

CNL Season 2009

11.2 Living for Christ in Style pt 2

Transcription

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....

The communication was 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 noticed, 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. Anyway, 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. That really is what Peter is saying here, we search our lives passionately after corruptible things, which are going to go out of style. They are going to rust. They are going to rot. The word "redeemed", of course, there is the word that means to be bought back. There are 3 Greek words which Peters uses as well as Paul talking about the word redeemed, which you could do a study some time. One means to be bought back and released as a slave, one means to be bought back and then put back and put back into service, one means to be bought back and to be raised and elevated. There are some interesting words for the word "redeemed", but it basically means, you have been bought back, but when you were bought back, it was not with corruptible things. In other words, why dedicate you life to something that did not buy you. Why dedicate yourself to something that did not release you. If somebody came to the jail. I went to the jail in which Paul was held, it is believed that Paul was held in which is the Mamratime Prison in Rome. Man,

you talk about claustrophobic. This prison cell is maybe 6 feet high and about 8 or 9 feet across and it is solid stone with tons of building above it and it comes down to a little tiny corner and you come into this room and there a tiny hole in the top where they dropped you into the room. There is a tiny hole, which would be the toilet, and there was no toilet obviously. It was just this solid stone and you are in this horrible prison. Now, if you are in that prison and you are just losing your mind, you are so claustrophobic and the stench is foul and someone came and bailed you out. Somebody came and said, "I told them that I will stay in the prison so you can be released." Would that be awesome? They wouldn't just come and pay \$25 to get you out of jail but they said, "I have to take your place." Would you not love them? Of course you would and what the Word of God is saying here is since you weren't redeemed, bought back by corruptible things, why are you so loyal to corruptible things. Why are you so passionate for corruptible things? The fleshly, the lust of the flesh. Why are we so loyal to what is disloyal to us and wanting to kill us? Uriah, poor Uriah, was loyal to David, the man who was sending him to his death. Why would we want to be loyal to that which is sending us to our death because sin and the lust of the flesh sends us to our death? Bottom line, Christ came and took our place in prison. Our loyalty should be to Christ, not to the prison and when you live in the flesh after having been redeemed, you are actually giving your loyalty to the jail rather than to the one who delivered you from it. Does that make sense? (audience answering "Yes") That's a powerful construction of this passage. We could spend 2 weeks, no joke, on this passage right here but the word redeemed is so critical there from corruptible things. Vain conversation. The word conversation just means babbling. In other words, when you are talking about the world's stuff, really after a while, you are just babbling because it does not do anything. It does not get you anywhere. It does not further the kingdom of God. It does not enhance your spirit. It is babbling. Conversation, received by tradition from your father's but of the precious blood of Christ as a lamb without blemish or spot is where you had it paid for, but did you know that the blood of Christ is a fashion statement. We will see in a second in the book of Revelation where the blood

of Christ is a fashion statement for all flesh is just grass in the glory of man. You, if you are proud of your looks, it is not for long. If you think you are just the prettiest thing that has ever been around, it is not for long. I remember watching on A&E a while back. The woman was Miss America in 1921. Now, she is a pretty older woman, but she did not look the same as she did in 1921, I got to tell you that. She is 96 years old, 98 years old. She has changed. (Peter laughing) Just a bit. If you are prideful of your flesh, what you have accomplished, he is saying, it is like grass, folks. It withers, it dies and when you are lying there about to go and be with the Lord. If you have invested you entire finances, your entire talents, your entire gifts, upon yourself and all of these things you have accomplished. I was reading about the son. I'll think of it in just a second, of Octavius, but as he was lying there. No, of it was another famous Roman but as he was lying and dying, he had been assassinated, but as he was dying, he looked around at the magnificent palaces around him that he had built and everything else and he says "for what use" and died. For what use, in other words, it adds up to nothing, nada. Really when it is all said and done and we are so passionate with the stuff around us, I am going to tell you that when you are about to meet the Lord, if you have not sent ahead the inheritance. If you have not sent ahead the mansions. If you have not gotten dressed in style, God's style, ready to walk across the threshold, how said a creature you are and I am. Amen. Who are we loyal to, the one who freed us? Are we investing in a fading trend? Can you imagine if you had inherited 10 millions dollars in 1974 and bought every bell bottom on the market because you said they were the thing of the future and in 1975 nobody was wearing them, would that have been a good investment? That's was investing in the flesh, in ourselves, in our pleasures. It is like investing in typewriter ribbons, it's going to change. It is just not going to go on forever. But of course, where do we sink our money? Where do we sink our time? Where do we sink our study? The Word of God here, we are going to find out four times that Peter talks about the Word of God and what the Word of God says. There are a lot of religions that say tradition is as

