that caused the apostle Paul to write those words. He was a Pharisee, instructed in all the law of Moses and the prophets, and by his own confession he was strict to the letter, before his encounter with the living Christ, on the road to Damascus. Other sects of the Jews were known as Sadducees, Zealots, Essenes, and so forth. The Essene Jews were so strict and holy, they separated themselves from the overall body of Judaism and secluded themselves in caves down by the Dead Sea. You have heard much about the Dead Sea Scrolls in recent years; these were found in those caves. Yet it is known that Christ did not seem to be drawn to the Essene Jews. Probably the reason for this was because they were like a lot of so-called modern day Christians of our day. Because they believed it was wrong to take life: they refused to accept animal sacrifice which was as much a part of the law as anything you could mention. Brothers and sisters, be sure you catch this point right here. Their holy attitude rose above the word of God; they left the scriptures and charted their own course. All of the various sects of Judaism had their own

particular formula for keeping the law of Moses, just like denominational Christendom of our day, and those Christians in the assembly at Rome were having problems because of it. First of all, this church was not founded by an apostle. It was started by those Jews who received their blessing in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, when the New Testament church had its birth. They returned home, to Rome, carrying a flame in their hearts, and that church was started as a result. That gave Christianity its start in that area, but as time went on, Gentiles were added to the body, and before long they had a conflict. Jews were very strict about the things which they ate. This was part of the Levitical law. But please keep in mind, what was written in the Levitical law was only to set a type of the purifying of the flesh, and was never meant to give anyone eternal life through its observance. Eternal life hinged upon obedience from the heart to what was written in the whole law of commandments and ordinances. The parallel to that in this grace age is total faith in the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ at Calvary. God was setting forth in type, through the purifying of the flesh of those Jews by observance of the law, how He would purify the spirit of New Testament, grace age believers. Now saints, that is what it is all about. Regardless of what you may do, or what you may put on, if your spirit has never been purified, you are just like Jesus said about some

Pharisees one day. You are just like white-washed walls, or whited sepulchers. They could white-wash the outside walls of those burial tombs, but that did not change the fact that within those walls was rotting flesh that would stink to high heavens if disturbed. In other words, what you see on the outside does not necessarily tell the whole story. I will readily agree that if the inner man is truly purified, it should reflect through the outer appearance, but the natural eye cannot look at the outer man and make a true judgment of the inner man. That is why make-believers are able to deceive so many people for such a long time. You know what I mean.

SHOULD WE EAT MEAT?

In this Roman church they had some folks who did not want to eat meat of any kind. They had determined to be vegetarians. We have people like that today, also. Why are they like that? Because they have the idea that we should return to the original, they way it was in the Garden of Eden before man sinned. It is true that in the beginning man did not eat meat, but you must remember, that after the flood, God gave a certain dietary law that made it permissible to eat meat. That in itself showed that the human body in its state of deterioration would need the protein that is derived from

eating meat, to stabilize it. What are our food scientists crying, the world over, in our day? We must get more protein into the diets of undernourished people. We all know that modern science has found other means of supplying protein, apart from the eating of meat, but that does not change the fact that God allowed the eating of meat for the protein content that is so necessary to our deteriorating bodies. Therefore becoming a vegetarian does not in any way make a person more holy. If you want to be a vegetarian, that is your privilege, but please do not try to persuade revealed saints that such a way of life will make them more holy before God; they know better. It was the same situation there in that Roman church. Some had accepted Christ, but they had a hang-up about eating meat. Therefore Paul wrote, "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean." (Rom. 14:14) He went on to admonish the spiritual ones in the assembly to accept such people as brothers and sisters in the Lord, without doubtful disputations, but they were not required to treat them as wise, strong believers. "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." (Rom. 14:17) You may have some particular health reason, to abstain from pork meat, or whatever, but please do not take the Bible and try to make a doctrine out of

what you do for personal health reasons. That is what your Adventist groups have done. They have taken certain things from the law, and they hold them over the heads of New Testament believers, like a club, thinking that they are going to make someone more holy. They are not going to make anyone more holy by keeping them from eating meats; so to cut the story short, let us go to 1st Corinthians 10:23, where Paul is dealing with this same thing.

USING LIBERTY WISELY

Judo-Christians and Gentile Christians always seemed to have a conflict about the eating of meats, and especially about meats that had been sacrificed to idols. That brings us to the verse we want to pick up here in chapter 10, where we will see what Paul's judgment was, on the matter. "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: All things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth. Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no questions for conscience sake: For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no questions for conscience sake. But if any man say unto you, This

is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake; for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof: Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my LIBERTY judged of another man's conscience? For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved." In this Corinthian letter, Paul is not dealing with a situation of whether to eat meat or be a vegetarian, but it is the same spirit that is causing trouble in the Roman church. No one in the Corinthian church seemed to have any problem wanting to abstain from the eating of meat: their problem seemed to arise concerning conduct in the presence of someone else who might be offended by their actions as they partook of certain things. These people were from a pagan background, where practically everything they ate had in some way been offered to an idol as a sacrifice. They had so many gods, it would be difficult to name them all. Therefore Paul says, If any of you accept a dinner invitation from an unbeliever, then eat whatsoever is set before you, and do not bother to ask questions about whether it had been offered to an idol or not, for with God

those things are not important; He created everything, and everything belongs to him. Nothing that they would eat, could ever harm them spiritually, unless someone made a point to mention that certain things on the table had been offered to idols. In such a case, Paul says, it would be better not to eat those things, because of the conscience of the one who mentioned such a thing. Paul knew where he stood with Christ; therefore he could say, All things are lawful for men, but all things are not expedient. In other words, there are some things that are lawful, but they will not edify others who are observing. Some of our liberty that has been gained through a pure revelation of God's word, could very well be a stumbling block to someone else. That is why Paul said, "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no more flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." (1st Cor. 8:13) It seemed to be of utmost importance to Paul, to get this question settled in the minds of these people, for he went into much detail in dealing with it. Not only from the standpoint of causing a weaker brother to violate his own conscience, but also from the standpoint of not giving the unbeliever an occasion to accuse you, a believer, of partaking with the same motive that he himself was. The unbeliever may be eating meat that has been offered to the god of wisdom, (just for example) believing that to eat such would make him more wise. (That is how pagans

are.) Therefore if he could get a Christian to partake of such, and remind him that the meat was offered to such and such a god, it gave him an occasion to accuse the believer of being no better than he was. Paul felt that it would be better for a believer to offend his host by not eating at all, than to give the unbeliever an occasion to say, Aha! I've got him now; he is eating meat to my god. Now some may ask, What has that got to do with holiness? Brothers! Sisters! These are the very things that many carnal, so called believers judge holiness by. That caused Paul to say, "Why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?" He knew that eating meat that had been offered to idols would not make a person less holy, but because of the hang ups of others, he would avoid doing so in their presence. That is just plain consideration for the feelings of others who place importance upon such things. On the other hand, we should not allow trouble-making busybodies to place us under bondage by their pretext of being offended. Grace sets a true Christian free from the bondage of manmade laws, and the wisdom of the Holy Ghost in our lives enables us to know how to conduct ourselves in every situation.

YOUR HEART CONDITION **REFLECTS**

Certain Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus one day and asked Him, Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders, by eating with unwashed hands? This gave Jesus an opportunity to tell them a few things about their own ways. He called them hypocrites, and told them that they had made the true commandments of God of none effect by their traditions. He said further, You draw nigh to God with your mouth, but your heart is far from Him. Later, as He talked with His disciples, He said to them, It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles the man, for all of that will pass on out with the body waste, and that will be the end of it. But those things which proceed forth out of the mouth, these are what defiles, for those things come forth from the heart. Out of the heart of man comes evil thought, murders, adulteries, fornications, blasphemies and such like. These are what defiles, but to eat with unwashed hands could never defile anyone. Now brothers and sisters, if you want to read the whole thing word for word, you will find this account in Matthew, chapter 15, but my point is this, do not use such a gauge to determine whether other folks are holy or not, lest you be like the scribes and Pharisees who Jesus said would strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Their legalism always caused

them to put true values in the wrong place, but none of that changed God one little bit, for He does not look at holiness through the eyes of natural man. You have heard different ones speak of having a heart condition, (speaking of a physical condition, of course) have you not? Let me tell you something; it is your heart condition that God judges holiness by, and nothing else. Furthermore if your heart is in the proper condition, it will reflect holiness through the outer man for the world to see.

WHAT ABOUT LONG HAIR?

I believe we have said enough about eating meat, so let us move on to another area of great conflict and trouble, HAIR. Some people have such rigid standards of holiness when it comes to the subject of how long a Christian woman's hair should be, or whether she should cut it or not, but in other areas of Christian conduct they seem to be so loose. It just makes you wonder where in the world they got their convictions. There are even people who will judge an entire congregation by what they see on one or two certain ones when they come in the church house door: not even taking into consideration whether those persons are a part of the regular assembly or not; nor how long they have been coming, if they are. We do

not stand at the door, inspecting those who come in, to see if their hair is the proper length, or if the dresses are long enough, or whether they go to the movies or not. Those are things we leave for God to take care of, as people sit and listen to the word that is preached and taught here.

