

CNL Season 2009

11.1 - Living for Christ in Style pt 1

Transcription

Today, we continue on dealing with the balanced church so why don't we go ahead and go before the Lord in prayer and ask his blessing upon this time and ask that we really once again get to know him better so that by the time we walk out of here we are changed here. Amen. Father, in Jesus name, thank you for being such a sweet Lord. We pray that this day you will bless, give us an understanding of your Word and understanding of you that we might be fashioned after Jesus Christ. Father, God, may be reflect Him, reflect his image and so we at this time coming before you, if there be any sin in our lives that we know is grievous to you, we just confess it, that if there is anything that we worried about last week or next week, if there is anything that is clouding our minds, make us sober, clear minded today that we might be able to understand your word, dig into it and have a joy in it and we pray these things that you might be glorified in this time together in Jesus name and God's people said "Amen". Let me encourage you as we go into today's study. We still are finishing off. Man it is looking awesome in here! Praise the Lord. I walked in and saw some carpet on the floor and all kinds of wonderful things that we take for granted, but it is just great to be back here. I wanted to, as we had traveled through Europe. There are stories I could be here all day long telling you some of some of the most unbelievable stories traveling through Europe. It is a different world, as you know, than in America. It was something else to watch what was happening in the Middle East if you have been keeping up on that and we, you know as we watched. Whoa! That is kind of weird the way it keeps doing that. As we watched with concern the events unfolding in the Middle East. Sometime we are going to be talking about prophecy after the grand opening and dealing with issues of today and having a wonderful study that deals with the prophecy of the tabernacle and the temple and the Garden of Eden. It is a really neat study so looking ahead a lot of these things will be covered that we are seeing even today occurring, but as we traveled

through Europe. I can't tell you all of them, but Maria and I love to notice little things like this on shampoo bottles and on the markings of the train stations and everything else some of the most hilarious things happen, but these are things that we picked up, in Italy mainly, but in France a couple of these came from, but I was to just let you know. In Italy, for example, on Coca-Cola there is a huge warning on the outside. It is strange that it is a warning but it says "Warning: This Coca-Cola is not an alcoholic beverage." As if, don't be disappointed, there is no liquor here. On one of the motorcycles, on the mirror, it actually says here: "Remember, objects in mirror are actually behind you." (Crowd and Peter laughing) We have spelled these things out for some people. On one of the blankets, it says, "Not to be used as protection from a tornado." That was in Pompeii and I thought, well that is good to know. It is funny how different people think differently, especially in cultures and if you will look at the notes inside your bulletin, it says "Living for Christ in Style". Live for Christ in Style. Some people just naturally have style. No matter what they wear, they just have style. Well, today, we are going to be looking from God's point of view at style, at fashion. Now, you are going to say "Now what in the world does this have to do with studying the Bible and talking about fashion". Well, actually the Word of God deals with fashion a whole lot. Except it is a different fashion than Hollywood or Paris would deal with.

When we went to Paris, we could not find a hotel for the simple reason; all the rooms had been taken up because of the biggest fashion shows of the year was in Paris, France. We landed in Paris. We were there for 2 or 3 days and one of the biggest fashion shows was in Paris so we ended up getting a room, this is not an exaggeration, it was 8 feet x 8-1/2 feet. The bed fit in the middle of the room and as you stepped out, your heel up against the bed, your toe would touch the wall and so you would walk into this room and it was a bed with walls next to it. It was a little claustrophobic for me, but that was pretty much the only room that we could find in Paris because of the fashions and as we watched television at night. Have you ever seen some of these fashions they have in Paris. You know that no one is ever going to wear these clothes. Have you ever seen them? They have hats that were like spiked and pointy going

