

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

March 17

2019

Editor's Note: I am sure that each of us can appreciate those who have had a positive influence in our lives. I have been blessed to have many individuals who were wonderful examples and made an impact on my life. One of these was A. C. Grider. Brother Grider was preaching in Louisville, Kentucky when I first began preaching the gospel. Brother Grider was not ashamed of the gospel and boldly defended the truth. Some (even those who might agree with him) were critical of his methods at times. I remember one instance when a young man who was criticizing his methods said, "brother Grider, there's more than one way to skin a cat." Brother Grider quickly replied, "Yes, but the cat doesn't like any of them." So it is. False teachers don't like any exposure of their error. Brother Grider accomplished much good in his proclamation and defense of the gospel. The following article is an example of his plain and simple manner in presenting the truth of God's word. (JH)



“Why I Am A Member Of The church Of Christ”

I didn't join the church of Christ. I didn't select the church of Christ as "my choice" from among many churches. It never occurred to me that I had a choice nor that I desired to make a choice of churches.

I started thinking about my spiritual condition down in Tennessee several years ago and made up my mind that I should do something about it. I began to consider what the Lord wanted me to do. I started to study my Bible.

I found that I was a sinner and that Christ was the savior. I found that if I were ever saved it would only be by Christ. I considered His word

relative to what to do to be saved. He said I should repent (Luke 13:3). I did. He said I should confess Him (Matthew 10:32). I did. He said I should be baptized (Mark 16:16). I did. He said if I would do these things I would *be saved*. I was. The *Bible* taught that when I was saved the Lord added me to the church (Acts 2:47). He did.

Now, *which church* did he add me to? *His* (Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28; Romans 16:16). Thus I am a member of the church of Christ because I had *no choice* and wanted none. I just wanted to be saved. And I was!
✍️ A.C. Grider (1912-1990)



Two Ways to "Soundness"

Three men rebel against hypocrisy, but they vary greatly in their reactions.

The first man turns to total moral abandonment. He throws off all restraint as he gives himself to the fulfillment of every fleshly desire. "Self" becomes his god. He hardens himself to the tears of his family as he goes out to do what he wants to do. His "justification" for his shameful conduct: "At least I'm not a hypocrite!"

The second man goes to the opposite extreme. He is fed up with the weakness and hypocrisy that he sees in all the churches, and he is not going to be like such people. He will become a Christian and from the beginning "he's going to live with it." He will be an example of what a Christian really ought to be. To him, the cure for hypocrisy is perfection.

The third man wants to avoid hypocrisy in his life, but at the same time, he has a deep sense of his own imperfection. So he takes on no air in infallibility, but sets out to be genuine. His genuineness soon becomes apparent to others. He does not claim perfection, but he strives for perfection. As he worships God, he does not claim to be perfect as a worshipper, but when the singing begins he gives his heart to what he's doing; when the prayer is led, he listens and makes the prayer his prayer; during the supper he meditates on the suffering of the Lord; and throughout the sermon he participates in a study of God's word; if his mind wanders, he brings it back; and when the worship period ends, he asks God to forgive him for his failure and to accept his worship in spite of his imperfection. When he goes to his job, he does not claim perfection among his fellow workers, but they know that he will try to give eight hours of work for eight hours of pay; that he is trustworthy; that he is pure in speech and life; and

that if he is ever overcome by pressure around him to sin, he will humbly seek the forgiveness of those who have been wronged.

He is the same in the home. His family respects him because he is genuine and does not claim strength and goodness beyond reality. His family sees his faults, but his one redeeming quality that enables him to maintain their respect is his ability to say, "I'm sorry." In every area of his life, he walks humbly before his God and his fellow man.

Our third man has found the true cure for hypocrisy. The first man, if he does not repent, will someday be a miserable wretch, his life completely torn and shattered. The second man is headed for disillusionment. His goals are unreal; his outlook is totally wrong. But the man who "walks humbly with his God" and is wholly free from guile and is a blessed man indeed. His life and his attitude with God is what God wants it to be and he lives in hope of heaven.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"
(Matthew 5:3). ✠ Robert Turner



"OUTWARD APPEARANCE"

We all recognize the danger of forming conclusions based solely on outward appearance. Samuel learned this lesson while carrying out God's instruction to anoint a king in Israel after God had rejected Saul as king. God told Samuel, *"Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."* (1 Samuel 16:7). The story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) also illustrates that being attired in fine clothing (v. 19) does not assure that one is acceptable to God. In fact, James teaches us that we sin if we show respect of persons based upon wealth and fine clothing (James 2:1-9). To be accepted of God we must *"obey from the heart"* (Romans 6:17).

Even though outward appearance is not to be the standard by which we determine acceptability before God we must not overlook the fact that outward appearance can sometimes be a reflection of what is within. The wise man spoke of the *"attire of a harlot"* (Proverbs 7:10). No details are given as to what this attire may have been but whatever it was, it identified the one wearing the attire as a harlot. On the other hand, Paul, in writing to the young evangelist Timothy, said women should *"adorn themselves in*

modest apparel" and describes such as that *"which becometh women professing godliness"* (1 Timothy 2:9,10). From these scriptures we see that immoral women and godly women, when desirous of reflecting their character, will not dress the same. There is a manner of dress that suggests an immoral woman. A godly woman will not dress in this manner, but will dress in such a manner as to indicate she is a *"woman professing godliness."* Godly women have a sense of modesty and shamefacedness that will be reflected in their dress. Young (and older) women, remember, when you are wearing your shorts and other revealing attire, you are sending a message to those who see you. I might add that the same applies to men. What do you want people to think of you? The way you dress may determine the answer.

Our outward appearance can also be a reflection of how important we view certain occasions. When Joseph was called from prison to appear before Pharaoh the Bible says *"he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh"* (Genesis 41:14). I am sure each of us would have done the same. When we attend the funeral of a friend or loved one we dress in a manner that shows respect. Most people would not think of dressing for a wedding or funeral in the same way they would if they were going on a picnic in the woods. Why is it that many will come to worship God and remember the death of His Son dressed as though they had just come from a game of back-yard volley ball or were going to such. We are not trying to bind a certain dress code or trying to place undue emphasis upon outward appearance? We simply recognize that there is proper attire for different occasions which reflects our attitude toward that occasion.

✠ James Hahn

Belleville church of Christ

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Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

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