

## Gospel Preaching, October 23-29

### THE VICTORIOUS CHRIST: THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Sermon Series by Ron Halbrook  
(Evangelist, Hebron Lane Church of Christ, Shepherdsville, KY)

Monday 7 PM: **Introduction to the Book of Revelation (1:1-20)**

Tuesday 7 PM: **Addresses to 7 Churches (2:1 - 3:22)**

Wednesday 7 PM: **7 Seals Opened (4:1 - 8:1)**

Thursday 7 PM: **7 Trumpets Sound (8:2 - 11:19)**

Friday 7 PM: **2 Beasts, & 7 Bowls of Wrath (12:1 - 16:21)**

Saturday 7 PM: **The Harlot Judged (17:1 - 19:21)**

Sunday Class 10 AM: **The Saints' Victory (20:1 - 22:5)**

Sunday Worship 11 AM: **A Call to Faithfulness (22:6-21)**

Sunday Worship 3 PM: **When Is the 1,000 Reign of Christ?**

Question-&-Answer period after each lesson.

## MATURITY IN DRESS (PROPER ATTIRE)

Ron Halbrook

When David's and Bathsheba's newborn was deathly ill, David laid on the ground in penitence and prayer for seven days (2 Sam. 12:16). When the infant died, *"Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped,"* in humble submission to the penalty of his sins (v. 17). What was going on in David's mind? Did he not know that "how we dress is just a matter of opinion, and, anyway, God does not care how we dress just so we have a good heart?" Why wash and change his clothes — just go to the house of the Lord and worship!

David had a far more mature attitude about dress than some of us do and we would do well to learn from him. The truth is that God Himself gave man the first proper clothing, then He gave instructions regarding how men should dress in every dispensation of time, and our clothing reflects our attitude toward God in many ways.

### GOD ADDRESSES

**CLOTHING.** Adam and Eve first lived in perfect but naked innocence (Gen. 2:25). With the experience of sin came the consciousness of nakedness, which they attempted to hide with *"aprons"* (Hebrew *agora*, Gen. 3:7; translated "loin girdle" in Jer. 13:1). God rejected this garment which left much of the thigh exposed and provided *"coats"* or *"tunics"* covering from the shoulders to the knees (Hebrew *kuttonet*, "a tunic...; generally with sleeves, coming down to the knees, rarely to the

ankles" (Gesenius, *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, 420).

God's covering of nakedness reflects His knowledge of human nature and the dangers of temptation aroused by exposing our nakedness. Human nature and these dangers have not changed with the passing of ages, covenants, and dispensations. Priestly garments detailed in Exodus 28 and 39 reflected God's concern for reflecting His glory but also practical concern for modesty: *"Make them linen undergarments to cover their naked bodies; they must extend from the waist to the thighs"* (Ex. 28:42, Christian Standard Bible). The continuing shame of nakedness is reflected in numerous events and admonitions in the New Testament. This shame is addressed with literal applications which teach women to dress modestly rather than shamelessly (1 Tim. 2:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:3-4) and also figurative applications which compare spiritual apathy to reckless disregard for adequate clothing (Rev. 3:17-18; 16:15).

**CUSTOM PLAYS A ROLE IN PROPER DRESS.** Godly people have respected different styles and articles of dress projecting various messages down through history. The mere washing of clothes indicated purification in preparation to hear God's word spoken (Ex. 19:10-11). White clothing often projects purity and joy: *"Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment"* (Eccl. 9:8). The Ancient of Days wore white clothing in Daniel 7:9, and the clothing of Jesus *"was white as the light"* at His transfiguration. Kings and high officials representing them appeared in garments signifying royalty, such as when *"Mordecai went*

*out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple"* (Est. 8:15; 5:1).

Ancient people, both male and female, wore flowing garments rather than trousers with shirts or blouses. Customary clothing could indicate the mourning of widowhood or the advertising of harlotry (Gen. 38:14-15). God warned His people not to take up Gentile customs of cross-dressing — males wearing the customary attire of females or vice versa (Dt. 22:22).

Various customs of veils are reflected in both Bible and secular history. The first mention of a veiling custom in Scripture is Genesis 24:65 when Rebekah *"covered herself"* as Isaac approached. Well dressed Jewish women included veils among their wardrobe (Is. 3:23). Paul urged Christian women in Corinth's moral chaos to respect the Greek custom of veiling as a sign of submission to male leadership (1 Cor. 11:2-16). The cultures of India and of Arabian nations embrace that sign today. The bridal veil was common in ancient Roman weddings, still widely practiced today.

Joseph languished in prison over two years, but when the Pharaoh called for him, *"he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh"* (Gen. 41:14). Prison attire was not appropriate for an audience with the king. Likewise, after spending a week in penitent mourning on the floor, King David washed himself and changed his clothes in order to appear in public before God, a greater King than himself (2 Sam. 12:16-17).

In Matthew 22:1-14 Jesus tells the parable of a king who invited many guests to his son's wedding feast and who was incensed when a guest attended wearing inappropriate attire. When the guest was confronted, he was "speechless" because he had no excuse for thus insulting the king and his son — he was immediately evicted and incarcerated. People who profess to honor Christ but do not obey Him will face an even worse fate!

