



## Bethel Discipleship Series

*1 Peter 1:15-16 – “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation (Greek: “anastrophe:” manner of life, conduct, behavior, deportment); Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”*

*Amplified Bible – “But as the One Who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all your conduct and manner of living. For it is written, Ye shall be holy for I am holy.”*

### I. HAIR

#### A. The Importance of Hair in the Bible

1. Hair is mentioned numerous times throughout scripture and often carries a highly significant meaning.
2. Hair had a very important role in the Law of Jealousies (Numbers 5).
  - a. When a woman was accused of sexual sin, her hair was “loosed” by the priest (uncovered, exposed, and possibly disheveled). Scholars believe that once she was convicted of adultery, the sentence was to have her head shaved.
    - “Vincent’s Word Studies” says, “The cutting off of the hair is used by Isaiah as a figure of the entire destruction of a people by divine retribution. (Isaiah 7:20) Among the Jews a woman convicted of adultery had her hair shorn, with the formula: “*Because thou hast departed from the manner of the daughters of Israel, who go with their head covered, therefore that has befallen thee which thou hast chosen.*”
  - b. The shaving of a Hebrew woman’s head was a public symbol of the shame and separation that she had brought upon herself and her husband (or father) by her lack of submission and faithfulness to him.
  - c. This was not a light or insignificant shame. The act of shaving her head was an act of separation from her family, her heritage, and her God. Her act of rebellion removed her from her former position in the man’s family and her shorn head was a symbol that she had lost her family rights and privileges. She became a shame, a curse to her people (Numbers 5:27); she had no place in society and she was considered to be separated from the Covenant of Abraham.
  - d. This act of shaving the head of an unfaithful woman as a symbol of shame has been common in many cultures throughout history.
3. A Jewish man marrying a non-Jewish prisoner of war (Deuteronomy 21) would also have her head shaved. The shaving of her head symbolized that the “shame” of her old “Gentile” life was being cut off. After her hair began to grow in again, her new identity as an official Hebrew would be acknowledged, establishing her status in Israel and her position in her husband’s home.
4. The Hebrew priests (who were all male) were specifically instructed not to let their hair grow long.
  - a. The Talmud states that the priests’ hairstyle was “Julian” (like Julius Caesar) and that priests cut their hair once every 30 days.
  - b. The Lachish Relief, a set of Assyrian stone panels portraying the account of the Assyrian victory over the Israelites in 701 BC, depicts the Hebrew men as having very short hair and wearing robes

# CHRISTIAN LIVING – Part 5

to mid-calf while the Assyrians are shown as having long hair and wearing garments that only reach the knees.

5. The “Zondervan Pictorial Dictionary” states, *“In biblical times, length of hair was a mark of distinction between the sexes.”*
6. The Nazarite Vow (Numbers 6) had three specific restrictions: one could not eat things made with grapes, could not touch a corpse, and could not cut the hair for a specified period of time. Other than three notable exceptions (Samson, Samuel, and probably John the Baptist), the hair would always be cut after a designated time period – usually 30 days according to the Mishna, although double and triple vows of 60 and 100 days were sometimes made.
  - a. The Nazarite vow not only set a man apart during this time but also shamed and humbled him. Many scholars believe that this signified the shame Jesus would later endure.
  - b. Jesus was not a Nazarite (one who takes a Nazarite vow); Jesus was a Nazarene (from the city of Nazareth. Jesus drank the fruit of the vine, touched dead bodies (raising them from the dead) and wore his hair like other Hebrew men.
  - c. Some think that the Apostle Paul took a Nazarite vow.

**Acts 18:18** – *“And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.”*

- d. However, the word “vow” here is translated from the Greek word “*euche*,” the same word used in James 5:15 for the “prayer” of faith. It is very possible that Paul cut his hair, not because he had taken a Nazarite vow, but because he had just been delivered from the court of Gallio, and he needed to cut his hair because he was going to prayer. Either way, Paul certainly did not make a practice of wearing his hair long.

