

# Apostolic Bible Expositor

# Apostolic *Values*



DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

**Apostolic Assembly** *of the Faith in Christ Jesus*



## **Apostolic Bible Expositor**

### **Apostolic Values**

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*All Scripture used in this book is from the King James Version  
unless otherwise specified.*

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# Apostolic Values

By  
**Ismael Martin del Campo**  
and  
**Francisco Quezada**

## *Apostolic Bible* **Expositor**

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## PRESENTATION OF

# The Apostolic Values Edition Expositor



As the years have passed, the principles of Apostolic discipline have come under attack and criticism. At the beginning, this attack came from those close to the men and women who embraced the Apostolic faith. In recent years, other denominations that no longer practice what we practice are who attack us by labeling us as “legalists.” Recently, Apostolics that have been dragged down by sects and rebellion are uniting to these arguments.

However, for those who have been formed in this wonderful and wholesome environment, our discipline is a matter of values. A value is something that serves as guide, as a principle that helps us to protect God’s blessings.

For example, one of the United States’ values is its democratic system, which permits us to enjoy a more advanced justice system. In this great nation, a common citizen can successfully defend himself against great corporate abuse. In this case, the nation’s many laws are not considered “legalistic,” but are instead called a system of values that protect the most elementary liberties and rights of America’s inhabitants.

Our ***Apostolic values*** and discipline, need to be revalued and studied more frequently and in depth so that we may “give reason of our faith” to new generations and those who question our faith.

## EDITION PRESENTATION

This Expositor, entitled ***“Apostolic Values,”*** is the first step to motivate our pastors and leaders to recuperate, teach and defend the norms and principles taken from the Word of God to guide our daily lives.

My prayer is that God bless our Apostolic congregations and strengthen their holy identity in the Apostolic Assembly’s centennial.

***Bishop Ismael Martín del Campo***  
Secretary of Christian Education

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## Lesson No. 1

# *We Need Leaders!*

### THE APOSTOLIC VALUE OF HOLINESS IN A SOCIETY WITHOUT VALUES

#### LESSON OUTLINE

##### INTRODUCTION:

1. Materialism is the door to confusion
2. Pitching our tents near Sodom
3. Abraham was a leader: Leaders walk by faith

##### CONCLUSION

#### Key Verse:

***"... Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. Now the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD."***

***Genesis 13:12-13***

## INTRODUCTION

We cannot stay with our eyes shut. We cannot ignore that Scripture prophecies that the last days will be the worst in history.

We cannot ignore that families today are faced with the most serious problems in history. Never before has there been so many divorces between spouses or abortions and murders of children by their parents. Never before has there been so many sexual violations, abuses and perversions. Never before has there been so much homosexuality and lesbianism.

In every Apostolic home, we need leaders with the powerful conviction of holiness values that the Church believes in. We live in a time where values are collapsed like never before. This is the postmodern culture, a culture that does not believe in values.

In the story of Lot and his family, we see a dramatic example that challenges us to fortify our love and practice of the Apostolic values which protect our lives. The Apostolic doctrine is a set of radical values that protects our lives from becoming like the world, little by little. This is a subtle but deadly trap.

## **1. MATERIALISM IS THE DOOR TO CONFUSION**

**1.1. Balance.** Christian life needs balance. When balance is lost, dangerous doors are opened. The book of Genesis tells of



Tarah, who emigrated with his son, Abram, and grandson, Lot, from his homeland. A special bond was developed between Abram and Lot during this time. This is why, when Abraham received God's calling of separating from his family, he took Lot with him. It is almost certain that Lot learned Abraham's same spiritual values. We see a nephew that is willing to risk his comfort in order to accompany his uncle on his calling of faith.

Along the way, uncle and nephew become more prosperous. It is this prosperity that causes the two to separate: *"Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold... Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together (Genesis 13:2-6)."*

**1.2. Should we repeat the worldly cycle of other denominations?** When God raised up the Apostolic Assembly, He did it in the same manner as with the Primitive Church. God called the

first believers, who were poor and with little education, from simple families. God mocks human riches and wisdom by choosing to reveal Himself to the most simple. By revealing Himself in this manner, God receives all glory.

But as the years have passed, these families have prospered economically thanks to God's blessings and the benefit of a life free from vices and filled with good work ethic.

All denominations coming from revivals have gone through the same: they come from the poorest social class, and then experience an "ascending social movement." However, this economic prosperity has transformed these old denominations, which once loved holiness, and has caused them to lose their distinct values.

We see these denominations go from a life free of jewelry, use of cosmetics and alcohol, indecent dress, homosexuality and perversion, become denominations where the use of excessive jewelry and makeup abounds, where the use of alcohol and tobacco is tolerated from their



members and even have homosexual and lesbian pastors.

Can the Apostolic Assembly be a Church that does not repeat the cycle of prosperity/worldliness that has been lived by many other denominations? That depends on our decision today and the upholding of God's values.

## **2. PITCHING OUR TENTS NEAR SODOM**

### **2.1. Ambition destroys values**

Without a doubt, Lot left his uncle Abraham profoundly inspired by the calling of God made on his uncle. When the prosperity

of the two men became overwhelming, Abraham, with great wisdom, suggests that they separate. As a man of faith, Abraham does not use his patriarchal right to have first choice of land. Lot, breaking a special tradition, is moved by ambition.

At the beginning of our second Apostolic century, we should ask God to guard us from the elimination of our values and disciplines by the ambition of simply being greater.

**2.2. The attack of the devil is subtle, or “little by little.”** Lot started by pitching his tents near

Sodom. When a believer begins to abandon his spiritual values, his complexes resurrect. Lot, the “farmer” who came from a small village, sees Sodom, a city of worldly lights and draw similar to Las Vegas today, and is seduced and impressed.

Little by little, Lot began to move his tents nearer to Sodom. The devil knows that if his temptations are drastic at first, we would flee from them readily. However, he is astute, and his temptations are subtle. The devil tempts us into compromising our values, little by little, until we are so far from God and close to Sodom that we are useless to God’s mission.



**2.3. When money is more important than your family** Lot thought primarily about money. He did not think about his spiritual health, or that of his wife, children or descendants.

**a)** This is why, in Genesis 19:26, it is not curiosity that causes Lot’s wife to turn back to see the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, it is her love of the world. Lot’s wife had learned her first spiritual values from

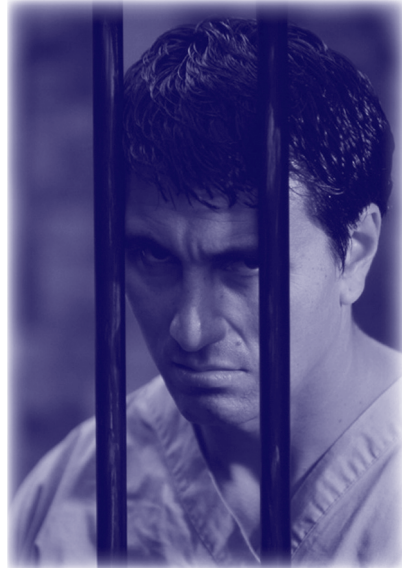
Abraham, but ended her life seduced and in love with Sodom and its false values.

**b)** When Lot's daughters thought the "world had ended (Genesis 19:30-38)," it never occurred to them to seek Abraham for counsel, much less cry out to the "God of Abraham." On the contrary, in what they considered to be a natural manner, they committed incest with Lot (technically, they raped their father). Where had they learned these types of solutions? It is clear this was learned in Sodom. As taught in Scripture, "bad conversation corrupts good customs."

As the Apostolic Assembly, we should place our families' salvation and spiritual health first. In the end, Lot lost everything. This is a great warning. Abraham, on the other hand, "sought the will of God first," and Jehovah added all that Abraham needed to him.

#### **2.4. "The men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD"**

The new generations of Apostolics, our children and grandchildren, have not witnessed the



havoc sin causes. For these generations, sin, vices and disorder seem to be inoffensive. This was the perception Lot had. Instead of trusting the testimony Sodom had, Lot trusted his limited human intuition.

This is similar to the testimony of an Apostolic family from Ciudad Juárez. In a certain neighborhood, there was a lovely, very kind couple who owned a beautiful house. For years, they returned greetings of their neighbors. However, in August 2009, they were arrested by federal agents. This "sweet couple" was a pair of sadistic, profes-

sional kidnappers that had a kidnapped victim in their home at the time of their arrest, and in whose home they found the remains of several people they had murdered.

**The Bible says this regarding our friendship with the world:**

✓ *"Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world." – I John 2:15-16*



✓ *"You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God." – James 4:4*

✓ *"If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you." – John 15:19*

✓ *"'Therefore come out from them and be separate,' says the Lord. 'Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.'" – II Corinthians 6:17*

✓ *"[He] who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good." – Titus 2:14*

**3. ABRAHAM WAS A LEADER:  
LEADERS WALK BY FAITH**

**3.1. Trust in God and do not contaminate yourself** When Abraham rescued his nephew Lot (Genesis 14:12-16), he did two radical things, which were appropriate from a leader that walked through faith:

**a)** Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek (our only God, manifested as King and Priest). Before the tabernacle and temple, the patriarch of faith laid the foundation of prosperity: giving to the Lord and tithing. Nothing was asked of him. This was a radical step from Abraham's heart as a leader of faith.

**b)** Before the king of Sodom, Abraham did not take anything for himself from the city. Abraham did not want to contaminate himself "with not even a thread (Genesis 14:23)" of what belonged to a city that was an enemy of God. Will we continue to hate everything that is worldly in 10, 20 or 30 years?

### **3.2. We are the only radical Pentecostal Church of the 21st Century**

After one hundred years, the Holy Spirit has guided our pastors and congregations to protect "the faith once given to the saints." We have maintained our doctrines and values (that we have believed and practiced), even though they have always been under attack.

**a)** We have seen certain "historical" Protestant denominations (Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran) abandon many of the values and disciplines they were formed with.

**b)** We have seen evangelical denominations, even those who are considered to be "very conservative," lose many of the characteristics of a holy life that had been taught for decades. Sadly, these changes were made within the denominations without Biblical reflection or pastoral agreement. Simply put, these denominations gave in to the pressure of today's culture, and the changes are even accepted by seminary professors.

**c)** We have been witnesses of how Pentecostal and Trinitarian denominations have abandoned many of the holiness values they were formed and grown with.

Apostolics are the only Church within the Protestants, Evangelicals and Pentecosts that has maintained its values of holiness and discipline in the 21st Century. How long will this last? May God permit that this last until He comes.



## **CONCLUSION**

In the following lessons, we will study the Apostolic values that have characterized us so that we may arm our pastors and congregations with weapons to protect and teach our disciplines. It may appear that certain words will feel harsh, but as Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was assassinated by Hitler, wrote: "Nothing can be more cruel than the tenderness that confirms another in sin. Nothing can be more compassionate than the severe rebuke that calls a brother to return from the path of sin."

## Lesson No. 2

# The curse of alcohol and drugs

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### INTRODUCTION:

1. The Old Testament
2. The New Testament

#### CONCLUSION

#### Key Verse:

***“Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.”***

***Ephesians 5:18***

### INTRODUCTION

The statistics about the impact of drug and alcohol abuse on our communities is staggering. Here are a few facts you may have been unaware of about this phenomenon:

- ✓ 14 million people in the USA are alcoholics; this is approximately 21% of the population.
- ✓ 2 out of every ten Hispanic youth admit to have smoked at least once.
- ✓ 76 million people in the USA have been exposed to alcoholism in the family.
- ✓ 5 out of every ten Hispanic youth admit that they are at risk (offered or exposed) to consume drugs at least once or twice a week.
- ✓ 20% of suicide victims are alcoholics.
- ✓ 4 out every one hundred Hispanic youth admit to having drunk alcohol without restrictions.



It is undeniable to us the great danger of alcohol, disguised in diversion. We have all seen the effects these substances can have. We have seen alcohol make men waste all their resources on their addiction. We have also seen how cigarettes have caused the death of many of our loved ones. We have seen the tragic scene of a young man or lady whose dreams and aspirations are shattered due to an overdose that provoked their deaths. In light of all these attacks against our communities, what does the Bible say to us about the consumption of alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes?

## **1. THE OLD TESTAMENT**

### **1.1. Noah**

**1.1.1.** Alcohol is a recurring problem which ruined and distorted the lives of many of the first Patriarchs. One of the most apparent and disturbing of these stories is that of Noah and his son Ham. In **Genesis 9:20-22** we see that Noah after having braved the waters takes some time to be “at ease in Zion” and produces wine for his own consumption. Noah ends up drunk and naked, and apparently at plain sight to his family.

**1.1.2.** Noah was part of God’s covenant people. In other words: He was in the church and saved. But in a moment’s time he fell into sin and opened up a Pandora’s Box that the world still has not recovered from. This is a sober reminder that none of us is too safe, we must all continue to persist in abstinence to not provoke disaster upon our lives or the lives of our loved ones.

**1.1.3.** Many times we think that the sin we commit alone or privately can only affect us. This is not true. Noah’s sin was trans-

mitted to Ham as a curse. When we sin, even when we hide it, we are affected and we affect those whom we love. Alcoholism tears families apart, and if we are not careful it can tear our families and communities apart as well. Noah's sin unleashed the first case of racism in the Scriptures since Ham is cursed, and becomes the scorn of his brothers.