We are going into the 11th chapter of 1st Corinthians now, where we will deal with the subject of hair for a little while. Not to hurt anyone, nor to tear anyone to pieces, but simply to see what Paul is actually teaching there. That is the scripture, used by so many, who make their main theme, LONG HAIR. I am accused of teaching the sisters that it is alright to cut their hair off, but you who come here regularly know better than that. You also know that I do not condemn them to hell; if they trim off the dead, split ends of their hair. Regardless of what some may do, though, I will not put this assembly under a set of rules and regulations, as some have advocated. New Testament believers who have been restored to the word of God, do not need to be put under law; that is what the New Covenant did away with. Let us read our scripture now, starting with verse 1. "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. (It is alright to follow a man who is following Christ if it is by the revelation of the word.) Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep

the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. But I would have you to know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. (THE ETERNAL SPIRIT) Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesyeth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her ALSO be shorn: but IF it be a shame for a woman to be shorn (hair clipped close to head) or shaven, (cut off at the skin) let her be covered. (SEE VERSE 15) For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God. Judge in yourselves: is it comely (PLEASING OR PROPER) that a woman pray unto God uncovered? (SEE VERSE 15) Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have LONG HAIR, (THE COVERING OF VERSES 5, 6 & 15) 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. But if any

man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.” Brothers and sisters, I realize, that is a lot of scripture to read all at one time, but it is best to get it all together, for Paul did not start out talking about one covering for the head, then wind up in verse 15, talking about a different kind of covering. I hope you can see that, before we finish. Naturally we read that from the King James’ version of the Bible, for that is the one I use, but we want to examine these verses very carefully, and determine beyond a shadow of doubt, what Paul is referring to as a covering for the head. I can take you into certain areas of the world, Europe, Canada and even in the United States, where you will find ancient, established systems that require a woman not only to have long hair, but when she comes to church, she must have a hat, a shawl, or some other kind of head covering on, as well, and they interpret it like that from the scriptures we have just read. Now! Saints! We must come to one certain conclusion here. Was Paul dealing with two different kinds of head covering? Did he start out talking about hats and shawls, and wind up talking about hair? Absolutely not. By God’s help, I believe we can show, from the scriptures, enough to convince every soul that has proper respect for the word of God, exactly what Paul was dealing with in these verses.

HATS & VEILS DO NOT COVER FOR HAIR

If I used only the Amplified version of the Bible, and the Holy Ghost did not reveal anything beyond what those scriptures contain: we would have to expect every woman to have some sort of covering other than her hair, if she desired to set in this assembly, for that is the way those translators understood what they translated from the Greek language. Therefore I ask you plainly, sisters of Faith Assembly, Is that the kind of law you wish to be under? If Paul was dealing with hats, then every sister in here should have some kind of a hat on her head, no matter how long her hair is. Do you not find it very strange, that the church at Corinth was the only one that had a problem like this? The assembly at Ephesus had no problem with hair and hats. Neither did the assembly at Galatia, nor Thessalonica. There had to be a reason for the problem at Corinth, and that is what we will speak about next.

In the days of Paul, Corinth had been influenced by, and subjected to Roman culture. Look in your Geography books and encyclopedias; you will not find pictures of Romans with long hair, in most cases. Neither women nor men. It looks like they had very little hair, and had some sort of band around

their heads, with a bunch of leaves stuck behind it. It will not take any more time describing hair styles, and I realize we do not have any scripture to prove what I am going to say to you, but there had to be a reason for Paul to be on a subject such as this, when he had no occasion to deal with it any place else. I believe those Greek woman in the church at Corinth, (having that Roman culture in their background) had begun to cut most of their hair off, and decorate their heads in the manner that you see in the pictures of that ere of time, so much so, that Paul was moved by the Holy Ghost to deal with the situation. But I am fully persuaded that Paul was not establishing a cloth covering for the head, or he would have taught it everywhere he went. I was confronted with a question on this subject, for the first time I went to Norway. Some people stepped up to me and asked, Bro. Jackson, What sort of covering is Paul speaking of, in 1st Corinthians, chapter 11? Should the sisters wear hats to church? Let me say this, If any sister desires to wear a hat, that is alright, but do not wear one because of these scriptures. You could wear a hat, so large, that no one could even tell by looking at you, whether you had hair or not, but if you have it clipped off short: you are uncovered, according to what Paul is teaching, here. Furthermore, if a hat is so important as a covering, then why did God not put a hat on Eve when He covered her loins with a coat of skin, and sent her, along

with her husband, out of the Garden of Eden? You must remember, they were both naked, before they sinned, and God Himself, is the one that clothed them, properly, before He sent them out of the garden. If Eve had needed a hat, God would have given her one. He only covered the area of their body that they had sinned with, their loin section, so please do not strain at the covering mentioned in these scriptures, as though it should be a hat of some kind. The one word, veiled, found in some translations, is the root of much of the confusion connected with these scriptures. Therefore I want to show you where that word (as far as a head covering is concerned) got started. It all pertains to marriage; and from that, we will see where the wedding ring fits into the picture.

SHORN - SHAVEN - TRIMMED

I want you to get verses 5 and 6, in your mind now, and hold the thought while we deal with various examples. It says that every woman that prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is the same as if she were shaven. If she is not covered, let her be also shorn: but if it is a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. If you interpret this covering to be a hat, then you must read the verse like this, If the women do not wear hats, then let their

hair be clipped close. (That is what the word, shorn, pertains to.) On the other hand, if it is a shame for the women to have their hair clipped close, or shaven, then let them wear a hat. Do you see where that will get you? While you think on that, let me say also, neither of those words mean the same thing as the word trim, but there are those who will inject the word, trim, and look down their nose at any sister that might trim a little off the ends of her hair. I do not care how much you may know about the English language, you cannot use the word, TRIMMED, in the place of SHORN, or SHAVEN. I have raised sheep, and I want you to know, I never did trim a sheep except to get cockleburs out of their wool. When you take the body of wool off, you shear the sheep. When you finish, it is shorn, but you would never say that the sheep has been trimmed. Neither do you shave a sheep, for to shave is to render completely bald. Anyway you look at these scriptures, you will eventually have to agree that Paul was faced with a religious tradition, there in that Corinthians church, and what he wrote to them was not to establish a head covering for women, but to straighten up their thinking on what a proper head covering is in the sight of God. You can go into certain areas of the world, even today, where they have a custom that requires all the women to sit on one side of the church, and all the men on the other side. Where could you find scripture for a tradition like that?

Judaism functions like that, but let me ask you this, What did Christianity do for mankind? Did it put him further under bondage, adding more law and traditions, or did it set us free from those man-made traditions? You must realize that God's plan of redemption is to bring us back to the place where we can fellowship God as Adam and Eve did in the beginning. If you will just stop to realize, that redemption is what all this is about, it will deliver your mind from a lot of foolish nonsense.

DISHONOR TO ONE - GLORY TO ANOTHER

Like I said already, much of the confusion is a result of various translations of the Bible. If you have ever examined the Greek and Hebrew sections of a good Concordance, you will have discovered that in many cases, the translators had to make a choice from many words that could be derived from certain Greek and Hebrew words that were spoken. Naturally their choice was only as good as their understanding of what they were translating. If they had caught Paul's thought here in 1st Corinthians, chapter 11, they would not have used words such as are found in certain translations of the Bible today. I want to demonstrate this, by

reading from a Greek to English translation, and let you follow along in your own Bibles, as I do. Starting with verse 4, I will read it as it is brought from the Greek to the English. “Every man praying or prophesying, having anything down over his head, shames the head of him, (shames himself) But every woman praying or prophesying, with head unveiled.” (Please notice that the word UNVEILED, is used. That is because of their customs and traditions shames the head of herself. For it is the same thing with the woman as having been shaved.) Now when we go to verse 14 and 15, we see what Paul wanted to implant in the minds of those Christians, for he goes right back to hair, and even calls that, the covering. “Doth not even nature itself teach you, (Nature, as Paul uses it here, is not referring to trees, grass, flowers and that sort; it pertains to time, common sense, and customary tradition. You young men would not walk up to a tree, and say, Tree, is it wrong for me to have long hair? Common sense, and honest observation is what teaches those who are teachable.) That, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him.” That is how you read those verses from your King James translation, but listen, as I read it from this one. “Does not nature itself, teach you, that a man indeed, if he wears his hair long it is a dishonor to him? But a woman, if she wears her hair long, it is a glory to her, because the long hair instead of a veil, has been given to her.” Brothers and sisters, that

takes the tradition off. It lets you see that the veil was a tradition, added by carnal minds. Look at that again. “Because the LONG HAIR, INSTEAD OF A VEIL, has been given to her.” Paul goes ahead, in verse 16, “But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.” In other words, If you want to go ahead contrary to what we have taught you, that is your decision, but I will have you to know that we do not have any such custom, and neither do any of the other assemblies. If you want to wear a hat; wear it. But we do not have any such custom here, that would require you to.

GOD HONORS CONSISTENT CONVICTIONS

Now, let us consider the words, TRIM, SHORN, and SHAVEN, for the words, SHORN and SHAVEN are in relationship to the subject at hand, but the word, TRIM, is not, even though some try to include it. Only the Lord Himself knows, how many times I have been asked, Bro. Jackson: Is it wrong for me to trim my hair? Now in the early stages of my ministry, I tried to stay off that subject, realizing that it was one thing that too many preachers dwell on too much, but there came a time when necessity required that I

take a stand on the subject. Therefore let me say again, as I have said many times before; Sisters, if it is just for the sake of trimming off dead ends and irregular strands, there is nothing wrong about it. On the other hand, if you are just looking for an excuse to whack your hair off, to make it more fashionable, or easier to take care of, please leave me out of it. I will not be held accountable for anyone who takes my statement and stretches it to fit their own desire. I personally feel that any sister who has the Holy Ghost, ought to have some consistent convictions on appearance and conduct for women professing godliness. Let me hasten to say this though. Please do not sit in the assembly and judge others, by your own personal convictions. You cannot produce scripture that will tell anyone exactly how long their hair should be. Furthermore if God required every sister to have hair a certain length, He would have to make sure that sister could grow long hair to that length. There are some, you know, who just simply cannot grow their hair very long; it just will not grow past a certain point. Does that mean that such a person cannot please God? Of course not. God will not require anything from you that is impossible for you to produce. I have known sisters that would stand before the mirror and cry, because their hair would just get so long, then begin to die, split and break off. God forbid that anyone would take it upon themselves to measure the righteousness of such a person on the

merits if the length of their hair. I have seen pictures of women of the world whose hair had grown to the ground, but that certainly did not make them righteous because of it. Some people will do almost anything to get their name in the news. One day they will have hair to the ground, and the next time you see them it might be cut off above their ears; people of the world are like that. On the other hand, any sister who has the Holy Ghost ought to be able to take the head of hair that God has given you, and use it to glorify your head, and also your husband if you are married. You who only go by what someone else may tell you, ought to check up on yourself. Something is wrong. Why cannot God talk to your heart about some things? If we are so close to the end as it seems like we are, then surely God has some people somewhere who have some Holy Ghost convictions that will bring their lives in balance with the scriptures.