## B. The Spiritual Significance of Hair

1. What God intends for good, Satan always tries to use for evil. Hair has always been significant part of occult worship.
  - In the book, “The Encyclopedia of Superstition, Folklore and The Occult Sciences of the World” it states, *“Women’s hair is a most precious amulet and wards off a great many evils and diseases.”*
  - In “The Power of Magic Secrets and Mysteries Ancient and Modern” (page 74) we read, *“Hair has always been considered strong magic; witches casting an evil spell needed a piece of hair from their victim to make it truly efficacious.”*
  - In “The Women’s Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects” (page 313) it states, *“Women’s hair carried heavy symbolic and spiritual significance in Oriental Religions. Tantric sages proclaimed that the binding or unbinding of women’s hair could control cosmic powers of creation and destruction.”*
  - In “The Donning International Encyclopedic Psychic Dictionary” (page 269) we read, *“Hair has psychical powers that act as a protection from evil entities of the etheric world; cutting of the hair was done in a ritual to discontinue this protection; it is symbolic of strength. It contributes to one’s personality, and is a mark of identification; to shave one’s head is to remove one’s self-image so one can begin a new self-image.”*
  - In “Encyclopedia on Witches and Witchcraft” (page 149) it states, *“A witch’s magical power is bound in her hair; by shaking her hair in the wind, the power of a spell is doubled.”*

# CHRISTIAN LIVING – Part 5

- In the book, “Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology” (page 572) we read, “*Hair has had an occult significance since ancient times. It has been regarded as a source of strength. The association of hair with sexual features of the body has given it remarkable force, and distinctions between male and female hair have emphasized sexual attraction. The unisex fashions of the permissive society and rock groups have tended to create sexual confusion and neurotic behavior.*”
2. Obviously, evil forces and powers are aware that there is a great spiritual significance to hair.
  3. While these facts of occult worship are enlightening, this information is meaningless unless the Bible teaches that hair has spiritual significance. Interestingly enough, the Bible *does* teach this.

## C. Hair Length

1. In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul gives a lengthy discourse concerning the length of the hair of the Christian believer.
2. There are several important facts to consider when examining the instructions on hair found in 1 Corinthians 11.
  - a. First, we must understand that the Apostle Paul makes a clear and deliberate proclamation as to whom this epistle is addressed.

**1 Corinthians 1:2** – “*To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours [their Lord as well as our Lord]*”

- The apostle makes it abundantly clear that while this epistle is addressed to the Corinthian church, it extends to the entire body of Christ: all people in every place who call on the name of the Lord.
  - Therefore, the instructions given in 1 Corinthians are for all Christians who claim Jesus Christ as their Lord.
- b. Secondly, the Apostle declares that his instructions are not his opinions or ideas, but they are the direct commandments of the Lord.

**1 Corinthians 14:37** – “*If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.*”

- Obviously, the instructions and traditions that the Apostle gives to us are extremely important and we should take great care that we observe these commandments fully.
- c. Thirdly, it is important to note that the Apostle Paul begins this discourse on the length of the believers’ hair by admonishing the church to remember and keep the ordinances that he delivers unto them.
  - d. Let’s look carefully at what the apostle writes as the commandments of the Lord in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16.

# CHRISTIAN LIVING – Part 5

KING JAMES VERSION	OTHER TRANSLATION
<p><sup>2</sup> Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.</p>	<p>(NIV) - I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the traditions just as I passed them on to you.</p>
<p><sup>3</sup> But I would have you 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.</p>	<p>(same)</p>
<p><sup>4</sup> Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.</p>	<p>(Amplified) - Any man who prays or prophesies (teaches, refutes, reproves, admonishes, and comforts) with his head covered dishonors his Head (Christ).</p>
<p><sup>5</sup> But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.</p>	<p>(NIV) - But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as having her head shaved.</p>
<p><sup>6</sup> For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be <u>shorn</u> or <u>shaven</u>, let her be covered.</p>	<p>(NIV) - For if a woman does not cover her head, she might as well have her hair cut off; but if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair <u>cut off</u> or her head <u>shaved</u>, then she should cover her head.</p>
<p><sup>7</sup> 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.</p>	<p>(same)</p>
<p><sup>8</sup> For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. <sup>9</sup> Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man</p>	
<p><sup>10</sup> For this cause ought the woman to have <u>power</u> (Gr: “exousia” a symbol of authority, a crown) on her head because of the angels.</p>	<p>(Amplified) - Therefore she should [be subject to his authority and should] have a covering on her head [as a token, a symbol, of her submission to authority, that she may show reverence as do] the angels.  (J. B. Philips Translation) For this reason a woman ought to bear on her head an outward sign of man’s authority for all the angels to see.</p>
<p><sup>11</sup> 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</p>	<p>(Amplified) - Nevertheless, in [the plan of] the Lord and from His point of view woman is not apart from and independent of man, nor is man aloof from and independent of woman; <sup>12</sup>For as woman was made from man, even so man is also born of woman; and all [whether male or female go forth] from God [as their Author].</p>
<p><sup>13</sup> Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?</p>	<p>(Common English Bible) - Judge for yourselves: Is it appropriate for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?</p>
<p><sup>14</sup> Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?</p>	<p>(NIV) - Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him,</p>
<p><sup>15</sup> But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her <u>for</u> a covering.  (“<u>For</u>” - Greek: “anti - instead of, in place of)</p>	<p>(Young’s Literal Translation) - and a woman, if she have long hair, a glory it is to her, because the hair <b>instead of a covering</b> hath been given to her;  (Darby Translation) - But woman, if she have long hair, [it is] glory to her; for the <b>long hair</b> is given [to her] <b>in lieu of a veil</b>.  (God’s Word) - Doesn’t it teach you that it is a woman’s pride to wear her hair long? Her hair is given to her <b>in place of a covering</b>.</p>

