

Back To Basics

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MODEST FASHIONS ARE IN

Johnie Edwards

According to an Associated Press article in the June 3, 2004 *Herald Times*, Bloomington, Indiana titled, "Modest Fashions Are In," eleven year old Ella Gunderson of Redmond, Washington wrote a letter to Nordstrom department store in Seattle requesting they sell more modest clothes that reveal less.

1) **LOW-CUT HIP-HUGGERS.** This young lady wrote Nordstrom department store, "I see all these girls who walk around with pants that show their belly button and underwear." She was told by a clerk, "There is only one look." She responded, "If that is true, then girls are suppose to walk around half naked." Good for you, Ella! When Adam and Eve learned they were naked, "they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Gen. 3:7). God, thinking they were not clothed properly, "Unto Adam also and to his wife did make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Gen. 3:21). Parents need to be teaching their children how to dress properly.

2) **SKINTIGHT TOPS.** The young lady also addressed the fashion of skintight tops. Many young ladies are allowed to dress in such a way as to attract the attention of young men in a way that is not good. It is high time

that mothers and fathers laid down some dress rules. Jesus said, "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Mt. 5:28). Young ladies, hear me, if your immodest dress causes young men to lust after you, then you are as guilty as they are. If not, why not?

3) **MODESTY IS STILL IN.** The article stated that, "people are tired of seeing so much skin...and a more modest look is in as sales of higher waistlines and lower hemlines have skyrocketed during the past 18 months." According to the New Testament, modesty has been in all along and is still in! Listen to the word of God, "In like manner also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Tim. 2:9-10). And again, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pet. 3:3-4). Checked your fashions lately?



THE SOWER'S SEED

Basic Sermon Starters

"HE THAT GOETH FORTH AND WEEPETH, BEARING PRECIOUS SEED, SHALL DOUBTLESS COME AGAIN WITH REJOICING, BRINGING HIS SHEAVES WITH HIM."

THE FIRST QUESTION GOD ASKED MAN

Introduction

1. Questions are as old as man. God asked the first question in Genesis 3:9.
2. "Where art thou?" is a good question for us.

Discussion

I. SPIRITUALLY

- A. Man is a two-fold being (Mt. 4:4).
- B. Must take care of both body and soul.
- C. 2 Cor. 4:16 Outward man/inward man
- D. Just because we might be doing well physically, not necessarily spiritually.

II. AS TO YOUR BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

- A. Folks were destroyed in Old Testament times due to "lack of knowledge" (Hos. 4:6).
- B. We must know (Jn. 8:32; Mt. 9:13).
- C. God expects growth (1 Pet. 2:2; 3:18).

III. SPIRITUAL MATURITY

- A. Some never grow up spiritually.
- B. "Be men" (1 Cor. 16:13).

- C. "In understanding, be men" (1 Cor. 14:21).
- D. "Ye ought to be teachers" (Heb. 5:12).

IV. ADDING TO YOUR FAITH

- A. Note the virtues of 2 Peter 1:5-9.
- B. Ask, "Where art thou?" for each one.
- C. Are you "blind, unfruitful, forgotten you were purged from your old sins?"

V. THE CHURCH YOU ARE IN

- A. Several thousand you could choose from.
- B. But the Bible only talks of the Lord's church (Mt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16; Acts 20:28).

VI. AS TO YOUR SINS

- A. Are you in your sins? (Jn. 8:24).
- B. Have your sins been remitted? (Acts 2:38).
- C. Have you gone back into your sins? (2 Pet. 2:20-22).

Conclusion

1. Where art thou?
2. You must decide. Come now and obey!

Back To Basics

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"A TIME TO MOURN"

John Isaac Edwards

At the passing of Ronald Reagan, the 40th President of the United States, President George W. Bush called for a National Day of Mourning Friday, June 11. Thus, it is a good time to call attention to Bible mourning.

