

Called to Be Rebels!

Are our lives a sign to the world that we are God's people?

Have you ever thought of yourself as a rebel? The word “rebel” has strong negative connotations in this country, unless you happened to be a Southerner during the Civil War, since it implies someone who is working contrary to the status quo. So often that means the person is doing something horribly wrong and deserves to be demeaned, punished, or even incarcerated. We speak of a rebellious child as one who acts contrary to his parent's guidance, and becomes dangerous to others or to himself. An entire state or nation can rebel against other states and nations, in which case war against that state is likely, such as when the northern ten tribes of Israel revolted against Judah, or when the Southern states seceded from the rest of the United States.

However, rebellion is not necessarily a bad idea. During the Revolutionary War many people of America fought against the British, which led to independence of the United States against a rather tyrannical British crown. Whether we believe that rebellion was justified or not, the result was a nation destined to become the bastion for freedom and liberty like no other nation in history. What about a soldier captured during war; is he not justified in rebelling against his captors and trying to escape?

What about us Christians? Are we to live in conformity to the rules of a evil society around us and passively accept our state ... or are we to rebel against those rules in favor of building a just and Godly society, at least within our own families?

What Is Rebellion?

According to the *American Dictionary of the English Language* (Noah Webster, 1828), rebel means “One who revolts from the government to which he owes allegiance, either by openly renouncing the authority of that government, or by taking arms and openly opposing it.” Rebel can also mean “One who willingly violates the law”, or “One who willingly disobeys the king's proclamation”. It is the first definition that best defines the status of Christians as rebels to the authority of today's government, which we know is ordered around the character of

the adversary, Satan the devil, for II Corinthians 4:4 states,

“... in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

Let us examine what God requires of us as followers of Christ to live in this world — to be rebels to this social order — and compare this requirement with the ways of the society and culture around us that are ordered around Satan's character. After all, we know that the Sabbath is a sign that we are His people (Exodus 31:13; Ezekiel 20:12, 22); ought not our personal lifestyle also be a witness to the world that we are His people?

To Whom Do We Owe Allegiance?

This world's system has an allegiance to Satan the devil, as we just read in II Corinthians 4:4, and as restated in John 12:31, 14:30, and 16:11 (the prince of this world”), and Ephesians 6:12. The forces we war against are not flesh and blood, but “... *principalities ... powers ... rulers of the darkness of this world ... [and] wicked spirits in high places.*” This world's system wishes to totally envelope every human being made in God's image within a cocoon of servitude to the adversary, wherein each person takes on the Mark of the Beast. This adversary is so lividly opposed to any competition from Godliness that he wishes that anyone who will not worship the image of the beast should die (Revelation 13:15).

“And he [the False Prophet] causes all, small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hands, and in their foreheads, and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name [which is 666].” Revelation 13:16-18.

While it is clearly the objective of the adversary and his system to capture all of mankind to obedience to himself and the leaders under him, the saints are to avoid this captivity with utmost energy and commitment.

“Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. Their breath goes forth, he returns to the earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” Psalm 146:3-4.

When a conflict arises between god’s laws and man’s commands, we are to choose the ways of God as so clearly spelled out by Peter and the other disciples with him.

“‘Did we [the council and the high priest] not straitly command you that you should not teach in this name? And behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us’. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, ‘We ought to obey God rather than men.’” Acts 5:28-29.

The total focus of God’s people is obedience to our Creator, to be “... casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (II Corinthians 10:5). As Christ stated in Luke 20:38, “*God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto Him.*” Our allegiance is to the One who made us, and not to the god of this world who has subtly wrapped a false facade upon the truth and perfection of the Creator’s ways.

With Whom, and How Do We Associate With Our Fellow Man?

Today’s world, like yesterday’s world, is fraught with people of all sorts, having qualities and persuasions of infinite variety. So often people are classified in a caste system of sorts, those having multitudes of money and material possessions placing themselves higher — in their own eyes and in the eyes of others

— than those of lesser substance. This nature of pride in mankind in no way implies that wealthy people cannot be humble or righteous, for Abraham, the father of the faithful, was a very rich man in cattle, gold, and silver, besides having a large contingent of family and servants (Genesis 13:2). Although it is difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven it is not impossible (Matthew 19:23-24).