# CHRISTIAN LIVING – Part 5

	<p><i>(Good News) - But on a woman it is a thing of beauty. Her long hair has been given her to serve as a covering.</i></p> <p><i>(Orthodox Jewish Bible) - Because the long hair has been given to her instead of the sterntichel (kerchief) or kesut rosh (head covering).</i></p>
<p><sup>16</sup> But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.”</p>	<p><i>(Amplified) - Now if anyone is disposed to be argumentative and contentious about this, we hold to and recognize no other custom [in worship] than this, nor do the churches of God generally.</i></p> <p><i>(Expanded Bible) - Some people may still want to argue about this, but I would add that neither we nor the churches of God have any other practice [custom].</i></p> <p><i>(J. B. Philips Translation) - But if anyone wants to be argumentative about it, I can only say that we and the churches of God generally hold this ruling on the matter.”</i></p>

3. The apostle lays out a very specific and detailed explanation of why the length of the hair of a believer is important to God and to His church. This is not an insignificant matter – it has a direct relationship with authority, submission, creation, angelic beings, nature, disgrace and glory.
4. The human male is the only creature that can stand in the presence of God bare headed because he is the only creature that is made in the image and likeness of God.
  - a. The Apostle Paul declares that a woman ought to have her head covered in the presence of God because of the angels. This is because certain angels must also be covered in the presence of God: they cover their faces and feet (Isaiah 6:2). Only man is made to be uncovered in God's presence. The woman needs a symbol of authority upon her head to appear before God. That covering, her uncut hair, is her authority, or her right to appear in right standing before God.
  - b. This issue has nothing to do with intelligence, superiority or any controversies that have been associated with "women's liberation." This doctrine's clear and principle message has to do with the order of creation. God expects us to maintain creation's order, bearing witness to the fact that man alone was made in the image and glory of God, and woman was made in the glory of the man.
5. According to I Corinthians Chapter 11, there are at least seven distinct reasons why a woman should have long, uncut hair:
  - a. It is her covering, her veil, her symbol of her submission to the authority of her husband/father and to God (verse 5).
  - b. It is a symbol of her position in the order of creation (verses 7-9).
  - c. She joins with the angels in having the proper covering before the Lord (verse 10).
  - d. It is a dishonor (shame, disgrace) for her to pray or prophesy without her covering of uncut hair (verse 5).
  - e. Nature and the natural order of things teach her to have uncut hair (verses 14-15).
  - f. Uncut hair is a glory unto her (verse 15).
  - g. Uncut hair on a woman was the custom of the Hebrews and the custom of the churches of God (verse 16).