1) **EXAMPLES OF MOURNING.** In the Scriptures, mourning was practiced by individuals and nations. Abraham (Gen. 23:2), Jacob (Gen. 37:34), Samuel (1 Sam. 16:1), David (2 Sam. 3:31), Ezra (Ezra 10:6), Nehemiah (Neh. 1:4), Job (Job 30:28-31) and Daniel (Dan. 10:2) stand out among the individual mourners, while the Egyptians (Gen. 50:3-10) and the Israelites (Num. 20:29) are good examples of national mourning.

2) **OCCASIONS OF MOURNING.** A brief survey of the Bible shows many different occasions of mourning: at death (Gen. 23:2); at divine rejection (1 Sam. 16:1); "when the wicked beareth rule" (Prov. 29:2); "for wickedness" (Jer. 12:4); transgression (Ezra 10:6); when there is leaven in the lump (1 Cor. 5); "affliction" (Ps. 88:9); at the death of Christ (Zech. 12:10) and because of oppression (Ps. 42:9).

3) **EXPRESSIONS OF MOURNING.** While mourning is to the soul as pain is to the flesh (Job 14:22), there are many outward manifestations of mourning: weeping (Gen. 23:2); rending of clothes and girding with sackcloth (2 Sam. 3:31); lamentation (Is. 19:8); ashes and the spirit of heaviness (Is. 61:3); leaving off of oil and ornaments and putting on of mourning apparel (Ex. 33:4; 2 Sam. 14:2); fasting (Ezra 10:6); prayer (Neh. 1:4); wailing (Est. 4:3); covering of the head (Est. 6:12); baldness (Is. 22:12) and going stripped and naked (Mi. 1:8).

4) **DAYS OF MOURNING.** The period of Bible mourning is varied. We read of mourning "many days" (Gen. 37:34); "threescore and ten days" (Gen. 50:3); "seven days" (Gen. 50:10); "thirty days" (Num. 20:29); "every day" (2 Sam. 13:37) and "three full weeks" (Dan. 10:2).

5) **CHRIST AND MOURNING.** Jesus was anointed "to comfort all that mourn" (Is. 61:1-3; Lk. 4:18-19). The One who proclaimed, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Mt. 5:4), has the ability to give us beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

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Is FAITH RATIONAL?

Craig Thomas

The Bible is very clear that a person must know God to be saved (Jn. 17:3; Heb. 11:6; 2 Th. 1:7-9). Also, all Christians are commanded to be ready to give a “defense” for the reason of their hope (1 Pet. 3:15). Frequently, non-believers attack the veracity of the Bible claiming it is unreliable. A Christian’s “faith” is labeled “illogical;” something only worthy of intellectual “simpleton.” Consider Mark Twain’s comment, “The Bible has noble poetry in it; and some clever fables; and some blood-drenched history; and a wealth of obscenity; and upwards of a thousand lies.” Thus, we should consider: “Does a Christian’s faith have an intelligent and rational basis?”

1) **OUR FAITH BASED ON TRUTH.** The Christian’s faith has an intelligent and rational basis because of God’s word, the basis of faith (Rom. 10:17), is “truth” (Jn. 8:32; 17:17). One does not commit *intellectual suicide* to have Biblical faith! Again, Mr. Twain once remarked that, “Faith is believing what you know ain’t so.” That agrees with one of Webster’s definitions of “faith.” But, the type of faith spoken of in the Bible is not “blind faith.” Bible faith is based on credible evidence and eyewitness testimony (Lk. 1:2; 2 Pet. 1:16; Heb. 11:1; Jn. 20:30-31; Acts 1:3). A more exact definition for Bible faith is given by Webster’s most common synonym for faith, “belief.” Belief is “conviction of the truth of some statement or the reality of some being or phenomenon, especially when based on examination of evidence.”