We see in Luke 22:24-27 a succinct view of who is really considered to be great in this world, and who is great in the eyes of our Creator. There is a great chasm between the two, and we obviously must gain friends among the servants Christ describes here.

“And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And He said unto them, ‘The kings of the gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors [euergetes, or “a well-doer”]. But you shall not be so, but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief as he that serves. For who is greater, he that sits at meat or he that serves? Is not he that sits at meat? But I am among you as He that serves.” (See also Matthew 20:25-28).

It is the humble that are able to draw close to God (Isaiah 66:2), those who put no trust in themselves to bring about their desired end in life. They will not exalt themselves, but surrender continually to the One who made them and guides them as they submit to Him.

While it is hardly possible to avoid associating with the rich and powerful of this world, who often-times attempt to use people of low status to their own profit, we are shown those with whom we ought to associate. Paul stated that the Christian ought to fellowship with people of humble character — “*All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted*” (Matthew 23:12) — and submit themselves to fellow Christians in the fear of God (Ephesians 5:21), be subject to one another, “... *and be clothed in humility, for God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble*” (I Peter 5:5).

“Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 2:3-5.

Our best friends need to be the brethren, with whom we are encouraged to fellowship often (Malachi 3:16; Hebrews 10:25), even as Christ defined our true kin as our brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers, wives, and children in the faith (Matthew 19:29). Everyone who has left relatives, kin, and lands in this world’s evil system will find true family members within the ecclesia and *“... receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life. But many that are first will be last, and the last shall be first”* (Matthew 19:29-30). God truly turns the world upside down!

Rather than latch on to the rich of this world, we are to *“Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate”* (Romans 12:16). As Jeremiah told his servant Baruch, *“Seek you great things for yourself? Seek them not, for behold I will bring evil upon all flesh, says the Lord, but your life will I give unto you for a prey in all places where you go”* (Jeremiah 45:5).

Moreover, even as the world’s system encourages people to recompense evil for evil, we are not to do so but are to live in peace with all men, as much as we are able. Paul stated in Romans 12:19-21,

“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine’ I will repay, says the Lord. Therefore, if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him drink, for in so doing you shall heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

When the evil of others threatens to overpower us, we are encouraged by the words of David to pray for the demise of the wicked. Several Imprecatory Prayers are voiced in Psalms to this effect, such as Psalm 109, where all sorts of evil are wished upon our wicked oppressors — a short life, cursed chil-

dren, poverty, and curses of every sort — but those punishments are to be meted out by God, not by any of us. He knows in His perfect knowledge what is the best treatment of all of His creations, even the wicked.

How Should We View Riches and Wealth?

This topic has already been discussed to some degree, but let us concentrate a bit more on the issue of money and wealth. We read earlier, in Luke 22:24 to 27, that *“... the gentiles exercise lordship ...”* over others, and the rich find it very hard to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 19:23-24).

Christ in the Parable of the Sower said that the seeds sown among thorns represent those who have too many cares of this world and deceitful riches that choke out the word of God, and they become unfruitful. Paul emphasized the great troubles that accrue when riches abound in a person’s life.

“But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” I Timothy 6:9-10.

Moreover, James in chapter 5:1-6 illustrates the typical quandary of the rich, who oftentimes hoard their wealth in various forms, and extract wealth from workers by not paying them their worth.

“Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is kept back by fraud, cries; and the cries of them who have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Hosts”. James 5:4.

Those wealthy, self-centered individuals who care not to grant just wages to their workmen, and live in pleasure and feasting while the underpaid workers *“... you have condemned and killed ... and he does not resist you”* (James 5:5-6), are very much in the same category as the “great men of the earth” who are utterly condemned in Revelation 18, those

merchants of the end-time who traded in all sorts of commodities by ships. These wealthy shippers live in the shadow of their father Satan the devil, who once was perfect until “...*iniquity was found in you By the multitude of your merchandise they have filled the midst of you with violence, and you have sinned ...*” (Ezekiel 28:15-16).