important as the written scriptures. That is not true at all. Peter, actually, when he talks about the traditions of the father, he says that the problem with the traditions of the father is that they got manipulated and changed over time, but the Word of God stays firm. So, if you come from a group, any kind of study group that says well our tradition is as important as the Word of God, the Word of God clearly says, "No, it is not." The written word is far superior. Sola Scriptura, sola Christus . The words of the reformers were right on. This Word is unchanged. Tradition alters but this Word is unchanging. Never believe that tradition is as great or equal to the Word of God and if it disagrees with the Word of God, the Word of God wins out. So, any way, we were looking at basically where should we invest our time. The reason you are here this morning, folks, is you know what, do you know what you are doing? You are getting style. You are getting dressed in the right fashion but studying God's Word. You are dressing in God's Word. I remember when Maria and I were in school. We would wake up in the morning. We would talk about art all day long. I used to drive my parents crazy when I was a kid. If there was a blank back, see the back of this piece of paper, I would walk into a church and flip over all the paper and if it had a blank back, I would pull out my pencil, I would start to draw. I was obsessive about drawing. Twenty-four hours a day, I would draw. I drew on the wall of my bedroom and got spanked 24 or 25 times. I drew on pieces of paper. I drew on napkins. I drew on restaurants. If it was butcher paper, especially, I would draw on it and if it wasn't, if it was cloth. You know, I would even keep the corners and draw little pictures. I got books. I got in trouble in the fifth grade and in school because in my science book, you could tell that I really wasn't studying very much because if you flipped my science book, the edges of it, brrrrrrr, like that it was a movie. Have you ever seen how kids draw that? I had an entire elaborate, this is not an exaggeration, I wish that I had kept that book but you know how you can draw pictures, like cells when you do cartoons, you know what I am talking about? And I would draw an elaborate thing with about 10 or 12 warriors and I would flip the next page and I would have them moving and you could go, brrrrrrr, and of course, I would entertain all of the other kids who were within

a few feet of me and of course, they all failed as well, but I mean, it was like brrrrrrrrrr, and AHHHH!!, And explosions and planes. It was just amazing, but all I thought about was drawing. Art and music, art and music, art and music because that's what my passion was; that's where I poured my life.

And the question is where do we pour our lives. When we become born again, do we pour our lives still into the world into the prison system or do we pour our lives into Christ studying His word so that we become more like him, so that we get dressed, ready to meet him in glory. One day, we are going to meet him in glory. Folks, my question is when you walk out of here, if you wear cut off shorts and a torn T-shirt to hear a great opera at the opera house, you would probably be a little undressed, not dressed right. You follow what I am saying. When you meet the Lord some day, what will you be wearing? How will you be ready when you walk through the gates? Are you going to be dressed in righteousness and the glorious garments of Christ? What's your fashion going to be? Is the world going to be what you are wearing? It is a challenge to us as believers. You could meet the Lord at any moment. Holiness and the scriptures endure forever as a style. Last point, "Will the style I am wearing endure forever?" Bell-bottoms won't last forever. Flare collars won't last forever. Psychedelic colors won't last forever. Our passions, what are they? Revelation 6:11 Would you read these wonderful verses with me. "And when he opened the fifth seal, white robes were given unto every one of them." Revelation 19:13 "And he was clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." Fine linen. It's a fashion statement folks. Fine linen. A pure fabric. Fine linen is refined. Fine linen. You and I like gold have been refined. If you look at the construction of how this linen was made, it was refined through many steps. It was a coarse heavy garment. Fine linen was valued. You know why? Because it took so long and cost so much to make the linen fine and the Word of God says that under the fire of tribulation, you and I will be refined through a process where the dross is taken off and we are pure. The word fine linen deals with pure linen.