2) **BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS ALIKE RELY ON THIS TYPE OF FAITH.** Few stop to realize that faith, based on credible evidence, is not just part of religion, but is a critical aspect of

our everyday lives. **Science:** Do you believe atoms exist? Have you ever seen an atom? How do you know atoms exist? *Credible evidence!* **Geography:** Do you believe the Eiffel Tower exists? Have you ever been to Paris to see it firsthand? How do you know the Eiffel Tower exists? *Credible evidence!* **History:** Do you believe Abraham Lincoln was the 16th President of the United States? Have you ever met Abraham Lincoln? How do you know Abraham Lincoln lived? *Credible evidence!* **Medicine:** Do you believe X-rays can aid physicians in seeing problems inside your body? Can you see X-rays? How do you know X-rays exist? *Credible evidence!* **Law:** If you are a juror in a murder trial, you are asked to decide matters of life and death. Do you believe the accused is guilty or innocent? How can you know, when you were not an eyewitness? *Credible evidence!*

Make no mistake about it: The atheist, agnostic and the Christian act, or fail to act, in a multitude of ways each day based on faith. Many of these actions based on “faith” are matters of life and death! (Have you gotten on an elevator or airliner lately?) The Bible believer and the unbelieving scientist base their faith on the same logic: *Credible evidence!* The Christian’s faith is not a “blind faith,” but quite the contrary, it is a belief based on solid evidence! (Lk. 1:2; 2 Pet. 1:16; Heb. 11:1; Jn. 20:30-31; Acts 1:3). The next time an intellectual bigot belittles your faith, hold his feet to the fire and show him that he also lives his faith by the same rule of logic.

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EFFECTIVE SONG LEADING - LEARNING TO BE A LEADER

Rick Baughn

Colossians 3:17 reads, “whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord.” To lead spiritual songs in worship services is a special privilege. It sets the tone for the rest of the worship service. This by no means indicates that the singing is the most important part of our worship, but it certainly can affect the spiritual attitude of the congregation. Consider the following passages that deal with the subject of singing: Acts 16:25; 1 Corinthians 14:15; Hebrews 2:12; James 5:13; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Revelation 14:3; and 15:3. John 4:24 states we are to “worship in spirit and truth.” We should have the right attitude and proper Scriptural execution. An effective song leader is one who realizes the importance of his example. Please consider the following thoughts for an effective song leader.

- 1) You need a sincere faith in and a love of God to be an effective song leader.
- 2) Songs should be selected which appeal to the heart of man.
- 3) Always be prepared to lead singing, even if you are not on the schedule. It shows when you are not prepared.
- 4) Select songs that are appropriate for the occasion. Never sing “Oh Why Not Tonight” on Sunday morning.
- 5) New songs should not be led on Sunday. Save those for a practice time. Pick a theme such as faith, hope, joy, love, etc.
- 6) You are in a leadership role - your

attitude and dress will affect the worship of the entire congregation.

For further reading, please read what God commanded the high priest to wear in worship (Ex. 28). Is there not a parallel for us today? Should we not look our best while worshipping God, and especially when we are in a leadership role?

Proper pitch is a must for effective song leading. It isn't necessary to know music - just a few basics. Look at the top line of the song or the treble clef. The notes in the spaces spell FACE, from bottom to top. The notes on the line are EGBDF, from bottom to top. A good way to remember these is the phrase, “Every good boy does fine.” Get a pitch pipe and match the first note at the beginning of the song with the note on the pitch pipe. This is your correct pitch.

Effective song leading requires song interpretation, distinct beating of time, learning the note the song begins on and using the proper pitch for the song. If you do not know time signatures, pat your foot and beat music with your arm at the same time. Keep the tempo up and don't drag the song. Pay attention to musical cues such as *p* (meaning softly), *pp* (even softer), *f* (loud), *ff* (very loud), : at the end of a song means repeat. A dot . on the right side of a note means an extended count. A dot with an umbrella over it ☂ indicates you should hold the note.

