

5.4.20 - Jesus and Nudity

We got a rather insightful response with questions from a reader of our site. He was reading in Luke 22 about selling your garment and buying a sword. We will include his comments and questions as well as our response to him. Then we will go into more detail on each of his question.

The passage is

Luke 22:35-38: And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

Here is what the reader wrote:

This morning my reading took me to Luke Chapter 22. As I continue to learn more of God's perspective on the body, I saw something in a new light today.

As Jesus was encouraging his disciples to be ready for trouble, he told them to sell their garment and buy a sword. Though I believe one could make a Second Amendment argument here, that's not really my point.

Would you agree that Jesus was instructing the disciples to sell their one — more than likely, their only garment? Is this nothing more than the exchange of one priceless, item for another? Does the singular form of garment suggest that Christ was completely accepting the nudity of his disciples and elevating the importance of their physical protection from violence that others might perpetrate?

Just curious if you have looked at this passage in detail.

Here is our response:

My father wrote a book years ago titled "Sell Your Coat and Buy A Gun", it was basically the case for armed self-defense as a Christian. It's a good read.

Based on what I know now about the scarcity and cost of clothing, the need to defend one's self, I do not believe that Jesus would have them without the ability to keep warm at night. I also do not believe that He wanted them without the ability to defend themselves either. I think the general principal was that clothing was expensive and swords were expensive. So, if someone had two sets of clothing, then they should sell one and buy a sword with the money. Which proves the idea that clothing was very valuable...about the same value as a military weapon.

So valuable in fact, that they would not risk damaging, staining or ruining it by working with clothing on unless you were exceptionally wealthy.

I do believe that Jesus was totally accepting of social nudity...after all He was the one who created us naked and not ashamed from the beginning anyway...

Properly applying scripture is not a simple activity. Is Jesus using this to teach some spiritual lesson, is He giving an illustration of how we are to live, does it still apply to us in today's world, is it for individuals or for groups of people, who is it directed at? The assumed answers to these questions and the ones we missed changes the application. Since we do not have the original writings, but copies, we can ask if it was changed when being copied, not very likely for the Textus Receptus is thoroughly tested and widely accepted. Since this passage was written in Greek, is it translated in the clearest form for today's society. Did the translator slant it to his beliefs?

We are going to consider the reader's questions one at a time and give a more detailed answer. First question: *Would you agree that Jesus was instructing the disciples to sell their one — more than likely, their only garment?* Protecting the body from cold was a more urgent need than protecting it from a potential attack. The cold and whatever else the body needed protection from was easily predicted to occur regularly. If a person has only one garment and no means to buy a sword, he probably should carry a rod or stick or whatever he can still afford for defense based on two swords being enough for a group of at least 13. We are assuming that all members of the group had at least one garment.

Second question: *Is this nothing more than the exchange of one priceless item for another?* If each member was expected to have a sword, then it would be an exchange. With only 2 swords for the group, it is giving priority to self-defense. In this society, it came right after food and clothing. With the cost of clothing being so much less today than in Bible times, it is not as easy to fit defense in the priority order, but it would come before luxury items if it came before a second garment for them.

Third question: *Does the singular form of garment suggest that Christ was completely accepting the nudity of his disciples and elevating the importance of their physical protection from violence that others might perpetrate?* This is two questions, but they are not easy to separate without losing the meaning of the last question in the pair. The answer to the first part is an obvious YES as indicated by our answer above. The last part is also a correct application of the verse's intent. But what about **Mat 5:39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.** we can imagine you thinking. This verse is part of the sermon on the mount which was dealing more with relating to others and not on self-defense from robbers or murders. In other words, don't settle a dispute with violence is the short version of the verse in Matthew. This verse is part of not seeking revenge because it belongs to God, but God

expects you to do your part to stop robbers and murders and etc. even if you end their career.

We are going to explore "Christ was completely accepting of nudity". First we are going to consider **John 21:7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea** As we have pointed out many times, Jesus said nothing that is recorded about Peter's (and probably all the disciples) nakedness. Imagine what would have happened if He reprimanded Peter about his nakedness. After Peter was done explaining that he was trying to keep the fish odor off his garments, Peter might add, "Why is nakedness a problem... You made us that way. Adam was naked in the Garden of Eden and You declared it good. What is the difference between fishing and gardening as far as nakedness goes?". We do not always think of Jesus, the God-Man, as also the creator. Jesus was probably pleased with Peter's nakedness because Peter was displaying His most prized creation.

To be our mediator, Jesus had to be 100 % human. There are only two forms He could take for that role, man or woman. For a variety of reasons, He came as a man. It is important that we know that He was a complete man. His disciples would have seen Him naked often for bathing and maybe even traveling on hot days. We can also safely assume that since He grew up as a carpenter's son that He probably spent many a day working with His earthly father Joseph in the naked condition that most work in during this time in history. The Apostle John gives us one example that is easy to miss if you are hooked on clothing. **John 13:4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.** If He laid aside His garments...plural, He was naked. In case you have never read a discussion on this verse by a naturist, He probably put the towel around His neck making it much easier to use it to dry the disciple's feet.

Along the same line of thinking, He was naked on the cross for everyone to see that He was completely a man. He was also most likely naked at the resurrection since he left His grave clothes in a nice neat pile all folded up in the tomb and since He was mistaken for the garden just outside the tomb who would have, as pointed out earlier most likely been working naked in the garden.

The bottom line is that Jesus likely would not have ordered the apostles to give up their most basic form of protection against cold and the environment (their clothing) for a means of protection for self-defense. If, however they happened to have two sets of clothing, then yes Jesus was recommending that they sell one to buy a sword. Thus, verifying the common occurrence of removing one's clothing when working so as to not soil or damage something of such great value.

Jesus, would certainly not have been offended by the very body that He created in His image and called it in its naked state as very good. It's a sad state of affairs when the Christians of today have the exact opposite viewpoint of the body that God Himself has.