out this far and shoulder pads this far, just totally bizarre and the point of these designers was to say “This is chic” and if they said it enough, they would convince the viewer that it is chic. I have yet to ever see these clothes worn anywhere but I’m sure that somewhere in the world people wear these clothes and what we are looking at today is the fashion of our hearts. The fashion that you and I wear when we are in public. How people view us style wise. What kind of style we have to the world and the world has convinced us in many things that there are things that are in good taste? Whether it is homosexuality, pedophilia, drunkenness, or whatever it is. There are certain styles. There are certain attitudes the world has that they have said for long enough “this is cool fashion” and people actually believe it long enough to do it. So, today, we are going to take a look at how God talks about fashion. It is going to be metaphorical, of course, but are we clothed in carnality and selfishness, and the things of this world or are we clothed in the garments of Christ because I want to tell you something. Try to remember this phrase, “People can tell your substance and my substance by our style.” Once again, they can tell our substance by our style. The way that they present ourselves. I have met people. Let me give you a perfect example of this metaphorical interpretation of the word “style” or “fashion”. Have you ever met anybody whom within 30 seconds of talking to them and every single time you talk to them, they are angry about something? No matter what happens, their fashion is anger. They have learned that they love the style of anger and no matter how they dress physically, as you talk to them, they consistently are angry or perhaps the person who is full of self-pity. Anybody here ever know one of them that no matter how many people minister to them, no matter how many people try to care of them, no matter how many people try to love them, they are full of self-pity and that is their fashion. That is their style. Do you know what I am talking about? That is their style. That is their fashion. That is what they clothe themselves in and every time you come near them, you get to see the substance of their heart by the style of their outward dress or their spiritual dress and God actually has a way that he says did you know that there is a fashion that you are supposed to wear spiritually, emotionally and mentally. There is

actually a fashion, a style, which if you wear it correctly; you will always be in style with God. It is a kind of neat study but it is in the book of First Peter. Go ahead and fill in #1 if you will as we start to go into this study. These are wonderful verses and fill in “What fashion statement am I making?” By our speech, by our actions, by the way that we look. Now, we are not talking today about whether we wear a Gucci or whether you dress like a monk. We are talking about fashion statements that deal with our attitude but sometimes you actually can see that in dress. I remember I was talking to a young man about a month and a half ago who dressed very gothic and shared with me, he said, “That’s pretty much how I feel. I like to listen to this gothic music. It is very negative. It deals with death because that is what I am preoccupied with.” So, inevitably, it has shown in his physical outer garments. It is possible to see the spirit of a person in their physical dress, but even more so in their attitude, the spirit of their lives. Would you read a very powerful verse with me, First Peter 1:13 and 15. Let’s read it together. “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope for the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance”. Now, that word “fashioning”, “fashion” is very interesting in the way that he writes this word. When he talks about fashion, it means, of course, shaping or molding you into and conforming to a specific kind of image. What do we actually fashion ourselves to? Well, as we look at this verse, first of all, we see the word “gird”. We covered that two weeks ago. The word “gird” means to wear and what are we wearing as far as our outfits. It says, “be sober”. Now, the Greek word for sober there is “nepho”. “Nepho” That is a very interesting word when you look in the Greek when you look at the word “sober” because it means basically “be clear minded”. Now, I don’t know if any of you have ever been drunk, but if you haven’t been, you have watched TV and you have seen people who have been drunk and one of the things about a person who is drunk is that he does not think clearly. It is amazing what a person can be seduced into when they are drunk. The person who dances on the table with a lamp shade on their head, that old thing. You

