

We Are The Message

- Reputation & Influence **Matters**
- Attire and Overall Appearance **Matters**
- Speech & Words **Matter**
- Attitude & Work Ethic **Matters**

The lesson is entitled “***We Are The Message***”, and is meant to be a Biblical reminder, of how important our behavior, reputation and **INFLUENCE** really is.

In the early 90’s, I briefly worked for Coca-Cola Enterprises. One of the things that impacted me during my brief tenure, was their interest in one’s **INFLUENCE** while wearing Coca-Cola clothing, or driving Coca-Cola vehicles.

Each morning the delivery trucks would pull into the warehouse to be loaded with product for the routes of the day. Before the drivers pulled out of the warehouse, there was a Big O sign, for all of the drivers to see, and it read: “**Drivers, When You Leave This Warehouse, YOU ARE Coca-Cola**”.

Management of Coca-Cola, were letting staff know that,

I. **Our Behavior, Our Reputation and Our Influence Matters**

Paul challenged Timothy to **GUARD** his **influence**:

- “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an **EXAMPLE** of the believers, in word, in conversation (or conduct), in charity (or love), in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine (or teaching).” ([1Tim.4:12-13](#))
- “**MEDITATE** upon these things; **GIVE** thyself **WHOLLY** to them; that thy profiting may **APPEAR** to all. Take **HEED** unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; **CONTINUE** in them: for in **DOING** this thou shalt both **SAVE** thyself, and them that **HEAR** thee.” ([1Tim.4:15-16](#))

The apostle Paul said,

- “Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not **YE MY WORK IN THE LORD**? ²If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the **SEAL** of mine apostleship **are YE IN THE LORD**.” ([1Cor.9:1-2](#))

In otherwards, those Corinthians were the fruit of Paul’s labor.

By their faithful actions, by their exemplifying the Words of Christ in their lives, people knew of the spiritual work, that the apostle Paul had accomplished in them.

What is that? ...INFLUENCE.

Those Corinthian christians were impacted, influenced by the Word of God, preached by Paul.

Paul said in [2Cor.3:2](#),

- “Ye are our **EPISTLE** written in our hearts, **KNOWN** and **READ** of all men: ”

We **ARE** indeed, living epistles, known and read of all men.

One might rightly say, that a christian is an open book, for others to know and read.

- One’s “actions, truly does speak louder than words”.
- Therefore, it is critical that we “practice what we preach”, because we influence others.

The Bible instructs christians to,

- “hav(e) your **CONVERSATION** (or conduct) **HONEST** among the Gentiles: that, ...they may **BY YOUR GOOD WORKS**, which they shall **BEHOLD**, **GLORIFY** God in the day of visitation.” ([1Pet.2:11-12](#))

The Bible says that husbands,

- “may without the word, **BE WON** by the **CONVERSATION** (or conduct) of the wives; while they **BEHOLD** your chaste **CONVERSATION** (or conduct) *coupled* with **FEAR**.” ([1Pet.3:1-2](#))

Don't you see that others can "Glorify God" ([1Pet.2:12](#)) or "be Won" ([1Pet.3:2](#)), **By our influence?**

- Others **BEHOLD** our **CONVERSATION** (or conduct), hopefully a godly life.
- People observe what we do, and **WE INFLUENCE THEM**.

Christians are instructed to,

- "Do all things, without murmurings and disputings:
¹⁵ that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, (that's **INFLUENCE**)
without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation,
among whom ye shine as lights in the world (which is, **INFLUENCE**);
¹⁶ holding forth the Word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ,
that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." ([Phil.2:14-16](#))

We need to make our influence count!

We need to make sure we haven't wasted our influence or "labored in vain".

We influence for good or for bad. The Bible says,

- "For the Name of **God is blasphemed** among the Gentiles **THROUGH YOU**, " ([Rom.2:24](#))

| |
|--|
| By one's bad influence, God is blasphemed. |
|--|

The son of God said to His disciples, then and now,

- "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?
it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.
¹⁴ Ye are the light of the world (**INFLUENCE**). A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.
¹⁵ Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick;
and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.
¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men (**INFLUENCE**), that they may **SEE** your **GOOD WORKS**,
and glorify your Father, which is in heaven." ([Matt.5:13-16](#))

Influence, influence, **INFLUENCE!**

- Your life, and My life, is an open book.
- People observe both the things we do, and don't do.

Each one of us, can have an effect upon others, for good or for bad.