Though physical wealth and riches are a strong deterrent to growing close to one’s Creator — and few of the rich accept God’s calling — it is not the wealth itself that is the problem but the attitude one has towards the wealth ... and the use one puts it to. God Himself owns all that is — “... *the earth is the Lord’s, and all its fullness*” (I Corinthians 10:28) — yet He is the epitome of graciousness, humility, and kindness (Jeremiah 9:24; Exodus 34:6; Psalm 86:15; Joel 2:13). It is the “poor in spirit” who are blessed, or, as some versions say, “*Blessed in spirit are the poor ...*” (Matthew 5:3), who will receive the Kingdom of God. As Christ in the Sermon on the Mount makes clear, those that mourn today, the meek and lowly, those who hunger for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, and the peacemakers will be blessed and given eternal life, though for a season here on earth they will suffer persecution and discomfort.

We should view riches and wealth with thanksgiving, should we be granted them, for surely this was Abraham’s attitude. We must never set our hearts on them (Psalm 62:10), for, as Solomon attested, “... *riches certainly make themselves wings ...*” (Proverbs 23:5). They are here today and may be gone tomorrow. We should ask God to give us neither poverty nor riches, but that He “... *feed me with the food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny [God], and say ‘Who is the Lord?’, or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain*” (Proverbs 30:9).

God has not chosen the rich and great in this world to be His people, but He has chosen the foolish, the weak, and the base to confound the rich, mighty, and noble in this world, “... *to bring to nothing the things that are ... that no flesh should glory in His presence*” (I Corinthians 1:26-29). God turns the world upside down! He takes poor beggars like Lazarus and promises to bring them into his heavenly realm while forsaking the rich unbelievers (Luke 16:19-31). Our brethren in the faith will seldom be rich and famous, but that is God’s design. We are

rebels to the world’s system and enemies of its author, Satan the devil.

Who Is Praised and Lifted Up?

We have already examined several scriptures that indicate how the present society lifts up the wealthy and those in positions of power — the two usually go together — and we can add to them the people of notoriety such as sports stars, those noted in the sciences and the arts, and in business ... those whom the media advertise as being great and worthy of the praise of men. Yet, our God in heaven reveals,

“But woe unto you that are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full [of material things], for you shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets.” Luke 6:24-26.

Contrariwise, those who are poor, hungry, hated, reproached, and cast aside in this age are told by our Savior to rejoice, not only in the age to come when all fear and tears will be cast away, but in the present age as well (Luke 6:20-23).

In the eyes of the Creator it is those who are scorned and berated for righteousness’ sake who are the victors, for whom He fights. This was made plain by Peter.

“For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endures grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, when you are buffeted for your faults, you take it patiently; but if, when you do well and suffer for it and you take it patiently, that is acceptable with God.” I Peter 20:19-20.

“But and if you suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are you; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled.” I Peter 3:14.

“If you be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are you, for the spirit of glory

and of God rests upon you; on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf." I Peter 4:14-16.

As rebels to this culture's standards, we as Christians cast aside the lauding of those considered great in today's world ... the rich, the powerful, the excellent physical standouts in sports, and the highly educated standouts in universities, the business world, and medicine. We must look upon the heart, as our Creator does for us, and praise those who praise and serve Him.

What Do We Eat and Drink?

A question so basic as diet ought to elicit strong reactions, since eating and drinking are so basic to our existence. Jesus Christ told us to "... *take no [anxious] thought for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink Is not life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*" (Matthew 6:25). Does this mean we ought to eat most anything presented to us by a society whose organizer and prince is Satan the devil? Recall that Christ said He is the "bread of life" (John 6:35, 48, 51), and does not taking into our beings this quality of life parallel with what sort of physical food we ought to partake of?

Even many religious leaders of this society claim that pork, shellfish, refined foods, and additives are fine to eat. They will quote Mark 7:19 which states that food enters into the stomach and finds its way into the toilet, "purging all foods". They will further quote Genesis 9:3 which quotes Elohim as saying that Noah and his descendants could now eat every moving thing that lives. Then they will go to John 10 and claim that the sheet containing four-footed and wild beasts, creeping things, and birds, which Peter was commanded to kill and eat, makes clean all sorts of wild things heretofore unacceptable.