know what I am saying. When they were sober, would they have done that? No. So, the word here “Nepho”, in the Greek, means “to be clear minded so that you are not easily seduced by being cloudy in your thinking.” So, if you have ever drunk a tremendous amount of alcohol, you are fuzzy. You are cloudy in your thinking. You are kind of numb and so the Word of God begins to say here is what has happened to us is that the world’s fashions which are sinful. The fashion of disobedience to God, the fashion of sin, the fashion of sin has been told to us for so long that we become fuzzy in our thinking and drunken and God says that you are going to have to start learning what is good taste and what is bad taste in the spiritual fashions. Are you all with me? Now, there is good taste in clothing and there is bad taste in clothing and you might say that it is all relative but to tell you the truth, with God, the fashions of God are not relative. They are unchanging throughout time. So, how should we dress spiritually, emotionally and mentally? Look at the next word “the revelation of Jesus Christ”, of course, is talking about when he returns. The word ignorance, after the word fashion. We will deal with that, but the word “ignorance, if you underline that word as well, it is basically saying back when you were living wicked lives, it is because you were ignorant of its results. Let me ask you this, if you walk up to a platter, to a hot plate or whatever and you put your hand on it and it goes “szzzzz” and it burns you. That is a sad thing, but now you know that it burns you, but if you daily walk up to that hot plate and put your hand on it though you now it is going to burn you, you don’t really have an excuse to cry do you. Why? Because at first, the very first time that you are ignorant of the result of putting your hand on the hot plate. Before you became born again, you were ignorant of the results of sin, right? The devastating results of sin, you were ignorant of them but once you become born again and you see from the clear teaching of the Word of God the results of sin, the downside, the deadly side, if you continue to put your hand on the hot plate, Peter is saying, “What’s wrong with this picture? If you continue to dress with the spiritual attitude of the world. What’s wrong with this picture?” You’ve learned that it is a hot plate and so he says the word “ignorance” here, basically the lusts in your ignorance. God wants us to spiritually

dress with modesty. Now, Proverbs 3:3. This is so great. Oh I forgot to tell you to read I Peter 1 with me, didn't I? Did you all read it with me? (audience responds "Yes"). Did you? That's okay. (laughter). In the airplane, the pressure, I lost my hearing. Proverbs 3:3, would you read this one with me? (Peter laughing). Let loving kindness and faithfulness not forsake you. Hang them around your neck.

Write them upon the tablets of your heart. Now, here is an accessory in fashion. What is it called? A necklace or a scarf. I brought a scarf up here. This is a beautiful scarf. It was bought in Italy. Now, if I put this around my neck (laughter) and if I was to walk around (laughing), and I was to come up and talk to you and if I was to talk to Tim about my scarf (laughter). Now, it's me. (laughter). Would Tim notice my scarf? It's next to my face. It is right up here where it is in view. The writer is saying something when he says something about faithfulness, about love. He says wear it like a scarf, like a necklace. Now, if you are visiting churches right now and you are going to visit 5 or 6 churches in the next 5 or 6 weeks and you sit down with your wife and you say, "You know I really liked that church. We had some practical teaching" and she says, "Which one was that?" What are you going to say? It was the preacher with what? It was the preacher with the scarf Now, that seems a little strange. Why? Because the scarf being right here is so noticeable and the word of God is saying your loving kindness and your spirit should be worn like a scarf It should be clear to everyone who sees you, You have the scarf What drives me crazy about politicians is that they say, "Well I don't agree with abortion personally but I fight for the woman's right to have one." You know that is hypocrisy. If it is written on your heart, it will be worn as your scarf. Are you all with me? (audience saying "yeah, yeah" and clapping). Sexual issues and everything else. I don't personally believe in homosexuality or pedophilia, but I fight for the right for them to do it. No, if you have it written upon your heart. If there is a truth written upon your heart, he is saying it also is worn publically. It is as clear as a bell and you should wear it with joy. It is a beautiful thing. A scarf and a necklace are beautiful things and the Word of God written upon our heart is a beautiful thing but it is a style ladies and gentleman. It is style. It is fashion. We wear this fashion around our neck in a beautiful,