VEIL - SYMBOL OF MARRIAGE

I want to turn our attention back to the veil again for a few minutes. I am sure you all understand by now, that if Paul had been establishing some sort of head covering other than hair, every one of you sisters would need to be wearing such a cover, regardless of the length of your hair, and regardless of whether you are married or not. Do

you all understand that? Alright then, Let us open our Bibles to Genesis 24:63, where we will begin reading, and we will see how the veil was used there. Eliezer, Abraham's servant had gone to Mesopotamia, and brought back a young lady to be Isaac's wife, and we pick up here, where they have just about completed their journey. 63 "Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and behold, the camels were coming. (He recognized those camels. He knew they belonged to his dad. He could identify every one of them by name; therefore he started toward them, across the field.) And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a VEIL, and covered herself." She had been riding without the veil until she reached a point where she was about to be married to Isaac. Now I do not believe she had been riding in the hot sun, all day without anything on her head, but this veil was some type of cloth, that when she put it on, every other man knew that she was already spoke for. No doubt this instance right here was a starting point for a custom that has been passed down from generation to generation even to this very day; not because God said to use it, but men have made it a command, simply because they read that in the Bible. Down through the centuries, the

veil has been used by many cultures of people to symbolize marriage, just like the little gold band that we refer to as a wedding ring. When you go to the Middle East, you find that the Moslem women do not appear in public without the black veil over their face. It does not keep one from seeing their eyes, not the outline of her face, but it does signify that she is married. Her unmarried daughters do not need to wear such a veil. It is all a tradition of man; therefore I will use this occasion to refer back to our text, "Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." The only way you can follow Paul's advise, is by Holy Ghost conviction. For as long as you are just trying to pattern your life after what someone may tell you, you will be subject to the frustrations of trying to fellowship with others who do not agree with what you are doing. They will give their versions of holiness, and sooner or later you will begin to doubt, and question yourself, Which way is right? You will begin to condemn yourself and waiver. Then you may be found trying to make your own personal, outward appearance to be like those you expect to be in contact with from day to day. That is not what Paul meant by his instructions. You adorn yourself in such a manner that regardless of where you are, or who may see you, you can still have the answer of a good conscience before God. As for this veil thing, look what

the Catholics have done with it. Certain orders of nuns whose choice was celibacy for the sake of their service to God, were taken, and sheared. Then they would put a veil over them which supposedly signified that they were married to the Lord Jesus Christ. That is absolutely a tradition of men. There is no scripture to support such a custom in New Testament Christianity.

PROPER ADORNING

As we look further into the scriptures we find both the apostle Peter and the apostle Paul writing about how women should adorn themselves, and their words are in complete harmony. Listen to Peter, first. (1st Peter 3:1-5) “Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation (or behavior) or the wives; (That just simply means that they do not necessarily have to have someone preaching to them at the time they come under conviction. Just beholding the godly life of his wife has broken down many a man’s resistance to the gospel.) While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. (Listen to verse 3.) Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold; or of putting on of apparel.” Now

let me stop right there and explain something before reading those next verses. Many people use that very verse of scripture to condemn anyone who wears a gold ring, watch, or any other piece of gold jewelry. That is not what Peter is dealing with at all. He is not saying that it is wrong for anyone to plait their hair, or to wear gold. If you use this verse to teach that, you would also have to teach that it is wrong to wear clothes. Read it again. That is what the word, apparel means. Now, do you see how ridiculous it is for preachers to use that verse to preach against gold rings and watches? Peter is simply saying that none of these things are what determine whether a person is holy or not. Well, What does? You may ask. Notice verse 4 and 5, and you will see. “But let it (your adorning) be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in SUBJECTION unto their own husbands.” Saints: I hope you can see, by now, that Peter was not speaking against anything, here, except an excess of stylishness. The Bible does not teach that Christian women should hide their beauty. It only teaches that they should be modest, without any flashy display of it. Women have always been a symbol of beauty down through time. If you disagree, I would

invite you to go into the museum of antiquity, in Athens, Greece, and look at the marble sculpturing there. Those sculptors did not just imagine the feminine beauty they captured on that marble. They had living models, for in those days, they did not even have photographs. Therefore there is nothing wrong with beauty itself, but there is a proper way for beauty to be portrayed. When the Bible says, Glorify God in your body, it means just exactly that. If God gave you a certain beauty; then He desired to look upon that beauty, portrayed in a godly manner. But the devil realizes that, and he tries to harness your beauty for the world. It is up to every individual to present themselves before God in a way that will be pleasing to Him.

INNER HOLINESS SHOWS OUTWARDLY

Men are usually not looked upon as symbols of beauty, but rather symbols of strength and wisdom. It is only this modern, perverted age with its unisex ideas, that allows its women to cut all their hair off, step up beside the men, and proclaim, I can do just as much as you can. If you leave them in an office somewhere, that is true. But you put them out in a ditch with a pick and shovel, and you soon begin to hear a different story. They cry,

discrimination of the sexes in a different tune then, for most of them just simply do not have the muscle for such work. God did not design the women for that kind of work, but if they must insist on equality, some of them at least, will have to pay the price. They cannot all have executive jobs, if it is equality they are looking for. That should be obvious. On the other hand, let me say this: you do not have to tell me that there are areas of the world where the women work right alongside the men; I know that already. I also know that it is not these women that are always demanding to be equal with men. Most of them would be glad to stay at home and tend to the house and the children, but circumstances dictate otherwise. That is why, or at least one reason why I will never take this Bible and try to Americanize my brothers and sisters who live in other countries. They have their own traditional customs and ways of doing things, and as long as their customs do not change the overall moral picture: I believe we should leave them alone. The purpose of a message like this is not so much to tear down a custom, nor to establish one, but rather, to make believers conscious of the fact that they ought not judge the holiness of others by their own personal convictions. We are endeavoring to show you what the Bible teaches on certain issues in the realm of holiness, but I hope you realize that just keeping the rules layed down by the preacher will not make you holy before the

Lord. Only a right attitude and motive can accomplish that. People who are forever blaming the preacher when things go wrong for them, are not right in their spirit in the first place; therefore their first concern should be to get their inner being in harmony with God. After all, what shows up on the outside should be a reflection of what is on the inside. Then from an honest heart, if you need help in understanding what the scriptures teach on these things, God will see that you have ample opportunity to be instructed.

SARAH - A MODEL OF SUBJECTION

Let me say to any sister who may have the feeling that she should not even trim her hair at all: Sister: Do not trim your hair just because I said that there is nothing wrong with it. Please do not! But if their comes a day when your hair is down to the ground, you should not have to come and ask me if it is alright to cut some of it off. An extremity is an extremity, whether it be too long, or too short. The same principal applies to rings on the fingers, watches, and every other thing that people use to adorn themselves outwardly. There is a sensible, modest application. Then there is the extreme in all of these areas. A woman professing godliness

will not need someone to constantly follow her around, Do this, and don't do that. You all know what I mean. It is a matter of getting your head on straight. Peter used Sarah, Abraham's wife, as a model of feminine, subjection unto her own husband, and mentioned how she called Abraham lord, but that did not infer that she never spoke her mind about anything. Let us read verse 6. He is speaking of how women of old were subject unto their own husbands, and in verse 6, says, "Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement." In other words be under subjection to your husbands out of respect and reverence for the word of God; not because you fear that which he may do in demanding it. Peter goes on to speak to the husbands, how they should conduct themselves. A believing husband knows that he is not to physically force his wife into subjection. Her respect for the word of God coupled with his proper attitude and behavior accomplishes that. But what about Sarah? How many believe she was a model that you could look to, for an example in feminine subjection? She absolutely was. But there came a time when she looked at Abraham and said to him, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son: (Hagar and Ishmael) for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that SARAH HATH SAID UNTO THEE, HEARKEN UNTO HER VOICE: for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.” (Gen. 21:10-12) I can just hear ole Abraham, Lord: What am I going to do? Sarah has demanded that I send Hagar and Ishmael away, saying, that Ishmael may not be heir with Isaac. The Lord answered, Obey her. Do as she says. Now sisters, take that for what it is worth, but please, do not stretch it too far. There are some godly women who have a level head upon their shoulders, which allows them to speak in defense of things that are spiritually right, many times. That does not mean that they are trying to exercise headship. It just simply leaves room for the head to be reminded that he may be leaning too far the other way. Isn't it wonderful that God can speak to us like this, out of His book? He does not have to hide anything from us. He can let us see a thing like what Sarah did there, and that still does not change the true picture of what Sarah portrayed in her overall role as a wife in subjection to her husband.