## **1.2. Proverbs**

**1.2.1.** Solomon, the wisest man to have ever lived wrote down these words in **Proverbs 20:1**. The Scriptures describe alcohol as a mocker and a brawler. Alcohol doesn't make you look smart; it makes you look foolish and loud. Too many people fall into the temptation of looking interesting by the consumption of these substances, not noticing that in the eyes of God and others they look weak and dependent.

**1.2.2.** Ever been dizzy? That's what it feels like all the time when one is addicted (**Proverbs 23:29-35**). It's up, down, up, and down perpetually. You're not in control when alcohol and drugs are present in your life; instead

these become your masters tossing and turning you. There's no doubt that the manufacturers of drugs do everything they do to present to you a very attractive product, but in the end it's a viper ready to bite and kill you.

**1.2.3. 1 Peter 2:9** calls every Christian royalty and **Proverbs 31:4-5** says that substance abuse is not of royalty. As Christians we have gained a new identity, the questions for us then is how can we persist with chains of alcohol, drugs, and cigarettes? Because





of Christ, we can overcome these addictions. We have been called to reconcile all things to Christ again, we should not be wasting our time in these sins with so many people trapped and lost. It's not for Royalty.

### **1.3. The Prophets**

**1.3.1.** God's loudspeakers in Israel (the Prophets) also have very stern words for those who use substances to abuse others. Habakkuk, the Prophet of Revival, in 2:15-16 calls out those who would use substances to knock out and abuse their neighbors. Much like today's

"date drug". God's anger burns brightly for those who use substances against others and he has passed his judgment: His own hand will disgrace those who abuse others.

**1.3.2.** Many have taken some form of cultural pride in the consumption of alcohol like the people of the tribe of Ephraim (***Isaiah 28:1***). Yet their pride will be what drags them down to the dust. Those who are also trapped by their addiction are opposing God (***Isaiah 5:11***). God strictly condemns chains and he has come in Jesus Christ to take the captives out of captivity (***Isaiah 61:1***).

**1.3.3.** Do you consider yourself smart? Do you want to be wise? Don't get drunk (Hosea 4:11). Alcohol and substance abuse are compared and spoken of with the sin of prostitution in this small verse spoken by the Prophet Hosea. It is not God's desire that our brains becomes useless due to substance abuse. Instead God has called us to increase in all knowledge.

## **2. THE NEW TESTAMENT**

**2.1.** (Read **1 Corinthians 6:9-11**) Rest assured that all those who continue enslaved by the chains of alcoholism, drug addiction, and cigarettes will not see Heaven's doors. You may be baptized, but if you lower your guard just once, your eternal salvation could be lost. This is a sobering warning to us all to persevere in the Gospel God has entrusted us with.

**2.2.** Our bodies are not our own, they are temples to be dedicated to God's worship and praise (**1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19-20**). The price that God paid was the life of his son. It was His blood that redeemed us from slavery. It's a great American lie: "Your Life, Your

Body". It's not your life, God gave it to you and it's not your body, for God lends it to you. As such we should take care of what we put in our bodies, being good stewards of this gift given to us.

**2.3.** The word used in **Galatians 5:19-21** for witchcraft is "pharmakia" in Greek. It's from this Greek word that we get the word for pharmacy. The definition of this word in the Greek is clear and it is applied to people who use drugs for non-medicinal purposes. This leaves it clear: Any believer who practices this comes under the captivity of



malevolent spirits. And if the believer is unrepentant, this can very well lead him to hell.

## **CONCLUSION:**

The Biblical solution to narcotics and alcohol is clear in **Ephesians 5:18**. Instead of filling our bodies, (which are temples of God's spirit), with substances that can kill us, we should instead seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit. For those of you who have not received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit this is the call to be filled with fire. For those of us who have been baptized with fire, this is the invitation to be filled with the Spirit every single day and not neglect our relationship with Christ. Instead of Alcohol, let us be filled with the Word of God. Instead of Drugs, let us be filled in the presence of God through prayer.



Our churches are filled with people who were freed from the chains of alcohol, cigarettes and drugs.

God wants those miracles to continue to occur every week in our congregations. Invite to your Friendship Groups and to church, every family member, neighbor or friend who is struggling with any addiction. There is power and freedom in Jesus' name.

# Traps of the Enemy

## LESSON OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION:

1. What is witchcraft?
2. What is sorcery?
3. Why do people fall into these practices?

### CONCLUSION

### Key Verse:

***“Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD, and because of these detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the LORD your God.”***

***Deuteronomy 18:10-13***

## INTRODUCTION

Many of us Christians live our day-to-day lives not really conscious that we live in a spiritual world. If this is the case, the Bible clearly tells us that the devil and demons exist all around us. A great lie that the devil has loved to spread is that he does not exist. Yet in the Biblical worldview we see a very different reality in which God, angels, and evil forces exist.

There is no question that the devil and demons exist in our world and battle against Christ and his church. We see the presence of satanic influence in the mainstream media, the titles of movies, (those of vampire and demonic themes ex. Twilight) and the actors thereof. We see it in literature, the “Harry Potter” movies, and the innocent light they are portrayed in. We even surprisingly find “Ouija boards” right next to such classic board games as Chess and Checkers. There is an inherent danger when our culture

wishes to portray as “innocent” or even “good” an occult object or theme.

Jesus gives a stern warning: *“And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven (**Matthew 12:31**).”* As believers we are now part of the Kingdom of Christ, we should not entertain the occult. Entertaining the occult goes straight against the Spirit and his work. And when we do, we can put our eternal salvation at risk.

## 1. WHAT IS WITCHCRAFT?

**1.1.** Witchcraft is all that is words, rites, ceremonies and/or potions used to control or exert influence on someone. As believers we should be wary of all those shows and movies where incantations and rituals are used as well. God has called us to be a separate people for Him (**2 Corinthians 6:18**). We should abstain from these practices and be spiritually wary of those individuals who are do involve themselves in these practices.

## 1.2. SPIRITISTS.

**1.2.1.** Spiritists are those who claim to have special power to speak curses on people from their mouths. Much like Balaam in **Numbers 22** who was hired to speak down curses upon the people of Israel, there are to this day people who claim to have powers to curse others. The Scriptures admonish us to *“make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord (**Hebrews 12:14**).”* Those who hire spiritists to curse others, run against the Word of God and gather judgment for themselves.

**1.2.2.** Astrologists would also count under here. These people much like the ancient witches of Canaan and Babylon interpret omens or knowledge from the stars and other objects (flight patters of birds, bones of animals, etc.) People who practice these things are likewise to be avoided, but to be prayed for so that Christ may save them.

## 1.3. DIVINATION.

**1.3.1.** Divination is everything that pretends to predict the fu-

ture or discover something hidden and occult. Thousands of ways have been invented to be able to do these things. For example: Palm reading, crystal ball, cards, even coffee, etc.

**1.3.2.** A great percentage of those who employ these tactics play with coincidence, others use the psychology of common sense. There are others however have been able to tap into occult forces. Both should be rejected and not tolerated in the least by believers. Our trust should not be in those who reject the light, but in the Source of all Life.

## **1.4. SPELLS OR ENCHANTMENTS.**

**1.4.1.** Trying to discover the future and/or the occult through playing with objects like dice and "ouija" boards are constituted here. Under here we can also count trying to hurt someone or control someone by the means of potions or "jobs". These all the baptized in Jesus' name should abstain from, instead we should increase in good works as the Spirit empowers us to do so.

## **1.5. NECROMANCY**

**1.5.1.** All activity that pretends to speak to the dead is counted as witchcraft and necromancy. The majority of "mediums" who advertise these practices are charlatans. A minority of these "mediums" however are possessed by evil spirits, who will then fake the voices of the deceased person convoked. These things are not foreign knowledge to the Scriptures because in 1 Samuel 28, we learn that the Witch was able to summon an evil spirit to fool King Saul. Those who persist in these practices, will like Saul fall under the curse of disobedience.

## **1.6. SORCERY**

**1.6.1.** People who are sorcerers have made a pact with Satan and as such blaspheme Christ and His name. They use whatever means they can to mock the Sacraments and Blessings of God.

**1.6.2** Santeria (also known as Voodoo) has its origins in yoruba sorcery of Nigeria, these equivalences exist between evil spirits and catholic saints used by those who adhere to Santeria: eleguá

= saint Martín of Tours; obatalá = the Virgin of Mercy; yemayá = the virgin of Regla; oyá = the virgin of Candelaria; ochún = the lady of Charity; changó = saint Barbara; ogún = saint George; babalú ayé = saint Lazarus.

**1.6.3.** Adherents of sorcery sacrifice animals and humans as well. One month it was in Nigeria about 100 cadavers, all sacrificed for sorcery. These are the origin of the new “blood sects” arising in Africa and the United States. We shall be taking a deeper look into what God has spoken about sorcery.

## **2. WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT SORCERY?**

**2.1.** God Brings Disasters over those who practice these things:

*“He sacrificed his own son in the fire, practiced sorcery and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger. Manasseh king of Judah has committed these detestable sins. Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: I am going to bring such disaster on Jerusalem and Judah that the ears*

*of everyone who hears of it will tingle. (2 Kings 21)”*

**2.2.** God brings ruin to those cities who practice the casting of spells:

*“I will destroy the cities of your land and tear down all your strongholds. I will destroy your witchcraft and you will no longer cast spells. (Micah 5:11-12)”*

**2.3.** Those who practice witchcraft will not live with God in eternity:

*“The acts of the sinful nature are obvious ... idolatry and witchcraft ... and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21)”*

**2.4.** God repudiates these people:

*“Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD (Deuteronomy 18:10-12).”*

### 3. WHY DO PEOPLE FALL INTO THESE PRACTICES?

#### 3.1. By Ignorance & Deceit

*"...for your merchants were the great ones of the earth, and all nations were deceived by your sorcery. (Revelation 18:32)."*

*"They followed him because he had fooled them for a long time with his magic (Acts 8:11)."*

#### 3.2. By Avarice:

*"As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. (Acts 16:16)"*

#### 3.3. By Desperation:

*"When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. And when Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets. Then Saul said to his servants, "Seek out for me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her." And his servants said to him, "Behold,*

*there is a medium at En-dor." So Saul disguised himself and put on other garments and went, he and two men with him. And they came to the woman by night. (1 Samuel 28:5-8)."*

#### CONCLUSION:

**Q:** What does God's love do?

**A:** It frees men from the chains of witchcraft:

*"Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver (Acts 19:18-19)."*

**Q:** What does the Blood of Christ do?

**A:** It frees us so that we may prosper in everything:

*"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against your magic bands with which you hunt the souls like birds, and I will tear them from your arms, and I will let the souls whom you hunt go free, the souls like birds (Ezekiel 13:20)."*



**Q:** What does the presence of God do?

**A:** It frees us so that we may prosper in everything:

*"For there is no enchantment against Jacob, no divination against Israel; now it shall be said of Jacob and Israel, 'What has God wrought!'"*

Our God in Christ prevailed victoriously against all the powers and authorities that had taken captive humanity. Christ has also then defeated all powers of incantations and sorcery. Come to Christ and enjoy the freedom and life that is found in him alone.

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# ***“...The Israelites Stripped off Their Ornaments”***

THE APOSTOLIC VALUE OF A LIFESTYLE LIKE JESUS,  
FREE FROM JEWELRY

## LESSON OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION:

1. The Patriarchs ceased from using jewelry because of their ties to idolatry.
2. God commanded Israel to get rid of its jewelry because of its destructive, idolatrous influence.
3. During the time of the Judges, jewelry is used once again as the prime material for idolatry.
4. The prophets mention jewelry and makeup as having a connection with infidelity and idolatry.
5. Jesus' lifestyle, a radical example.

### CONCLUSION

#### Key Verse:

***“So the Israelites stripped off their ornaments at Mount Horeb.”***

***Exodus 33:6***

## INTRODUCTION

One of the most commonly used explanations about why Apostolic believers don't use jewelry is because they are vanities. But when we go to the Word of God, we find that, from Genesis to Revelation, there are additional reasons found, each carrying significant weight. One of these reasons against jewelry is that they are used as instruments of idolatry.

Let us see what God teaches us in His Word about jewelry and why our lifestyle, free from jewelry, is a radical commitment to “having no other gods before me.”

## **1. THE PATRIARCHS CEASED FROM USING JEWELRY BECAUSE OF THEIR TIES TO IDOLATRY** (*Genesis 33:1-5*)

**1.1.** In Genesis 33, we find the Patriarch Jacob preparing for his return to his homeland. For twenty years, Jacob has lived amongst the pagan customs of his family members. In verse 1, God orders him to



raise an altar to the True God in the same place where God had appeared to him when he was fleeing from Esau.

**1.2.** Jacob understands that this is not only a moment of return, but also a new beginning, a moment of conversion, repentance and purification. This is why Jacob declared to his family in verse 2 that they *“Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves and change your clothes.”*

**1.3.** Note that Jacob’s loved ones did not only turn in “foreign gods,” but also turned in “the rings in their ears (earrings or amulets).” Jacob and his family knew that the jewelry they wore were amulets (idolatrous objects that supposedly offered an idol’s protection), which is why they turned in both idols and jewelry. In archaeological remains of the ziggurats (idolatrous pyramids that inspired the Tower of Babel), thousands of pieces of jewelry belonging to the people of Ur (from whom the patriarch Abraham came out of) have been found,

and are believed to have been used exclusively for religious reasons.