The use of a pitch pipe is very important. Find your note, blow it, hum it, and sing it!

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THE CHURCH VS. DENOMINATIONALISM

W. Curtis Porter, "Dead Yet Speaketh"

The Bible was given to us as a guide in religion. It tells us all we need to know in our journey from this world to the next, but men have sought other sources for information that can be found only in the Bible. And not having found the truth in other books, they have gone on without the truth. As a result, we have many religious bodies in the world today that are not even hinted at in a commendatory way within the Bible. The Bible authorizes the existence of but one church. Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Mt. 16:18). It has been referred to as, "the church of God" (Acts 20:28). A number of congregations are called, "churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16). If a number of them are so styled, of course one of them would be a "church of Christ." All this the Bible endorses, but where can you read of the denominational bodies of the present day? Can you find any mention of the Baptist Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church, the Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, the Seventh Day Adventist Church, etc.? All these exist without divine sanction and must be put over against the one mentioned in the Bible. Not only is that true as far as the name is concerned, but it is also true with respect to doctrine. I wish therefore to draw some contrasts between the things in the Scriptures and the things taught by denominational churches.

1) **ON JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ONLY.** It is a cardinal doctrine of nearly all the denominations that a sinner is justified by faith alone. They say that he is saved at the very moment he believes in the Lord, and, of course, that there is nothing more for him to do. Too much space would be required if I were to give you statements

from all who so teach, but the following I take from the Methodist Discipline: "That we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort" (Article 9). Similar statements have been made in the creeds of other denominations. But faithful Christians do not believe nor teach that doctrine. We do not believe it because it is not taught in the Bible. We take the Bible as our only rule of faith and practice and must abide by its teaching. We do believe that men are justified by faith; but we do not believe salvation is by faith only. To find the teaching of the New Testament on this subject, read James 2:24: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." This statement made by James is in direct conflict with that made in the Methodist Discipline. The Methodist Church accepts what the Discipline says; the church of Christ accepts what the Bible says.

2) **THE PROPER SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.** Not all denominations are agreed as to what it takes to make one a proper subject of baptism, but there are many denominations in Christendom today that declare that baptism should be administered to infants. If space permitted, quotations from a number of creeds might be given, but I shall have to be content with one taken from the Presbyterian Confession of Faith. It reads as follows: "Not only those that do actually profess faith in, and obedience unto Christ, but also infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized" (Chapter 28; Section 4). In contrast with this, however, members of the Lord's church do not believe in baptizing infants of any kind of parents, whether believers or unbelievers. We insist that an infant is not a proper subject of baptism; that no one can be truly baptized till he has

believed. In every case of baptism on divine record, the persons baptized both believed and repented before being baptized. We read in Acts 18:8 the following statement: "Many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." Also, in Acts 8:12, we have this language: "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Lutherans must accept their creed; Methodists must accept their Discipline; Catholics must accept their Catechism; and Presbyterians must accept their Confession of Faith; but simple Christians accept the Bible!

3) **DISCORD ON THE FORM OF BAPTISM.**

The denominations who practice infant baptism also teach that it should, or at least may, be performed by sprinkling or pouring water on the person to be baptized. Another quotation from the Presbyterian Confession of Faith is in point here: "Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person" (Chapter 28, Section 3). With this agree the statements of the creeds of the Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, and other churches which practice sprinkling. But the teaching of the Scripture is in abrupt discord with such a doctrine. Not one time does the Sacred volume ever record baptism by either sprinkling or pouring. Every time there is any suggestion or indication at all as to the form of baptism, immersion is clearly indicated or stated. Paul declares in Ephesians 4:5 that there is one baptism, and tells us in Romans 6:4 how that one baptism is performed: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Also in Colossians 2:12 he writes, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through faith of the operation of God, who hath

raised him from the dead." We know that in sprinkling and pouring there is not a burial, neither is there a resurrection; therefore, such cannot be the baptism of the New Testament. Christians follow the New Testament; denominational bodies follow their various creeds.