It deals with one that has been refined a lot. And of course, dipped in the blood deals with the fact that it deals with sacrifice. The life of the Christian, if you want to dress like Jesus means sacrifice. It means being pounded. It means being hammered. It means being tested. It means that is why you are fine linen and you are dressed in white because what does white symbolize. Purity. The lamb without spot and blemish was what. It was white. So, the Jew reading this says, "I know what it is to be dressed in heaven's fashion" and after the fifth seal, this is going to be a prophetic study, but it is talking about how the robe. A robe is something that was regal. It was worn publically. How, publically, the robes are white and the next verse, "The king's robe was dipped in blood." That was for the shedding of sins to take to atone for the world's sins and we are riding upon white horses. Horses represent power to the Semitic mind. White being pure. It is a power that is going to be pure, not motivated by the flesh. Fine linen being tested, we have been tested, we are wearing these beautiful garments that are white and clean. Clean, clean, clean. Our lifestyles should be fashionably clean. In today's fashion, if you say live a moral lifestyle, the fashion moguls of Hollywood, New York, and Paris would laugh at you. But the style, the fashion of Christ is pure. It is clean and it is absolute and there is good taste and there is bad taste in the kingdom of God. God's taste is good taste and good taste in the spirit realm is only God's taste. If he says don't do it, don't do it because otherwise you are dressing in an outfit that is going to go out of style and at the judgment, out of style does not make it. You have got to be in style, God's style, good style, fashionable in the image of Christ. That is a challenge for our culture. You know why? Because the world hammers you and me 24 hours a day. No, no, no that is old fashioned. Notice that phrase "old fashioned". That means it is a fashion that is outdated, but Jesus never is old fashioned. He is the past and he is the present. He is the beginning. He is the end. He is the eternal fashion. He will never change. Righteousness and holiness will never be out of style. Never. Because when you pass from this world into the next world, if you are dressed in the right style, ladies and gentlemen, you are going to be ready for the opera. For the singing in heaven, for the chorus of trillions and all he says is "Be holy, just like me

because I am holy.” All of you may have heard a story about a young man who had been writing to a woman. After 2 years of writing, he had been writing to this woman. And she had said to him you’ll recognize me at the train station because I’m going to be wearing a rose. He had never seen her or a photograph of her. This was in the 1940’s. He had fallen in love with her and he said I would love to meet you. He had grown to love her dearly and so the day finally came and he went to this train station and there was the marker in this train station where he was supposed to meet her and he went over to that marker. As he turned and glanced across the station he saw a woman that looked very matronly. She was a little rounder than he expected and she was not very attractive at all and there on her collar sat the red rose. At that moment in time he thought she hasn’t seen me yet, I can take off. But he was a man of integrity, a man of loyalty, he was a man of loving kindness, he was a man of mercy, he was a man who kept his word. He had met Christ and he knew Christ. He was a man of his word and he smiled and walked boldly across that train station floor and he placed his hand on her shoulder and said, “Elizabeth”? The woman turned and looked at him and he said, “I am so blessed to finally meet you.” They talked for a few moments and he just chattered on as to how he loved her and how precious she was to him. When he finally finished, she smiled and said, “Young man, I’m not sure what this is all about but you see that beautiful woman standing right over there? She handed me this rose and asked me to wear it. Apparently, she’s been watching us the whole time and she said please wear this rose and let me see how this man reacts to you. And if he reacts with grace and love, I know he is the man for me and if he turns and walks away, I’ll know that he wasn’t. And as he turned, up walked the most gorgeous, fresh faced, sweet smiling woman he had ever seen. She put her arms around him. She knew him because of his style. She knew him because the fashion he wore was not relevant to who was around him, was not relevant to his flesh, was not relevant to his desires. It was relevant to what the word of God says in 1st Peter, it was his loving kindness and his faithfulness to his word. Today God is calling us to not continue changing based upon circumstance of convenience, based upon circumstance

of self fulfillment or self motivation and furtherance. But based upon, are you going to be faithful to me, child of God? Are you going to be faithful doing what you said you were going to do? Like the man in that station, he would have missed that great blessing coming his way, had he been centered upon the carnal, but he being centered upon the loving kindness and faithfulness was rewarded beyond his imagination. And so it will be for the Christian that wears the scarf, who wears the truth of God as a necklace around his neck and no matter what the fashion designers of the world say is the hippest, latest fad, we will look up with pride until the day we meet Jesus and we will say no matter what the world says, no matter how the world pressures you, I only have one word to say, Jesus never goes out of style. Amen? Never. And so should we ever live, let's pray. Father, in Jesus name, we love you. May our fashion be the robes of fine linen, tested, may it be Father we look at the one whose robes were dipped in blood because of sacrifice delivered us from the prison. Father God in Jesus name, may we not be caught up in what the world says is fashionable. That because everybody else is doing it, it's fashionable, therefore its ok.....