# CHRISTIAN LIVING – Part 5

6. A man, according to 1 Corinthians 11, should have cut, short hair because:
  - a. It is a symbol of his authority and position under God (verse 3).
  - b. If he has long hair he dishonors God (verse 4)
  - c. His cut hair is a symbol of his order of creation (verses 7-9).
  - d. Nature teaches him to have short hair (verse 14).
  - e. Long hair is a shame (disgrace, dishonor) unto him (verse 14).
7. The **only** arguments for a woman to have cut hair or for a man to have long hair are vanity, convenience and a desire to conform to the world. Our decisions must never be based upon these desires.
8. God gave man and woman certain unchangeable physical characteristics to distinguish them, but He allowed them to possess one easily changeable physical characteristic: both men and women can manipulate the length of their hair. Men can grow their hair long and women can cut their hair short, but by conforming to God's standard, they demonstrate their willingness to accept God's authority over them and their official place before Him.
9. Some have thought that Paul was dealing with a local custom or a matter that related only to Corinthian culture. A closer look at these verses reveals that to be incorrect. Paul references all the way back to creation for this teaching and states that **any** woman praying or prophesying without her head properly covered dishonors her head.
10. Paul says that nature itself teaches us that long hair is a shame to a man and short hair is a shame to a woman. How does nature teach this? The answer is simple. Many men will lose their hair and become bald as they age. This is considered "natural." But we find very few women who experience baldness to the same degree as men. When it does happen to a woman, it is considered "unnatural."
11. In order to fully understand what "short hair" and "long hair" is, it is necessary to understand the meaning of the words "shorn" and "shaven."

**1 Corinthians 11:6** – *"For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be **shorn** or **shaven**, let her be covered."*

- Shorn – Greek: "*keiro*," to shear, to cut, to sever - (to shorten the hair by cutting)
  - Shaven – Greek: "*xurao*," to shave, to use a razor - (to shorten the hair by cutting it to the skin)
- a. This verse clearly states that there is no difference in "shorn" hair (*hair that has been cut*) or "shaven" hair (*hair that has been shaved down to the skin*). If hair has been cut or severed, it is the same to God as if it has been shaven or razored off completely. The scripture declares both shorn hair and shaven hair on a woman to be a shame.
  - b. In 1 Corinthians 11:14 and 15 we read the English words "long hair" twice.

**1 Corinthians 11:14-15** – *"Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have **long hair**, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have **long hair**, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering."*

- c. The phrase, "long hair," is translated from one Greek word, "komao."
  - Authoritative sources such as Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, Thayer's Lexicon, Gingrich's Lexicon, Bauer's Lexicon, Moulton & Miligan's Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament, and W.E. Vine's Expository Dictionary all agree that the Greek word, "komao," means "*to let the hair grow, long hair.*"

# CHRISTIAN LIVING – Part 5

- Long hair, then, is hair that is “allowed to grow” or uncut. Short hair is hair that has been cut.
12. The “Illustrated Bible Dictionary” states that Hebrew women throughout biblical times wore their hair long and basically uncut.
  13. Since uncut hair for women and cut hair for men was the time-honored practice for the Hebrew people, the Apostle Paul does not find it necessary to deal with this subject more than once because he concludes by saying, “we [the Hebrews] have no such custom, and neither do the churches of God.”
  14. Throughout history, civilized societies accepted that long hair was the norm for women and short hair was the norm for men. The apostle Paul says that nature itself teaches us that this is God’s natural and normal order.
    - “Barnes Notes on the Bible” states, “*For that is even all one as if she were shaven*” *As if her long hair, which nature teaches her she should wear for a veil (1 Corinthians 11:15) should be cut off. Long hair is, by the custom of the times, and of nearly all countries, a mark of the sex, an ornament of the female, and judged to be beautiful and comely. To remove that is to appear, in this respect, like the other sex, and to lay aside the badge of her own. This, says Paul, all would judge to be improper.*”
  15. The first widespread practice of women cutting their hair began in the 1920’s (The Roaring Twenties) when a new revolution against traditional femininity began to take place.
    - “*Unlike her mother, who dressed in dark, restrictive, modest clothing and strove to conduct herself with complete respectability, the flapper of the 1920’s was determined to express herself ... She wore lipstick and rouge, especially after The Saturday Evening Post magazine, which had originally condemned makeup early in the 1920’s, began accepting advertisements for cosmetics. She cut her hair into a short, blunt style called a bob and plucked her eyebrows ... She drank. Hemlines rose dramatically ... prompting the states of Ohio and Utah to pass laws fixing hem lengths no more than seven inches above the floor.*” (“America In the 1920’s,” by Michael J. O’Neal)
    - In “The Saturday Evening Post” (June 27, 1925) an article by Marian Spitzer, entitled “*The Erstwhile Crowning Glory, stated*”: “*There hasn’t been a newspaper printed for the last two years ... that hasn’t carried some sort of little story ... about women’s hair. It used to be a woman’s crowning glory, but now it’s just hair.*”
    - In the “Ladies Home Journal” (March 1927), an article by Ann Harding, entitled, “*Your Crowning Glory,*” stated, “*The most radical change in the costume of women in our times has been the change in hair styles. Hair really is the crowning glory of a woman ... her hair still remains the most telling item of her appearance. And now short hair is considered chic. It is also the symbol of the freedom of women.*”
    - Famous Ballroom Dancer Irene Castle “bobbed” her hair and created a fashion sensation known as the “Castle Bob.” She also popularized shorter skirts and body-contact dancing.
    - In his essay, “The Bob,” literary critic and social theorist Michael Warner states, “*By 1925, the bobbed hair controversy still raged. A teacher in Jersey City, New Jersey was actually ordered by her Board of Education to let her hair grow! The Board claimed that women waste too much time fussing with bobbed locks. Preachers warned parishioners that “a bobbed woman is a disgraced woman.” Men divorced their wives over bobbed hair. One large department store fired all employees wearing bobbed hair ... The free-spirited youth of the day readily accepted the new*