**1.4.** To avoid temptation, Jacob takes advantage of this moment of his family's repentance, and as it says in Genesis 35:4, “buried [the earrings and idols] under the oak at Shechem.”

**1.5.** As consequence, the fear of the Lord went before them and they were able to travel without being attacked by cities in their wake.

## **2. GOD COMMANDED ISRAEL TO GET RID OF ITS BECAUSE OF ITS DESTRUCTIVE, IDOLATROUS INFLUENCE**

**2.1.** After nearly five centuries of living in Egypt, Jacob's family, which entered Egypt and its idolatrous jewelry, came out of the nation heavily influenced by Egypt's paganism.

**2.2.** Jehovah did great signs and wonders in order to deliver His people from Pharaoh's clutches. While Moses climbed Mount Sinai in order to receive the two tablets with the Ten



Commandments written by God's own finger on them (**Exodus 31:18**), the people despair, abandon their faith, and with the donation of their earrings (from both men and women) they demand the fabrication of a new god (**Genesis 32:1-7**). This was nothing new to the Hebrews, who were behaving in the same manner they had seen the Egyptians do for centuries. Bracelets, necklaces and rings, as any anthropologist knows, were used by the Egyptians as gifts to their gods to be given in permanent worship. Idolatrous jewelry was used in all social classes, and was made from gold, silver, bronze and even bones.

**2.3.** Aaron knew this, which was why he immediately asked for the people's rings to make them a golden calf. The Hebrews also understood this, which is why they gave their jewelry freely. In their pagan logic, since their jewelry consisted of amulets, it was normal to make an idol out of the jewelry.

**2.4.** Moses interceded for Israel, both on Sinai and after descending, before God. Jehovah responded to his pleas by saying he would not destroy them, but repeated to Moses that it was an angel that would go before them to the Promised Land. **Exodus 33:4** says, "When the people heard these distressing words,

they began to mourn and no one put on any ornaments."

**2.5.** Israel took off their jewelry because the Lord had ordered this to Moses in **Exodus 33:5**. Our God, ever practical, gives a commandment of protection to His people. Exodus 33:6 says, "*So the Israelites stripped off their ornaments at Mount Horeb.*"

**2.6.** In **Exodus 34**, God immediately warns Moses of the great danger the people will face by being influenced by pagan cultures and essentially idolatrous cultures:

*"Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the*



*land where you are going, or they will be a snare among you. Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones and cut down their Asherah poles. Do not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land; for when they prostitute themselves to their gods and sacrifice to them, they will invite you and you will eat their sacrifices. And when you choose some of their daughters as wives for your sons and those daughters prostitute themselves to their gods, they will lead your sons to do the same."* – **Genesis 34:12-16**

### **3. DURING THE TIME OF THE JUDGES, JEWELRY IS USED ONCE AGAIN AS THE PRIME MATERIAL FOR IDOLATRY**

**3.1.** The historical period Israel spent under the reign of the Judges was a time of great Biblical ignorance. Joshua was a great and zealous leader, but he did not prepare a new leader to take his place. After Joshua died, **Judges 2:10 says** "another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel."

**3.2.** The first chapter of Judges explains that many of the tribes of Israel did not expel the pagans from their territories. As it had been prophesied, this became an influence of evil. The cycle of idolatry/judgment/repentance is described in **Judges 2:19**, "*when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their fathers.*"

**3.3.** Gideon is a sad example of how jewelry was the prime material for idolatry. Israel sins through idolatry and God punishes them through Midianite oppression. When they cried out, Jehovah called Gideon and brings miraculous liberation to His people. The Hebrews ask Gideon to be their king, but he declines. Instead, Gideon has an "innocent" petition:

*"I do have one request, that each of you give me an earring from your share of the plunder." (It was the custom of the Ishmaelites to wear gold earrings.) They answered, "We'll be glad to give them." So they spread out a garment, and each man threw a ring from his plunder onto it. The weight of the gold rings he asked*

*for came to seventeen hundred shekels, not counting the ornaments, the pendants and the purple garments worn by the kings of Midian or the chains that were on their camels' necks. Gideon made the gold into an ephod, which he placed in Ophrah, his town. All Israel prostituted themselves by worshiping it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and his family.” – Judges 8:23-27*

**3.4.** Gideon wanted to make something holy out of unclean material. He asked for idolatrous jewelry to make an ephod (a sacred apron used by priests to minister during a service). Instead, the pagan priests used the ephod for their services to



idols. All of Israel fell into this sin. This was the same pagan logic as before: if idolatrous jewelry was used, it should be used to honor idols.

#### **4. THE PROPHETS MENTION JEWELRY AND MAKEUP AS HAVING A CONNECTION WITH INFIDELITY AND IDOLATRY**

**4.1.** In *II Kings 9:30*, it is noted that Jezebel, the murderous and idolatrous queen “*painted her eyes*” to intimidate the judge Jehu.

**4.2.** In *Jeremiah 4:30*, the prophet warns Israel that although they are dressed in a worldly manner, God’s judgment will come: *What are you doing, O devastated one? Why dress yourself in scarlet and put on jewels of gold? Why shade your eyes with paint? You adorn yourself in vain. Your lovers despise you; they seek your life.”*

**4.3.** *Ezequiel 23:40* compares the kingdoms of Israel and Judah (for their idolatry) to two prostitutes, with the prophet giving detail of their attire: *“painted your eyes and put on your jewelry.”*

**4.4. *Isaiah 3:18-21*** denounces a materialist and worldly society. The prophet announces the coming of God's harsh punishment, but note how the amulets are numbered with earrings and rings: *"In that day the Lord will snatch away their ... crescent necklaces, the earrings and bracelets and veils, the headdresses and ankle chains and sashes, ... the signet rings and nose rings."*

**4.5. *Hosea 2:13***, in a prophetic message which announces judgment but also offers hope, the prophet denounces Israel's idolatry and clearly shows the connection between jewelry and idolatry:

*"I will punish her for the days she burned incense to the Baals; she decked herself with rings and jewelry, and went after her lovers, but me she forgot," declares the LORD."*

**4.6. *Revelation 17:4*** describes the Great Babylon, connecting jewelry and idolatry once again:

*"The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden*



*cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries."*

## **5. JESUS' LIFESTYLE, A RADICAL EXAMPLE**

**5.1.** There is no reference in the Bible in which the Lord's angels appear wearing necklaces, earrings, rings or jewelry. The messengers of God are perfect in their beauty and appearance, just as the Creator who made them.

**5.2.** God's prophets are also described as having a simple lifestyle. Although they were in the highest government positions, the prophets' ways

of dressing and living (filled with blessing and prosperity) were not pretentious. Jewelry, in their radical conviction, was not part of their wardrobe. They didn't need jewelry, as they did not have problems with low self esteem.

**5.3.** From the days of the Primitive Church and the Ancient Church, through the first three hundred years of the Church, not using jewelry was part of the conviction, values and discipline of the Church. Famous sermons were written by John Chrysostom against the jewelry and frivolity. To verify this, simply read all literature written from 100 to 300 A.D.

**5.4.** The most striking example is that of our Lord and Master, Jesus. Yes, He dressed in a tunic of the best quality ("seamless" according to **John 19:23**, which would remind us of the high priest's tunic in **Exodus 28:32**), Jesus did not use jewelry. As essence of what a child of God should be, Christ was sure of Himself, His value and His identity. Jesus teaches us to live adorned with love, holiness, character and purpose.

**5.5.** In contrast, think of the people who have dedicated themselves to witchcraft and astrology, they dress dripping with jewelry. Also think of drug traffickers (who seek idolatrous protection for their business), rappers, gangsters and pimps, who are an example of those who love to dress, covered in excessive jewelry.

**Is Jesus your example?**

## CONCLUSION

In a world full of cultures that idolize vanity, the superficial and materialism, God is calling us to remain radical. We are called to a lifestyle free of jewelry, free of worldly ostentation and free of all that has even the slightest connection to idolatry.

This is why the Apostolic Assembly believes and teaches as one of its values, in Clause VII of Article 74 of its Constitution that: ***"The members of the Apostolic Assembly should abstain from the use of rings, jewelry, facial paint, costly or immodest garments, keeping themselves from all forms of ostentation and vanity."***

# The Veil: *a Sign of Worship*

THE APOSTOLIC VALUE THAT REALIZES GOD'S ORDER

## LESSON OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

1. The Jewish women of Jesus' lifetime
2. I Corinthians 11, verse by verse

### CONCLUSION

### Key Verse:

***"Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone."***

***Ephesians 2:20***

## INTRODUCTION

Some Christian groups who practice similar values and disciplines to those of the Apostolic Assembly, but lost it in the onslaught of contemporary culture, attack our Church and its values. Some of these denominations have come to say that our values oppress theirs.

This is why we must be cautious with the lies that are being said about the Bible being an oppressive book, as it is actually the Book of freedom! Our values, taken from the Bible, are values of liberation and life. This is why God warns us in **II John 1:7**: *"Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist."*

## **1. THE JEWISH WOMEN OF JESUS' LIFETIME**

**1.1.** To go out on the street, Jewish women would:

**a)** Use two veils to cover their heads.

**b)** Use a tiara with ribbons hanging from it.

**c)** Use a mesh knotted with cords.

**1.2.** If a woman went out onto the street with her head uncovered, her punishment was divorce without pension.

**1.3.** The Primitive Church's values do not add a large burden to women; instead, taught the women to put aside the excess and extreme. These values taught the women to cover themselves as a sign of respect.

## **2. I CORINTHIANS 11, VERSE BY VERSE**

### **2.1. Imitate Christ**

*Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. – 11:1*

✓ As an introduction to the discussion of the veil, covering and the Lord's Supper, Paul exhorts the Corinthians to continually seek to be imitators of Christ. Paul tells them to follow Christ with all authority, as he also is following Christ.

### **2.2. The Lord's Supper and using a veil or covering**

*I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the teachings, just as I passed them on to you. – 11:2*

✓ Paul uses the word "teachings" in the same way he uses the word "doctrines." Paul's words of praise regarding the Corinthians' faithfulness remind us of what he said in **Acts 2:42**: "*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching.*" Paul is preoccupied with teaching this church what the fruit of their missionary work and basic values are.

✓ Paul consciously places his introductions on the veil or the women's covering in chapter 11 of his letter, along with his instructions regarding the Lord's Supper. If this had simply been a cultural aspect, as some critics

argue, Paul would have left this theme for the final part of his letter, where small themes are combined in few verses.

### **2.3. The order of God**

Now I want you to realize that

**a)** the head of every man is Christ,

**b)** and the head of the woman is man,

**c)** and the head of Christ is God.  
**11:3**

✓ Since Eden, God has placed man under His leadership and placed the leadership of the household with man. God's order sustains the beauty and perfection of all God has created.

✓ Through the order of the following systems, we can see the continuity of life and wellbeing in:

**a)** The solar system, with the harmonious movement of planets and moons, which gives our planet precise 24 hour days and 365-day years. That order is what allows the beauty and renovation of life,

which is given through the seasons (spring, summer, fall and winter).

**b)** The ecological systems, through an order given by God, maintain life in the jungles, forests, plains and deserts.

**c)** The social systems, inspired by the Ten Commandments, provide wellbeing when their order is respected. The country's democratic system is an excellent example of this. It exists for society's wellbeing.

**d)** The body's systems (circulatory, nervous, bone, digestive, respiratory, lymphatic, reproductive, and muscular), when functioning under the order God designed them for, maintain health and life.

### **2.4. The uncovered head of man is a sign of his place**

*Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. – 11:4*

✓ After writing this letter, Paul wrote to the church of Corinthians that: "We are not like Moses, who would put a

*veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away.” II Corinthians 3:13-14.*

These words, filled with prophetic value, continue to ring true. And if we take into account the profound Jewish formation Paul received, what he wrote in **II Corinthians 11:4** is a direct breakdown of the old Jewish religion (in which men until this day cover their faces), and is also an affirmation of God’s new order for man in Christ Jesus.

## **2.5. The woman’s covered head reaffirms God’s order**

*And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is just as though her head were shaved. 11:5*

✓ Paul emphasizes that this instruction is for all women (girls, single and married women and widows). This indicates to us the character norm of the verse.

✓ Paul makes a rough parallel on women who don’t cover their heads to pray or prophesy: it’s as if they had shaved their heads. In Paul’s days, to shave oneself was a mark of slavery and imprisonment.

✓ Paul compares the absence of any veil on the woman to God’s judgment against the Babylonian Empire, as written in Isaiah 47. In Isaiah 47:2, the Hebrew literally states “take of your veil.” In other words, the women who pray or prophesy with their heads uncovered do not show respect to God’s order in the human community.

👁️ **Attention:** Certain disobedient individuals want to confuse us by saying that long hair and the veil are the same thing. However, the Bible clearly shows us here that it is not sufficient to have long hair in order to pray or prophecy. It is necessary to have a veil or covering on top of the long hair.

## **2.6. Long hair and the veil are two distinct items.**

*If a woman does not cover her head, she should have her hair*

*cut off; and if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, she should cover her head. 11:6*

✓ The word used here, which we commonly use as “veil”, is **KATAKALUPTO**, which means “something that hangs and covers the hair.”