One preacher noted that,

- "When we, as christians, fail to let our light shine ([Matt. 5:16](#)),
We do great harm; we render our **INFLUENCE ineffective** – **USELESS** – for the cause of Christ.

Eternity will reflect how we have expended our energies.

Eternity alone will disclose the rich influence of parents, teachers, preachers and fellow-christians!"

Remember, "**We are the Message**"!

Don't forget, that "**Our Influence Matters**".

Notice with me also, that,

II. Our Attire & Overall Appearance Matters

The Bible says to,

- **NOT** dress “with the **ATTIRE** of an harlot, and subtil of heart” ([Prov.7:10](#)).

One should immediately recognize that our attire or clothing has **INFLUENCE** and therefore it **MATTERS**. Our choice of clothing and appearance, can influence others to draw a conclusion, about one’s Character and Attitude, which may be, “serious OR relaxed”, “respectful OR rebellious”, etc.

One preacher noted that one’s,

- “outward actions, are a reflection on inward thoughts” (read [Matt.15:16-20](#)).

If we put some passages together, we’ll notice that, not only is one **NOT** to dress with the attire of an harlot, But one is to fully cover themselves. Notice these few passages:

- “And the eyes of them (that’s, Adam & Eve) both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they (that is, Adam & Eve) sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.” ([Gen.3:7](#))

Adam & Eve made themselves aprons, But like a parent to child,

- “the **LORD God** make coats of skins, and **clothed them.**” ([Gen.3:21](#)) because aprons were not a full covering.

[1Tim.2:9-10](#) says:

- “that women **ADORN** themselves in **MODEST** apparel, **WITH** shamefacedness and sobriety; **NOT** with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; **BUT** (which becometh women **PROFESSING** godliness) with **GOOD WORKS.**”
- “Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; ⁴ but *let it 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.” ([1Pet.3:3-4](#))

Modest clothing is equally important as modest behavior.

So, not only is one to fully cover themselves, but they are to dress modestly, and behave modestly also; and by doing so, will help aid in **PROTECTING** one another from sin (Read [Matt.5:27-28](#); [2Tim.2:22](#)).

In the O.T. book of [Deut.22:5](#), it reads,

- “The woman shall **NOT** wear that which pertaineth unto a man, **NEITHER** shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so, are **abomination** unto the Lord thy God.”

I believe this principle is repeated in the N.T. from the word “**Effeminate**” (translated as homosexuality) ([1Cor.6:9-10](#); [1Tim.1:10](#); [Jude vs.5-7](#)). Somebody says, “we’ve changed subjects from attire to morality”. Homosexuality is unlawful, immodest and immoral **BEHAVIOR**, which carries a bad influence. Homosexuality implies all things related to one breaking the **course of NATURE**, such as men wearing women’s clothing, and vice versa.

God’s thoughts on morality, modest behavior and modest appearance has not changed from the O.T. to the N.T.

- In the same way, that the unlawful behavior of homosexuality, goes **against nature** ([Rom.1:26-27](#)),
- It goes **against nature**, for a man to wear long hair, like that of a woman ([1Cor.11:14](#))
- A woman’s hair is to her glory ([1Cor.11:15](#)); it is part of what separates a woman from a man.
- Mary wiped the feet of Jesus with her hair ([Jn.11:2](#); [Jn.12:3](#)), which implies her hair was long, in contrast to a man’s hair length ([1Cor.11:14](#)).

We don't know for sure "how long" is long, and "how short" is short.

Maybe if a man's hair is wavy and long enough for him to be mistaken for a girl, it would be time for a haircut. Likewise, if a girl's hair is short enough to be mistaken for a boy, it's time to let her hair grow out longer.

Does one's attire, appearance and behavior matter? **YES!**

In [Matt.22:11-13](#), Jesus spoke of a parable, concerning a king who made a marriage for his son, and we are told,

- "when the **KING** came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a Wedding **GARMENT**:¹² and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a **Wedding GARMENT**? And he was speechless.¹³ Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Much can be gained Spiritually from this Parable, but like so many passages from the Word of God, there are multiple applications that could be made. For our lesson, we are concerned in learning,

- that it is proper to prepare ourselves for a wedding ([Matt.22:11-13](#)).
- We customarily dress properly for a funeral, to demonstrate honor toward that family.

Our Worship service, in large part, is a funeral service, of our Lord. Shouldn't we dress our best, for the Memorial service of our Lord?

