

Summertime Blues

Eddie Cochran recorded *Summertime Blues* in 1958 to extol the problems and challenges of a teenagers life. That tune has been re-done numerous times and remains a ballad of almost timeless nature. For a few minutes however, could we think of the song title as it relates to the upcoming season? School will be out here in less than 2 weeks. Summer always brings some issues into our thinking and maybe we can begin to discuss them here.

Modesty should be part of our summertime plans. Once thought only a problem for young girls and young women, the modesty challenges now extend to older women as well and even to young boys, young men and mature men. There is no longer any monopoly on the modesty market by women. God has created woman as the crowing jewel of all creation (Genesis 2:18-25). She is beautiful beyond compare and is the perfect companion for man. Although created in the image of God and thus sharing a similitude with man, she is wonderfully different. Anatomically, woman is the perfect mate for man and vice versa. Men are attracted to women as they should be and within the God given bond of marriage, sexual relations are wonderful and fulfilling. However God never intended for men or women to put their sexuality on display for all to see. Husbands and wives belong to one another (1 Corinthians 7:4) and not to themselves. They ought not put on exhibit that which God has covered. Recall that God provided modest clothing in the Garden of Eden once sin had entered into the world (Genesis 3:21). The purpose of such would not be to protect from the elements that does not seem necessary at this point. Rather, the purpose was to limit and control lustful notions that might arise from immodest dress.

Some suggest that a person ought not look at or stare at someone who is dressed immodestly; that the one doing the looking is the one sinning. Certainly, to a point, we agree. Jesus said the man who looks for the purpose of lusting has already committed adultery in his heart (Matthew 5:28). But are we willing to hold the skimpy dresser guiltless? No, for that person has created the temptation to sin and must therefore bear some of the blame.

It is impossible to define in precise terms what modesty means. Is it "to the knee" or "below the knee?" Is it one button opened or two? How shall we decide? First parents ought to examine their children before they leave the house. Certainly a father has better idea what young men might be thinking about his daughter. While children grow and mature, they still need the steady hand of mom and dad to ensure their decisions are wise. In general, we might ask how we would feel if we bumped into one of our elders while dressed in a particular way. Or what if the Lord called you home and you appeared before the

judgment seat in your present attire? Even more simple might be to suggest that if we question it ourselves, it is immodest. At the very least, torsos and thighs ought be well covered and clothing ought fit well enough that one can reach and bend without revealing what lies beneath. Make modesty a part of your summer!

Faithful worship should be part of our summertime plans. Summer usually brings vacation time for most of us. A few days away from our normal routine is appropriate and quite rewarding. It recharges our batteries and prepares us to return to work with new energy. But let us not also take a vacation from God. God desires our worship (John 4:23) and certainly is deserving of our devotion. We ought never turn from God, even for a brief week or weekend. When we do, we risk being forsaken by him (2 Chronicles 15:2). To worship God is a privilege which we ought always to seek and desire to do. Let every Christian commit to being in worship both time on Sunday as well as on Wednesday. What a small price for such a great glory.

Many congregations experience a "summer slump" because of lagging attendance and decreased commitment of members. Perhaps the longer days, the warmer outside weather and the more relaxed atmosphere of summer is to blame. But instead, may be suggest a "summer hump"! While taking a vacation from work is good, let us never take a vacation from God. Make faithful worship a part of your summer!

Faith giving should be a part of our summertime plans. Vacations are expensive and frankly, most of us don't do a good enough job planning for them. Meals are always more and the price of travel seems to constantly rise. And, when we are away from our home congregation, it is easy to forget that the work at our home congregation must go on. God has instructed us to give and has given elders the authority to expend funds on behalf of the church. Our elders and deacons spend much time developing our plan of work and our budgets. All of that work comes to naught when the local church cannot depend upon the support of its members. May we suggest that you leave your contribution here when you travel. Place it in an envelope and leave it for the treasurer. At the very least, make it up when you return. Make faithful giving a part of your summer!

Vacation is a wonderful time for escape and enjoyment and we encourage you to go and have fun. But let us remember that the Christian life is a 24/7/365 event which never slows. Your faith: Don't leave home without it!

Bryant Evans