# CHRISTIAN LIVING – Part 5

*look and made it the forerunner of many fads and fashions which eventually led to new curling, perming and coloring methods. When a woman had her hair cut short, she grew bolder. Soon she began wearing 'long beads, short skirts, rolled stockings, and rough on her knees,' an expression synonymous with the flapper. The rebellious change in hairstyle was just the beginning of a major change in societal norms and values seen during the 1920s."*

- The "[Encyclopedia Britannica](#)" describes the changes in this area. After World War I (1914 – 1918) the following practices developed in American society: Women began to cut their hair, extremely short skirts began to appear (i.e., skirts that exposed the knee), women's sportswear and swimwear became scanty, and women began to wear trousers for sports activities. During and after World War II (1939 – 1945) women began to wear pants to work in factories and then to wear them at home. In the 1960's miniskirts, short shorts, and unisex styles came into vogue, as well as long hair on men. Social changes particularly affected women.
  - Historian Carl Degler writes, "*Early in the twentieth century upper middle-class women... learned to... smoke cigarettes, and embrace men in the modern ballroom dance... The more advanced also insisted on their right to go anywhere unchaperoned, to drink, smoke, and swear in public, and generally to behave as men did.*"
16. The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the beginning of the great revolution against biblical principles and standards. What had been considered indecent, immoral, and shameful from time immemorial began to become widely accepted as carnal and fleshly behavior became popular.
17. Even as late as 1945, most fundamental, evangelical churches taught against women wearing makeup, wearing pants or cutting their hair. But in time, they allowed the world's attitude to influence them. The long-dreaded "perilous times" of the last days had indeed arrived.
- **2 Timothy 3:1-6** – "*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent [without self-control], fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady [stubborn], highminded [proud], lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,*"
  - Worldwide English Version: "*6 They are the kind who go quietly into people's houses. There they get foolish women to believe them. These women know that they have done many wrong things. And they want to do many kinds of wrong things.*"
18. There can be absolutely no question that the Apostle Paul strongly advocates the importance of "long hair" for women and "short hair" for men. Those who choose to follow the world's fashions for hair length rather than the Bible's instructions place themselves in direct opposition to scriptural command and they go against the tradition, practice, and example established by the original First Century Church.

## II. THE USE OF INTOXICATING AND DAMAGING SUBSTANCES

### A. Alcoholic beverages.

- **Proverbs 20:1** – "*Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.*"
- **Proverbs 23:31-32** – "*Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.*"
- **Ephesians 5:18** – "*And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.*"

# CHRISTIAN LIVING – Part 5

- **1 Corinthians 6:9-10** – “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, ... nor drunkards, ...shall inherit the kingdom of God.”
- **Galatians 5:19-21** – “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these ... drunkenness, ...of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

1. Drunkenness is a sin that will prevent people from inheriting the kingdom of God.

## B. Substance abuse – drugs, tobacco, etc.

1. Any substance that causes the equivalence of drunkenness (loss of self-control) leads to sin, causes physical harm or causes us to become dependent upon it (addicted) is not pleasing to God. This includes drugs, tobacco, etc.

- **2 Corinthians 7:1** – “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.”
- **1 Corinthians 3:16-17** – “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”

2. We are specifically instructed to cleanse our flesh from filthiness and not to defile (harm, make unclean, injure) the temple of God: tobacco use contradicts these commands.