✓ That clarifies this rule: the veil or covering should be an appropriate size to cover the woman’s hair. Those “mini-veils” are a lack of respect to the Lord’s instruction.

✓ Once again, in verse six, we are reaffirmed that long hair and the veil are two distinct items. If they were the same, women would not be given the order to “cut their hair” when they don’t cover themselves.

✓ Paul utilizes two strong words to mention the options for those who choose not to obey:

**a)** Shearing oneself (cutting the hair in the same manner a sheep’s wool is cut). This goes to say that the hair cut isn’t professionally done or artistic; it is crude, which serves as a rebuke to rebellion.

**b)** Shaving oneself, which, as aforementioned, is a dishonor that is reserved for slaves or prisoners. By using this language, Paul is communicating the importance of showing respect to God’s order to the Christian women.

## **2.7. The reasoning behind the order God created for humans.**

A man ought not to cover his head,

**a)** *since he is the image and glory of God;*

**b)** *but the woman is the glory of man. – 11:7*

✓ When man uncovers his head to pray, he shows obedience and submission to God’s order. Since the time of Eden, man was created in the image and glory of God.

*For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. – 11:8-9*

✓ God decided that woman would be the man’s glory:

**a)** God created woman by forming her from man's rib

**b)** Woman was created because of man

## **2.8. The reason for the angelical cause.**

*For this reason, and because of the angels, the woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head. 11:10*

✓ The woman should use a veil or covering to show respect and worship to the order that God created in all.

✓ Because of the angels, women should show reverence and submission in the presence of God, just as the angels do in God's presence. The prophets taught on the angels' respect and subjection, citing **Isaiah 6:2**: "Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying." In other words, just as the angels cover their faces, women must cover their heads when directing themselves to God.

## **2.9. The woman's covering or veil is not a chauvinistic sign.**

*In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. 11:11*

✓ Once again, the humanistic and respectful character of the Gospel comes from the Bible. "In the Lord," there is no room for chauvinism (the sin of believing that men are worth more than women) or feminism (the sin of believing women are worth more than men). "In the Lord," man and woman together are God's perfect creation.

*For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God. 11:12*

✓ God's creation is made to be interdependent. Therefore, although the woman was created after man, men are born from women. There is no glory for either sexes, but instead, the glory is for God who created them both.

## 2.10. The “common sense” reason

*Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? – 11:13*

✓ Paul appeals to the common sense God has given all human beings. Although sin has varied this common ability, it is still there and has been restored in believers. Common sense allows us to perceive biological, cultural and spiritual differences which affirm the place God has given man and woman. Since woman is a more fragile vessel, as mentioned in Scripture, it is proper for a woman to cover herself when directing herself to her Lord.

## 2.11. The reasoning of nature

*Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him? – 11:14*

✓ Paul utilizes the argument of nature, which in God’s aesthetic design, a man with long hair appears effeminate. This leads to confusion (Out of confusion, many of us have called a boy a girl because of his long hair).

✓ Any serious anthropologist will recognize that men generally have short hair in most cultures, even without the Bible’s direction.

*But that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory. For long hair is given to her as a covering. – 11:15*

✓ Anthropology will also demonstrate that women in most cultures and societies have had long hair for thousands of years. It is a natural practice.

👁️ **Attention:** Individuals who disobey the use of veils or women’s coverings try to confuse us by using verse 15. They say that the veil is not necessary, as the women are already covered with their long hair. But Paul explains here, as a zealous Jew of the Law, that women do not need to have their heads covered 24 hours a day. Certain Jewish women, who had become mothers of Jewish high priests, prided themselves on never letting their hair be seen, even in their own homes!

👁️ As aforementioned, Jewish women could only go out of their homes with several veils. Paul explains that Christian women do not have to use veils 24 hours a day, as God has given them their long hair as their honor. For Christian women, the new rule in the Lord is that they only cover their hair when they pray or prophesy.

## **2.12. This rule is for believers all over the world.**

*If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God. – 11:16*

✓ Paul concludes his instructions on the veil and woman's covering by indicating that this is a principle to be obeyed, and not to be a topic of debate.

✓ At the beginning of his letter in **1 Corinthians 1:2**, Paul directs this letter in a universal manner: "to all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." This introduction was not uniquely for the Corinthians; it was for the universal church.

✓ God's church does not refute holy doctrine with a rebellious spirit; instead, the church receives the doctrine with love, obeying and teaching the apostles and prophets' doctrine.

## **CONCLUSION**

This is why the Apostolic Assembly believes and teaches this as one of its values on Clause IX, article 74 of its Constitution: ***"During a service, the man shall uncover his head and the woman shall cover her head with an appropriate veil."***

# Catching the little foxes

## THE VALUE OF WORK THAT PROTECTS AGAINST GAMING AND GAMBLING ADDICTIONS

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### INTRODUCTION

1. What do the little foxes destroy?
2. Vineyards free of foxes

#### CONCLUSION

#### Key Verse:

***“Catch for us the foxes,  
the little foxes that ruin  
the vineyards, our vine-  
yards that are in bloom.”***

***Songs 2:15***

### INTRODUCTION

*“When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. ‘Let’s not tear it,’ they said to one another. ‘Let’s decide by lot who will get it.’ This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said,*

*‘They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.’ So this is what the soldiers did.” – John 19:23-24*

One of the saddest scenes in human history is found in this passage. In the shadow of the cross, with Jesus dying upon it, soldiers gambled over His garment and sought to profit from Jesus’ death. Gambling, and the greed and corruption that link gambling to the Mafia, have invaded cities across America.



Gambling has existed since ancient times. Dice with numbers on four sides have been found in Egypt; they are believed to be from thousands of years before Christ. Gambling tables have been found in the Pompeii ruins. Tacitus, the Roman historian that lived around 100 A.D., noted that gambling was common among German tribes.

The United States has been influenced by gambling since the nation's foundation.

In 1612, the British governor coordinated a lottery to help the new colonization of Jamestown, Virginia. In 1776, the first Continental Congress sold lottery tickets to help with the construction of Washington, D.C.

One of the most solid Apostolic values is the love of honest work. This value protects us against the cultural plague of gambling addiction. In cities both large and small across the United States, there are illegal games controlled by the Mafia. The Mafia has bookies, strongmen and professional assassins that ensure that addicts pay their gambling debts. These clandestine games include rooster and dog fights, and even involve secret bets on weekly basketball, football and baseball games. In each congregation, there is someone who has fallen victim to these individuals. This is why our Apostolic values are countercultural.

How can the phrase "the Gospel is countercultural" be explained to the group?

## 1. WHAT DESTROYS THE SMALL FOXES?

*“People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.” – 1 Timothy 6:9-10*

**1.1.** Aaron Walsh had a bright and promising future ahead of him. He was a sergeant in the U.S. Army and a decorated Apache helicopter pilot. Walsh had an enchanting wife and two small

children. However, when Walsh joined the army, he developed an addiction to gambling on slot machines found at overseas military destinations. In 2005, Walsh went AWOL, and was found seated in front of a slot machine near a military base in Seoul, South Korea. Unable to stop his addiction, young Walsh lost his family and military career, and spent his days homeless on the streets of Las Vegas, Nevada. In 2006, Walsh returned to Maine with hopes of reuniting with his wife and children, but his gambling addiction continued. Sadly, on September 26, 2006, at the age of 34, Walsh went to Baxter State Park and killed himself with a gunshot to the head.



Have you heard stories of people who have lost it all to gambling? If so, write them down and share with the group. \_\_\_\_\_

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**1.2.** The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. It carries the stigma of noxious greed and sorrow. Gambling feeds off of greed (covetousness). This is why gambling is associated with all classes of sin and immorality. Let us see some of the curses caused by gambling:



**1.2.1.** Poverty, lack of family care, fights and divorce occur because a gambler is constantly wasting family funds instead of providing for needs.

**1.2.2.** Stress, threats, beatings, traumatic wounds and murder.

A large majority of gambling is clandestine, which primarily hooks our Hispanic community and youth. Whoever falls into this net begins to live in stress, as they are unable to pay their debts. Afterward, these individuals live under threat. Because of their mounting debt and losses, they suffer beatings by the Mafia’s professional strongmen. Finally, when gamblers are unable to pay their debts, some are left paralyzed or murdered as a satanic lesson for the rest of the addicts. This occurs every day.

**1.2.3.** Alcoholism and drug addiction. Because alcoholism and drug addiction almost always occurs around gambling, and because gamblers attempt to drown their emptiness and guilt when they lose, many gamblers become alcohol or drug addicts as well. The state of Nevada, which is well known for gambling, has the highest alcoholism rates in the nation.

**1.2.4.** Gamblers and gambling addicts become pathological liars, trying to hide their habit and their terrible debt from bosses, associates and loved ones.

**1.2.5.** Gamblers serve the Mafia's interests. Many gambling games, both legal and illegal, are empires of organized crime syndicates. Casinos and clandestine games both attract criminal figures. Many bets are made with money made from drug sales, robberies and extortion. Las Vegas has the highest crime rates.

**1.2.6.** Bribes to legislators and police officials are made in order to create laws favorable to gambling and to keep them from not enforcing laws against it.



**1.2.7.** Sexual immorality (prostitution) is constantly used as immoral entertainment provided in gambling casinos. According to reports, there are more than 10,000 active prostitutes in Las Vegas.

**1.2.8.** Suicide is seen as an escape route for compulsive gamblers with large amount of debt. Nevada has a suicide rate that is double the nation's average.

## **2. VINEYARD FREE FROM FOXES.**

*"Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards, our vineyards that are in bloom." – Songs 2:15*

**2.1.** The Bible contains many principles that clearly teach us to stay far away from the evils of gambling. These are the principles in which we base our Apostolic values and discipline.

**2.2.** God created honest work so that through Him, we can live with blessing and prosperity (**Ephesians 4:28; II Thessalonians 3:12; Proverbs 31**).

**2.3.** All our income belongs to God, not us (Psalms 24:1), and we should not waste what God has given us. Christians are God’s stewards and should utilize money according to God’s objectives. Christians are called to supply the needs of their families (**I Timothy 5:8**).



**2.4.** God uses money to achieve important objectives in our lives:

**2.4.1.** To supply basic needs (**Matthew 6:11; I Timothy 6:8**)

**2.4.2.** To build character (**Philippians 4:10-13**)

**2.4.3.** To give direction on providing or maintaining economic resources in life

**2.4.4.** To help others through me as intercessor (**Galatians 6:6-10**).

**Exercise:** Form teams, then write and comment with the four previous points as a starting point. How does God use money to achieve important objectives in our lives?

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**2.4.** Greed and covetousness are sins (I Timothy 6:9; Hebrews 13:5), and are the main motivations for gambling.

**2.5.** The Word warns against the disaster that waits for those who try to get rich quickly (**Proverbs 28:20-22**).

**2.6.** Riches that come easily also go easily (**Proverbs 13:11**).

**2.7.** Riches obtained in incorrect ways destroy families (**Proverbs 15:27**).

**2.8.** Gambling causes gambling addiction. This is an enslaving illness. Although you might not fall into this slavery, don't allow your example to cause others to become slaves to gambling. (**I Corinthians 8:9, 13**).



## CONCLUSION

Christians are administrators of possessions that really belong to God and has delegated into our care. We should use them for His glory (the principle of glorifying Jesus Christ in our Christian lives is fundamental. See **Isaiah 43:7**). We will give account for our stewardship. Compare this with what we have studied regarding gambling.

How does **1 Corinthians 8:9-13** apply to your life?

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## **Apostolic Assembly** of the Faith in Christ Jesus

In Doctrinal Principle twelve, the Apostolic Assembly teaches the Apostolic value that protects us against the evil of gambling addiction:

*"...for this reason you shall abstain from all types of all practices, diversions and filthiness of the flesh and spirit (**Leviticus 9:2; II Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians***

**5:26, 27; II Thessalonians 4:3-4; II Timothy 2:21; Hebrews 12:14; II Peter 1:16).**"

Also add to this our creed in Article 74, line VI:

*"You are warned on what is sin: ... unhealthy diversions ... and all that tends to pervert the sentiments of humility and spirituality."*

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# Honor, decency and propriety

THE VALUES THAT PROTECT US FROM MATERIALISTIC MANIPULATION  
WHICH REPRESENTS A CULTURE INFLUENCED BY THE EVIL ONE

## LESSON OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

1. A problem yesterday and today
2. Three principles: decorum, decency and propriety
3. The external balance
4. Interior beauty
5. What directs our wardrobe?

### CONCLUSION

### Key Verse:

***"I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God."***

***1 Timothy 2:9-10***

## INTRODUCTION

In the Old Testament, God indicated to the people of Israel that the wardrobe of men and women should be different. Both men and women use very distinct clothing, showing that the difference between genders is very important.

Although the Bible does not mention specifically what type of clothing or style should be worn by either gender, it gives principles in dress that should be followed. In 1 Timothy 2:9-10, we find three principles: decorum, modesty and propriety. The Apostle Paul, after instructing Timothy about the role of man in the congregation, instructs on the woman's dress or attire.