REGULATING “THINGS”

Now we are going to leave the subject of individual adornment, and go into our homes for another round of

holiness. Let us just take a look at what we have there, and why we have it. Some people are so rigid on certain things, and that is why I said, Whatever you have, in the realm of personal convictions: you hold on to them, and abide by them. There are certain things that would definitely be sin to you, because of your conscience, that would not be sin to someone else. In other words, if you cannot get your conscience in balance with certain things that you see others doing, you may be a person that will wind up flat on your face, (so to speak) if you do the same things. Just listen for a minute, while I relate something that you might hear, in certain circles. “Did you know that Bro. Jackson has a television in his home? Oh! No! Surely not! I had a lot of confidence in that man, but, if that is true, I will never be back here again. Bro. Branham said, If you have one of those things, you should take it out to the city dump, and blow a hole through it.” It is sad to say, but you can hear that kind of carnal talk among far too many who claim to be in the truth of this hour. I want you to know, that if you did not know William Marrion Branham, in his personal, human life: there were a lot of times when you could not possibly know what he was talking about. He knew that America is a nation of excesses, where human souls are being turned over to a reprobate mind. America gave television to the world. She has also given the world the space satellites. But know when there is something

coming through that tube that is not fit to watch, and know how to turn it off. If you adults, and parents of children, do not know that, then, you certainly would be better off without one in your home. I will have to say this though; If you cannot regulate a thing like that: there is definitely something wrong with you. Some will say, I just do not want that environment in my home, before my children. I do not condemn you for that. I respect your judgment in the matter, but I am going to tell you parents something. You can shelter your children, raise them without a television in your home, and lead them around blindfolded, like a little pup: but if this country ever gets into another war, and your 18 & 19 year old sons get drafted into the U.S. Army, you will not be there to protect them, then. They will be thrown right in with every kind of perverted, degenerate kind of mess that humanity produces in this age, and if the grace of God is not with them, there will come a day when you will cry your heart out because you molded him into something that could not cope with all of that. High moral standard, and a proper code of ethics is not attained by burying your head in the sand and pretending that everything around you is lovely.

WHAT IS EVIL?

My parents taught me certain principles of conduct, and things that were right, and wrong, without shutting me off from the rest of the world. I had the smoking habit, and I knew it was wrong, but when I went into the Army during W.W. 2, I was able to cope with all the drinking and gambling influences around me, without taking part with them. When we landed in the Hawaiian Islands, and many of the men went to the P.X. and bought beer, another fellow and myself bought a little cup of ice cream, and sat there on a rock eating it, while the beer drinkers made fun of us. During the months that passed, those fellows drank, got drunk, cursed, played cards, shot dice, and all the things that men do, and I kept myself apart from all of it. On paydays, I would send a little money home, and keep the rest, and many times, after some of those fellows had lost all their money, gambling, they would come to me, Jackson, can you let me have three dollars till payday? Brothers and sisters, I am just showing you that my upbringing did not cut me off from the world, but it did put something in me that stabilized me through all of that, even though I was not a Christian. Therefore I am saying to each and every one of you, The television is not going to send your soul to hell, but, if it becomes an obsession in your life, and you just cannot shut the thing off, then you had better do what Bro. Branham said, blow it to pieces. Do not let anything capture you to the point

where you have no control over it, and do not let the fact that you cannot control certain things, cause you to believe that no one else can either. That is not true. Some things that are a great blessing to some folks, can be a curse to others. Also, some things that were commonly looked upon as sinful, by Christians, in former days, are now commonly accepted by most Christians as very essential to our modern way of life. Let me give you a couple of examples. Years ago, down here in a little area called Dogwood, we attended a United Brethren church, when I was first saved. One morning, they asked me to teach Sunday school, and when the lesson was finished, an elderly man stood up, and said, Bro. Jackson, I am going to tell you something. What he told me, had no relationship to the Sunday school lesson, but here is what he said. "I am so many years old. I saw the first automobiles come on the scene, and I remember how the old United Brethren preachers would preach against them. They would get up in the pulpit and say, The automobile is a damnable thing. It is right out of the pit of hell. It scares the horses off the road, causes runaways, and they are wrecking up, putting lives in danger. That proves the thing is right out of hell. They would warn their congregations, never to get one of those evil contraptions, nor have anything to do with them. (That is why some of the Amish and Mennonite people still use horses.) When those

old preachers died off the scene, the young ones came, driving an automobile, and the church went right on. It was the same way when the radio first came out. Those old preachers branded them as evil, because they advertised liquor and tobacco, but when they passed off the scene, the next generation of preachers was preaching over the radio, instead of against it." Brothers and sisters, I hope you will let these little examples provoke your thinking, and cause you to face life as it is, with the thought of overcoming that which would be sin to you as an individual, instead of hiding from it. But, Bro. Jackson: Does not the Bible tell us to shun the very appearance of evil? Yes, it does. But you must keep your head on straight. A lot of what some people brand as evil, (or sinful) is only sinful to them, because their former teaching will not allow them to partake with a good conscience, and they expect everyone else to bow to their convictions. Saints, please do not misunderstand me. I believe every Christian should have some personal convictions, and moral standards, in this life, but they need to have a scriptural foundation for them, and they need to treat them as **THEIR OWN CONVICTIONS**, and never try to force others to abide by them.

You who believe that it would be wrong for you to have a television in

Copyright 2018 Faith Assembly Church

your home, certainly do not need to get one, but I want you to know, that the television is a thing that is in the prophecy of the Bible for these last days. When you read Revelation 11:8 & 9, where those two Jewish prophets are killed, and their dead bodies lie in the streets of Jerusalem for 3 ½ days, and the people of the whole world will look upon them, and not suffer them to be buried, surely you do not believe the whole word is going to travel to Jerusalem to see them lying there. Believe me; they will see them on the national news broadcasts on television. Now that still does not mean that everyone should have a television, for all who are truly of the bride of Christ, will not even be here on earth at the time those prophets are killed, but it does show that God fitted the television into future prophecy. You just have to look at all these things in the same light of what the apostle Paul said about eating meats and herbs. (Rom. 14:14) "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, and that there is NOTHING UNCLEAN OF ITSELF: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, (or sinful) to him it is unclean." (Or sinful) The whole 14th chapter of Romans is good to read, when you start finding fault with your brothers and sisters in faith. There are just so many things that affect holiness, in one way or another, that it is almost impossible to mention every one of them, but you can be sure that the devil has twisted, distorted, and harnessed

every one of them, down through the ages.

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE SCRIPTURES

In Romans 13:8, Paul says, "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law," and some have taken that verse to mean that a Christian should never finance anything, nor borrow any money. I have actually had people say to me, Bro. Jackson, I have never borrowed money in my life; I just do not believe in it. If any of you feel that way, let me ask you this; On what scripture in the Bible do you base such a conviction? I hope you have more than Romans 8:13. Maybe some of you who might feel that way, have never had to borrow money. That is well and good; God bless you, but I am one that has. I will always remember one time, when I wanted to put a furnace in my house, and my salary in the church was very small, so I knew I would have to borrow a little money, if I was going to do that job. I was praying about it, for I always tried never to do anything that would be in excess of what I saw my future potential to be. As I continued to pray about it, one night, I had a dream. I had said, Lord, you know what I need, and you know when I should do this, and in the dream, I saw myself

standing in the Corydon, Indiana State Bank, when Mr. Miller was still alive. I was standing just outside his office door, waiting, and I could hear him talking to another person. After a bit, that man left his office, and Mr. Miller said, Raymond: Come in. I saw myself go in and sit down, and I could hear myself telling him what I wanted to do, and how much money it would take. When I finished, he said, Raymond, when you get ready to do it, come on in. That was the dream, and it was some time after that, before I felt that I should go ahead with the project, but the day I went to the bank to see Mr. Miller, that is exactly what happened, just like I saw it in the dream. I do not owe the bank for that furnace now though. To owe no man nothing, means, do not borrow, without paying it back. Furthermore, you should pay it back on the contract basis, and not wait until your creditor catches up with you and demands payment. You do not have to take my word for this; just open your Bible to Matthew 25:15-27, and read the parable of the talents, and you will see what Jesus said of the slothful servant that should have at least invested his master's money with the exchangers, so that he could have received interest from the use of his money. In other words, they could have loaned the money and received interest, (usury.) That just goes to show, that borrowing and loaning is a part of the economics of our society. What we have to realize is that there are always certain men who will twist

every truth of the Bible, trying to get someone else under bondage. It is all right to borrow money, or to finance a purchase, but it is not all right to fail to keep up with the contract agreement. Now, do not worry about what will happen if the rapture takes place before you finish paying for something you have bought; you are not going to take it with you. Some people ask questions like that.

CHECK YOUR CLOTHING

Brothers and sisters: True holiness is more than just a shell that we put on. True holiness is perfected, when you are inside, what you appear to be on the outside, if what you appear to be on the outside is in harmony with God's principles of righteousness. Raymond Jackson has his faults, but by the grace of God, I try to keep them subdued, so that they do not rule my life, nor cause me to become a stumbling stone to you. My desire is to be a stepping stone, that may enable some to draw closer to the Lord. It is one thing to have faults, but there is something wrong with your experience in the Lord, if you do not appreciate His grace enough to try to better yourself. We should never allow anything to become an obsession with us. Take clothing, for instance. We are living in an age when clothing has become an obsession with many people who

profess to be Christians. You do not need to have on a new dress, or a new suit every time you go some place, and certainly, Christian people do not need to be trying to keep up with the styles of the world. Back some time ago the miniskirts were popular. The worldly crowd started that fad, but it crept right into the churches. All you could see was women's knees, everywhere you went. Then the styles changed, from extremely short to extremely long, but what did they do then? As the skirt length got longer, the blouse necks got lower and lower. Everything is designed with a sex slant, to grab the lustful attention of the opposite sex, and men are just as bad as the women, with their clothing. It makes me wonder, What will they come up with next? One thing that has become popular as the women's skirts got longer is the slits up the sides. At first glance you may think a woman is modestly dressed, and then find out that her skirt has 3 slits that run practically all the way up. We encountered such a sight on our way into Canada recently. Walking down through the Toronto airport terminal, was a nicely dressed man, with what seemed to be a very modestly dressed woman, walking by his side. Her skirt length was about half way between her knees and her ankles, and at a distance you could find no fault with her appearance, but as they came on in and sat down, it became very obvious that the front panel was the only thing that hid the woman's nakedness. When she

sat down across from us, the whole underside of her body was exposed. All you can do is just bow your head to keep from looking at such as that. It is all a design of the devil, in this sex crazy age. Not all of those skirts are slit that far up, but if they are slit at all, it identifies with the spirit of that thing. Let me hasten to say this, now; Do not become legalistic about this, for I am sure that any right thinking person will know the difference between this kind of skirt, and others that may have always had a little ½ inch or 1 inch gap where the seams are, on the sides. There is nothing that can be done about how people of the world dress themselves, but Christians do not have to identify with them. Christians ought not display themselves in such a way as to draw sexy glances from the opposite sex, and you do not need a list of do's and do not's; all you need is some Holy Ghost convictions.