God is greater than any King on Earth, and Joseph **PREPARED** his attire to appear before the ruler of his day.

Notice [Gen.41:14](#),

- "Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he **SHAVED** himself, and **CHANGED** his **RAIMENT**, and came in unto Pharaoh."

King David besought God for his ill child, and he lay all night upon the earth for seven days ([2Sam.12:15-18](#)). After the death of the child,

- "David arose from the earth, and **WASHED**, and anointed himself, and **changed** his **APPAREL**, and came into the house of the Lord, and **WORSHIPPED**." ([2Sam.12:20](#))

From this passage, one could conclude that the clothing King David wore for worship, was different from that of laying on the ground. ...he cleaned himself up, to be presentable before God.

The Bible says,

- "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we **GAVE** them **REVERANCE**: shall we not much rather **BE** in **SUBJECTION** unto the **FATHER** of spirits, and **LIVE**?" ([Heb.12:9](#)).

We are to be separate from this world, so that our,

- "...**WHOLE** spirit and soul and **BODY**, be **KEPT blameless** at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" ([1Thess.5:23](#)).

Christians are to,

- "**glorify** God **IN** your **BODY**, and in your spirit, which **ARE** God's" ([1Cor.6:19-20](#)).

Jesus said,

- "**Render** to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and (render) **to God** the things that are God's" ([Mk.12:17](#))

Christians are to be **DISTINCLY** or **CLEARLY** associated with things that belong to God.

The Bible says we are to be,

- "**sound in the faith**" ([Titus 1:13](#)), which would include being sound in modest dress and modest appearance.

Friends, our clothing and overall appearance is of utmost importance.

WHAT we wear and **HOW** we wear it, has an affect on others, **Our attire has INFLUENCE**.

One poet wrote:

I go to see a **girl-friend**; ...My clothes are nice and **NEAT**.
I comb the hair on my head, ...And shine the shoes on my **FEET**.

My best friend is getting **married**; ...He's asked me to be "best **MAN**."
I want to make his wedding great, ...So I dress the best I **CAN**.

I'll attend a **funeral** tomorrow; ...I will look my very **BEST**.
A brand new shirt and tie, ...Plus a new suit and **VEST**.

Now it's **Sunday** morning; ...I will worship God **TODAY**.
My clothes won't be too tidy, ...And my hair in **DISARRAY**.

My shirt will be open, ...To show the hair on my **CHEST**...
And I'm not really too concerned, ...Whether or not my pants are **PRESSED**.

Why is it when before mere men, ...I want to look my **BEST**,
But when I come to worship God, ...I **don't care, HOW I'm DRESSED?**

O how we need to remember, that **WE ARE THE MESSAGE!**
Don't forget, that **Our Attire and Overall Appearance MATTERS**.

Our Influence Matters.

Our Attire & Overall Appearance Matters. ...Additionally,

III. Our Speech & Words Matter

The Bible says,

- **"SPEAK as the oracles of God"** ([1Pet.4:11](#)), and that literally means the actual Words of God.
- **"SPEAK thou the things which become sound doctrine"** ([Titus 2:1](#)) or "sound **SPEECH**" ([Titus 2:7-8](#)),
- **"KNOW how ye ought to ANSWER every man"** ([Col.4:6](#)),
...How one answers, necessarily has to do with one's speech.

- The Bible teaches that we have a responsibility to bridle our **TONGUE** ([Jms.1:26](#)),
- Don't let "foolish **TALKING**, nor jesting" be "named among you" ([Eph.5:1-9](#)),
- **"PUT off, ... FILTHY communication OUT of your MOUTH"** ([Col.3:8](#); [Eph.4:29](#)).

The Bible says,

- "the **TONGUE** is a **fire**, a **WORLD** of **iniquity**: so is the tongue among our members, that it **DEFILETH** the **whole BODY**, and **SETTETH** on **FIRE** the **course of nature**; and it is **SET** on **FIRE** of **HELL**. ...the tongue can no man tame; it is an **UNRULY evil**, **FULL** of **DEADLY poison**. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought **NOT** so to be" (reads [James 3:6-10](#)).

[Proverbs 18:21](#) says,

- **"Death and life are in the POWER of the tongue"** (or in the power of our speech and words).