Society as a whole does not challenge such liberty to eat anything and everything, even though all of the so-called scriptural proofs have not suddenly allowed unclean foods to be eaten. It is clear that

Mark 7:19 is analogizing physical food with evil thoughts and attitudes that enter into and defile a person from within; this is not announcing a change in Biblical dietary laws. Nor was Elohim telling Noah that all moving creatures could be eaten, for Noah knew the difference between clean and unclean animals; he had them as such on the ark. Acts 20 relates that the unclean beasts and creeping things that Peter was to "eat" were actually representations of gentile nations, considered unclean to Israelites and unable up to this time to join the fellowship of the saints, who were all from the line of Israel. Now Peter could say that "... *in every nation he that fears him and works righteousness is accepted with Him*" (Acts 10:35).

The rebels of God's ecclesia are told to "... *come out from among them, and be you separate, says the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you*" (II Corinthians 8:17), and "*Come out of her My people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues*" (Revelation 18:4). This world's mantra that "anything goes" is negated by God's word to reject society's standards and "*come out from among them*", and "... *be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God*" (Romans 12:2).

We eat what is clean in God's eyes, fruits and vegetables with seeds (Genesis 1:29), and four-footed animals that chew the cud and part the hoof; this does not include swine. We are permitted to eat fish with fins and scales, and seed-eating birds (Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 5), not because of any ceremonial cleanness but because these foods are good for our health.

Beyond that, in today's industrial society where factories and processing plants, coupled with modern economics, encourage long shelf life and refining, the Christian must not allow his tastes to be perverted by artificial sweeteners and commercial flavoring agents superimposed on refined, lifeless foods. "*The life is in the blood*" (Deuteronomy 12:23), and foods that limit this life ought to be shunned. They are foods stolen from, disobeying the Eighth Commandment.

As rebels, God's people will consume vegetable foods that are grown, if at all possible, on soils that are high in minerals and organic matter, and of the

sort that Genesis 1:29 indicates. Any animal, fish, or poultry flesh they eat will be of clean species, and raised naturally apart from feed lots where growth hormones and antibiotics are used; for beef and lamb that means grass fed, for fish that means wild-caught, and for poultry that means uncaged and fed naturally raised grains and no meat products.

The Christian will shun refined flour and refined sugars ... refined anything. The slogan should be “whole or nothing!” Sucrose and fructose, as well as aspartame, cyclamates, Splenda, and other sweeteners will be anathema, as will processed foods or foods containing artificial colorings, stabilizers, emulsifiers, and preservatives. Whatever is able to kill or deter microbes in foods will also hinder life within the human body. The Christian will avoid fluoridated and chlorinated water, milk from megadairies that has been pasteurized and homogenized, and artificially sweetened and sugary drinks. He will consume fresh, unpolluted, whole, nutrient-dense foods, and renounce the promise of death and disease from a diet fed to the uneducated masses. He might invest in a juicer, or obtain a small acreage and have a cow for fresh milk. He may raise a garden of his own, and avoid genetically modified foods (GMOs) and their toxins, which create considerable havoc to the human body. He will take to heart the promise God gave to Israel,

“If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord your God and will do that which is right in His sight, and will obey His commandments and keep His statutes, I will bring none of these plagues upon you which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord your Healer.” Exodus 15:26.

What Do We Read and Watch?

Today’s world is one filled with enormous pitfalls as Satan fights for the control of everyone’s mind. That control relates directly to what is poured into the mind. As a person becomes a product of his physical diet of food and drink, so one’s thoughts and dreams become a product of his daily reading and viewing. There is no greater focus of the adversary’s intent on expropriating the minds of people than the toxic output of Hollywood ... though one need not

limit the focus to that one place. The scum of the ‘Prince of the power of the air’ (Ephesians 2:2) pervades the radio and television networks, most of the printed media, advertising, and even what is noted in literature as “classics”. Most of those works are icons of evil, such as Plato’s *The Republic*, Nietzsche’s *The Gay Science*, and Darwin’s *The Origins of Species*. If one wants a close look at the mind of the adversary, just look at which books in history are memorialized as being great. Even school texts nowadays are being revised to vilify the founding fathers of America, while uplifting the rebels of a sane and noble world such as George Soros, Ayn Rand, Martin Luther King, Mohammed, and John Lennon.

Today’s television and movie viewers are fed a diet laced with violence, death, adultery, fornication, child rebellion, theft, and idolatry in horrible contradiction to God’s directions. Would it rather be wise for the chosen people of God to heed what God has directed us to do?