## III. GOD REJECTS THOSE WHO REJECT HOLINESS

A. Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch, was one of the first seven church deacons chosen to look after the business matters of the early church (Acts 6:3-5). According to early historical writings, Nicolas either fell away from the true gospel, or his teachings were misrepresented by others who later fell away from the truth. In either case, a doctrine known as the “Doctrine of the Nicolaitans” emerged.

1. Irenaeus, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century “Church Father” wrote that the Nicolaitans, “*lead lives of unrestrained indulgence*” and teach it is a matter of indifference to practice adultery...
2. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who lived in the First Century AD, called the Nicolaitans “*lovers of pleasure.*”
3. John Wesley, in his writings (Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament on Revelation 2:6) states that the doctrines and lives of the Nicolaitans were corrupt. “*They allowed the most abominable lewdness and adulteries, as well as sacrificing to idols; ...*”
4. In “The Bible Handbook,” Dr. Joseph Angus writes that the “*Nicolaitans taught and practiced “Ritualism without spirituality, knowledge without practice. Justification by faith without holiness.*”
5. This terrible doctrine of the Nicolaitans taught that a lifestyle of separation and holiness (which includes holiness of spirit, behavior, adornment, and dress) was unnecessary.

- **Jude 1:4** – “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

# CHRISTIAN LIVING – Part 5

- (NIV) – “For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.”
- B. The Doctrine of the Nicolaitans required no outward change in behavior or lifestyle, therefore it became a very popular belief because it appealed to the carnal nature. It attracted large numbers of people from pagan religions. But unfortunately, it also attracted many people from the lukewarm church who embraced it with open arms.
- C. However, the doctrine was not popular with God. Twice in Revelation (2:6 and 2:15), God said that He “hated” the teaching of the Nicolaitans. If God hated it then, He still hates it today.

**2 Peter 2:1-22** – “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. <sup>2</sup> And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of ... <sup>12</sup> But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; <sup>13</sup> And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; <sup>14</sup> Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children ... <sup>17</sup> These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. <sup>18</sup> For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. <sup>19</sup> While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. <sup>20</sup> For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. <sup>21</sup> For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.”

- D. We must never forget that if we reject holiness, we reject not man, but God.

**1 Thessalonians 4:7-8** – “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto **holiness**. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.”

## IV. THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS

- **Hebrews 12:14** – “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”
  - **1 Chronicles 16:29** – “Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.”
- A. Our lifestyle is a major part of our worship – by the way we speak, act, dress and conduct ourselves we either blaspheme the Word of God or give glory unto God.
1. Holiness and godliness begin on the inside. We must have a genuine desire on the inside to please God more than we want to please ourselves or please those around us.
  2. As long as our inner desire is to follow the fashions, fads, practices, and customs of the world, we will always have difficulty in following the guidelines of God’s Word.
    - **Acts 5:29** – “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, *We ought to obey God rather than men.*”

# CHRISTIAN LIVING – Part 5

- **Romans 12:2** – “*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*”
3. In areas of dress and ornamentation, instead of asking “What do Christians have to do?” we should ask ourselves, “What is the right thing to do? What is the thing that would best please God?”
- B. Our lifestyle of holiness must go beyond regulations, restrictions, rules and guidelines – it must be a means of joyfully serving and pleasing our beloved bridegroom.
  - C. Perfecting holiness is a journey. Don’t be discouraged or disheartened if your carnal nature rebels against some of the things the Word teaches. Pray and ask God to give you both the will and the strength to obey His commands. Study and let His Word and let His Spirit continue to work within you!
- **Philippians 2:13** – “*For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*”

Additional reading material (available through the Pentecostal Publishing House):

*In Search of Holiness*, David K. Bernard

*Essentials of Holiness*, David K. Bernard

*Practical Holiness—A Second Look*, David K. Bernard

*Hair Length in the Bible*, Daniel Seagraves

*Modesty*, Nan Pamer

*Law Keepers and Grace Abusers*, Bishop D. D. Davis (CD #940331: Bethel Media Library)

---

**Bethel United Pentecostal Church**

357 Jericho Turnpike, Old Westbury, NY 11568 ~ (516) 338-1032

[www.BethelUJC.org](http://www.BethelUJC.org)

**August 2018**