OPEN TOED SHOES

Now I want to call your attention to another extreme. Some preachers in times past, have preached so hard against women displaying themselves, sexually, that they have even forbade women to wear shoes with the open toe. They feel that a woman's toes sticking out the end of her shoes is displaying herself in the wrong way. I sometimes wonder, just how silly

Copyright 2018 Faith Assembly Church

some preachers will get before the end? I have never seen a woman's big toe yet, that I felt would entice anyone sexually. I have always felt that any preacher who preaches like that should be prepared to go into Africa, India, as well as other places, and furnish shoes for all of those women. Saints: It is not whether your toe shows or not, when it comes to this thing of holiness. There are Christians in the world, who have never owned a pair of shoes in their whole life, and just to have a pair of little sandals would be the most that they could ever hope for. Could you say those dear souls are not holy? Shoes are just like anything else. They can reveal a lot about the individuals who are able to have any kind they may choose, but you can never set up a standard, and enforce it around the world. That brings us right back to our text. "Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." I would never try to get any brother or sister to violate their convictions on these issues of holiness, but I do encourage every one of you to strive to bring your convictions into harmony with the word of God. If you believe that it is wrong to wear a wedding ring, it would be wrong for you to wear one, if you did it just because I said it was not wrong. But just as Rebekah put something on her head, showing that she was espoused, you owe it to yourself to display something, showing that you are married.

Otherwise the man on the street sees you young married sisters, the same as any other young virgin. The ring could prevent a lot of ideas on his part. I wear a wedding ring myself, and I do it mainly for that reason, to show that I am a married man. I was asked to take it off one time, and for the sake of the preacher who asked me, I did it, while I was in his pulpit. But within three days, some of his people started coming to me, Bro. Jackson: Is it wrong to wear a wedding ring? That kind of puts you in a corner; you cannot be a hypocrite, yet you do not want to cause trouble in a man's church, so I said, If you believe it is wrong, it is wrong for you, but to me, it is not wrong. Before long, that preacher's wife told my wife, to tell me, to go ahead and wear my ring. The next time I went back there, you could see wedding rings all around the place, but deep in his heart, the preacher himself was stubborn. You know what the Bible says about stubbornness. That is what happened with King Saul, that made him go against the word of God, and here is what the prophet Samuel, had to say about it. (1st Sam. 15:22-23) "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and STUBBORNNESS is as INIQUITY and IDOLATRY. (Notice what a severe penalty he received.) Because thou hast rejected

the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king.” A person should have convictions that have based upon the word of God, but stubbornness, and manmade traditions can never stand in the place of true holiness with God. Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. If you have trouble with your family, and your old friends, let it be because of a genuine conviction from the word of God, and not just because of something you may have heard me say. I hope you get the point.

HYPOCRITES - BLIND GUIDES

We have all read 2nd Corinthians 7:1, where Paul wrote these words, “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, PERFECTING HOLINESS in the fear of God” and I suppose every extreme theory of holiness might have been instituted because someone read that particular verse. The real problem seems to come from carnal minds which read certain scriptures, then stretch the truth of that scripture, just like a rubber band, until it breaks and slaps them in the face. Every rubber band had a certain amount of elasticity, and within its limits, it will hold things together, compactly. But when you stretch it beyond those limits, it breaks, and

whatever it is holding together, falls apart, many times, making a mess. That is exactly how a scriptural truth is. When it is applied within its scope, it will serve a good purpose in the plan of God, but when it is stretched beyond its true application, and carnal minds are allowed to play with it, sooner or later, you have a mess for someone to straighten up. We definitely are to be about the business of perfecting holiness both in our bodies as well as our spirits, just like this verse says, for without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. But like I have said over and over again, True holiness is a relationship between every genuine Christian and God; and it cannot necessarily be measured by man’s standards of holiness. There are some obvious areas in individual lives, where a lack of holiness can be detected, but there is no possible way that we can look at people, and declare that they are holy, for outward appearances and ways of life are very deceptive. If holiness was based only on outward appearances, then Jesus did wrong when he spoke to the scribes and Pharisees as He did. Listen. “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, HYPOCRITES! For ye are like unto whited sepulchers, (whitewashed tombs) which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so YE ALSO OUTWARDLY APPEAR RIGHTEOUS UNTO MEN, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” (Matt. 23:27-28) Do you see

what I mean? He could speak to them like that, only because He was able to look inside their outer shell, and see what their heart condition was like. We have people, supposedly in this end time message of restored truth, who travel around from place to place, measuring holiness by what they see. Regardless of what part of the world they may be in, their measuring standards are the same. They dwell on the length of hair, the length of dresses, whether you wear jewelry or not, whether you speak in tongues, how high you jump when a fast song is sung, whether the men wear neckties, and whether the women wear shoes that cover their toes. Brothers and sisters, they have a list of do's and don'ts a mile long, but they do not all dwell on the same things. They all have certain main points that they pick on. If they can get you to subscribe to their formula of holiness, you are a true child of God in their mind, but if you do not agree with them on every point, they will put you out of the family of God. At least in their mind, you are out. But listen, while I read another verse from this same chapter of Matthew's gospel. Verse 23, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, HYPOCRITES! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, (in other words they followed their own little set of rules, which were alright as far as they went) and have OMITTED the WEIGHTIER matters of the law, JUDGMENT, (JUST JUDGMENT) MERCY, and FAITH: these ought ye

to have done, and not to leave the other undone." In other words, if our heart is right with God, we will not dwell on certain outward ways and appearances, and neglect other things that are just as important. Verse 24, applies to those who do. Jesus just looked at them, and said, "Ye BLIND GUIDES, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." It is not my responsibility to judge the eternal destiny of anyone; that is in the hands of God, but to those scribes and Pharisees who placed so much importance on their outward appearance, when their heart was full of deceit and ungodliness, Jesus said, verse 33, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" I know that is strong language, but it was Jesus Himself that made the application, and He made it applicable to men whose hearts are so vile that they would destroy another man's image and testimony, if he refused to bow to their set of rules.

CHURCH BUILT UPON WHAT?

Some of you may think I am speaking a little too plain about these things, but let me tell you something, The hour is late. Our time for playing around with the scriptures is running out. I have never said anything to deliberately hurt anyone. God forbid that I ever would, but there has to be a dividing line

drawn somewhere, so people may have an opportunity to get their eyes opened, and see why they are following whoever they may be following. I have said many times, and I am going to say again this morning, Please do not follow my flesh, regardless of how much you may like me as a person. Without a revelation, you will miss God completely, even if you do and say all the right things as you go through life. Upon what did Jesus tell the apostle Peter that He would build His church? I know there are ten thousand different opinions as to what that rock is, but I hope all of you are able to see that He was speaking of the rock of revelation. He had just asked His disciples a question, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" Some of them replied, John the Baptist, others said that the people thought He was Elias, or Elijah, and that some thought He could even be Jeremiah, or one of the other old prophets. After hearing them report what the multitudes were saying about Him, He looked them in the face and said, "BUT WHOM SAY YE THAT I AM?" Peter always seemed to be the quick one to reply, or to act, so he blurted out, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." We are in the 16th chapter of Matthew, and in verse 17, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." That simply means that no earthly man revealed such a thing to

Peter. He knew it because the Spirit of God had revealed it to him. This caused Jesus to say, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock (this rock of revelation, not this rock Peter, as some have understood it) I will build my church; (the rest of this verse gives a clue to understanding what the rock is, for anything that is built upon any man is subject to have the gates of hell prevail against it, but that which is a revelation to you is such a part of you, that the devil and all his angels can never take it away from you.) And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Those who have the word of God hid in their hearts by a spiritual revelation are not at the mercy of the devil and all of his angels, but anyone who is just following some man, without a personal revelation to stabilize them, are as helpless as a fly in a tub of molasses. The devil can run them up any old road he chooses to.

DO NOT PLAY WITH TRUTH

Now let me ask you, Are you in this end time message of restored truth, or are you just trying to play around with it like the denominational theologians play with their theories. This is not a message that you can play with. This message that so many people claim to have heard, from the mouth of God's prophet messenger to this age, will

place a demand upon your life, and require you to meet Bible standards in a holy walk with God. All who play around with it, get hurt. Many have been hurt already. Some of them have gone past the point of no return. They have departed from the truth that Bro. Branham stood for, deified him, and given him the place that only the Lord Jesus Christ could ever have, and because of this, God must deal with them as idolaters. To a great extent, their conscience is already seared, as with a hot iron. They are branded, and regardless of who they may be, they should be treated according to Paul's instructions in the 5th chapter of 1st Corinthians. As we begin reading with verse 11, I want you to pay attention to what is written here. "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man **THAT IS CALLED A BROTHER** be a fornicator, or covetous, or an **IDOLATER**, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one, no, not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth **THEREFORE PUT AWAY FROM AMONG YOURSELVES THAT WICKED PERSON.**" Brothers and sisters, that is plain enough. Paul says, Do not keep company with such people; do not even eat with them. Many such people have been blindly led into such a place; therefore, there is hope for them if they will come to their senses, and return unto the word of God, but there are

others that have gone too far. They will never return. You could preach to them until you become grey headed, and all they will do is look at you with a smirk on their face, as if to say, Preacher; God gave me this revelation. That is exactly what those idolaters will tell you, if you question them as to why they have elevated Bro. Branham into such a place of deity. I have heard them say, You have to have a revelation of who he was. Saints! I praise God because I do have a revelation of who he was. He was a man, just like you and me, in the sense that he needed a savior. But he had a call of God upon his life that no other man among us had. He was commissioned to put us back in the Bible, where we could see just exactly what a Christian is supposed to be. He did what he was called to do, and he will receive his reward for it, in that day when God rewards His saints. God will not hold him accountable for the extremes that some have gone to with the words he preached. They have become idolaters by their own choice, they become subject to be dealt with according to Paul's instructions. Saints, it is bad when we lose fellowship with people because of the truth we stand for, but I would certainly hate to be deprived of fellowship because some crazy, devil idea had grabbed hold of me, and true believers had to put me out.