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Philippians 4:8

We think upon the things that go into our minds. Why place within our thoughts the things that pique lusts of the flesh, vanity, pride, self-centeredness, and sensuality? The Apostle Paul warned in all of his letters to avoid such things. In Romans 7:15 and 18 he stated,

“For what I am doing I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice, but what I hate, that I do For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), nothing good dwells, for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.”

The inner being wishes to serve itself, if not in contact with God’s spirit, as Paul so succinctly stated in Romans 8:7: “*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.*” That being the case, why then

feed the carnal mind with the movies and literature that entice it, but which war against the purity of God's spirit? Note what is said in Isaiah 33:14-17.

"Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, he who despises the gain of oppressions, who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high, his place of defense will be the fortress of rocks; bread will be given him, his water will be sure. Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; they will see the land that is very far off."

Those that are to dwell with the heavenly Father will be turning away from viewing and hearing of violence and killing, from listening and viewing of evil, whether in television, movies, or radio, books, or billboards. It is difficult to shut one's eyes and ears to all of those evils around us, because evil is so pervasive, but God can give us the power to avoid such thoughts that war against the things of the spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

We are instructed to *"Watch therefore and pray always, that ye may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man"* (Luke 21:36). We must keep our eyes on the events around us, and that surely means taking note of the descent of our nation into immorality. Yet, we must not dwell upon these evils, and avoid viewing them and listening to them whenever we can. The body is the temple of the holy spirit, and we are not owned by ourselves. God owns us and yearns to create in us perfect, holy, righteous character. He can do that only if we obey what He asks us to do, and carefully guard our eyes and ears ... and keep the pathways to our mind pure. We must be rebels to what the culture around us offers.

What Music Do We Listen To?

Music is such a powerful motivator of thought

and attitude that it deserves to be treated separately. Music motivates entire nations, moving them towards peace and love or towards militaristic exploits. The adversary, Satan the devil, the one who was at first perfect in every way, was created with *"... tabrets and ... pipes"* (Ezekiel 28:14), so was proficient in music at his beginning, just as he is proficient at guiding the development of sensual, carnal music to this very day ... moving musicians towards rock-and-roll, rap, jazz, and many other genres of music that cause people to sin. Today, music has degenerated into unlistenable, jungle beat, droning, diabolical swill that pulls the spirit down to a sensual pit. To listen to today's menu of music is to bear the pain of rebellion to rational thought and Godly principles. It is the opposite of righteousness.

God's people are repulsed by this hideous drivel resounding from radio, television, movies, and CDs. Instead, they are swept up by the harmonies of rhythmic and pleasant melodies, ones that lift the spirit and complement the natural world Elohim created. The Psalms are really God's words set to music, as so are many other portions of His word. God often spoke to the prophets of old through music, and scriptures throughout the Bible emphasize singing praises to Him (Judges 5:3; II Samuel 22:50; Psalm 9:2, 11; 27:8; 47:8; 108:3). The order of the first temple had choirs singing praises to God continually (I Chronicles 16:5-37; II Chronicles 29:28-30). At Christ's birth an angelic choir sang praises of the new child (Luke 2:13-14), and at the time of the end the elders, angels, and spirits in heaven will sing songs of praise to God (Revelation 5:9; 14:3; 15:3).

The New Testament church was directed to sing praises to God as well: *"Are any among you afflicted? Let them pray. Are any merry? Let them sing psalms"* (James 5:13). In fact, God tells us through the Apostle Paul to speak to one another in spiritual songs!

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" Ephesians 5:18-19.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly

in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Colossians 3:16.

Within our minds and amongst one another God has shown we ought to be rebels, communicating in spiritual songs and hymns, praising the God of heaven, not the sensuality of this world. He turns the world upside down. He shows us how to rebel not through discordant, jangling, off-beat music but through harmonious, concordant, blessed vibrations

How Do We Dress and Appear?

It is common knowledge that clothes designs are changed regularly to increase sales and profits, and to gradually move toward styles that are more revealing and oftentimes ugly and sloppy looking. Take, for instance, the trend away from well-groomed suits in the workplace to jeans, and shirts hanging down over the waist. In some cases the jeans hang so low on the waist that it seems they could fall down at any moment.