**Group reflection:** Why is the method of dress so important to Christians?

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**1. A PROBLEM YESTERDAY AND TODAY**

**1.1.** Apparently, certain women in Paul and Timothy’s time were not dressing in an appropriate manner. The women then, just like they do today, liked to dress in an attractive manner, which is completely natural. A problem arose when the desire of looking good becomes improper self-indulgence. Other women, perhaps from the higher classes, sought the ability to show their wealth and high class through their expensive dress and wardrobe. These practices entered the church through women who were accustomed to dress in a worldly manner before becoming believers.

The worship service is a time to worship God, not to show off style. Christian men and women do not live to flaunt their possessions and social-

economic level, but to be favorable in the eyes of God.

*“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.” – 1 Corinthians 6:19-20*

**1.2.** The aforementioned verse holds a very important point. If a person is overly preoccupied



with their exterior appearance, they will not take care of what is considered their apostolic value in what is most important: their interior life.

## **2. DECORUM, MODESTY AND PROPRIETY**

*“...women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety.” 1 Timothy 2:9*

Three principles are introduced regarding Christian woman's wardrobe:

**2.1. DECORUM:** An orderly and decent attire. The Christian woman should dress decently and with decorum. The interior virtues are expressed through the exterior, through conduct, purity and dress (**1 Timothy 2:9-10**). Decorum also describes the Son of God, who disciplined Himself in the same manner. Through Christ's moral conduct, He maintained the image of a pure, respectable and honorable person. The wardrobe of every Christian that professes modesty should not be like those of the world; it should be different. *“Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but*

*set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.” – 1 Timothy 4:12*

**2.2. MODESTY:** The quality or state of being proper (appropriate). What is socially accepted in conduct or word; fear to offend conventional rules of conduct, especially between genders. In our case, this refers to the Apostolic community norms. Modesty is related to reverence. Propriety is rooted in character. All Christians should dress with a sense of moderation, modesty and decency. Modesty is the value or principle that withholds a person from doing an indignant act. It is also the sense of shame after something improper has been done (**Romans 6:21**).

**2.3. PROPRIETY:** The constant internal control of “me.” Propriety is self control of all passions and desires. Propriety helps us separate ourselves from temptation and resist it. Propriety is also translated as “brakes”, strength to control appetites. Propriety is sobriety and continuance. Propriety helps us to have the strength to evade being dragged into dressing in an inappropriate manner by our desires.

*"Encourage the young men to be self-controlled."* – **Titus 2:6**

**2.4.** Men and women should take into account what effects their wardrobe has on others. We should not be instruments that provoke lascivious thoughts. It's true that although an individual may dress decently, people with dirty minds will see and think about filthiness. But it is undeniable that clothing designers' main goals include making people look sensual and provocative. Apostolic believers have more powerful values: to think about and influence others to think upon that which is good (**Philippians 4:8**).



Why does the Bible strongly focus on the believers' wardrobe?

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### **3. THE EXTERNAL BALANCE**

*"...Not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes."* – **1 Timothy 2:9**

**3.1.** The Christian woman's hairstyle should not be scandalous

or ostentatious. Certain women of Apostle Paul's time were given to extreme use of garments. For example, they would weave golden and pearl adornments in their hairstyles and would dress in costly dresses to call attention to themselves and flaunt their

social status, which Paul ordered should not be practiced.

**3.2.** The Apostle did not want believers to be trapped by ostentation. The Church's goal is to be

distinguished with modesty and balance. A person who places too much emphasis on the exterior decoration of their body shows that the individual is insecure.

How does the way we dress reflect our character?

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#### **4. INTERIOR BEAUTY**

*"...But with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God." – 1 Timothy 2:10*

**4.1.** In the following comparison, Paul exhorts women to not be so preoccupied with their physical appearance alone, as we have already mentioned, but to also be dressed in "good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God". God calls Christian women to influence our materialistic and self indulgent culture with their new example. Apostolic believers are equipped by the Holy Spirit to illuminate with their words of hope, their honorable dress and holy and different conduct. The years of trusting in

bedazzling jewelry, heavy make-up and provocative clothes have stayed behind. The Apostolic principles recover the original image of God: woman, valued for being created by God, and not a sex object.



**4.2.** The clothes we wear reflects our character and attitude towards the Word of God and the Church. It has to do with the heart.

## **5. WHAT DIRECTS THE WAY WE DRESS?**

The Bible is the example. Our conduct is not determined by our sentiments, what we think or what is popular; it is determined by the Word of God.

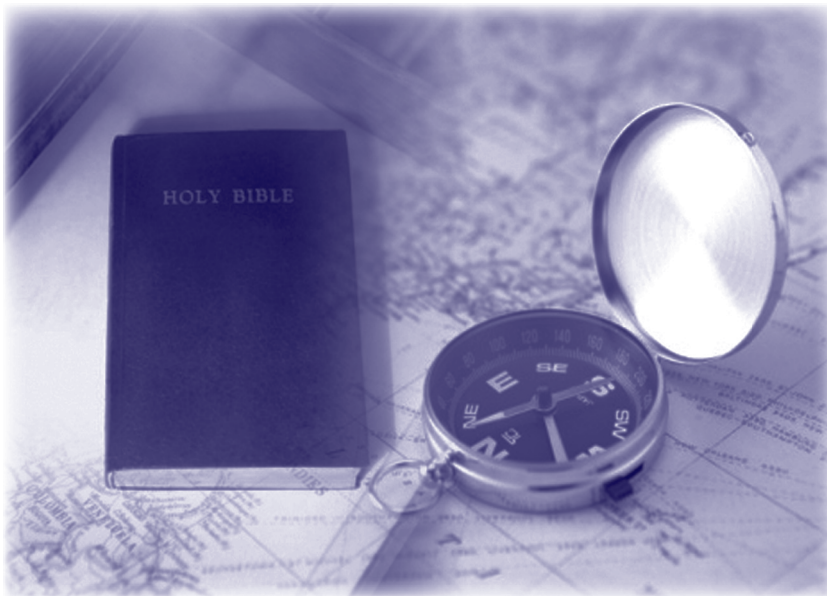
✓ *"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts*

*than your thoughts."* – **Isaiah 55:9**

✓ *"... My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day."* – **Acts 23:1**

✓ *"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ."* – **Colossians 2:8**

✓ *"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it."* – **Matthew 7:13**



Our direction comes from the Word of God: "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." – **Matthew 5:14-16**

**Apostle Peter also teaches us:**

*"Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands."* – **1 Peter 3:3-5**

How would the dress of both men and women be described, based on these three principles?

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## CONCLUSION

Our dress reflects our character, identity and attitude towards the Word of God and the Church. It has to do with the heart.

*"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is*

*your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."* – **Romans 12:1-2**

This is why we believe as stated in our Constitution in

## **Apostolic Assembly** of the Faith in Christ Jesus

Article 74, clause VII: *"Members of the Apostolic Assembly should abstain from the use of rings, jewelry, facial paint, expensive or immodest dress and beware of all forms of ostentation and vanity."*

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# *Dangerous Sounds and Movements*

## THE APOSTOLIC VALUE OF MUSIC CENTERED ON CHRIST

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Music's purpose
2. Music's style
3. Music's misuse
4. The song of fools
5. Bad rhythm which seems good
6. God's Rhythm

#### CONCLUSION

#### Key Verse:

***“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”***

***Philippians 4:8***

### INTRODUCTION

Swing music from the 1920s, jazz from the '40s and rock from the '50s raised rhythm above melody and harmony. There is evidence proving that as a result of this, the United States is comprised of many neurotics. Rock from the '60s was the result of a progression of ungodly music. In fact, the term “rock and roll” is a phrase with a sexual double meaning, which is taken from a song by Roy Brown. Furthermore, this genre marked a transition in public radio that allowed for the use of double meaning phrases for the first time. Sadly, “rock and roll” is a deliberate step from the Gospel music genre, which was used to shake sinners with their spiritual message, to another genre



with the goal of shaking individuals with a rhythm that has a message of dancing, sex and the music's sound.

In truth, many believe that there is nothing wrong with rock. This is due to the fact that music in the 21st Century is so bad; rock seems "good" by comparison. However, we should examine all genres, according to God's standards.

The music and art of a certain culture manifests its false gods. This idolatry, empty of values, is exemplified in the

explosion of posthumous acts and accompanying paraphernalia that occurred around the world followed Michael Jackson's death. Music in the United States and the rest of the world reflects the deterioration of the world's culture.

## **1. MUSIC'S PURPOSE**

**1.1.** Is music uniquely designed for worship, or did God also create music for our entertainment? King David exclusively used music to worship God (***Psalms 4:1; 6:1; 54:1; 55:1; 61:1; 67:1; 76:1***). When King Saul was tormented by evil spirits, he would call David to play calming psalms on his harp (***1 Samuel 16:14-23***). The Israelites also used musical instruments to warn of danger (***Nehemiah 4:20***) and to surprise enemies (***Judges 7:16-22***).

**1.2.** In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul instructs Christians to encourage one another with "... psalms, hymns and spiritual songs..." (***Ephesians 5:19***). In all lights, music's principle purpose is to worship God.

## 2. MUSIC'S STYLE

The issue of musical styles is the topic of debate among Christians. There are those who rigidly demand that certain instruments should not be used. There

are Christians who want to only sing "hymns of the faith." There are Christians that want more rhythm and contemporary music. Others assure that they are able to worship better in a "rock concert" atmosphere.

Team reflection: Biblical balance is key. How can the Bible's light be integrated into the different cultures of our Church? How is balance achieved?

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## 3. MUSIC'S MISUSE

**3.1.** In His Word, God declares that Lucifer was originally created as the angel of worship (**Ezekiel 28:13**). When Lucifer fell, his music fell along with him, and since then, he has been the inspiration of perverse music on earth (**Isaiah 14:11**).

**3.2.** When Man sinned, his life's priorities were upset. Man was created to live according to the Spirit, choosing with his heart to obey God and subject





his body to the Creator's principles. Man, in his sinful and animalistic nature, raised his body to his first priority, with his body's thoughts and will enslaved to sensual and carnal desire. As a result, Man's spiritual sense was corrupted into idolatry and slavery to the enemy. Moses was a stunned witness that saw in how a few weeks, Israel fell into idolatry, and could even make out idolatrous songs from a distance.

*"Moses replied: ' It is not the sound of victory, it is not the sound of defeat; it is the sound of singing that I hear.'"* – **Exodus 32:18**

## **4. THE SONG OF FOOLS**

**4.1.** Today, worldly music mostly glorifies immorality, insolence, nonsense and violence. With every song, purity and integrity are mocked. How can a Christian deliberately listen to a song that glorifies what opposes God? The Word illuminates: *"It is better to heed a wise man's rebuke than to listen to the song of fools."* – **Ecclesiastes 7:5**

**4.2.** **Philippians 4:8** is an excellent guide to what we should search for in the lyrics and rhythm of today's music: *"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."*

These are values that protect God's blessing in our lives. These principles should be what we exclusively let into our hearts through the music and lyrics we listen to.

***Comment amongst yourselves about how our values and heart are affected by the rhythm and lyrics of worldly music.***

## **5. BAD RHYTHM THAT SEEMS GOOD**

### **5.1. DIVE BARS**

In recent years, clubs have been carelessly called “dive bars” by a large population of the world. Originally, the term “dive bars” signified “a place of bad reputation and little respect”. This word is used sarcastically and with shameless pride to describe clubs by all social classes. It is common knowledge that these places, regardless to what country they are in:

**a)** Feature music that incites sexual depravity, glorify homosexuality, lesbianism, rebellion, drug trafficking and violence

**b)** Sell all types and qualities of alcoholic beverages. It is after going to a club that many young people are killed in automobile collisions or literally drown in alcohol

**c)** Serve as clandestine distribution points for all types of drugs

**d)** Are places to “hook up,” or find someone with whom to fornicate with.

**e)** Have frequent violence and murders, regardless if hip-hop or “narco-corridos” are featured there.

The Bible teaches that lasciviousness and drunkenness can condemn the soul (***Galatians 5:19-21***). Rock, disco, hip-hop and other genres of music cause psychological changes in a person. Police officials have documented that after drinking strong alcoholic beverages and listening to 20 minutes of hip-hop, adolescents are more likely to be filled with hatred and are altered to the point of murder. The heavy rhythm agitates emo-





tions, especially the sexual impulse. The affect of heavy rock is to augment tension, disorientation, and the loss of self control.

## **5.2. THE “FROG EFFECT”**

If a live frog is tossed into a pot of boiling water, the frog, in an attempt to save itself from the heat of the boiling water, will jump from the water in less than hundredths of a second. But if the same frog is put in cold water and the pot is put on the stove for the water to boil, the frog will become acclimated to the water’s temperature until it cooks. What has happened? The frog does not detect those small, gradual changes, per-

ceiving that the water was lukewarm until its death. “Acclimating” to the world, or the “little leaven” is what has caused the spiritual destruction of many believers.

## **6. GOD’S RHYTHM**

**6.1.** Do not love the world *“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” – 1 John 2:15; James 1:27; 4:4*

**6.2.** Do not conform to the world *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind ...” – Romans 12:2*

**6.3.** Do not have participation *“Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.” – Ephesians 5:11*

Not only should we not participate in deeds of darkness, but we should also rebuke them, expressing disapproval, condemning them, exposing and refuting them. God calls us to be militants against sin.

**6.4.** Abstain from all evil *"Avoid every kind of evil."* – **I Thessalonians 5:22; I Peter 2:11** "Avoid", or abstain, signifies "to maintain a distance or avoidance."