WORK OUT YOUR SALVATION

Look with me, at some other instructions that Paul gave to believers in Thessalonica. 1st Thessalonians 5:21, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good, (That lets me know, that somewhere in our Christian lives, we have to reach a point where we know what good principles are.) Abstain from all appearance of evil (that means, abstain from those things that God calls evil, not just every little whim of some carnal minded person you may respect) and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Speaking of abstaining from every appearance of evil, reminds me of something that happened years ago, out in the state of Missouri. I was invited to a young couple’s home for an evening meal, and the young man was one of these fellows that is always doing some kind of bodily exercise. He spent fabulous sums of money, buying exercise equipment, trying to keep his muscles built up. He was very careful about eating the right foods, and taking vitamins, and all of that. When he found out that I drink coffee, what do you think he did? He went over to a cabinet, took out a bottle that had some little yellow pills in it, and said, Bro. Jackson, I do not mean to be offensive, but according to research findings,

each cup of coffee has an amount of caffeine in it, which is equivalent to one of these caffeine tablets. Now what would be the difference between you drinking a cup of coffee, or just taking one of these caffeine tablets? I knew what he was driving at, this was not the first time I had encountered this sort of thing. I just took a little time to think, then I said to him, God knew when He made the coffee tree that some people would have a nervous type stomach, and coffee would not set well with them. But he also knew that some other people would have a stomach that could consume a barrel of coffee, without any adverse affects. These people might enjoy the taste of it, and also appreciate the warm stimulating feeling that a cup of coffee can give them on a cold winter morning. As a matter of fact, I learned to drink coffee years ago, when my sister and I had to walk 3 miles through the woods, going to school, on those cold winter mornings. A cup of hot coffee helped a lot. I have been drinking it ever since, and it has not affected my salvation one bit, and I do not believe it hurts my physical body either. If I thought it did, I would quit drinking it. Furthermore, if you think it would hurt you, then do not drink it, but please do not try to tie it to holiness. When the apostle Paul wrote to those Christians at Philippi, and told them to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, it was this matter of holiness before God that he was referring to. We all know that there is only one way for lost

sinners to be justified from their state of unbelief, that is, by faith in the shed blood fo Jesus Christ. We do not work that out; it has already been worked out for us, there at Calvary. But we do have to work out the affairs of our life, after we have believed, to bring our lives in line with the word of God. If you do not work out your own salvation on this question of holiness, you will always be under bondage to the devil, trying to follow some man. Brothers and sisters, what I am trying to get across to you, is that holiness is a personal relationship between every true believer and God; it is not just a doctrine with a set or rules to follow. Of course there are some guidelines to get you started on your Christian walk with God, but then, you must have your own convictions about what is right or wrong for your own personal life, and a lot of that is based upon the culture of your own society. When it comes to water baptism, for the remission of your sins, that is the same, no matter where you are. It requires you to repent first, and then be immersed in water, not sprinkled, and just pouring a little water on your head is not good enough either. You must be put under the water. That is the only way your baptism can be a type of burial. When you bury something, you put it under. Now God has one formula for receiving the Holy Ghost, (Acts 2:38) and there is no other formula, so you do not have to work that out. You just believe the word of God, and obey this one formula from the heart, and it

then becomes God's responsibility to give you the seal (the Holy Ghost.)

HOLY GHOST, NOT AN OPTION

When you receive the Holy Ghost, there is no certain manifestation that you have any right to expect. You may speak in tongues, then again, you may not. You may fall out under the power of the Spirit of God, but then again, you may not. It is up to God to give you the Holy Ghost with whatever manifestation pleases Him. The only important thing, is that you receive the Holy Ghost, not how you receive. The Holy Ghost is not an option in salvation. You do not have the new birth until you receive it. That is why Paul wrote as he did to the Romans. Look in the 8th chapter of Romans, beginning with verse 8, "So then they that are in the flesh (without the Holy Ghost) cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. NOW IF ANY MAN HAVE NOT THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, HE IS NONE OF HIS. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. Bur IF the SPIRIT of him that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken (make alive, raise from the dead) your mortal bodies BY HIS SPIRIT THAT DWELLETH IN YOU." That should help you

understand why I said, The Holy Ghost is not optional. It is the Holy Ghost that places us in the body of Christ, and if we are not in that body, we are not of Him. Look at 1st Corinthians 12:13. "For by ONE SPIRIT (the Holy Ghost) are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one SPIRIT." Brothers and sisters, we are either in the body of Christ, or we are not; it is as simple as that. If we are in that body, we have the Spirit of God in us, to enable us to have a holy walk with Him. But if we do not have that Holy Ghost experience, we are not in the body of Christ and whatever amount of outward holiness that may be displayed, is just a shell, and God will not accept it. Perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord, is to be constantly moving toward a Bible picture of holiness, not a human picture. We titled this message, Holiness versus Tradition, to keep the title simple, but what we are dealing with is true Bible holiness in contrast to man made traditional holiness. One is by the Spirit of God in true believers, and the other is by human zeal. That which is by the Spirit of God will allow for circumstances, but that which is by human zeal is rigid and unbending, without mercy, and without just judgment.

DRESS CONSERVATIVE

We have already touched on clothing, and I do not mean to be repetitious, but there is yet a couple of things I want to say. As you travel around the world, you become very conscious of the fact, that in every continent, there is a traditional type of clothing that identifies those of that continent. They are known by that certain style the world over. Therefore when you go into their part of the world, and convert them to Christ, are you to touch their dress style? Only that which might tend to draw immoral, suggestive glances from the opposite sex. Only then, would you interfere with their traditional style of dress. When Jesus Christ came into the world, He was manifested to the Jewish race. His natural genealogy was traced back through Jewish parents, therefore He did not dress like a Turk, nor like someone from the Orient; He dressed Himself according to the traditional life style, and customary dress of the Jewish people at that time. He did not dress Himself in such a way that when he walked down the street, His clothes made Him stand out like a sore thumb. If you did not know who He was, you could have taken Him for any average Jewish man walking down the street. I am certain of one thing though, He was dressed conservatively. Now when we say conservative, it must be understood like this; whatever the

traditional custom in clothing may be, in any nation, God will accept that. When Paul, or Peter spoke of apparel, they were dealing with fads that pop up for 6 months or a year or so, until another one is introduced to take its place. The devil works in those things, most of the time to display the human body in some sex suggestive way. People who design things like mini skirts, or skirts with slits up the sides, or promote the image of the unbuttoned blouse, or the low neck blouses, do not do that to portray morality, decency and godliness; it is just the opposite of that. Therefore every woman who wears clothing like that, no matter how pure in heart she might be, is looked upon by degenerate mankind just like any woman of ill fame. If your style of dress identifies with that kind of image, what else can you expect? That is why I do not hesitate to say, No born again child of God will submit themselves to such an image as that. Just plain common sense is all it takes to know what conservative clothing is, in whatever part of the world a Christian may be living for God in. Over the years, living standards and modes of travel have brought about changes in traditional customs of dress; that is understandable. But that kind of change will always have a consistent pattern; it will not be one thing today, and something different six months from now. In other words, just for an example we will think about the American style of dress, back around

the turn of the century, when the automobile first came on the scene. Up until that time people rode horseback, or in a buggy or carriage of some sort, that required a different style of clothing than what we are used to now, since most all of our transportation is motorized, and on good roads. The Amish and the Mennonite people are an example of those who refuse to change with the times. You will see them going down the road in a horse drawn buggy, where everyone else is driving a modern day automobile. You will usually see, in that buggy, a man dressed in black, with a low profile, wide brimmed hat, and the same style shirt and trousers that was worn in Holland, back in 1400. Their ancestors came out of the Dark Ages with convictions against worldliness, against worldly appearance, world fashions in dress, and everything else that seemed like worldliness to them. In almost 500 years, they have not changed their style of dress. They will not own an automobile, nor any kind of farm tractor or equipment, and they will not even have electric light in their houses. They are not all like that, not that strict anymore, but many of them still are. They will not even have window shades.

JUMPING OVER BIBLE TRUTH

I heard the testimony of an old Mennonite brother, back in the late 50's. He told how a certain physical condition had caused him to go to one of those salvation and divine healing meetings. I forget now, who the particular evangelist was, but in that meeting, God got hold of him, healed his body, saved his soul, and filled him with the Holy Ghost. Then God got hold of his whole family, and saved them, but his testimony was that later, back on the farm, he was plowing corn one day, with an old horse drawn cultivator, and he could look out across the fields and see other farmers with their high powered tractors, plowing acres of corn in one day's time. It made him feel that he was at a crossroads in life. He just stopped right in the middle of the field, to rest his horses, got off the seat, and took off his hat, wiping his brow, and saying in his heart, O Lord, if this condition was only changed. At that moment, he heard an audible voice speak to him; Go tell your people wherein they are wrong. It scared him. He thought someone had slipped up on him, and heard him talking to himself. He looked all around and did not see anyone, but then, he heard the same thing again; Go tell your people wherein they are wrong. Then he knew that God had spoken to him, so he did exactly that. He went right back to that old Mennonite church, took his seat, and waited for his time to give testimony and read scripture, according to their custom. When he finished giving his

