

*A monthly publication of Memorial Christian Church
in the interest of promoting the Gospel of Jesus Christ
and goodwill among His people, our friends.*

In this issue . . .

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Chief Shepherd

Jesus Christ

Pastors

Gordon Addington
David Benedict
Forrest Cotter
Rick Schmeski
Bill Sites
Bruce Wolf

Deacons

Kevin Cotter
James Darr
James Evans
Gene Frazier
Gene McCoy
Joey Peglar
Rick Schmeski

Secretary

Joy Williams

Preacher

Gene McCoy

Youth Minister

Eric Dwyer

Reader Response

***The Rest of the Story* by Lowell E. McCoy**

In last month's CONTACT Gene's article referred to the generous and sacrificial contribution of a widow in the Mansfield, OH congregation, namely Maureen Hoffman, who mortgaged her house to help us build the church building. There is a lot more to the event that is amazing, which I offer for inspiration and encouragement as you approach your capital campaign.

In 1960 our family moved to Mansfield, OH to establish a new congregation. The fledgling congregation of only 20-30 people held its Sunday morning meetings in a small community center, but only after discarding beer containers and deodorizing the air left

by the Saturday night "revelers." Partitions had to be moved into place to form classrooms and chairs had to be set up every Sunday.

The only money came from our offerings, so there was no money for my salary. I soon got a job delivering milk and other dairy products to homes six days a week in order to support our family. By that fall we had accumulated \$1,200 in a building fund. We found 3.48 acres of land priced at \$7,700. So we needed \$6,500 to purchase it. Remember, this was in 1960!

A middle aged couple in a neighboring
cont. on p. 4

Exciting Announcement

Rick Schmeski, Elder and Missions Ministry Team Manager/Deacon, made an historic announcement to the congregation on Sunday, June 14. The congregation had been expecting the announcement of a capital campaign relating to the proposed construction of our new church building. But the congregation erupted in applause when Rick announced that the Missions Ministry Team had accepted the challenge of building a church building in India, as well.

The announcement was made in the presence of Jay Henry and Ernest McFarland, our preachers in Damoh, India, whose families were our special

guests that weekend. The news was wildly welcomed by all.

Every year since the congregation adopted the practice of increasing its missions giving by 1% per year, there have been excess funds to distribute. It is out of this anticipated excess that the Missions Ministry Team intends to contribute \$5,000 each of the next five years to fulfill a \$25,000 commitment to the Mid-India Christian Services — Bethlehem, Inc. Capital Campaign.

The annual increase of 1% in our support to missions began in response

to a challenge made in a stewardship sermon several years ago. The Missions Ministry Team recommended to the Elders that the congregation set the example by increasing her missionary support at that rate. The Elders agreed. This year 24% of all undesignated offerings is sent directly to our missionaries.

This recent proposal was also in response to a suggestion from the pulpit that it would be wonderful to build a church building on the mission field at the same time we construct our building. Praise God from Whom all blessings flow! ■





Preacher's Pen *by Gene McCoy*

When a greatly condensed version of this article appeared in our Sunday bulletin, some asked if it was written about someone in particular. Like the disciples in the upper room, some were asking, "Is it I?"

The purpose is not to point fingers at people or to criticize anyone, but to highlight a principle. The author invites all readers to apply the principle of the "Golden Rule" to all aspects of life and testimony.

For other articles and information about our congregation, go online www.memorialchristian.com

Additions

Jim & Nadine Conder have returned from Arizona and again placed their fellowship with us.

BUDGET Requests

Ministry Managers (Deacons) should submit 2010 budget requests to the Finance Ministry Team by Sunday, August 30.

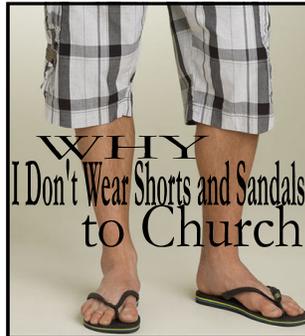
There are at least three reasons why I don't wear shorts and sandals to the weekly appointment with the Lord at His table. But some of my reasoning may surprise you.

I was raised in a generation that still recognizes a connection or relation of one's attire to the dignity of the occasion or the value one places upon the event or person being honored. I think that connection is valid. Even those who push the envelope and make an issue regarding one's freedom to dress ever so casually at church really do recognize that the way a person dresses does indicate to some degree the dignity and importance of the occasion. For example, they dress up for the prom, their wedding, and other events to which they assign great importance or significance. And they will likely dress up for Easter. In many workplaces, employees would not be permitted to dress as casually as some do when they go to church.