Modesty in dress is out of fashion amongst the vast majority of people in this nation. Swimmers of a century ago would not believe the skimpiness of today’s swimming wear, which leaves little uncovered and triggers lust for the normal male. Likewise do short skirts and dresses. Makeup for women has become an art, with cosmetic sales in the billions of dollars each year, in an effort to make women appear more physically attractive ... or so they think. There is even the attempt of some men to dress like women, and women dress like men. The seduction of men through their attire and makeup is apparently nothing new, for in Isaiah 3: 16-23.

“Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, making a jingling with their feet, therefore the Lord will strike with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will uncover their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the finery: the jingling anklets, the scarves, and the crescents; the pendants, the bracelets,

and the veils; the headdresses, the leg ornaments, and the headbands; the perfume boxes, the charms, and the rings; the nose jewels, the festal apparel, and the mantles; the outer garments, the purses, and the mirrors; the fine linen, the turbans, and the robes.”

The end result of this attitude of the women was to be a “stink”, to wear a “worker’s apron”, “baldness”, and war and defeat. It would have been so easy instead for the people of Israel to listen and obey, but being stiffnecked has no easy remedy.

To rebel against this evil society and its immodest dress code is to put on modesty and humility in one’s apparel and ornaments.

“... in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, 10 but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.” I Timothy 2:9-10.

“Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.” I Peter 3:3-4.

Moreover, a person is not to dress like one of the opposite sex (Deuteronomy 22:5), nor is he to adore himself with tatoos (Leviticus 19:28), for these were practices of pagan tribes that populated Canaan before Israel moved in. It is quite obvious that one’s dress and adornment ought to be seasoned with humility and the fear of the Creator ... without which one cannot approach Him (Isaiah 66:2). We must be rebels and refuse to take on the dress code of the heathens.

What Sort of Occupation Should I Have?

The work afforded to people amidst Babylon the Great is as varied as the imagination of mankind will

allow. It used to be that most families were farmer families, but nowadays only about 2% of all families live on farms. Farm life was idyllic in many ways, since the husband, wife, and children worked closely together while producing the needs for the family, within an environment close to the natural creation. It was, and still can be, a healthful, spiritually uplifting occupation.

Today farming for many — the survivors of the flight from the land — is a factory enterprise, far from the family owner-operator ideal of the past. That is true for both crop and livestock farmers, with farm acreages oftentimes over 1,000 acres, and livestock concentrated into cramped feedlots, far removed from a natural setting.

Within the highly urbanized civilization of Babylon, most jobs are located in or near large population centers, which are inherently poor environments to raise families. Satan's objective is to wrench people from the land and place them in high population concentrations, where there is little room for privacy and meditation, or for the natural flora and fauna to spread forth their messages of the creation. Thus, God's people will attempt to locate themselves in a rural setting of some sort, if not on the land itself then in a small town.

What about an occupation? God's directions to the brethren of his day was to remain in the work the person had when he was called. Paul himself was a tentmaker (Acts 18:3), and he practiced this art after his conversion. He stated in I Corinthians 7:20:24,

"Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Are you called being a servant? Do not be concerned about it, but if you can be made free, rather use it. For he who is called while free is Christ's slave. You are boughten with a price; be not the servants of men. Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called"

It was fine for a servant or slave to remain so during his or her Christian walk, but Paul made clear that if circumstances could be improved every attempt should be made to improve them. Surely it is better to be free than a slave. In the same way it is better to be an independent employer or employee

than working in a factory. Independence to set one's own schedule, and to be able to keep the Sabbath and Holy Days without interference, is of great value.

One also ought to consider the character of one's servile work, for as Solomon stated,

"There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he should delight his senses in [enjoy] his labor For God gives to a man that is good in His sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy, but to the sinner he gives travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit." Ecclesiastes 2:24-26.

Within modern-day Babylon a good many of the people work at jobs they dislike; Christ's brethren ought to find employment they truly enjoy and find fulfillment in it, for if you rejoice in your labor it is a gift of God, *"For he shall not much remember the days of his life because God answers him in the joy of his heart"* (Ecclesiastes 6:20). The admonition given to us by Paul is to work with our hands at some occupation ... and indeed fulfillment comes from personal labor using one's hands (Ephesians 4:28; I Thessalonians 4:11).