**6.5.** Flee all evil *"Flee the evil desires of youth..."* – **II Timothy 2:22; I Timothy 6:11; I Corinthians 6:18** We need to flee from sin, not waiting for it around the corner or giving it our address.

**6.6.** Cast off the old man *"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ... and to*

*put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."* – **Ephesians 4:22, 24**

**6.7.** Kill the flesh *"Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry."* – **Colossians 3:5**

**6.8.** Renounce uncleanness and worldly desires *"It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age."* – **Titus 2:12**

Read **Daniel 3:10-12** and give an explanation on what a Christian character is.

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## CONCLUSION:

This is why the Apostolic Assembly has the **Doctrinal Principle 12** as values or principles that protect our blessings.

*“... abstain from all types of practices, diversions and uncleanness of the flesh and spirit” (Leviticus 19:2; II Corinthians 7:1; Ephe-*

*sians 5:26, 27; I Thessalonians 4:3, 4; II Timothy 2:21; Hebrews 12:14; I Peter 1:16).*

As our Constitution says in **Article 74, line VI:**

*“Be advised what sin is... unhealthy diversions... and all that tends to pervert the sentiments of humility and spirituality.”*

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# Poison to the Home

## THE APOSTOLIC VALUE OF BEING RADICAL IN ORDER TO PROTECT OUR FAMILIES

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Giving our children venom
2. The reach and influence television and the Internet have on adults
3. How families are affected

#### CONCLUSION

#### Key Verse:

***“Turn my eyes away  
from worthless things.”***

***Psalm 119:13***

***“I will set before my eyes  
no vile thing.”***

***Psalm 101:3***

### INTRODUCTION

What are the true effects and influence of the images we see from Pandora’s Box (television and the Internet)? What affects do they have on the character, behavior and attitude of each person?

According to Nielsen Media Research, from the ages of two to 11, a typical child will see an average of 1,197 minutes of television per week. These children only have approximately 38 minutes a week (averaging less than six minutes daily) of quality conversation with their parents.

An adolescent normally watches 1,500 hours of television annually, while in the same lapse of time, only goes to school for an average of 900 hours, according to an exhaustive analysis by specialist Benjamin Barber.

By the time an individual is 18 years old, he or she has seen about 200,000 acts of violence on TV. If we add to this the economic problems, drug addiction and gang problems being faced today, the picture presented about the influences and formation of our children is indeed bleak.

## **1. GIVING OUR CHILDREN VENOM**

**1.1.** Many Christians do not pay attention or give importance to the destructive influence television has on the personality and character of our children. Our children's models and idols are

the same models for millions of children around the world who are feeding off of their violent, sexual, abusive and deadly images. The Word of God says: *"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it (**Proverbs 22:6**)."*

All that our children receive from us through our mediums of communication and educations train their paths. In which path are we instructing our children?

**1.2.** Jesus tells us: *"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these (**Matthew 19:14**)."*



When our children grow up, they may be hindered from reaching the Kingdom of God by being bound by false values, which have penetrated their minds through television, the Internet and video games. Let us analyze the following expert commentary:

*"The science of cognitive and physical development of children tends to show that the television programs created specifically for children does not have a positive*

*effect on psychomotor and affective development. On the contrary, available studies emphasize the risk linked to the consumption of television images to the development of thought and imagination, the integration of emotions and their psychomotor development. To develop his physical, psychomotor and cognitive abilities, the child must actively use their senses and rely on the relationship with an adult."*



**1.3.** The spiritual threat of television, combined with its psychological power, is what makes it so bad. Let us see the results of analysis from "What television does to children," published by Newsweek Magazine:

✓ After parents, television has the second most important influence on a child's development, attitude, values and behavior. By the time an adolescent enters ninth grade, he has seen approximately 350,000 commercial announcements on television.

✓ Repeatedly watching violence tends to produce aggressive be-

havior. It also augments the behavioral tolerance children have of others.

✓ A study sponsored by ABC found that out of 100 juvenile delinquents, 22 of them confessed to be copying criminal conduct they had seen on television.

✓ Television creates paranoia and generates an exaggerated fear of violence in the lives of viewers.

✓ Television displaces many normal social interactions between parents and children

[Note: It also has the same effect between spouses and friends].

✓ Television alters childhood development. It causes children to mature prematurely in certain areas, while robbing them of their joy in normal childhood and youthful experiences, causing them to become seemingly boring.

✓ Addiction to television slows the creative imagination. This causes a lack of spontaneous or imaginative play.

✓ Television reduces children and adults from active participants to mere spectators. It separates them from direct partici-

pation of real life, and produces an evasion from reality.

✓ Television creates a low tolerance for learning frustrations. It shortens the attention span, so that children need incentives in order to learn.

✓ Today, television is the principle socializing agent. This means that television forms pathological or harmful ideas about how the world is and what roles people should have in life. Within the “unreal society” of television, it’s normal to lie, have sex before marriage, be unfaithful to one’s spouse, and abandon one’s responsibility as parents.



Group discussion: Is it convenient to have a family reunion and discuss the dangers of television? How can we explain the dangers of television and Internet addiction to our families? \_\_\_\_\_

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## 2. THE REACH AND INFLUENCE TELEVISION AND THE INTERNET HAVE ON ADULTS

“For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.” – **Matthew 15:19**

**2.1.** We live in a society that is growing more violent with each passing day. There are many factors that cause this type of conduct, and what we feed our mind has a large role in this.

Television images and scenes which are broadcast daily, though they may not be approved by those who watch them, are contaminating the viewer’s mind and heart. Many excuse themselves by saying, “I’m strong and this isn’t going to affect me. It’s just a distraction.”

However, the thousands of perverse images captured every second, accumulate in our minds, making it difficult and nearly impossible to erase them from our subconscious. All that has been sown into our hearts and minds have repercussions (**Proverbs 23:7**).

**2.2.** What is the result of television and Internet addiction?

- ✓ It undermines the basic resistance to sin in a Christian’s life
- ✓ The mind is constantly tempted and ready to sin
- ✓ After watching sin repeated over and over, the mind gradually arrives to the conclusion that sin isn’t so bad after all



✓ Television viewers and Internet users subconsciously assume that society in general is similar to what they have seen on the screen and that the entire world lives according to what they view

✓ It creates a compromised and permissive attitude

✓ It is well known by psychologists that television is a type of evasion

✓ The subconscious mind identifies with the actors and plays out their roles as a way to escape the boredom of everyday life

✓ Simply put, a person's mind is being contaminated by participating in the types of scenes shown on television.

In summary, television and the Internet have a constant flow of temptation and contamination for the heart and mind.

*"Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.*

*Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul" **Proverbs 8:33-36***

### **3. HOW FAMILIES ARE AFFECTED**

**3.1.** The greatest danger television produces is the alteration of family life. The modern Pandora's Box has come to be an intrusion that profoundly harms the forms and habits of communication within a family. In a study done in the United States, children between the ages of four and six were asked, "Who do you love more, your father or television?" The answer, which is profoundly

disturbing, was that 44% of the children preferred television to their fathers.

The children's reasoning was convincing: "The television is always at home, while Dad is never home." "My television is always there when I want it, while my parents are always busy."

**3.2.** Television used during meal times. In the generations of our fathers and grandfathers, family problems were always discussed during dinnertime.

"We'll discuss this at dinner" was a simple phrase, but was extraordinarily valuable. Mealtimes offered a natural forum where parents and children, husbands and wives, could talk with freedom about their daily problems.

What quality time do we dedicate to our families now?

## CONCLUSION

### ***Television and Internet addiction destroys the Christian life***

Violence and dirty sex are the two most common themes found on these mediums. Provocative clothing, theft, adultery, fornication, atrocities, lies, hatred, drinking, smoking and murder are just a few of the evils constantly exhibited.



Comment: What are the rules that we should set about television or Internet use at home?

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This list sounds very familiar to the list in **Matthew 15:19-20**, which has the list of that which contaminates man. Certainly, the Scriptures *"I will set before my eyes no vile thing"* and *"Turn my eyes away from worthless things"* are applicable here.

How can we say we hate evil if we nearly have an altar to television in our homes?

Television addiction is one of the largest wastes of times. In summary, God is calling a new

generation of Apostolics to renounce the use of television.

Let us take the first step of dramatically limiting television's use in our homes. Then, let us periodically remove it from our homes and put it into the garage. Finally, let us take the final step and eliminate it from our lives.

This is why the Apostolic Assembly teaches that we must abstain from ***"... All that tends to pervert the sentiments of humility and spirituality."***

# Honesty Does Pay

## LESSON OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

1. Honesty is the foundation of love
2. Honesty distinguishes true Christians
3. Honesty is the best policy
4. Dishonesty kills: Ananias and Sapphira

### CONCLUSION

### Key Verse:

***I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord.***

***1 Corinthians 7:35***

## INTRODUCTION

A group of Argentinians showered a taxi driver with gifts after he honestly returned to them an important sum of money that had been forgotten in his vehicle. Approximately 55,000 people went to the Web site, [www.devolvelelaguitaaltaxista.com](http://www.devolvelelaguitaaltaxista.com), created especially for the occasion. On May 21, 2009, the following objective was fulfilled: Santiago Gori, 49, was offered the exact amount of money that he returned, 130,000 pesos' (about 35,000 dollars) worth of gifts.

"We knew the idea could motivate others, because it allowed people to express what they felt," stated Nicolas Diaco, 24, the publicist who came up with the idea with his colleague, Ezequiel De Luca, 22. "But we never thought something this large would happen!"

"While there are more like us, this country will keep moving forward," wrote a couple who had offered Gori a computer screen.

In La Plata, a city situated about 60 kilometers southeast of Buenos Aires, Gori worked until 9 p.m. every night, as if this had all never occurred.

Gori remembers the April day that all this transpired as if it were yesterday. A passenger of his taxi had just left his vehicle, leaving behind a satchel. Gori opened it and saw the wads of money. Gori needed to return that money, but admitted that he remembered a loan that he had asked for to buy his car. Still, Gori did not doubt that he had to find the money's owner, whom he found in an eatery.

Honesty is a human quality that consists in behavior and expressions of coherency and sincerity, while being in accord with the values of truth and righteousness. In its most sincere form, honesty can be understood as simple respect to truth in relation with the world, acts and individuals.

Using your own words, define honesty.

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## **1. HONESTY IS THE FOUNDATION OF LOVE**

**1.1.** When a man and women commit their love to one another, they should be honest according to their promises. If all were sincere in their vows before God, there would not be broken families.

**1.2.** Many marriage problems would be avoided if relationships were based on honesty and virtue. One of the reasons why marriages fail is because one or both of the partners was not honest. This is why the Word orders, “*Husbands, love your wives (Ephesians 5:25)*” and “*women to love their husbands (Titus 2:4)*.” Love that unites should last “until death do us part.”

**1.3.** When one becomes a Christian, it is a lifelong decision. There should be no thoughts of abandoning the Lord. This is how two souls should be united in the holy unity of marriage: it is a lifelong decision. Honesty, sincerity, love, virtue and honor are the bonds that unite the pair. What a great difference there would be if all marriages were built on honesty!

## **2. HONESTY DISTINGUISHES TRUE CHRISTIANS**

**2.1.** When the Church elected deacons to administrate the daily care for the widows, the first requisite was that they be “of honest report (**Acts 6:3**).” Paul said that Christians



Write five blessings honesty gives a marriage.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



should “Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody (**Romans 12:17**).”

**2.2.** This cultivates thought on things that are honest. “For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men.”  
– **II Corinthians 8:21**

Paul prayed so that the people of good would do what is good: “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, what-

ever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” – **Philippians 4:8**

When we think honestly, we have peace and confidence. Although people differ in thought about important things, there is no reason for being dishonest in one’s thought or actions towards others. How different it would be if the people of God were honest in all things before God and man!

**2.3.** Those that preach and teach the Word of God should be completely honest with God and those whom they teach. An honest person will teach his students the truth, although it may sound harsh and make others uncomfortable.

**2.4.** There are many factors that give place to dishonesty. Children see dishonesty in their parents and this trains them to be dishonest. Egoism and greed contribute to dishonesty also. However, God demands that we be honest with everyone.

### 3. HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY

**3.1.** “Honesty is the best policy” is an old saying. Being dishonest does not create positivity in people’s lives. **Ephesians 4:15** demonstrates the personal growth that is connected with telling the truth with love. It is impossible to focus solely on love and omit the truth.

**3.2.** It is never correct to be dishonest.

*“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” – **Philippians 4:8***

Name five Biblical characters that are known for their honesty.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. DISHONESTY KILLS: ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA

Ananias and Sapphira are two examples of dishonesty. In **Acts 5:1-11**, it is explained that they owned a certain property. They sold this property and gave part of the money to help the needy. Because of their hunger for man’s praise and a heart greedy for money, Ananias and Sapphira lied about keeping a portion of the money, even though it would have been perfectly fine to only give a portion of the money. However, they wanted to pretend they had given it all, so they lied to both God and Peter. When they did so, both fell dead because of their dishonesty.



What problems can come from not living an honest life?

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## CONCLUSION

Honesty is a principle that serves as an umbrella: it protects all that stay within its parameters. Honesty is a virtue that comes from God's character and nature.