The question is, will we **promote LIFE** with our tongue, or will we **promote DEATH?**

- Jesus said, "But I say unto you, That **EVERY** idle **WORD** that men shall **SPEAK**, they shall **GIVE account** thereof in the day of judgment. For **BY** thy **WORDS** thou shalt be **justified**, and **BY** thy **WORDS** thou shalt be **condemned**" ([Matt.12:36-37](#)).

Notice these few passages:

- “Let us therefore **FOLLOW AFTER** the things which **MAKE** for **PEACE**, and things wherewith one may **EDIFY** another.” ([Rom.14:19](#))
- “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.
¹³ But **EXHORT** one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” ([Heb.3:12-13](#))
- “let us **CONSIDER** one another, to provoke unto love and to good works:
²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but **EXHORTING** *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” ([Heb.10:24-25](#))
- Jude, “...gave all diligence to **WRITE** unto you of the common salvation, ...and **EXHORT** *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith, which was once delivered unto the saints.” ([jude vs.3](#))

Paul charged Timothy to

- “...**EXHORT** with all longsuffering and doctrine, ...by preach(ing) the word...” ([2Tim.4:2](#))

God the Son,

- “gave **SOME**, apostles; and **SOME**, prophets; and **SOME**, evangelists; and **SOME**, pastors and teachers;
¹² for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the **EDIFYING** of the body (or church) **OF Christ**.” ([Eph.4:11-12](#))

[Eph.4:16](#) states that,

- “...the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh **INCREASE** of the body unto the **EDIFYING** of itself in love.”

[verse 15](#) tells us how that’s done, through our **spiritual speech** or by

- “**SPEAKING** the truth in love”.

The Bible says,

- “Let your **SPEECH** *be* always with **GRACE**, seasoned with **SALT**, that ye may know, **HOW** ye ought to **ANSWER** every man.” ([Col. 4:6](#)).

The apostle Paul had just asked the Colossian christians to pray for him and Timothy,

- “that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to **SPEAK** the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: ⁴that I may make it manifest, as I ought to **SPEAK**.” ([Col. 4:3-4](#))
- He wanted to effectively use the message of the gospel, to **INFLUENCE** others to be saved. And, he also wanted the brethren to succeed in helping save others. This, he said, could be done by effectively using their speech, to teach the gospel.

You and I, We Are The Message!

Don’t forget, that **Our Speech and Words MATTER.**

Our Influence Matters.
Our Attire & Overall Appearance Matters.
Our Speech & Words Matter. But also,

IV. Our Attitude and Work Ethic, MATTERS

A. Do We Have A Proper Attitude Toward God?

Notice these few passages:

- “God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him **MUST** worship Him in **SPIRIT** and in **TRUTH**” ([Jn.4:23-24](#)).
- “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: **FEAR** God, and **KEEP** His Commandments; for this is the **WHOLE** of man” ([Ecc.12:13](#); [Deut.13:4](#)).
- “He that **FEARETH** Him, and worketh **RIGHTOUSNESS**, is acceptable with Him” ([Acts 10:35](#)).

The phrases:

- “In Truth” ([Jn.4:24](#)), “Keep His Commandments” ([Ecc.12:13](#)), and “worketh righteousness” ([Acts 10:35](#)), all have to do with the Biblical **FACTS**, of how we are all, to please God.

The phrases:

- “In Spirit” ([Jn.4:24](#)), and “Fear God” ([Ecc.12:13](#)), has to do with one’s **ATTITUDE** toward God.

Isn’t that what **REVERENCE** toward God is all about?

...The right attitude toward God, coupled with the right **BIBLICAL** facts of what God expects of His followers.

- “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may **SERVE** God **ACCEPTABLY** with **REVERENCE** and godly **FEAR**.” ([Heb.12:28](#)).
- “Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them **REVERENCE**: shall we not much rather **BE** in **SUBJECTION** unto the **FATHER** of spirits, and **LIVE**” ([Heb.12:9](#))?

I suggest to you, that one’s speech, dress and overall appearance reflects an attitude of either **REBELLION** (contrary to Biblical scripture), or of **REVERENCE** (in harmony with God’s Word, and will necessarily **INFLUENCE** others.

Which **ATTITUDE** will **WE** have?

- “The **FEAR** of the **LORD** is the **BEGINNING** of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction” ([Prov.1:7](#)).

We are the Message!

...And our **Attitude** greatly Matters.