4) **CONTRAST ON THE DESIGN OF BAPTISM.**

With but few exceptions, present day denominations teach that baptism is not a condition of salvation; they teach it is not necessary to submit to it to reach heaven; that men are saved first and then baptized, and that therefore baptism is "an outward sign of an inward grace." Let me cite some quotations from the Baptist Manual. On page 76 we have this: "Baptism also expresses, in emblem, the believer's death to sin, and resurrection to newness of life." And on page 77 we read this: "Baptism is likewise a symbol of purification...Then baptism is the outward symbol of an inward washing." But the New Testament writers always place salvation after baptism, and make baptism a condition of that salvation. Read your New Testament. In Mark 16:16 Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Peter said in Acts 2:38, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." And Peter wrote after this manner: "The like figure wherunto even baptism doth also now save us..." (1 Pet. 3:21). Baptists must accept their Manual, and other denominations their creeds, confessions of faith, and disciplines; but the church of Christ accepts only the teaching of the Bible. Which do you think is the safe ground?

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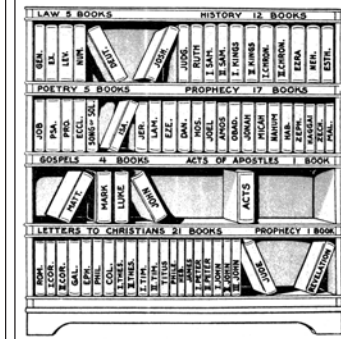
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As we enter God's library, the Bible, and take a glance around, we note that it contains something for everyone. For one who knows little or nothing about God's revelation to man, it contains simple facts and principles, easily understood. For those who are better informed, and even for those who have spent their lives in research of its truths, it contains the depths of wisdom and knowledge that challenges even the greatest of minds. For those who enjoy history, it is there - the most accurate of all. For those who enjoy excitement and adventure, they can find it in this library. For those who enjoy poetry and beautifully written prose, nothing excels what can be found there. Yes, romance is there as well. But most important of all, it contains food for the soul for those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

In previous articles, we have explored briefly the Old Testament books of law, of history, and of poetry. In this article, we shall browse through that section of the Old Testament called prophecy. This room is divided into two areas called "Major Prophets" and "Minor Prophets." Let us linger awhile first with the "Major Prophets." There are five books in this section: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel. While Jeremiah also wrote Lamentations, the other three were authored by

the men bearing their names. They are called "major" because they are longer books than those found among the minor prophets.

Isaiah is sometimes called the "Messianic prophet," for he, perhaps more than any other Old Testament prophet, had much to say about the coming Messiah and His kingdom. Isaiah prophesied between about 740 B.C. to around 700 B.C. This was during the time of the divided kingdom. The northern kingdom of Israel was steeped in idolatry and moral corruption and was soon to be carried away into Assyrian captivity. The southern kingdom of Judah was not much better. Isaiah warns both of these kingdoms of their fate unless they repented. One of the kings of Judah who lived during the days of Isaiah was a good king. His name was Hezekiah, and he, along with Isaiah, instituted reforms in Judah that delayed their judgment. Nevertheless, Isaiah prophesied that they would ultimately be carried away into Babylonian captivity for a period of 70 years, after which a remnant would return to Jerusalem. He even called the name of the ruler who would give the order for their return over one hundred years before he was born (Is. 44:28; 45:1-7; Ezra 1:1-2). With the eye of prophecy, Isaiah could see the "last days" when the Christ would come and His kingdom would be established and His law would go forth "from Jerusalem." The 53rd chapter of this book describes the Lord's suffering servant, the Christ, as He would bear the iniquities of the people some 700 plus years later on the cross.

Jeremiah is often called the "Weeping Prophet." His prophecies were written just before and during the Babylonian exile of Judah. He pleaded with his brethren to repent, but to no avail. They abused him in various ways. They even had him put in a dungeon where he sank in the mire. He was discouraged at times, and wanted to quit preaching, but he felt "a fire" in his bones that he could not quench.