Honesty does not lie: *"Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor..."* – **Ephesians 4:25**

Honesty is not deceptive: *"Do not be deceived: ... slanderers nor*

*swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God."* – **I Corinthians 6:9-10**

Honesty does not steal: Those who have been born again are called "not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted." – **Titus 2:10**

This is why the Apostolic Assembly teaches that:

***"Every person that pertains to the Apostolic Assembly should live a life of holiness and honesty."*** – **The Apostolic Assembly Constitution, Article 74**

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# Sow a Habit and Reap Character

THE APOSTOLIC VALUE OF THE WORD OF GOD'S  
DAILY LECTURE AND GOOD READING

## LESSON OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

1. The blessings of Biblical reading
2. What are the benefits of good reading?
3. The dangers of bad reading
4. How do we carry out Christian reading?

### CONCLUSION

## Key Verse:

***"Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching."***

***1 Timothy 4:13***

***Please read these words from Pastor David J. Meyer as an introduction to this lesson:***

I am writing this urgent message because I was once a witch. I lived by the stars as an astrologer and numerologist casting horoscopes and spells. I lived in the mysterious and shadowy realm of the occult. By means of spells and magic, I was able to invoke the powers of the "controlling unknown" and fly upon the night winds transcending the astral plane. Halloween was my favorite time of the year and I was intrigued and absorbed in the realm of Wiccan witchcraft. All of this was happening in the decade of the 1960's when witchcraft was just starting to come out of the broom closet.

It was during that decade of the 1960's, in the year 1966, that a woman named J.K. Rowling was born. This is the woman who has

captivated the world in this year of 2000 with four books known as the "Harry Potter Series." These books are orientational and instructional manuals of witchcraft woven into the format of entertainment. These four books by J.K. Rowling teach witchcraft! I know this because I was once very much a part of that world.

Witchcraft was very different in the 1960's. There were a lot fewer witches, and the craft was far more secretive. At the end of that spiritually troubled decade, I was miraculously saved by the power of Jesus Christ and His

saving blood. I was also delivered from every evil spirit that lived in me and was set free. However, as I began to attend fundamental Christian churches, I realized that even there witchcraft had left its mark. Pagan holidays were celebrated as "Christian holidays."

As time went on, I watched the so-called "Christian" churches compromising and unifying. I also watched with amazement as teachings from Eastern religions and "New Age" doctrine began to captivate congregations. It was a satanic set-up, and I saw it coming. Illuminati conspirators were bringing forth a one-world religion with a cleverly concealed element of occultism interwoven in its teachings.

In order to succeed in bringing witchcraft to the world and thus complete satanic control, an entire generation would have to be induced and taught to think like witches, talk like witches, dress like witches, and act like witches. The occult songs of the 1960's launched the Lucifer project of capturing the minds of an entire generation.



In the song "Sound Of Silence" by Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel, we were told of seeds that were left while an entire generation was sleeping, and that the "vision that was planted in my brain still remains."

Now it is the year 2000. All of the foundations for occultism and witchcraft are in place. The Illuminists have to move quickly, because time is running out.

It was the Communist revolutionary Lenin who said, "Give me one generation of youth, and I will transform the entire world." Now an entire generation of youth has been given to J.K. Rowling and her four books on witchcraft, known as the Harry Potter Series.

As a former witch, I can speak with authority when I say that I have examined the works of Rowling and that the Harry Potter books are training manuals for the occult. Untold millions of young people are being taught to think, speak, dress and act like witches by filling their heads with the contents of these books. Children are obsessed with the Harry Potter



books that they have left television and video games to read these witchcraft manuals.

The first book of the series, entitled "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone", finds the orphan, Harry Potter, embarking into a new realm when he is taken to "Hogwart's School of Witchcraft and Wizardry." At this occult school, Harry Potter learns how to obtain and use witchcraft equipment. Harry also learns a new vocabulary, including words such as "Azkaban," "Circe," "Draco," "Erised," "Hermes," and "Slytherin;" all of

which are names of real devils or demons. These are not characters of fiction!

How serious is this? By reading these materials, many millions of young people are learning how to work with demon spirits. They are getting to know them by name. Vast numbers of children professing to be Christians are also filling their hearts and minds, while willingly ignorant parents look the other way.

Dear Apostolic readers, God is calling a new, radical, jealous and countercultural generation to carry His cross! We are at risk of becoming a church who wants to be more like the world rather than to be like its Lord.

One of the fundamentals which protect the believers' spiritual lives is their love and daily reading of the Word of God. The first generations learned how to read thanks to their great desire to read these sacred Scriptures. The love of God took them out of illiteracy. Now God wants to take the new Apostolic generation out of spiritual illiteracy.

## **1. THE BLESSINGS OF BIBLICAL READING**

### **1.1. We shall be pastored by God.**

All reading done in prayer will be of special blessing, but the Word of God shall be a special light in our daily walk.

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path."* –  
**Psalm 119:105**

Although we are cleansed in Christ, our walk through this earth "dirties our feet." Worldliness and all types of sin haunts us, therefore it is necessary that the Word of Christ dwell in us abundantly.



*"How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word." – **Psalm 119:9***

In all moments, when there is danger, sickness or tribulation, the Lord comes to our rescue through His Word.

*"Strengthen me according to your word." – **Psalm 119:28, 116***



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***Dear Apostolic readers, God is calling a new, radical, jealous and counter-cultural generation to carry His cross! We are at risk of becoming a church who wants to be more like the world rather than to be like its Lord.***

□ —

### **1.2. We know God.**

WE know that "faith comes from hearing the Word of God." We read and listen to the Word of God, as only this can make us wise regarding the faith in Christ Jesus. We remember what God has revealed in His Word, and it is the only way to know of Him and learn His will.

What happens when one has an abundance of God's Word in their life?

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### 1.3. We recognize ourselves.

By not reading and practicing the Word of God, one cannot know himself. He will continue making the same errors and sins. Only the Word of God can transform man. *"The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart..."*

**Jeremiah 17:9**



## 2. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF GOOD READING?

**1.1.** Reading routinely enriches our vocabulary, enhances memory and improves the attention span. Reading also improves communication. Reading helps us to relax and relieve tension.

**1.2.** Reading books has played an important role in forming the characters of great men throughout history, and will continue to do so in the future. Prevost, the French writer, said in one of his works, "the incidental finding of a good book and reading can change destiny."

**1.3.** Gordon Sabine, a professor of the Sciences of Communication at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, traveled from US city to US city with his wife Patricia (who was also a professor at the same university) for an

**REFLECTION:** In teams of three, write a commentary about the importance of knowing ourselves.

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entire year, interviewing 1,400 people of all social classes. He asked them, "What book have you read that has had a major impact on your life?"

The result of this research (which was financed by the Library of Congress) was the published book entitled: Books that made a difference. In this book, the transcription of approximately 200 of the best interviews, it becomes apparent that the printed word is far from being obsolete, as it tends to occupy an increasingly important place in our society.

Reading a book can progress professional careers, change systems and ways of life, help overcome obstacles and tragedies, and, above all else, contribute to the understanding of ourselves. In nearly every one of the interviews, there was a book that, in a determined situation, changed the life of an individual.

Out of the 165 books mentioned in this study, the Bible received the most number of votes, with a large gap between its immediate followers.

A fact mentioned by the authors as curious and notable is that none of those being interviewed mentioned a best seller book out on the market as having an impact on their lives. All the books that had an impact on lives come from the past and have had an impact on earlier generations.

### **3. THE DANGERS OF BAD READING**

*"The eye is the lamp of the body... if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness."* – **Matthew 6:22-23**

*"I will set before my eyes no vile thing."* – **Psalms 101:3**

Why did David put so much emphasis on not letting his eyes see malignant and vain things?

**3.1.** The reason for this is because the eye is a unique member of the body for various important aspects. Jesus tells us in **Matthew 6:22-23 and Luke 11:34** that the eye is the lamp of the body. If it is good (clear, entire, not blind), then the entire body is filled with light. But if it is bad (wicked, sick, blind)

then the entire body is filled with darkness. In other words, Jesus taught that the eye is the door to the heart and soul of man. It is the primary sensory organ that we use to receive information from the outside world. If our eye is constantly filled with perverse visions, then it will drastically affect our thoughts and actions.

**3.2.** Psychologists estimated that ninety percent of our thoughts are stimulated by what we see. Experiments have proven that the human mind retains approximately 65% of what is received simultaneously through both the eyes and ears, but only 15% of what is obtained through the ears.

**3.3.** It is well demonstrated that what a person does has a powerful influence on their thoughts. The thoughts of an individual determine who he is.

*"For as he thinks in his heart, so is he", -Proverbs 23:7*

The condition of the eyes determines the condition of the entire body. The body will participate and enjoy the same

things that its eyes participate in and enjoy. John recognized this when he included the desires of the eyes as one of the three important areas of worldliness and temptation (**1 John 2:16**).

### **3.4. Books and magazines.**

As destructive examples, we can denounce:

- a)** Novels that are based on adultery or love triangles of infidelity.
- b)** Novels that have graphic sexual content.
- c)** Books filled with vulgar words and atrocities.
- d)** Pornographic magazines.
- e)** Magazines filled with scandalous reports and intimate confessions.
- f)** Books that are presented as literary works but are actually books of witchcraft and occult sciences.
- g)** Tabloids.
- h)** Trash blogs, which are popular on the Internet.

We cannot enrich our minds and hearts with this type of material and at the same expect God to give us clean hearts. We should rid ourselves of this trash and destroy what we have in our homes, as it was done in Ephesus (**Acts 19:19**). If we read dirty things, we absorb images that are implanted in our hearts. Eventually, such things are converted into destruction.

After observing the dangers of destructive reading, how can we help our children obtain good reading?

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## **4. HOW DO WE CARRY OUT CHRISTIAN READING?**

### **4.1. Read prayerfully.**

Every type of reading should be done while asking for God's guidance. Just as a child opens a Biology textbook to study; a

youth takes a Physics textbook; or an adult studies theology, all should ask for guidance from the Teacher to discern what they read.

*"In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."* – **Proverbs 3:6**

### **4.2. Read with the heart and mind.**

Don't read for reading's sake. In Acts 8:30, Philip asked the eunuch: "Do you understand what you are reading? Candace's official read Scripture knowing that they were good and holy, but did not understand them. If this was the case, what good were they?

We must try by all means to have comprehension of what is being read. Our mind needs to understand. It is wise to begin with simple reading and, little by little, submerge ourselves into more complicated topics. All this helps to understand text. People with vision problems can obtain books with larger letters or books on tape. What is most important is to understand and learn.

When speaking of reading with the heart, this refers to our emotions. We should try to read with an open mind, without prejudices and clean hearts to follow the advice of *“Examining everything, retaining the good (I Thessalonians 5:21).”*

### **4.3. Read with perseverance**

Today, advanced technology occupies the space that was once dedicated to reading. Having the discipline or habit of reading helps the Christian life. Obtain the good habit of reading. Do not abandon books that are treasure chests of knowledge. Above all, do not fail to keep Biblical reading. *“If you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD*

*and find the knowledge of God.” – Proverbs 2:3-5*

## **CONCLUSION**

Reading regularly contributes to our vocabulary, enhances our attention and improves our memory. Reading also improves our abilities to communicate. Reading helps us to relax and meditate

- 1.** Let us take the step to take out all destructive literature from our homes.
- 2.** Seek a reading plan and read the whole Bible in a year.
- 3.** Involve the entire family in daily readings from the Word of God.
- 4.** Make it a habit to buy and read a good Christian book every month.

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# Your Friends will either help you get *into Heaven... or Hell*

THE APOSTOLIC VALUE OF CHOOSING OTHERS  
WHO LOVE GOD AS OUR FRIENDS

## LESSON OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

1. Great friendships in the Bible
2. What it means to be a friend
3. Friends that will make you weep

### CONCLUSION

## Key Verse:

***“Do not be misled: ‘Bad company corrupts good character.’”***

***1 Corinthians 15:33***

## A TESTIMONY ABOUT THE POWER OF FRIENDSHIP

One of our Apostolic pastors speaks of his time in San Bernardino County, in which he was a witness of the blessing a good friend can be in the lives of those who do not know the Lord.

For four days, the church that he was visiting was holding a marriage seminar. Although the original goal of the seminar was to help the church’s couples, the visiting pastor encouraged the brethren to invite their friends.

The second night, an Apostolic believer invited some of his neighbors, who were also his friends. The neighbor's wife agreed and accompanied them, but her husband, who was in a bad mood, had stormed out of the house before the brothers arrived. The Apostolic man, after dropping off his wife and neighbor's wife at the church, began searching for his friend, until he discovered he was in the park. The brother went for his friend, and dealt with him in a friendly manner, convincing him to go to the marriage conference.

After the second night of the conference, our Apostolic broth-

er heard his neighbor's shocking story: the man was tired of his life that was bound to vices and his wretched marriage life. When he had heard the brother's invitation, his heart was filled with sarcasm and incredulousness, and he left to the park with a shotgun in the trunk of his car. He had decided to take his own life. The tenacity of our Apostolic brother saved his life, marriage, and brought the man to know the best friend of all: Christ Jesus.