testimony, and telling them they were wrong about this, wrong about that, and wrong about tractors, electric lights, automobiles, and so forth; they held court right there in the church, and voted to throw him out. Now the point is this, they were so old fashioned in their lifestyle, that God could no longer talk to them, yet you could not say that they were not a holy looking people, from their outward appearance. That is why I said, You can get into a holy looking shell, and miss God altogether. In other words, you can get yourself so separated, that even God will have to pass you up. That may sound strange, but that is exactly what happens when individuals, or groups, just pick out certain things, and make a doctrine out of it. They always reach a point where they will jump over Biblical truth, in order to enforce their doctrine. The Shaker movement was a good example of that. They had what you and I call the Holy Ghost, but they got off course. They secluded themselves into colonies, practiced confession of sins, and community of goods, which you could not say is unscriptural, but they went on to demand celibacy, and equality of the sexes, which definitely required them to jump over many scriptures. For instance, Did not the apostle Paul tell Timothy, that the younger women should marry, bear children, and guide the house, without giving the adversary an occasion to speak reproachfully? Did he not also tell him that the women should learn in silence, with all subjection, and that

they should not teach, nor have authority over any man? Yet this society of Shakers, or Shaking Quakers pushed women into roles of leadership. They had no formal statement of beliefs, but starting out in America with only a handful of members, somewhere around 1780, by the middle of the 19th century they had grown into eighteen colonies, with around six thousand members. History records that the Shaker movement was the most successful experiment in religious communitarian living in the New World. They were noted for their neat, well planned, and peaceful villages; their pure architecture and fine craftsmanship; their progressive practices in agriculture, and their concern for social betterment. They suffered persecution at times, because of their peculiar ways, but it was all in vain. They had jumped over too many scriptures, therefore God allowed the movement to die out. In 1959 there were only twenty nine known members of this society. It just goes to show, that when you leave the scriptures, no matter how holy you may appear, the day will come when you reach the end of your rope. Shakertown, Kentucky, today, is nothing more than a memorial of bygone days.

TOO HOLY FOR GOD TO LEAD

It seems that many people get to feeling so holy, and so close to God, they begin to feel that they do not need a scriptural foundation for what they decide to make a doctrine of. That was the case with these Shakers, on the issue of celibacy. In the year 1758, a twenty two year old young lady joined the society, which was then under the leadership of James Wardley and his wife Jane. This young lady was Ann Lee, a textile mill worker. Four years later she married a man by the name of Abraham Standerin, a blacksmith, by whom she had four children, which all died in infancy. Hers was an unhappy marital experience complicated by severe illness, and during these trying times the conviction grew upon her that “concupiscence” was a cardinal sin. (That, of course, is the condition of man and woman living together physically, intimately as man and wife.) She became convinced in her mind that this was strictly wrong, and that it was the cause of sin in the world in the first place. It was because of her influence that the discipline of this sect became so severe. But it was while she and some others were in prison, for disturbing the congregation of a church during worship services, in the year 1773, that she claimed to have a vision whereby she was divinely ordained to complete the mission of Jesus Christ, on earth. This would require her to repudiate, or abstain from every lust of the flesh. Her testimony was so powerful, that she was accepted as an inspired

prophetess, and appointed leader of an order known as “The Millennial Church.” Ten months later, in the year 1774, seeking freedom of worship, Ann Standerin, with seven devoted followers, sailed for America. Coming from England to America, they settled first in New York, where they waited for an opportunity to open their testimony on the shores of the New World. Their big opportunity did not come until the year 1780, and Ann Standerin died four years later, but she left behind, American born converts, that expanded the movement until it reached its peak with about 6 thousand members, before it started its decline. During that time they spread into Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky, as well as various parts of New England. They rebelled against the established church, because it condoned marriage. Saints! When you start establishing teaching like that, no matter how holy you may appear to be, you are stepping over the Bible to do it. What did the apostle Paul say, in Hebrews 13:4? “Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.” That scripture meant nothing to them; they converted whole families to their teaching. But sad to say, many times they only converted either the husband, or the wife, and this broke up that home. The men lived in separate dormitories from the women, and the children were placed in nurseries. There was no home life, as we know it. Brothers and sisters: when you go to

that extreme in your holiness, you have left the Bible completely. God told Adam and Eve, to be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. Then, after the flood of Noah’s day, God spoke to Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and the fear of you shall be upon every other living creature. It was at this time, that God told Noah and his sons, Every living thing that moveth upon the earth shall be meat for you, but do not eat flesh that still has the blood in it. This last part is for you that believe it is wrong to eat meat. It does not matter whether you eat meat or not, but if you teach, abstaining from meats, as a doctrine, you have left the Bible to do it. God never reaches into the leadership realm of movements like these, to pull out men who will stand for truth. No. He goes down the line until He finds some little fellow who is hungry for the truth, then He has someone He can lead, by His Spirit. That is the reason John the Baptist, did not come from the ranks of the Scribes and Pharisees. That is also why the messenger of this age, did not come from the high ranks of oneness Pentecost; they had already settled down upon their statement of beliefs, and locked all the doors and windows so tightly, that God could no longer speak to them. Then, when Bro. Branham did come on the scene to fulfill his calling, Pentecost looked at him with a big bug-eyed look, and wondered how he could be of God,

since he did not come from among their ranks. They thought they had all that God had to give, and they tried to lock the devil out, but that will not work for you. If you are going to be led by God in these last days: for goodness sakes, leave the door open. When you lock the devil out, you lock God out too. But if you will keep the door of your life open to God, He will make a fool out of the devil when he comes around.

HOW DENOMINATIONS BECOME SUCH

Did you ever take time to think about what causes a denomination in the first place? Every denomination that has ever been started has been the result of God reaching down into some old dead system, and dealing with the hungry soul of some individual that did not lock up his own heart's door along with the system he was in. God leads individuals out of those old dead systems, through a revelation of truth that He imparts to them, but before long they begin to notice how the devil is harassing them. The first thing they think of is to lock the doors and windows, so to speak, in an effort to keep the devil out, but the moment they do, God is locked out also. How is that, Bro. Jackson? It is very simple. The devil is a spirit, and he gives

people ideas. He causes some people to read the Bible and get strange revelations from it. Therefore to prevent such a thing from being mixed with the teaching of the church, they all get together and make a list of the basic Bible truths that they all stand for. This is what they call these articles of faith, even though we realize that not all of them are Bible truths; the devil has already been busy. Nevertheless what they commonly agree upon is all that they are going to allow in their services, therefore God is shut out along with the devil, for He (GOD) also, is a Spirit, and that is how He deals with human hearts, by causing them to see things in His word, that their denominational system does not see. The truth is, you will never keep the devil out like that; he gets in just the same, but God will not force His way into those old cold places; He just lets them go on and die, but He is ever looking for a hungry soul that has His heart's door standing open for Him to enter. Now all of this should lead us to one conclusion; We can never keep the devil out of the church building, as long as people are free to come and go by their own will and choice. But every true child of God absolutely can keep the devil out of their personal life. How many of you know what I am talking about? There are always some who will not walk where I walk, but I am not the final judge of the matter. I will say this though, Brothers and sisters of this end time restored truth: If we will walk with God day by day in a true

Biblical holiness, it will get harder and harder for the devil to sit among us. As perfection becomes more and more a Biblical reality, the devil has less and less room to move around in.

WHAT ABOUT MUSIC?

Let me say another thing or two, and then I will try to bring this message to a close. I want to touch on music now for the next little while. I had Bro. Neil Connolly play that song on his slide trombone for a reason. Five or six years ago, when Bro. Connolly was here, he was asked to play that song for us. It is a beautiful song to me. "Down from His glory, every living story, my God and Savior came, and Jesus was His name. Born in a manger, to His own a stranger, a Man of sorrows, tears and agony." I did not know that the tune itself originated in Europe, years ago. But there was a man in the congregation at that time, that had come over from Norway. I had picked him up at the airport myself. While Bro. Connolly was playing that song, I saw the brother get up and start toward the platform. I met him, and checked him. He was wanting to say something. But I said, Not now, and lead him back to his seat. When the song was finished, and one of the preachers started to preach, (This was in our convention) the man came down to the platform and turned around, like he

wanted to say something to the congregation. I went over, and said to him, Brother: Is there something wrong? Yes. He wanted to say something. By that time the preacher was already preaching, and I again said, Not now. Wait until after the service. He went back to his seat for a few minutes, but then got up, and went outside. He would not sit in the service. The deacons told me after the service, that they had taken him back to his motel room when he would not remain in the service. I went to his room to find out what was wrong with him, and this is what I heard, "The song that the brother played on his horn is a worldly song." I said, "Brother, that is not so. That is a beautiful song." But he insisted, "It is of the world." Then I said, "How do you know that?" At that, he began to tell me how the song was written in Europe, so many years ago, and that it was a worldly song. It was a classical number, and it was worldly, and Christians ought not be playing it. I knew that whatever classical music America had, came from Europe, but I said, Brother, the only time I have ever heard that tune it was to the beautiful words known to us as, Down From His Glory. But he did not want to accept it any differently, and I thought to myself, This is where people can really get carried away. They think if any tune was ever associated with the world, that brands it as no good for God, and Christians should not play it. I realize that he did not hear the words that we sing to that tune, and this

naturally made the worldly association, when he heard it played by Bro. Connolly, but that did not give him any right to be unreasonable, when I tried to explain the situation to him. I wonder how many of you sitting here, realize just how many of the gospel songs we like to sing, at one time or another, the tune to them has been used by the devil's crowd? Does that make it a bad song? How many of you ever heard that little song, "Oh, I'm Thinking Tonight of My Blue Eyes?" It is a worldly song, about a sailor that was far over the seas, and he is thinking about his love back home. It was not a vulgar song, like most worldly songs of our day, but it is a worldly song. Now, Let me ask you this, How many of you know that the tune to that song is the same tune that Roy Acuff sang, "The Great Speckled Bird," to? The great speckled bird is the Bible in this song. Should we throw that song out, now that we all know this? If you feel that way, I could probably help you throw away a lot of your gospel albums that you love so much, for I can think of a lot of gospel songs that are sung to what, at one time, was a worldly tune.

