

WATCH YOUR MANNERS

When I was growing up in the 60's and 70's, you'd often hear parents say this to their children, "Watch Your Manners!" Now, as I observe the continuing downward slide of society, manners are a lost art. As the morals go, so go the manners.

What is even more disheartening, is to realize how many Christians, or at least professing Christians, really don't seem to care. It has become acceptable to be rude, sloppy, loud, inconsiderate, greedy, pushy, etc...

Ezek. 11:12 says, "And ye shall know that I am the LORD: for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but have done after the **manners** of the heathen that are round about you." 1Cor.15:33 says, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good **manners**."

There are some words which have at least some association to each other, and even though Satan is out to destroy the language of the Bible, most every clear thinking American still respects what we might call "character" or even "class." Christians, above all others, should strive to be "a class act." We should be people of character, and like it or not, this involves what the saints of old had in mind when they said, "Watch your Manners."

Without going into further defense of this tract, I'll simply say, it is written for those who desire to hold on to some of the "old paths" and "train up" (not down) some young people who will be "grown up in their youth." (Jer.6:16; Prov.22:6; and Ps.144:12) In this dark world, we need Christians who will SHINE for the Lord (Phil.2:15)

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We have very little space in this tract, so we'll list some manners which we hope will be helpful to those who are interested. (We hope to expand this material into book form in the near future.) It should be mentioned, teaching manners leads to much more than boys and girls having the right "actions." It helps them learn submission, discipline, self-control, and many other helpful traits which will assist them all of their lives. O.K. Here we go:

- * Learn how to say, "thank you," "no thank you," "yes sir," "no sir," "yes ma'am," "no ma'am," "excuse me," "pardon me," etc... at the proper time.
- * Always rise when a lady, an older person, or a person of respect walks into the room or approaches you.
- * Look people in the eyes when you speak to them.
- * Let people finish their sentence without interrupting them.
- * Open doors for others, especially ladies.
- * Take your hat off when indoors, especially in church and at the table.
- * When standing in line and someone walks in, offer them your place, especially an older person.
- * When someone tells you about something they've done, be careful about trying to "outdo" them with your own story.
- * Send "Thank You" notes .
- * Develop good posture.
- * Carry a handkerchief with you at all times.
- * Don't smack and don't talk with your mouth full of food.
- * Don't handle the food unless you are going to eat it.
- * When the flag is being saluted or honored, stand up straight and show respect.
- * Eat what is set before you and be thankful.
- * Say "thank you" at the end of the meal and help put things away.
- * Be on time.
- * Don't walk between two people; stop and say, "excuse me."

- * Don't run inside or in crowded places.
- * Cover your mouth when you cough, sneeze, yawn, etc...
- * Keep your hands to yourself.
- * Eat in moderation.
- * Don't whisper
- * Don't point
- * Don't talk while others are talking

A FEW "RULES TO REMEMBER"

Character builds trust by being RESPONSIBLE:

- * If character turns it on, character turns it off
- * If character borrows it, character returns it
- * If character moves it, character replaces it
- * If character opens it, character closes it

CHARACTER is ON TIME, HONEST, THANKFUL, LOYAL, OBEDIENT, RESPECTFUL, SENSITIVE, AND ORDERLY.

Now, these are some basic rules to follow, they are not difficult, and with consistent training, all of the above will become "second nature" in no time at all. All of us will break the rules occasionally and sometimes with justification. They are the "rule" and "the exception proves the rule." These manners are intended to help your testimony and improve your discipline, they should never lead to self-righteousness or arrogance.

MANNERS FOR CHURCH

1Tim.3:15 says, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to **behave thyself** in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." I also use to hear another phrase as I grew up, "Behave yourself!" I realize the "house of God" is actually the saved people, but the principle is obvious. So, here are a few manners to work on.

Mind Your Manners

A tract for Christians



- * Be on time.
- * Look for new faces to speak to
- * Look for opportunities to be friendly, especially with those who are quiet or shy.
 - * Rise when approached
 - * Don't chew gum in church
 - * Take your hat off immediately
- * Sing and participate in the service
 - * Be on time
- * Don't be moving around and don't be going in and out
 - * Sit still and pay attention
 - * Don't run
- * Don't take food or drinks in the sanctuary or other designated places
- * Don't talk during preaching, singing, Bible reading, scripture memory, etc...
 - * Call or write those who are not present
 - * Be on time
- * Don't "huddle together" in such a way as to leave someone else feeling left out.
- * Don't walk around with straws, toothpicks, or pens in your mouth.
 - * Keep your hands to yourself.
- * Don't push yourself through a crowded line

WHAT ABOUT CLOTHES?

People have abused the truth that God looks on the heart. Surely, God is more interested in the heart than outer appearances. However, history, common sense, and scripture clearly teach that "outer appearances" do matter and often indicate something about the heart. We use to see signs that said, "No shoes, no shirt - NO SERVICE." That was found posted by unsaved people who had a sense of decency that even Christians don't have today. Like it or not, believe it or not, your clothes do speak.

In the Bible, we find the "attire of an harlot," a bride's attire, clothes of self righteous scribes, "mourning apparel," "royal apparel," and even "strange apparel." (Pr.7:10; Jer.2:32; Lk.20:46; 2Sam.14:2; Esther 5:1; and Zeph.1:8). Furthermore, we can not deny the Bible facts - God likes things clean, decent, and in order. Rev.19:8,14; 1Cor.14:40.

Just as our manners have gone down hill with society, so have our standards. As surely as morals and manners go together, so do character and clothes. Again, without defending this tract further, we'll now list some **GUIDELINES for GODLINESS** in the area of clothes:

* The Bible seems to indicate that the THIGH is connected to nakedness. (Ex.28:42; Isa.47:1-3) It is therefore wise to wear clothes that reach below the knee. Common sense along with the Bible indicates what "attracts." We conclude therefore the following:
* Avoid sleeveless tops, slits, low neck-lines, form fitting or tight clothes, worldly fads; avoid showing your belly, loud colors - whether on your clothes, fingernails, or eye-lids, avoid too much make-up (the Bible word is "paint"), and avoid too much jewelry.

* Concerning clothes, notice we are not aiming any of the above or the following at men or women. We would like to believe there are still a few sane people left in this world who know which rules apply to both or to only the male or female. (There was a time when "under wear" meant something you wear under your clothes. Today's "outer wear" is more revealing than yesterday's "under wear.")

For those who think this is archaic, old-fashioned non-sense, I ask you to consider the "fruit" of modern standards. Statistics support my convictions! The problem is obvious, as we lose our morals, our manners follow. Out goes character, and off go the clothes.

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**A Biblically Based Look at
Morals and Manners**