Many also recognize a correlation between one's attire and behavior. Guidelines for visitors' apparel that appear in a Florida prison handbook support this. The stated purpose of the guidelines is not to pass judgment on anyone's clothing, but rather "to prevent harassment, discomfort and embarrassing incidents that may spoil your visit." The handbook acknowledges that comfort in travel to the prison may prompt visitors to wear clothing that is prohibited in the visiting area. But those visitors are advised to bring along acceptable clothing into which they should change before entering the visitation area.

One may refute such reasoning by saying that he can be as reverent or respectful in very casual clothes as in formal attire. To argue that point serves no purpose. But it is interesting that visitors to the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington Cemetery are asked to extinguish all smoking materials and dispose of chewing gum before entering the observation area. It isn't that chewing gum or smoking a cigarette makes it impossible for one to be

patriotic or to appreciate the sacrifice there commemorated. For whatever reasons, neither activity is deemed appropriate in that context. What would you think of



someone who, disregarding these instructions, insists on chewing gum or smoking just because he is a free American who insists upon exercising his rights? Perhaps you would consider him to be immature and rebellious.

Now for the possible surprise. While I contend

one's attire does reflect reverence and respect to a certain degree, and that the way a person dresses has some impact upon his behavior, there is another reason I don't wear shorts and sandals to the fellowship around the Lord's Table. It is my regard for other people. Both saints and sinners. If not out of **reverence** for God, it is at least out of **deference** to men.

**REVERENCE FOR God
and
DEFERENCE TO men.**

Since many people have rejected the traditional values regarding dress as it relates to reverence or behavior, this consideration may be the most meaningful or effective in helping us think about proper decorum. This reason falls within the realm of the objective and is based upon principle, whereas the others are subjective, being discussed and determined largely upon personal opinion. Another way to state this is to say that this reasoning is removed from selfish interests, considering others as more important than self. This is the attitude of humility modeled by Jesus (see Phil 2:1-4).

Proponents of casual attire will usually appeal to 1 Samuel 16:7 to support their position, saying that one's outward appearance is inconsequential because God looks at the heart. They apparently disregard or ignore the other part of that verse which states that man looks on the outward appearance. We must consider

how our actions and attitudes, including those regarding attire, affect other people.

The teaching of Jesus at Matthew 7:12, which is known as the "Golden Rule," also applies in this discussion. We must consider the thoughts of others in the matter of attire.

It is out of respect and honor for my brothers and sisters who **DO** recognize the connection regarding attire with reverence and decorum that I wear relatively nice clothes to the Lord's Table. I may not share their *thinking*, but I do share the **Table** with them. I don't want to do anything that I know offends my brother or sister. The Bible points out that I am not free to exercise my liberty when doing so offends another or causes one to stumble. Jesus

teaches us to do to others as we would want them to do to us. I don't want my brother to offend me in his manner of dress, so I do not want to offend my brother in my manner of dress.

Does that mean I must wear a tuxedo? Or a coat and tie? Let's be reasonable. Is there anyone offended by the wearing of shorts and sandals who thinks the only acceptable attire is a coat and tie? That is a non-issue; an argument without substance.

Does this mean I think the church ought to have a dress code? Again, let's be reasonable. This is not about trying to tell anyone what to wear or not to wear. The principle is to so act and present ourselves as not to be a distraction or an offense to those with whom we commune at the Table of Remembrance. And that can be done very easily and simply in this matter of attire. We know what manner of dress is customarily regarded as appropriate by all reasonable people.

So why would I insist on wearing to church clothes I would not wear to the prom, a wedding, or an event honoring a dignitary? Why would I wear to church clothes that I know could offend a brother or sister who recognizes a connection between one's attire and their attitude regarding the occasion? The only reason that comes to mind is that of insisting upon exercising my rights. But is that honoring the principles mentioned above? Is that properly regarding my brothers and sisters? That is the only reason, unless, of course,

the person so clothed really doesn't have any more regard for the dignity of the Lord's Supper or the One there honored and remembered than they do of other significant observances or people. You will have to determine which characterizes you.

My experience has taught me that most people who do not attend a church hold to a higher standard of decorum and conduct at church than do some Christians who SAY they dress in such casual attire to attract people from the world. I do not know of any person who has come to church because of the extremely casual attire of Christians. I do know, however, that some have been offended by it. No one is offended by apparel that is neat and clean, even if it be along the order of what is

Most people who do not attend a church hold to a higher standard of decorum and conduct at church than do some Christians.

customarily referred to as "dressy casual," such as a polo shirt and khakis with

shoes.