tasteful way. An outside faith, as well as an inside faith. There are T-shirts all over Europe. The kids wear T-shirts. Adults wear T-shirts and they have a political saying on them. They have making a public statement just like that statement that we were just making. That makes a public statement as to who you are because I think God has good taste and there is bad taste and His taste is the taste that should be what we promote. Let's look at the two things. Loving kindness and faith. We could probably spend 2 days just on these two words, but loving kindness. The construction of that word actually deals with kindness as a result of love. If you love someone, you are kind to them. If you love your child, you are kind to your child. If you love your spouse, you are kind to your spouse. In other words, when you talk with people, it ought to be full of love and kindness, Amen? And they will believe that you live them if you are loving and kind to them. The other word, faithfulness deals with what this world lacks today is loyalty to any kind of cause. People are fickle. They bounce from one thing to the other. They go wherever it pleases them. It is like going to the movies. They like this movie, don't like this movie so they switch theaters. Have you ever seen them? I remember when we were kids and the first multiplex theater came out and I remember it was very natural that some of the kids would go to one movie and watch 10 to 15 minutes of it and if they didn't like it they would go to the next theater. They would get out of that theater and go to the next one. They bounced around until they saw the movie that they liked. That is how we are with the study of God's word. That's how we are with church. That's how we are with our relationships. That's how we are with life. We kind of bounce around. We lack faithfulness and loyalty in this society and most importantly we lack a loyalty to Christ. So, he is saying you need to wear this. You know why, because the world, listen to me, is actually dying for somebody who stands for something. This world is hungry for people who will wear faithfulness, who will wear loving kindness, who will wear loyalty, who are not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that are not ashamed of something and people are embarrassed about the politicians they vote for, they are embarrassed about

the leaders that they follow. You know why? Because they don't have a loyalty because they also don't see the loving kindness of God in them so they simply say, "I kind of stand here but then I might bounce tomorrow to somewhere else." But, Jesus Christ, let me just tell you about the fashion of Jesus, the fashion of righteousness, the fashion of godliness that never goes out of style and our leader never changes and he never one day says I believe one thing, but I will do another. Jesus did not say, "Well, I personally don't believe in sin, but I can't stop people from doing it and to tell you the truth, I want to fight for their right to do it." Did Jesus say that? (audience laughing and saying "NO"). Those are not the words of Christ. There are absolutes in the fashion styles of Christians. It is called a lifestyle. A style of the one who gave life and that is who we are called to follow fashionwise. It is a bizarre world. The Boy Scouts made a stand. They said, we do not hold to the fashion of having homosexual leaders with our boys out on camping trips and things like that. Anybody who has studied the movement of homosexuality, if you are in a homosexual lifestyle, it is sin. You need to deal with it, just like if you were in an adulterous lifestyle or anything else, but Cornell and these others at conventions invite (NAMBLA), it's a homosexual organization that is a molesting organization and they openly accept this lifestyle, I am going to tell you that Boy Scouts of America making that stand, I praise God that they made the stand because they are losing tons of funding, millions of dollars. They are being attacked 24 hours a day, but the still said we are here to protect the boys so that is going to be our fashion, that is going to be our style even though the world says it is not in style any more. We think that it still is in style to protect these boys and that's where style really comes down some times to a confrontation almost. It is when we say that we are not going to change our fashion to please what Hollywood or Paris on the runway says is fashionable and if they say it long enough, the world believes it is. These weird looking hats. If they say long enough these weird looking hats are fashionable, you will start seeing everyone wearing weird looking hats. Because we are a world hungry to be in fashion. The original fashion of Jesus Christ has never been out of style. What styles do I love to read, talk about, and imitate? What styles do I love

to read, talk about imitate? Are we more fascinated with People Magazine than we are with the book of John? Which would you grab faster off the shelf at HEB, People, the Inquirer, or the Gospel of John?

Man it got quiet. Okay. Would you read I Peter 1:15 and 16 with me? But as he who has called you is holy, so be you holy in all manner of conversation. Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.

