



Welcome to West Side!

WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

February 13, 2022

Haircuts, Tattoos and the Bible

Article by Tim Tripp

I listened to a podcast from “The Bible Project” this morning while walking. One of the things this podcast pointed out was the importance of reading the Bible in context. By that it meant don't take verses out of their context when reading them. The Bible was not written to be consumed in small, individual statements (some of the Proverbs excepted). It was written to reveal God's plan to reconcile man to himself and to glorify Jesus, God's son, as his Messiah and Savior of mankind. It allows us to have a feel for God's will and what, by His standards, determines right and wrong. However, it was written to a certain people at a certain time and it is crucial to discern what the words of scripture meant to them before applying it to our time and our situation.

A great example might be found in Leviticus 19:27-28. *“Do not cut the hair at the sides of your head or clip the edges of your beard. Do not cut your bodies for the dead or put tattoo marks on yourselves. I am the Lord.”*

These seemingly random instructions make little sense to people living in our time and place but without a doubt, were very relevant to those living in the time of Moses. In those days, hair/beard styles were worn to represent pagan gods, to identify with certain people groups and to mark those taking vows to pagan gods.

“Cutting the body for the dead” was likely an appeal to a pagan god for the welfare of a loved one in the afterlife. Tattoos were also associated with pagan gods, health conditions and/or social status. Apparently, God did not want the Israelites to use bodily markings like the Egyptians, Canaanites or other peoples did. They were supposed to be set apart, holy.

Yet today, you might see a clean-shaven man criticize someone for having a tattoo and even quote Leviticus 19:28 as proof! The verse directly preceding it tells him he should have a full, untrimmed beard! Yet if confronted, he would likely deny that the beard passage is relevant for today. It is not hard to see that his standard for Biblical interpretation might be his own likes and dislikes.

Biblical interpretation is sometimes challenging. The Bible states some things very clearly. A Christian attitude toward wealth, treatment of the poor, and underprivileged runs consistently throughout the old and New Testaments. While immorality, cruelty and violence are consistently condemned. Other things, like tattoos and haircuts have cultural attachments to them and must be interpreted within their context.

There are a few rules of Bible Study have helped me to navigate the challenges of Biblical interpretation. The first rule is to learn something about the context of a passage and how it functions within the larger paragraph and book. Another is to consider what the passage meant to the original audience before applying it to the modern context. Another is that one should always lean on the Holy Spirit who was given to help discern God's will.

Some have serious objections to someone getting a tattoo, while others are more accepting. I admire people who turn to the pages of scripture to decide whether or not to do things. It is important however, to have the proper perspective on scripture to be able to take from it what God would have us see. The Bible is God's word, not ours. I try to remind myself of that fact every time I read it and humbly pray that he helps me understand what he wants me to see there.

ONLINE CONNECT CARD

We would love to connect with you! Please fill out our Online Connect Card at...

westsidear.org/connect



Last Week:

Sunday Class & Conversation -122

Worship - 253

Giving - \$13,867

Wednesday Evening Bible Study - 99

CHRISTEENS IS just 2 WEEKS AWAY!!

Prayer Requests

Joel Delgado is battling an ear infection and pneumonia. Kaelyn, his mother, is scheduled to be induced for the birth of their daughter on March 1st. Please continue to keep this family in your prayers for healing and wellness in the coming weeks.

Wanda Bailey has moved to an assisted living center. Please pray for her transition and acclimation.

Scott Thieman, son-in-law of Carol White, is scheduled for surgery to repair mitral valve and 3 aneurysms. Please pray for successful surgery and full and rapid recovery.

Connie Koerner is having health and mobility issues. Please pray for strength and encouragement

Continue to pray for
Tami Robinson
Sofia Juarez
Jonah Vanderheiden

Other News

MNFTM needs Little Debbies (or any type of snack cakes) for the Monday night meal distribution. Please drop off items in the box provided in the hallway outside of the KFC Room.

HOUSING

If you are willing to house students for this event, please sign up soon! For more information please see Deanna Cole

HOSPITALITY ROOM

It's time to begin gathering items for the Hospitality Room!

Bottled Water, 12 packs of canned sodas, (please no 2 liters)

and prepackaged snacks,

or monetary donations are needed.

Drop off donated items in Room 11 until Feb. 25th.

For specific details about snack items and drinks needed, and to sign up to work a shift in the Hospitality Room, please see Wendy Loveland.

Ushers

We are currently seeking ushers to help with traffic flow during the event. Ushers make themselves available to answer questions and help direct groups or individuals to their destinations. No special skills needed - just willingness to be present and watchful. If you can serve in this way, please see Mark Hixson, or call the church office.

For information like this and more visit www.westsidear.org & subscribe