

# GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Showing What's Important

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A picture of a family of five caught my attention the other day. All were seated at a table for dinner. A meal of ham, English peas, and new potatoes were neatly plated before each family member. A clean linen table cloth graced the table. The mother was dressed in a white dress with a pearl necklace. The little girls were in clean frilly dresses. The little boy's hair was combed, and neatly in place. The father was in a crisp white shirt and tie. All heads were bowed in the offering of thanks. The setting communicated to my mind's eye how important family dinners were to this family.

I could imagine all the busy work and effort expended to create such a serene setting. Cleaning and ironing the clothes and table cloth; carefully folding the napkins; preparing the meal; coordinating all the family members' schedules in order to eat together took effort. But such things you do when something is important to you.

Let's say in the next few years that we will see brethren attending services, and waiting on

the table in walking shorts and tee shirts. Not too long ago I was asked by a visitor from out of town about what we wore to services. I think he would have liked to come in shorts, for when I told he we do not wear shorts to worship, he replied that he had asked because it is a “regional thing” now.

Now, ask yourself, what lies behind such trends in attire for worship? Does not God look upon the heart, instead of man's outward appearance (*I Samuel 16:7*)? Can not I sing and pray in casual clothes? This is not the issue. The issue is, should we approach God in our worship with an informal casual attitude? This is what we communicate with our outward attire.

Worshipping God is not a leisurely stroll in the park, nor an informal picnic, regardless of what region you are from. We are offering worship to our Creator, Redeemer and Judge. We are to do so, “with reverence and awe” (*Hebrews 12:28*). Should we not dress in our best to accompany our heart's reverential best?

Another area in which we communicate just how important

worship services are to us is in our being on time for worship. Tardiness involves “*delay*” and is “*characterized by or proceeding from reluctance; unwilling to move or act; or hanging back.*” I do not think there is anyone here who wants to communicate that they are “reluctant” or “unwilling to move” or deliberately want to “delay” the proceedings of Bible study and worship. If so, we have an attitude that needs correcting. While there will be times in which unforeseen things delay us, chronic tardiness tells others that you are not that interested in the occasion at hand. We dare not be late for a funeral or wedding. What does tardiness to such occasions say to the people and family we are there to honor? Should we not feel the same about Bible study and do all that communicates honor to God and His Word?

Brethren, dressing in clothes honoring the occasion (*cf. Matt. 22:11-12*), and leaving ten minutes earlier can go a long way in showing that gathering for Bible study and worship is a very important activity in our lives.