Suppose we leave America with this thought, and go to the other side of the world. A few years back, there was a little country western tune came out, "Anybody Going to San Antonio, Anybody Going My Way." I know

some of you have heard that little song. Truck drivers enjoyed hearing it on the radio, as they drove along. It was not a vulgar song either, but it was a worldly song, not for the church. But when we went to Norway, we heard some young people singing a little song in church, and it was to that same tune, "When I Remember What He Has Done For Me, I'll Never Turn Back Anymore." We sat there listening to that little song, and I kept wondering, Now where have I heard that tune? Then I remembered it was the tune to "Anybody Going to San Antonio," and then I wondered where the tune first originated? Which song had it first? It does not make any difference as far as I am concerned, for it is the message contained in the words, that determines whether it is a worldly song or a gospel song. Those young people had learned that little song in Germany. They did not know that the tune was used with any other words, just like I did not know that the tune to "Down From His Glory" was one that my brothers and sisters in Norway, would consider a worldly tune. Saints, we really need to keep an open mind about all these various things that are attached to holiness. The first thing you need to be conscious of, is that the church of the living God is universal, and that we Americans have no right to make a sin list for saints that live in a completely different environment than ours. God knows how to deal with every soul that is truly born of His Spirit, regardless of where they may live, and those that are

not born again, can never be made holy in the sight of God, just by following your rules for holy living. Just let me say it like this, You follow your own rules, so that you yourself may have the answer of a good conscience before God, but leave room for the Spirit of God to deal with you, just in case you do not have all of your convictions built upon a solid foundation.

WHAT ABOUT DOCTORS AND MEDICINE?

For another example of extremes that some people are guilty of, let us consider divine healing. I have crossed paths with many people in the last 25 years who did not hesitate to express their viewpoint on divine healing. Many of them would say, so piously, If you believe in divine healing; then it is wrong for you to take pills, and go to doctors. Brothers and sisters, listen carefully to my question. Where did they get such an idea as that? In all of His 3 ½ years of preaching, Jesus never preached one sermon against doctors, nor against taking medicine. Neither did Paul, nor any of the other apostles. On the other hand, we do find where a certain woman had been ill with a blood disease for twelve years, and that she had spent all she had on physicians, and constantly grew worse, instead of better. In other words, she

had a medically incurable physical condition. But when she heard about the miraculous power that worked through this man called Jesus, the Christ, she said in her heart, Oh, If I can only touch the hem of His garment, I will be made whole. No one instructed her like that; it was a feeling from within her own heart. Therefore she pushed her way through the crowd until she got close enough to touch His garment, and at that very moment Jesus turned, and said, “Who touched my clothes?” She had hoped that she could do that without being noticed, but Jesus felt virtue go out of Himself, and that caused Him to ask the question. His disciples said, Lord, you can see all this multitude thronging about you on every side, and yet you say, “Who touched me?” About that time, Jesus looked over, and saw the little woman fearful and trembling, and said to her, “Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.” The little woman was healed immediately, from a disease that physicians could not help her with, but did Jesus or any of the others, take that opportunity to condemn all physicians? You know they did not, as well as I know it. Let me tell you what probably did happen though. When Jesus went back to the Capernaum area, after the news of that had had time to spread, they probably had all the sick folks lined up waiting. It is such a common thing for people to feel that whatever works for one will work for everyone, I can just see them,

Lord, just walk along here where we can all touch your garment. We are not asking you to pray a long prayer for us, just let us touch you. Does that sound familiar? Is that not the way many preachers of our day, promote such things? I am not making fun of them; many people have been healed in much the same way as that little woman in the scriptures, but I must point out one thing, That little woman was probably not the only sick person that touched Jesus that day, in all of that great multitude, so what was it that made the difference? It was her faith. “Thy faith hath made thee whole.” (Luke 8:48-Mark 5:34) Every believer should know, that when that kind of faith reaches out to God, favorable results come back in return, but none of these scriptural accounts of healing, provide any reason for us to condemn a brother or a sister for going to see a doctor. People have such a tendency to take certain scriptures and use them for a club or a whip, just to beat someone else down, and make them feel bad. They all quote scriptures such as 1st Peter 2:24, which reads like this, “Who His own self (speaking of Jesus) bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed,” and they will say, If you are already healed, why do you go to the doctor? Brothers and sisters, it is alright to remind each other of the many benefits and provisions that are in the Bible, but it is wrong to do it in such a way that it becomes a whip, and

brings feelings of guilt upon some who may need to go to a physician. I have always said this, If you can live above sickness, without going to the doctor or taking medicine, that is wonderful; may God bless your soul. But please! Do not condemn a brother or sister that has not attained such a place. Always allow room for the grace of God to work in every person’s life. Do not be so foolish as to think that God is helpless to deal with His true children when they need to move up a notch or two. What do we read in Romans 8:29? “For whom He (God) did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His son, (Jesus) that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” If God has predetermined to do a thing, Brother! You can be sure that He has away to get it done. Bro. Jackson, does that mean that we should not try to help each other? Of course not. Did I say anything against the children of God, helping each other? Everything I have said, has been to help you keep from condemning each other, and to keep you from condemning yourselves, when carnal minded people find fault with you. I have not said one thing that should keep anyone from obeying any scripture that God may reveal to them. Some of you who have grown more in the stature of the Lord Jesus Christ, may recognize many things in the lives of others that you feel should not be there, but it would be wrong for you to assume a pious attitude toward them, knowing that growing in the grace of

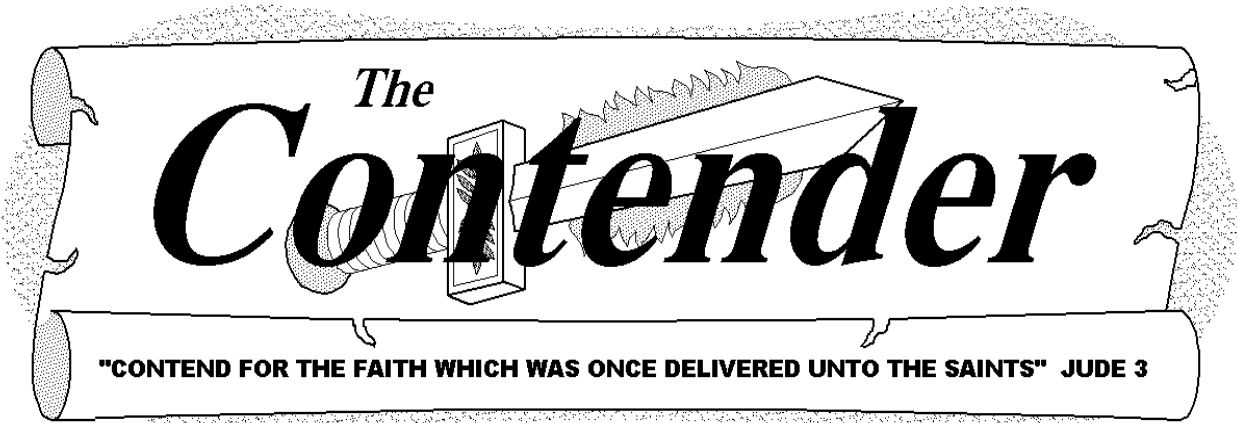
God is a progressive process. No one reaches maturity suddenly.

DO NOT BE LIKE CAIN

Let us read a few more words that Paul wrote to the church at Rome, and then we will try to bring this little message to a close. Our hope, and our confidence rests in the ability, and the faithfulness of the one that called us to this great salvation by the wooing of His Spirit. Picking up verse 30, there in Romans 8, we read these words. “Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? WHO SHALL LAY ANYTHING TO THE CHARGE OF GOD’S ELECT? IT IS GOD THAT JUSTIFIETH.” God is able to carry us through, if we will just hold steady and depend upon Him. Let us not be as concerned about what other people may think of us, as we are about what God thinks about us. Let me read you a few verses from the little epistle of 1st John, beginning with 3:11. “For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain,

WHO WAS OF THAT WICKED ONE, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because HIS OWN WORKS WERE EVIL, and his brother’s righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. HE THAT LOVETH NOT HIS BROTHER ABIDETH IN DEATH. WHOSOEVER HATETH HIS BROTHER IS A MURDERER: AND YE KNOW THAT NO MURDERER HATH ETERNAL LIFE ABIDING IN HIM.” There are some people who become so violent when they cannot get others to subscribe to their formula of holiness, they are almost like Cain, who physically slew his brother Abel. They may never kill you physically, but they will do everything within their power to kill any spiritual influence you may have with people. Why? Because their own deeds are evil. Their own heart is not right with God. Who would follow such leaders? Those who have drifted along through life without ever becoming grounded upon the word of God. Those who love excitement, more than they love truth. Those who hope for some material advantage, and those whom the devil has set in your assembly just for such an occasion. All of this is foretold in the scriptures, that those who love truth, and desire a holy walk with God, may be forewarned.

I am going to close now. I never had any intention of making a sin list for anyone. If you have a Bible, you already have a sin list. If you do not have a Bible, try to get one. Then just humble yourself before God, and ask him to show you from His word, how to conduct yourself as a child of God. If anything in this message leaves a question in your mind, do not hesitate to write us. We are here to help you, if we can. I have always felt that there is a Bible answer for every honest question that anyone may have, concerning their spiritual walk with God. Meanwhile, May His grace be sufficient for each and every one of you. Amen.



The Contender is published 8 times a year (excluding the months of March, June, September and December) by Faith Assembly Church, P.O. 2368, Clarksville, Indiana 47131-2368, a non-profit corporation, and is mailed free to all who request it. Published at Corydon, Indiana.

© 2018 Faith Assembly Church. Only by special permission from the author, may any part of this paper be reproduced.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
The Contender, P.O. 2368, Clarksville, IN 47131-2368.
This edition was put in this format in January 2018
www.fachurch.org

OFFICERS

- James AllenAuthor, Pastor
- Raymond M. Jackson.....Author, Founder, Pastor
- Louis B. Turner.....Editor, Retired
- Charles Paisley.....Editor
- David Jackson.....Copy Layout
- Ramona Barber.....Contender Secretary
- Naomi Elliss.....Secretary – Treasurer