To rebel against the modern society is to move on to the land if possible, reversing the flood to the cities. It is to find work that you enjoy, and can put your whole energies into (Ecclesiastes 9:10). It also is to be involved with work that is uplifting to one's fellow man. Serving liquor at a bar is not the best environment for God's people, nor is baking white bread for the supermarket. One must examine how the fruits of his labor are used, and strive to become involved with work that is truly uplifting and fulfilling. Many people now work from their homes on computers, using their hands in this fashion while being near the family; in this way the internet can be a blessing. Ideally, if one can involve his sons and daughters in the enterprise and teach them a trade, then the next generation has been given a boost in providing for their own families.

What Spirit Guides Us?

not His” (Romans 8:9), but with that spirit, then ...

“He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His spirit that dwells in you.” Romans 8:11.

What Laws Does One Follow?

Today’s society and its leaders claim that the person is free to practice his own set of laws ... that there is no God who directs what is right and wrong. In its humanistic fervor, educators and politicians teach that everyone is a god of sorts, to know and define good and evil ... the very lie perpetuated upon Adam and Eve by Satan in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:4). Indeed, as stated in Romans 2:14, these people become a “... *law unto themselves*” Men are free, according to this philosophy, to do whatever is pleasing to the senses as long as no one else is hurt. Of course, others are invariably hurt when someone breaks the laws of God; we are all tied together as human beings.

God’s laws are summarized in the Ten Commandments, so deftly stated in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 but amplified throughout Scripture. These laws have always been in force and will continue to be forever, even as they are the nature of the Creator of all who does not change (Hebrews 13:8; Malachi 3:6), and will live forever. The veracity of these laws are obvious in the way human behavior and the natural world work — “*does not nature teach us*” (Romans 1:20) — but those steeped in Satan’s ways choose to disregard the obvious. Lust, greed, and self-willed pride take residence in the mind and hearts of the many, the wide and easy way that leads to death (Matthew 7:13).

God’s elect, the few, enter at the narrow and difficult gate that leads to eternal life (Matthew 7:14). As Christ plainly stated,

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called

One need not live in this world very many years to understand that there is a pernicious, upsetting spirit that influences each of us towards evil. Even from conception has this spirit, imparted through Adam at the beginning (Genesis 3:6-19), afflicted us: “*Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me*” (Psalm 51:5).

This sinful proclivity that has been handed down to all of mankind creates the great conflict within the spirit which Paul so accurately pointed out in Romans 7:22-23: “*For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*”

This is the age-old conflict between good and evil waged within the hearts and minds of every being on earth.

“I say then, walk in the flesh and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like, of which I tell you beforehand ... that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” Galatians 5:18-19.

That spirit of this world is decried in Romans 1:18-32 as a horrible force that leads one to all sorts of uncleanness and perversion, to “... *a reprobate mind* ...” (Romans 1:28) and a whole list of evils that Paul points out in verses 29 to 32.

On the other hand, the spirit granted by God at baptism and the laying on of hands gives the fruit of “... *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control* ...” (Galatians 5:22-23), traits of character that define the true sons of God as rebels of this world’s carnality. If one does not possess this spirit of God, “... *he is*

least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:17-19.

While the leaders of this society remove the commandments of God from schools and public venues, God’s people rebel against this atrocity. The spirit He placed within them contains the very laws He set forth at the beginning for all of mankind to follow:

“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” Hebrews 8:10 (from Jeremiah 31:31).

Called to Be Rebels!

There is no better time in history than now to be a rebel ... to stand apart from this corrupt culture

around us and be a true revolutionary, and owe total allegiance to the Creator of all. We see signs all around us that this present world is crumbling, and signals of the final assault by Satan the devil on all that is good. We as God’s people will be — and even today are — targets of his wrath. Note Revelation 12:13-17, where the dragon at the end time will try to annihilate the saints.

We as God’s elect owe our total allegiance to our Creator. Our view of riches and wealth will never allow them to overtake our pursuit of righteousness. We praise and lift up the Savior’s name. We are careful about the physical and spiritual food we take into our bodies, what we eat and drink, and what we read and listen to. We live our lives in every way to please Him, resting on God’s love and living through the power of His spirit.

Yes, we are rebels! Let us rejoice in our rebellion to this world.