

REFLECTIONS

April 5, 2009

**A cheerful look brings joy to the heart,
and good news gives health to the bones.**

Proverbs 15:30

Dressing Like a Ballplayer

Ed's son-in-law is a baseball coach and he had explained to Ed the reason it is important for a Little League baseball team to wear a uniform instead of just a monogrammed shirt and cap. "They wear a uniform because it makes them feel like ballplayers," he said explained. "Give me a team with a uniform and I will beat a more talented team that is without one. My team will act like a baseball team and perform like a baseball team. The other team won't."

Dressing like a ballplayer makes a statement that helps young ballplayers believe in themselves; and the uniforms they wear makes a statement that helps others believe in them too. That is the point Ed's son-in-law was making, and it prompted me to think about the importance of the way we dress ourselves.

Dress was important enough to God for him to address it in the instructions given to Moses. The dress code for priests is meticulously described in Leviticus. Clothing defined who they were, it set them apart from the others; it served as a reminder of the God they served, and it honored God.

Still in modern times, clergy are often identified by the way they dress, but there is no standard dress for ordinary Christian disciples. A robe and sandals combined with long hair and a beard is not suitable attire for Christ's disciples these days. But neither does modern day dress represent Christian discipleship very well either, even when mixed with Christian symbols on rings, necklaces, and earrings. But the way we present ourselves still sends an important message to ourselves, to others, and to God.

One person once explained how he shaved, combed his hair, and put on fresh clothes in preparation for quiet time each morning. "I am going before the Father and I want to be at my best," he said. His words may say it all.

If dressing like a ballplayer helps young players perform on the field, maybe dressing like a disciple will help us live a more meaningful life. The items of clothing we choose may not be standard, but proper dress will surely include a friendly smile and an understanding heart. It will reveal a generous attitude; and abound with encouraging words. And we are always at our best when we allow the love of Christ to shine through.

The way we dress ourselves can make a statement that we believe in Jesus Christ. It will make us feel good about ourselves.

And just maybe it will lead others believe in him too.

"You are the light of the world,"

Richard +

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