**DO WE REFLECT MATURITY OR IMMATURITY IN OUR DRESS?** Like the guests at the wedding feast, we serve a great King whose son must be honored at all times by our conduct. Claiming our conduct is not important since the King sees our heart is foolish, insolent, insulting, and rebellious. We need to seriously study passages such as Malachi 1 where God rebuked Israel and her priests for their debonair, nonchalant, apathetic attitude toward Him, His law, and His worship. They had given God minimal service, halfhearted worship, and mere scraps for sacrifices. They had not prepared themselves to give God the highest honor due Him — yet, they were indignant when God challenged and rebuked them!

God tried to reason with His immature children by showing they gave Him less honor than a son gives his father, than a servant gives his master, and than a citizen gives his governor. God concluded they had just as well close the temple and cease all pretenses of worshipping Him (Mal. 1:6-10).

*Do we reflect maturity or immaturity in our dress* when we follow the changing patterns of ungodly, immodest, seductive

attire constantly evolving in the world under Satan's leadership? God covered Adam and Eve in clothing from their shoulders to their knees to cover the shame of nakedness and thus avoid the dangers of sexual temptation. Satan constantly finds new "styles" to uncover the same terrain: sections of the body from our shoulders to our knees.

Mary Quant, designer of skirts climbing above the knees, was not timid about her intentions. When asked if such designs are intentionally suggestive and seductive, she responded, "But I love vulgarity. Good taste is death, vulgarity is life." *Why do Christians wear such vulgar attire?*

*Do we reflect maturity or immaturity in our dress* when we "dress down" for worship services? One symptom of our society's loss of respect for all sources and standards of authority is the "dress down" attitude when attending any important occasion including weddings, funerals, and worship services. It is no longer important to show honor to the person or occasion which should be honored, but it is important only to feel personally relaxed and uninhibited. The common alibi regarding worship services is that "so long as God knows my heart is right, it does not matter how I dress." But the heart is not right when we drag God down from His divine throne so that we can commiserate with Him as a bowling buddy or fishing partner. *We are losing the sense of reverence for God and of humility as His creatures and as pardoned criminals in the Court of Heaven!*

*Do we reflect maturity or immaturity in our dress* when we adopt the changing customs

which manifest rebellion and ungodly lifestyles? Yes, customs may change and not all of them are sinful. Paul adjusted to different cultures and customs but not in ways which violated the law of Christ (1 Cor. 9:20-22). When homosexual males introduced the wearing of earrings, some Christian males could not wait to join the vanguard of a changing custom — even at the expense of tarnishing their influence and reputation.

After the passing of years, some such customs lose their sinful significance and may be adopted by Christians, but we must not adopt Gentile customs which send mixed signals about our moral stand. What associations and communities do we identify ourselves with when we plaster our bodies with tattoos, dye and style our hair to match people obsessed with drawing attention to themselves, and pierce our heads, tongues, and other body parts with metal objects? *We should pause to ask what lifestyles will we likely be identified with before we adopt these fads.*

Let us dress at all times in a manner which clearly communicates the highest honor to our great King!

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## AT ALL TIMES

Nicolas Edwards

The phrase, "at all times" occurs 8 times in the KJV. There are some things that we need to be doing at all times.

**BLESS THE LORD.** David wrote in Psalm 34:1, "I will bless the Lord at all times: His

*praise shall continually be in my mouth.*” Do you bless the Lord and praise Him at all times? To bless is to give thanks. Paul wrote the Ephesians, *“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Eph. 5:20). It is coupled with praise in Psalm 34:1. Do you praise, adore, and give thanks to God at all times?

**TRUST IN GOD.** *“Trust in Him at all times...”* (Ps. 62:8). We need to learn *“that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men”* (Dan. 4:17). We need to have the attitude of Job when he said, *“though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him...”* (Job 13:15). *“But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee”* (Ps. 5:11). Sometimes our trust in God will be put to the test. Some fail to submit to God, thinking they know better. We must realize, *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts”*

(Is. 55:8-9). We must *“Walk by faith, not by sight”* (2 Cor. 5:7). Do you trust in God at all times?

**DO RIGHTEOUSNESS.** We are to be righteous at all times! *“Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times”* (Ps. 106:3). God’s commandments are righteousness. *“My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness”* (Ps. 119:172). Do you keep the commandments at all times?

**LONG FOR GOD’S JUDGMENTS.** *“My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times”* (Ps. 119:20). Do you long for the judgments of God at all times? To long for His judgments is to long for His word (Ps. 119:97-105). We need to *“hunger and thirst after righteousness”* (Mt. 5:6). Job is a good example of that as he said, *“...I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food”* (Job 23:12). Do you esteem God’s word more than your necessary food? If not, you need to develop a desire for *“the sincere milk of the word”* (1 Pet. 2:2).

**SATISFIED.** The wise man penned, *“Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers’ with thee. Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love”* (Prov. 5:15-19).

**LOVE.** Proverbs 17:17 says, *“A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”* A friend who loves at all times will speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). *“Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful”* (Prov. 27:5-6). Be sure you are choosing true friends and not enemies who tell you what you want to hear! There is no better friend than Jesus (Jn. 15:14). Thus, we must do what He commands!

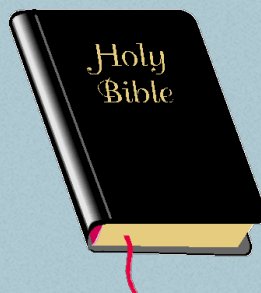
**EVERY MEMBER  
AT  
EVERY SERVICE!**

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