

# GLAD TIDINGS

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

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## APPEARANCES CAN BE DECEIVING

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**T**he wise man Solomon wrote, “*There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: There is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great wealth*” (Proverbs 13:7). Surely we have known or heard of people who fit both parts of this proverb. There are those who, putting on airs, lead people to think they are rich, but in reality they have nothing. Then, there those folks who, by their dress and living conditions, appear not to have a dime, but you find out later they have millions in the bank. Making sure we focus on the blessings of reality instead of deceptive appearances is the better way to live life. For Solomon also affirms, “*Better is he that is lightly esteemed, and hath a servant, than he that honoreth himself and lacketh bread*” (Proverbs 12:9).

The pleasures of sin often hide sins’ real consequences from man’s view. Solomon instructs all to look at the consequences of drinking intoxicating beverages. On the surface, the drink may look pleasing to the eye, offer a relaxing moment, and promote acceptance among your peers. Solomon exhorts us to “*look not thou upon*

*the wine when it is red, when it sparkleth in the cup, when it goeth down smoothly; at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.*” (Proverbs 23:31-32). Not a few in our country have ruined their spiritual influence for good and physical health because they do not look further than appearance unto what happens “*at the last...*” when contemplating the decision to drink intoxicating beverages. “*Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and who-soever erreth thereby is not wise*” (Proverbs 20:1).

Many would have labeled Moses as crazy for “*choosing to suffer ill treatment with the people of God...*” when he could enjoy all the pleasures Egyptian royalty could offer. Moses looked beyond appearances unto reality and saw the truth that the pleasure of sin is “*for a season*”. (Hebrews 11:25). Sin draws people by offering pleasure, but we can avoid succumbing to the Devil’s deception by looking deeper into sins’ reality. The pleasure of sin is momentary. Then, sin’s corruption and ruin of our well-being takes over (Galatians 6:8, Romans 6:23). In eternity, would you rather be Moses, or Pharaoh?

Looking beyond appearances is very important when it comes to making correct judgments regarding applying God’s word to our lives. Jewish leaders condemned Jesus for healing a man on the sabbath day. In their judgment, such activity was working on the sabbath day, thus breaking the law. Jesus reminds his detractors that circumcising an eight days old male child in order “*that the law of Moses may not be broken*” (John 7:23), sometimes fell on a sabbath day. If one were to judge merely by appearance, circumcising on the sabbath day would appear to be wrong, but in reality it was not. Jesus reasons that if such action, involving cutting away skin, is right even though it fell upon the sabbath day, then how is Jesus condemned for making a man “*whole*” on the sabbath? Jesus exhorts all to “*Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment*” (John 7:24).

Be wise and look beyond appearances when tempted to sin, and confronted with making judgments. Remember, appearances can be deceiving.