

Naked And Afraid

Joe Slater

This article has nothing to do with the (un)reality show by the same title. I've never watched it and hope you haven't either! But I figured the name might get your attention

At the creation, Adam and Eve *“were both naked . . . and were not ashamed”* (Genesis 2:25). God created our bodies, and they are good. Marital intimacy is pure and holy. Nakedness became shameful only after they sinned. As if they could hide themselves from God, they made fig-leaf garments and hid among the trees in Eden (3:7-8). *“Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’ So he said, ‘I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself’”* (3:9). Naked and afraid! Such is the result of sin.

The smug, self-satisfied brethren at Laodicea had fine clothes, but their souls were naked. They neither knew it nor had the good sense to be ashamed. Jesus rebuked them: *“Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’ – and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked – I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich, and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed”* (3:17-18).

Public nakedness is shameful, worldly objections to the contrary notwithstanding. Let God's people resist the temptation to conform to an ungodly culture! But let us also realize that Scripture uses nakedness to illustrate the shamefulness of all sin. *“Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame”* (Revelation 16:15). Don't be naked and afraid!

The Rest Of The Story

Growing up as a child I loved to listen to a radio program by Paul Harvey called ***The Rest of the Story***. It premiered on May 10, 1976 and consisted of stories presented as little-known or forgotten facts on a variety of subjects with some key element of the story held back until the end. I loved waiting for whole reason behind the story or what I considered the “cliff-hanger.” The suspense built up. ***“How will it end?”***

You knew it would be informative. You knew it would be of great interest and you also knew **You Just Had To Know!** There I sat and waited, not so patiently sometimes, for the outcome; and **Bam**, there it was as clear as a bell. Very few times was I able to predict the result which was finally and ultimately revealed. The waiting was anxiety-producing for a young and **Far** too curious kid, but I wasn't going anywhere, **Not** until I heard what I needed to hear: the **Rest** of the story. That was what the broadcast was all about, right?

From a spiritual standpoint, God has already given us the “rest of the story” *“And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name”* (John 20:30-31). The real question is, are we like that little child, who is “open and receptive” to that which has been given? *“Then Jesus called a little child to Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven’”* (Matthew 18:2-4).

Since this story (life) will end one day and with only TWO choices available for us, a good question would be ***“What Will Your Answer Be?”*** *“I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life . . .”* (Deuteronomy 30:19). Based on the evidence at hand, why not choose wisely?

--Archie Green (Charles Town, W. VA)

HOLDING TO TRADITIONS

Paul told the church in Thessalonica to *“hold to the traditions which you were taught”* (2 Thess. 2:15). What traditions was he talking about?

It is important to know that there are two different kinds of traditions. HUMAN traditions can be good or bad. It depends on how you use them. A human tradition is just a way of doing something over a period of time. A human tradition is something that can be changed. Meeting together on Sunday at 11 A.M. can be changed to 10 A.M. without violating any Biblical teaching. The same can be said about the number of songs we sing in our assemblies and the number of prayers offered.

The other kind of tradition is DIVINE. This is the kind of tradition Paul was talking about in our text above. This is the kind of tradition that has been handed down through the generations by the inspired writers of the Bible. If we choose to change divine tradition we are disorderly (2 Thess. 3:6). Divine traditions teach us what God wants in His church.

So, following the traditions of the New Testament for our pattern for faith and practice is a good thing. Following the blueprint given by God for building our Christian life and worshiping God is a good thing.

Also, understanding the difference between and human tradition a divine tradition will go a long way in *“keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”* (Eph. 4:2).

--Rob Albright (via *Bulletin Gold*)