What a blessing it is to have friends! To have friends is a marvelous thing, as friendship is a gift from God. Friendship is a general gift; it is not found with only a few and not with others. God created man with the capacity of having friends. Just as God created human beings with the potential of being a father, mother, brother, father-in-law or cousin, God created human beings with the capacity of being a friend. Friendship is an indivisible part of our initial programming.

To have good friends is wonderful, as it is to have good work friends and sharing the rich and



stimulating life of living in Christ with fellow believers. But to have friends who are true believers, profound, loyal “friends of the heart,” is an invaluable treasure.

## **1. GREAT FRIENDSHIPS IN THE BIBLE**

*“After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return to his father’s house. And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.” – 1 Samuel 18:1-4*

**1.1.** The Bible has several cases of great friendships: David and Jonathan, Joshua and Caleb, Ruth and Noemi, Paul and Timothy, and Jesus and His disciples. From these relationships we can find lessons to be applied in our lives, as well as proverbs and teachings that can help us to become better friends.



**1.2.** David and Jonathan are an example of this type of deep friendship. It seemed greatly incredible that these two should have been friends. The Bible states that David was only a shepherd, while Jonathan was a prince. However, rank and class did not matter to these two. Besides both being humble, they had a mutual respect for each others’ faith and decided love of Israel. The two felt committed as friends, and shared what they had. For example, Jonathan gave David his mantle, a valuable possession to the king’s son, to show his loyalty (v. 4) and risked his life and reputation to save his friend (**1 Samuel 20:27-32**).

**1.3.** Many times we fall into the trap of “looking for friends to enrich our lives” without taking into account the example of our Great Friend, the Lord Jesus Christ. We should seek to “enrich the lives of our friends” or those that need us as friends.

**1.4.** In the lines bellow, describe the following: Are you a good friend? Are we good friends? In which manner have your friends received blessing by having a friendship with you?

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**2. WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A FRIEND**

**2.1.** Being a friend is to think of one's friends.

Just as we like when others treat us well and think well of us, we should try to occupy ourselves with similar thoughts and actions. *“A man that has friends must show himself friendly (Proverbs 18.24).”* **Hebrews 10:24** teaches us that we should “consider” others in order to stimulate love and good works. We rarely find ourselves with “dissolved friendships” if we do so. If we desire

this type of richness, we should be willing to work in these areas and think about how to bless others, while planning in which way we can have friends participate in the most important parts of our lives.

**2.2.** Being a friend means always being a friend.

*“A friend loves at all times.” – Proverbs 17:17*

Time can pass and circumstances change, but a true friend will stay a friend. *“Everyone is the friend of a man who*

*gives gifts,” says **Proverbs 19:6**, but in **14:20**, it says that “the poor man is shunned even by his neighbors.” This goes to show that it is easy to be friendly with someone who blesses us with their help, companionship or in another manner, but it is very difficult to be a friend with someone who doesn’t have much to offer, especially when they are constantly in need of their friends’ help. Notwithstanding, the Word of God tells us, “Do not forsake your friend and the friend of your father (**Proverbs 27:10**).”*



### **2.3. Being a friend means thinking of yourself.**

*“Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought.” – **Romans 12:3***

When one adequately thinks honestly about himself, then his friends – and all those who surround him – can benefit. What type of a friend are you? What are the strong areas in your life, so that others can be enriched in their relationships with you? What do you have to offer? As one works on their own life, and begins thinking

honestly about himself, truly attempting to become better, this individual will offer a better person to everyone else and be a better friend. Anything that will bring improvements to the person’s character, personality, habits, or behavior; anything that makes him grow, will be “available capital” for those who relate to him.

### **2.4. Being a friend means prioritizing truth, honesty and loyalty.**

*“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” – **Proverbs 27:17***



Just as iron is sharpened by another piece of iron, our character – our “countenance” is formed in the same manner when in contact with their friends. It is pleas-

ant to say things our friends like and that are pleasing to their ears. But this does not “sharpen the countenance of our friend,” as the Word says; instead, it is more likely to act as being “ties under their feet.” To sharpen a friend’s character is to speak the truth. This allows our friend to know that he has someone that loves him to the point of not hiding the truth and showing what’s in their heart, even when the truth can be painful. It isn’t that the individual is denouncing his friend, but instead confronting them with the truth. Both individuals deserve the loyalty, and should understand that loyalty is not the same as being complacent. Being loyal means maintaining integrity within friends, constantly seeking what is best for them.

Write four ways in which you have helped friends by telling them the truth.

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### 3. FRIENDS THAT WILL MAKE YOU WEEP

The Bible does not only warn us against associating with mockers and the foolish, but it also warns us against friendships with those who have negative characters.

**3.1** The gossip. This type of person is one who always has bad news about someone and communicates it with pleasure. The Bible says, *"A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid a man who talks too much (Proverbs 20:19)."*

**3.2.** The critic and discontented. Be careful of becoming friends with those who have the spirit of criticism and bitterness, especially those who are resentful and rebellious against those in authority. If you walk with them, they will spread their bitter spirit to you.

**3.3.** The angry. The bad-tempered person does not know how to control his anger. If you are friends with them, you follow their example. The Bible says, *"Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered, or you may*

*learn his ways and get yourself ensnared (Proverbs 22:24-25)."*

**3.4.** The immoral. The Bible tells us to avoid associating with immoral individuals (**Proverbs 7**). If we walk with their norms and conduct, which are contrary to the Word of God, we walk along the path of destruction.

***How do you supervise your children's friendships?***

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### CONCLUSION

True friends are a special treasure. The Lord created us to have significant relationships. It is difficult to prosper if we live in isolation. We have been created to share our lives with others, as well as give and receive love.



Bad friends (gangsters, people with corrupt habits, vices and immorality) bring ruin and problems (**Prov. 1:14; 13:20; 22:24-25; 23:19**). Sadly, many people will never know what a true friendship is. This is why they feel alone, even when they are surrounded by others.

Think about those who God has given you as your friends! Bless them in word and action! You will become more than adequately benefited from this. Be a good friend! Jesus is the best friend we can have, but even He desires that we develop deep relationships with others.

***This is why the Apostolic Assembly teaches the new believer that:***

- a)** They should fight passionately to win their friends for Christ.
- b)** They should be ready to say goodbye to their old and bad friendships.
- c)** They should seek among their local church to be friends with true believers in whom their friendship with God is apparent.



# Male and Female He Created Them

## LESSON OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

1. The unisex culture is an abomination to God.
2. From the beginning, God created male and female.

### CONCLUSION

### Key Verse:

***“A woman must not wear men’s clothing, nor a man wear women’s clothing, for the LORD your God detests anyone who does this.”***

***Deuteronomy 22:5***

## INTRODUCTION

Once again, we emphasize that we are called “Apostolics” because our conviction of faith is that we are *“built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20).”*

***Deuteronomy 22:5*** is a passage that takes a distinct element of the creation of man. What is being distinguished to us is not a social position or race, but being a male or female, as God made us.

## 1. THE UNISEX CULTURE IS AN ABOMINATION TO GOD

### 1.1. The unisex culture is a trick of the devil to deny God’s creation

The unisex culture, “not distinguishing between male and female,” is a product of the so-called sexual revolution.



**a)** The culture first began with the practice of sexuality without matrimony; also known as 'free love.'

**b)** Afterward, the practice of sexuality without responsibility followed; abortion became an answer to unwanted pregnancies.

**c)** The practice of sexuality without love followed; casual sex, pornography, and so on.

**d)** The production of children without sexual relations followed; assisted reproduction (in vitro fertilization).

**e)** Finally, anticipating a unisex culture and the growth of radical

feminist thought, sexuality was separated from the individual; there is no male or female.

Satanic philosophy is sex as anatomical data without human relevance; the body no longer speaks of the individual, of the complementarity that expresses marriage. The evil deception is that everyone can choose to sexually configure themselves as they like: heterosexual men, homosexual men, heterosexual women, homosexual women or transsexual. The unisex culture is an attack on the sexual identity that God created for every human and marriage.

This translates into a weakness in marriage and an augmentation in domestic violence. In actuality, in the countries with more separations, divorces and the most unisex culture, there are more cases of domestic violence.

### **1.2. There is a clear connection between the unisex culture and the emergence of homosexuality and lesbianism.**

The unisex culture has aided the explosion of homosexual-

ity and lesbianism in the 21st Century. It is painful to see the emergence of a culture that defends the distortion of sexuality. More and more data confirms that the origin of homosexuality and lesbianism is childhood sexual abuse.

**a)** There are at least five times more homosexuality and lesbianism cases in countries with a culture of debauchery that promotes women cutting their hair and unisex clothing.

**b)** There are up to three times more homosexuality and lesbianism cases in nations that now have confused sexual roles (haircuts and clothing), even without a culture of debauchery.

**c)** On the other hand, countries that promote a clear distinction between man and woman through hairstyle and clothes have low levels of homosexuality.

**1.3. The unisex culture does not help promote equality, but instead promotes egalitarianism.**

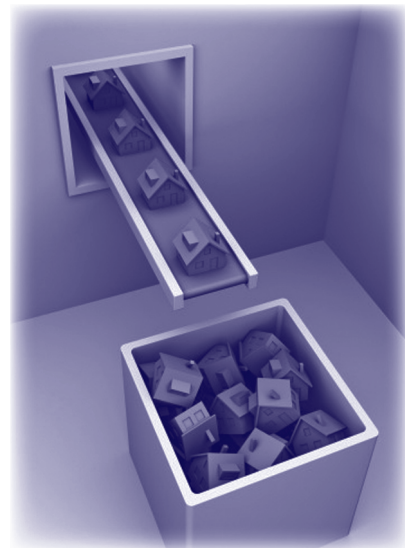
Communist ideologies misinterpreted the occidental need of equality. With the goal

of constructing a paradise for workers, they established identical salaries and benefits for thousands of employees with very different jobs.

**a)** This destroyed the value of those that were forced to educate themselves to the highest university or technological degree.

**b)** This destroyed the value of those who were forced to work with more commitment, more quality and more number of hours.

The result was the destruction of the economy in communist





countries. Those that call themselves communists by name, but have prospered economically, as China has done, actually have a capitalistic economy which recompenses the different efforts of each worker.

The unisex culture does not contribute to the equality of male and female, instead, it grotesquely places exploitation on the female or distorts the image of the male.

## **2. FROM THE BEGINNING, GOD CREATED MALE AND FEMALE**

**2.1. From the 15th Century until 1960, the dress and skirt were essentially the only feminine garments in America.**

### ***Pay attention to the following acts:***

**a)** Irene Guenther writes on page 68 of her book, "Nazi Chic: the feminine fashion of the Third Reich," that this style was essentially a fashion that masculinized the German woman in order to ideologically justify their widespread use as soldiers.

**b)** In Europe during the 1950s, the masculinization of women's clothing in the United States was seen as the result of "Americanization," or a more modern and liberal society.

**c)** The introduction of the widespread use of pants in women's fashion is recognized by the American Institute of Fashion as the result of a clearly decided "masculinization" of women's clothing. This was the goal of designers in the 1960s, which were successful in implementing the change.

**d)** In 2008, in Madrid, Spain, in the Museum of Garments, a presentation on the designer Yves Saint Laurent showed that he was one of the motivators for the change to "the mascu-

lization of feminine fashion” by dressing his models in a masculine way during the 1960s.

**e)** One of the subtle consequences, but significant social impact, is a larger burden on the lives of women. The number of single mothers has quintupled, because “after all, now they have equality in job opportunities”. For many wives, the use of pants signifies a duplication of their work: they work outside and inside the home.

## **2.2. In America, pants were created as an exclusively masculine garment.**

**a)** In **Exodus 28:42-43**, the Lord had already ordained the unique piece of clothing for the men in the priesthood, which was very similar to pants: *“Make linen undergarments as a covering for the body, reaching from the waist to the thigh. Aaron and his sons must wear them whenever they enter the Tent of Meeting or approach the altar to minister in the Holy Place, so that they will not incur guilt and die. This is to be a lasting ordinance for Aaron and his descendants.”*

**b)** As all Biblical dictionaries always prove, there have been clear distinctions between men and women’s clothing for the people of God. In **Job 40:7**, when God talks with this patriarch, he asks him to do something exclusively able to be done with men’s clothing: “Gird up thy loins now like a man.”

**c)** Even culturally, the dress and skirt were garments for women exclusively and pants were exclusively for men.

**d)** When unconverted individuals say, “There are women’s





pants,” my immediate response is, “Which are the men’s skirts?” After hearing this response, our friends usually laugh and recognize there is no response.

**e)** It is interesting to hear how every day there are more sociologists publishing well documented studies that speak of the “masculization of poverty”. They blame the feminine movements, the unisex culture, movements of homosexual rights and the governments of nations that have echoed these movements for an explosion of unemployed

men across the globe. This phenomenon is clearly seen on the Mexican-United States border. From Matamoros to Tijuana, especially in Ciudad Juárez, the workhouses have put aside manly labor to exclusively hire women as workers. This has had grave social, family and spiritual repercussions. These unconverted sociologists from Third World countries see Christian movements as the “Guardians of the Promise,” and with great hope. They see a complete restoration of the male role in the modern culture in these movements.

## **CONCLUSION**

We conclude by repeating what we began with:

*"A woman must not wear men's clothing, nor a man wear women's clothing, for the LORD your God detests anyone who does this."*

***Deuteronomy 22:5***

***This is a value  
of the Apostolic Assembly.***

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