I wear nice clothes to church because children are impacted by my decorum. A mother related that her five-year-old child recently commented with disfavor regarding the attire of some in the worship assembly. That an innocent child makes such an observation behooves mature adults to give more than flippant consideration to their manner of dress!

There really is one more reason I don't wear such casual clothing to the Lord's Table. It's because I think you would be somewhat embarrassed and hesitant to introduce your friends to your preacher if he were dressed so casually. A young adult in one church avoided introducing his guest to one of the ministers who was so attired because he was embarrassed by the staff member's appearance. Perhaps your brothers and sisters are equally embarrassed to invite their friends, whom they are confident would not think so highly of us or the Lord on account of the apparent lack of proper decorum, indicating a level of irreverence.

Maybe there is more significance and importance to what we wear to the assembly than some have thought! Based upon the principles outlined here, maybe God does care! Could it be that He has looked upon the heart and seen rebellion, carelessness, disregard, disrespect, or selfishness?

AUGUST MEETINGS

- 3 *Willing Workers*
- 4 *Benevolence Ministry Team*
- 5 *Finance Ministry Team*
- 10 *Elders*
- 20 *Building Committee*
- 30 *Lake Area Fellowship*

New Address

Memorial Christian Church



Physical Address 1365 Eastside Centre Court

Interim offices are located in the Commercial Center at 1322 Bradley Drive, #4, which is located behind the 1st Assembly of God church building.

Lake Area Fellowship
6 p.m. Sunday
August 30

Flippin Christian Church

cont. from p. 1

congregation, Gene and Celeste Smith, offered to mortgage their house to provide the needed money. He worked for the gas company as a laborer and not an executive. But through frugality and faithful stewardship, they owed nothing on their house. When the Smiths explained what they wanted to do, their loan officer exclaimed, "You are going to do **what**? And you are not even members of the congregation?" Gene replied, "Isn't that what Christians are supposed to do for each other?" That about blew his mind! We took the payment book and made the payments.

In the spring of 1961 we sold trustee's certificates to raise money to build the first unit of a building. Gene and Celeste purchased a \$2,000 trustee's certificate and paid cash for it. Others participated by paying monthly on whatever size certificates they could afford. That fall construction began on an auditorium that would seat about one hundred and twenty people, as well as an educational wing with sufficient classrooms. Men and women alike provided volunteer labor because cash was very limited.

This is where Maureen Hoffman, not a young woman, comes in the account. Her husband died during the planning stages of the new congregation. She mortgaged her house and we took the payment book to make the payments.

We soon needed more money. One of the elders in my home congregation had just retired and moved to Mansfield. He and his wife mortgaged their house, allowing us to secure more money.

As Dedication Day approached in February of 1962, we still needed more money in addition to what was coming in from monthly payments on the certificates. Being the evangelist for a congregation with no elders, I really felt the pressure. The evening before Sunday's dedication service arrived and I still did not know where we were going to get

**an example
of faith
and trust**

the needed money! The pressure was great! Late that night I received a phone call from a man in the congregation where I previously preached. He reported that five couples in that congregation had made arrangements to borrow \$1,000 each to help us. It makes tears come to my eyes to this day. I could have cried then! I guess I did! All five couples attended the dedication service, when it was first explained what had happened.

After the building was completed we could get a loan on it. We eventually paid off all the mortgages and bank loans. Everything was paid in full.

By the time our ministry in Mansfield was completed, the financial situation was solid and no one lost a dime! What an example of faith in God and trust in one another!

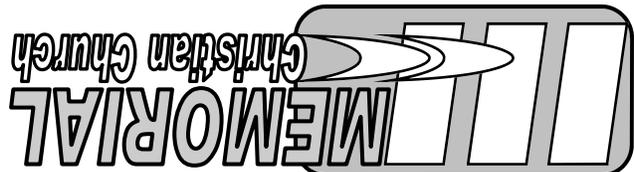
The LORD'S COMMISSION is OUR MISSION
Mathew 28:19-20

Sunday Morning 11:00 Bible Classes
9:30 Worship
Wednesday Evening 6:30 Supper
5:30 Bible Classes

Meeting Schedule

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

P.O. Box 388 Mtn. Home, AR 72654 870-425-8323
(located at 315 W. 6th St.)



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