Conversation, folks, what do we get excited to converse about. I have listened to people sit around. Girls sit around and talk about style and dresses and everything else and that is really great, because they love it but do you know what the interesting thing about styles is. Fad. They are all fads. The extreme styles are all fads and where do we love to talk. Would you read this Proverbs 2:4? Lets just read this verse before we get into it. "If you seek (wisdom) like silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the reverent awe of the Lord." Now, what it is saying is this: Wisdom, of course, and knowledge are two different things. Knowledge is the accumulation of information. Books have knowledge, encyclopedias have knowledge. Wisdom is the ability to take the data and apply it correctly. You all with me (audience replies "Yes"). Now, when you look into the Word of God and it talks about wisdom in this passage, it says "If you seek wisdom as passionately as you would silver, riches, and you search for her like a hidden treasure, the you will understand the awe of God." Why? Because if you begin to apply the fashion of life, of God's life to your life, if you begin to reflect Him, you will begin to understand Him. It is kind of like walking in His shoes. If you walked in the shoes of God, you would understand who He is; you would understand exactly what He is expecting of us. Communication is what this all comes down to. What we live and talk about. Man, I have just got to say this. We were in Italy and we were lost and we were having a blast. It was downtown Rome and I was pretty much figuring out how the train system worked after a while, but we were in downtown Rome and we were looking for this place called "Termini" (212) and obviously "Termini" means the end, so we figured it was the end of the railroad line, but we just were not sure which of the trains which were going out from what is called the Pedamedia in the center of Rome where we could catch it. Maria

speaks, you know, Portuguese and several Latin languages so we had a pretty easy time there, but this one lady that we spoke to spoke so fast that we could not understand her. She was in the middle of the train station that said "Information" and she spoke brrrrrrr, like a machine gun so we were having a hard time figuring it out. We were asking where it was Termini, so she finally signals us over to this fellow who is in this little corridor. Go over and ask him, basically, is what she said so Maria and I walk over and I asked him. Well we walked through this little corridor, walked into this area where he was and we say "Where is Termini?". You know and the weird thing is I can say "Where is Termini" and he looks at me like, you know, like a dog that hears a high pitched sound. Maria can say "Ummm" like she is going to think it through and it more like Italian than what I said and she will actually say the exactly "Ummm where is Termini" and he goes, "Oh Termini" and it was this way all over Europe. It never failed. She would repeat it, but that is a different story. That drove me nuts. She would actually repeat it but somehow because she goes "Ummm where is Termini" and it was like suddenly it spoke out, but any way. We go up to this guy and we asked him where Termini is and while we were there talking to him about Termini, he says "Where are your passports?" "Your passaporte". "Where is your passport?" It was like "What do you want my passport for" He writes this out like a parking ticket for \$50. You know why, because as we walked into his office, we apparently had passed the ticket booth and therefore, he thought that we were trying to get on the train and this was not even the Termini train station, get on the train without paying. We said, "No, no, we are here just to ask a question" and in our communication we could not communicate "We are not trying to get on the train to leave. We are just walking up to you. You saw us walk up to you and we are asking you where is Termini."

So, he writes out a ticket. It takes him 20 minutes to write me out a ticket for \$50 for having basically gone past the ticket counter. Well, we were totally bewildered when we finally figured out what is going on. So, we said to him, "Where is the ticket counter." We turned around and we cannot even find it.

He actually looks at us and says, "The tobaccalist". We go, "The tobaccalist?" and he goes "Si, the tobaccalist." And he points over to the tobacco shop. Now, there is no ticket counter and we are thinking to ourselves, now this is bizarre. So, we actually walk over to the tobacco thing, wait in line, go up to where they sell tobacco, and we say, this girl spoke a little English, "Do you sell the tickets for the train here?" She says, "But of course" and she pulls up the tickets and sells us two tickets to Termini.