Kid's Activity Page

Paul Adams

Memory Verse: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

Truth or Error?

We must be able to know the difference between truth and error. Determine if the statement is TRUTH or ERROR by reading the passage of Scripture. Draw a line to the correct answer.

The Bible authorizes instrumental music in worship. (Ephesians 5:19)

Jesus was baptized for the remission of sins. (Matthew 3:13-17)

The Lord's supper consists of grape soda and toast. (Matthew 26:26-30)

Jesus was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. (Matthew 3:13-17)

Baptism is a burial. (Romans 6:3-4)

Everyone will go to Heaven. (Matthew 25:46)

The Lord's supper consists of the fruit of the vine and unleavened bread. (Luke 22:7-20)

The righteous will be saved. (Romans 5:21)

We should sing with grace in our hearts when we worship. (Colossians 3:16)

We should be sprinkled to join a church. (Acts 2:41-47)

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14).

HISTORY OF METHODISM

Bill Cavender

From Bishop McTyeire's "History of Methodism" we read: "The history of Methodism cannot be given without a biography of John Wesley. To him belongs the distinction of Founder. Great men by a natural law come forward in groups; but to insure the success and unity of a movement, there must be a solitary pre-eminence. While Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, John Fletcher and Thomas Coke were mighty auxiliaries, it is around John Wesley that the religious movement of the eighteenth century, called Methodism, centers" (p. 14). "The first Methodists were the two Wesleys, with Robert Kirkham and William Morgan" (p. 57).

Methodist historians and scholars admit freely that the Methodist movement began in the 18th century, that its founder was John Wesley, and that the first Methodists were Morgan, Kirkham and the Wesleys. This is interesting and revealing to those who will think and who want to do the Lord's will. This means that Christ's church began 1700 years before the Methodist denomination (Mt. 16:18; Acts 2:47; 20:28). None of the apostles of Christ were Methodists. None of the early Christians were Methodists. Christ never taught people to be Methodists. The Methodist Church was begun by John Wesley, not Jesus Christ. This writer used to be a Methodist. I learned better. Why should anyone want to be one? The Lord does not tell us to do so, and the Bible doesn't tell us how!

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HUMAN CREEDS

Benjamin Franklin, "Dead Yet Speaketh"

First, any creed containing more than the Bible is objectionable, because it does contain more than the Bible.

Second, any creed containing less than the Bible is objectionable, because it does contain less than the Bible.

Third, any creed differing from the Bible is objectionable, because it does differ from the Bible.

Fourth, any creed precisely like the Bible is useless, because we have the Bible.

This covers the whole ground. There can be no other thought of. A creed must contain more than the Bible, less than the Bible, differ from it, or be precisely like it. No man defends his creed on the ground that it contains more than the Bible, less than the Bible, that it is different from the Bible, or precisely like it. If a creed be not defended on some of these grounds, on what ground can it be defended? Certainly on no ground conceivable to mortal man.

"How Readest Thou?"

Test Your Bible Knowledge

Are there any Bible proverbs that cannot be used today?

Yes, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge" (Ezek. 18:1-3).

Answer:

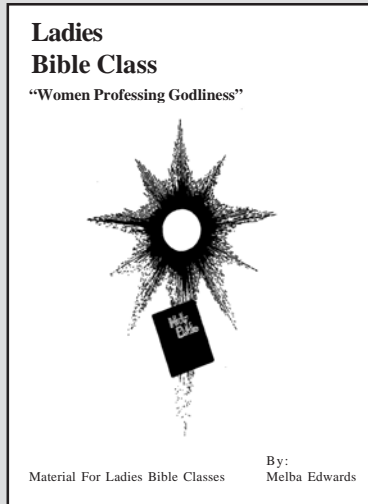
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