In both the old and new testaments, we can find scripture that would direct one to DO their very best, especially in spiritual matters and therefore,

B. Our Work Ethic MATTERS.

Notice these passages:

- “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, **DO it with thy MIGHT**; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest” ([Ecc.9:10](#)).
- “And whatsoever ye do, **DO it HEARTILY**, as to the Lord, and not unto men;” ([Col.3:23](#)).

The Bible makes it very clear, that the physical body is of less importance than the spiritual.

- “For bodily exercise profiteth **LITTLE**: but godliness is **PROFITABLE** unto **ALL things**, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” ([1Tim.4:8](#))
- “**GODLINESS** with **CONTENTMENT** is great GAIN.” ([1Tim.6:6](#))

And so., we should prepare and equip ourselves to enjoy the best life a person can experience on this Earth, and for the eternal life to come.

Our Spiritual Work Ethic Matters, so we need to do our best.

- ...”Do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men” ([Col.3:23](#)).

With Regard to one’s **SPIRITUAL** work ethic, It is possible to profane Holy things and it is possible to make Sacred or Holy things, as common, profane or unclean. ...so we need to be careful that what we teach and practice in our Work ethic, include the correct Biblical facts.

The Bible says,

- In [Ezekiel 44:23](#) – “they shall **TEACH** my people the **DIFFERENCE between the HOLY and profane**, and cause them to **DISCERN between** the **UNClean and the CLEAN**”.
- [1Pet.1:15-16](#) says – Christians are to be holy – they are **NOT** to be common or unclean
- In [Rom.1:2](#), we find that – the scriptures are holy, they are not common or unclean.
- [Eph.5:27](#) says – the church is holy, therefore it is not common, profane or unclean.
- We are told in [Heb.7:26](#) that – we have a holy high priest, Who is not common or unclean.
- [Heb.10:29](#) informs us that – people can profane themselves and regard the blood of Christ as profane, common or unclean.

Some try to make holy things unholy, and the reverse is true also, some try to make common things holy.

Some tried to make words of men holy in [1Cor.1:18-31](#).

- The Bible says, “Wherefore come out from among them, and **be ye SEPARATE**, saith the Lord, and **touch not the UNCLEAN thing**; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” ([2Cor.6:17-18](#)).
- We need to be careful **NOT** to allow our spiritual birthright to be stolen, by being a **PROFANE**, common or unclean person (read [Heb.12:16](#))

We need to make sure that our spiritual work ethic **INCLUDES** the proper spiritual attitude, coupled with the right Biblical facts, As we have a serious responsibility, to abide in the teachings of Christ ([2Jn.vs.9](#)).

A careful consideration of Biblical scripture, should motivate us to,

- Keep from LOOKING and ACTING like the world ([2Cor.6:17](#)), which has influence. including the religious traditions around about us ([Matt.15:9](#); read also [Nehemiah 13:23-24](#));

A careful consideration of God's Word, should prompt us to,

- Make safeguards against making that which is holy, as common, and vice versa ([2Cor.6:17](#); [Eze.44:23](#));

A careful consideration of God's Thoughts (Isa.55:8-9), should help us realize to,

- **DO** our very best ([Ecc.9:10](#); [Col.3:23](#)) – especially in Spiritual matters that belong to God ([Lk.20:25](#)),

A careful examination of our eternal soul, should include enough zeal to,

- Have the right, **REVERENTIAL** attitude toward God and His Word ([Prov.1:7](#); [Heb.12:28](#)).

We are the Message! Don't forget, that Our Attitude and Work Ethic Matters.

V. IN-CLOSING

May God help us to equip ourselves with the sword of the spirit, the Word of God ([Eph.6:17](#)),

- That we might **PLEASE** Him in all things ([Matt.3:17](#)),
- including our great **INFLUENCE**, in our "Attire & Appearance", in our "Speech & Words", and in our "Attitude & Work Ethic".

Don't ever forget, "**We Are The Message**".

For those who have never considered their spiritual **INFLUENCE**,

- OR If you have STOPPED **Hearing** ([Rom.10:17](#)), **Believing** ([Jn.8:24](#)), and **Repenting**, as needed ([Lk.13:3](#)),
- If you have STOPPED, **Confessing** your Belief ([Acts 8:37](#)),
- IF you have NEVER been **Baptized** INTO Christ ([1Pet.3:21](#))

...Then make things right with the Lord; Don't delay.

If you have a spiritual Need, COME as together we stand and **SING**.

Sources:

Other Sources:

Compiled and formatted by Michael Wright

Richard Fox; Johnny Ramsey; Jeffrey W. Hamilton