I'm like, how could we have known that, but you see, in Rome, they assume, You got to know. It's logical. You want a train ticket? Go to the tobacco shop. To them that's logical and I paid 50 bucks to find out that I have to be a smoker to know how to get around Italy. The communication just is not there and that is how Italy is, you just say "Mama mia lets go have a good time and get lost together and everything else." You know, it was a whole concept of communication and you know the fashion styles that we wear in Christ are really an issue of communications. What are we communicating who Jesus is to the world by who we are. He said, "Be ye holy". Why? Because "I am Holy" follow my style and dress like me and you will always be in style but you will breaking the holy spirit world styles, the heavenly styles if you don't dress like me. If you are not holy like me, you are going to be out of style. You are going to be following a fleshly fad, but it is going to fade. It's going to be like bell-bottoms. Stick with the holy style. You know and when you do wear that scarf. It is so precious watching Maria because we got split up on this bus. The tickets were not together and she was sitting in front of me and a woman sat down next to her that was Chinese and I heard her speak in Chinese to this other woman. And I thought, now Maria is really going to have to work hard because she knows some many languages, but I know that she does not know Chinese. Within two minutes, she has turned around and said, "This woman's a born again believe" and it turns out, of course, that the Lord blesses Maria everywhere she goes. The woman is from Brazil, a Chinese from Brazil, of course. So, in Italy, a Chinese Brazilian sits next to her who is born again believer, but the thing is both of them so wear the scarf of Christ that within. I mean, if you would have seen it, in 120 seconds, within 120 seconds they both recognized each other as

born again believers. It was just as clear as day. They both love Pompeii. They both love research. They both know Roman history. They could have been talking on all of those subjects, but somehow within their conversation they notice, they saw the necklace on each other's neck and the rest of the trip; we had a dear friend with us. You know why, she was our family. She wore the scarf we wore. If you go to Cuba, they all wear red scarves. The children are raised wearing red scarves with their uniforms. The red scarf identifies that they are communist and this compatriotism which is created by that red scarf identifies them and so they have something in common and that is what Christians have in common. We wear the same scarf. These 2 wear the same scarf and within seconds knew each other and if we continue to mess with the world, while wearing God's fashions, it will burn us. I want you to look at Proverbs 16:27, a fascinating verse from the NIV. Read this with me. "How long can a person scoop fire into their lap without burning their garment?" Oh, thanks. I get a little scared when people approach the platform but I know Mike. This is a necklace, which came from Pompeii. What's really neat about is if you look at this material here, it is a beautiful material, but this material is actually polished lava from Mount Vesuvius which destroyed all the Pompeians, of course, when Mount Vesuvius erupted in about 79 A.D. and destroyed all of Pompeii and this is kind of a neat example. It is going to go into next week's sermon, but it deals with how literally materials which they dug away and threw away, this artisan has gone and taken material, stones which have been thrown away, and fashioned them into a beautiful necklace. This, of course, goes with the book of 1st Peter, chapter 2 where it talks about how the stone which the workers threw away, God fashioned into the cornerstone who is Jesus Christ. Any way, this is one of the necklaces. So, if somebody wears this necklace, as you walk up to them, you will probably notice a necklace on their neck and that is exactly the point that we are making with that scarf that. If it immediately identifies and is noticeable which is what we ought to have in our faith in Christ when someone meets us. Let's go to the next thing, number 3. Let's go to #3. It all comes down to communication. It is kind of like somebody said to me, "why is it called lipstick if your lips can still

move?" (audience laughing, Peter laughing) You'll get it eventually. Okay. By the way, I was always wondering did George Washington, whenever they asked for an ID (identification) did he just pull out a quarter? (audience laughing) Okay, #3, let's fill in #3. (Peter laughing) My dad used to say, Peter you don't tell puns, you tell 2/3 of a pun, just P-U. Okay. (audience laughing). Number 3, let's fill this one in. "Am I sinking all my riches into a fading trend? "Am I sinking all my riches into a fading trend?" Would you read I Peter 1:18, 19, 24, and 25 with me? "Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold; from you vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers. But of the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and spot: For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower falls away. But the Word of the Lord endures forever." You want to make a fashion statement, wear Jesus. Not only do you make a fashion statement, which the world desperately needs to see, but you wear a fashion statement, which never goes out of style.