

## ***Summertime Temptations***

Summertime is a delightful season in many ways. It is joyfully anticipated by school children and teachers who need to relax from the regimen of the classroom. It is usually a time for many families to take a much needed trip to a place where they can have fun and enjoy themselves. But, as God's people, let us remember that as Christians we are always Christians wherever we are and at whatever time of year it may be. Christianity is a year-round religion. However, during the summer, there are certain temptations that we must overcome and avoid. Let us notice some of them in this short article:

### **1. Neglected worship.**

We are taught not to forsake the assemblies of the church (Heb. 10:25). But some who have been regular in their attendance during other seasons of the year will start allowing summer activities to get in the way, and they will start missing the services of the church. Some will take vacation trips with carefully laid out plans for food, lodging and entertainment, but with no advance planning or thought to where they are going to meet to worship with the saints on the Lord's Day. Christians should not plan vacations and weekend trips with no intentions of attending the worship services of a faithful congregation. This is very unwise and will weaken one's faith.

### **2. Neglected local obligations.**

Every Christian is to support the work of the local congregation by giving cheerfully on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2). How could any child of God think that he is excused from this responsibility because it is summertime? Why should the work of the local church suffer because Christians fail to "make up" their contributions after they return from a trip? One thing is for certain, congregational expenses do not cease during the summer.

### **3. Indecent exposure.**

Some think the moment the weather warms up, it is time to start taking off their clothes, and begin wearing skimpy clothing that leaves most of their bodies exposed. The Apostle Paul plainly says that Christians are to dress modestly (orderly and decent), with propriety (with a sense of dignity, shame, with the ability to blush), and with moderation (seriousness which reflects a heart of modesty and purity) (1 Tim. 2:9-10). Another problem with immodesty is that the person dressing in such a manner can cause another person to sin (Matt. 5:28). If parents have not instilled a sense of modesty in their children's hearts and minds when they are very young, by the time they reach adolescence, it is probably too late. Do you as a parent, or as a husband, want your daughter or wife to become sex objects when they appear in public wearing skimpy, immodest clothing, tight, revealing outfits, swim suits, costumes, uniforms, etc. Do you want your wife or daughter to be the objects of vulgar leers of worldly men who make it a point to lust after and observe their nakedness in scanty, revealing clothing? Is dressing (or better yet, undressing) this way becoming to a Christian? Think about it! Some years back, the Army did a study concerning how soldiers should dress in tropical, desert climates. They found that skin temperatures were actually cooler when they wore loose long pants, as opposed to knee-lengths worn by British soldiers. If you will notice, those who live in hot, desert areas, wear loose, long, light colored clothing that covers the entire body. Exposing our skin when it is hot is not to be used as an excuse to stay cool and dress immodestly.

May we all have a pleasant summer season. But please remember your responsibilities as a Christian. Don't allow the casual, easy-going spirit of the warmer months to sear your conscience and weaken your faith in God.

- by ***R.J. Evans***

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***An Uncertain Sound***

*“For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?” (1 Corinthians 14:8)*

In this context the apostle Paul was addressing the use of spiritual gifts in the first century church. The illustration is an obvious one: in a battlefield situation, the trumpeter must give clear signals so that the soldiers will know whether to advance or retreat. In regards to spiritual gifts, Paul was making the case that speaking in tongues (one of the miraculous gifts given by the Holy Spirit) would not be beneficial if there was no interpreter (another gift) to explain the message.

While we no longer have the miraculous gifts Paul was discussing, the principle of his illustration has important applications to many pertinent matters. We are concerned that uncertain sounds are emanating from many brethren. Just as the apostle explained, people will not be properly advised, and their correct reaction to spiritual dangers will be lacking. For example:

**Social Drinking:** Too often we hear brethren who express a disconcerting lack of conviction against all alcoholic consumption. They typically express it this way: “I don’t drink, but I’m not sure we can say that it is absolutely wrong to do so.” These folks need to realize that their unclear warning will be taken by the weak and the young as a full license to drink alcohol. Good and positive arguments against social drinking are available. Use them, and warn the people!

**Dancing:** A preacher was reported to have preached a sermon about dancing, and at the conclusion he stated that everyone would just have to make up their own mind if it was sinful or not. You guessed it – all the young people rushed off to the prom. You see, his “uncertain sound” left them unprepared to make a right judgment – in fact it empowered them to make exactly the wrong decision!

**Immodest dress:** Again, we hear too many of our brethren expressing doubts about standards of modesty. They will be heard to say things like, “I don’t think you can draw any absolute lines.” They mean, of course, that no one can say for sure if this is too short, too tight, too low cut, etc. The implication is that everyone must just figure it out for themselves. We deny it! The Scriptures give clear teaching on what parts of the body must be covered to avoid “nakedness” – and modesty would keep one far away from those limits. Teach this, and help folks – especially young folks – know how to dress and act as God desires.

We need clear and plain teaching and preaching. We do not need to hear uncertain sounds coming from our pulpits and Bible classes. To put it bluntly, if you don’t know or can’t be sure, please keep your doubts and reservations to yourself! On the spiritual battlefield we need to hear clear and certain sounds. Think!

**- by Greg Gwin**