

# Don't Forget to *P.A.C.K.* for Summer Vacation

Vacation time is almost here. The young people are anticipating summer break. High School graduates are looking forward to their last summer before going off to college. Parents can't wait for vacation to spend a week or two with the family, away from the day-to-day grind.

I'm thrilled that you get the break and are able to leave home for a few days and enjoy a great vacation. But as you prepare to go, here's a little reminder--Don't Forget to *P.A.C.K.*!

## **Don't forget to pack your *p-rayer* life.**

Maybe it's the case with you that you have the entire vacation mapped out. Perhaps you know exactly what you're going to be doing from sun-up to sun-down. Does your vacation include one-on-one time with God? Will you study your Bible while on vacation (2 Timothy 2:15)? Will you pray to God while you're on vacation (1 Thessalonians 4:17)?

Vacation does not mean that one takes a break from Christianity. When Paul said to "pray without ceasing," he did not say pray without ceasing except when you are on vacation. This summer, while enjoying some much needed vacation, don't forget to pack your good prayer habits.

## **Don't forget to pack your *a-ttendance* patterns.**

There have been several occasions that concerned Christians have come to me and said, "Neil, I'm going to be traveling in a few weeks. Do you know of a sound congregation that I can attend while I'm away?" That's the attitude that every child of God should have. If I have to be out of town on the Lord's Day, or on Wednesday night, I want to know where there is a place for me to go and worship and study God's word. Not to mention the fact of enjoying the fellowship with Christians in different parts of the country.

The temptation for some church members is to look at church attendance while on vacation in the following way: "Well, nobody will know what I'm doing while I'm away from home." If that describes you, then you're believing a lie--if nobody else knows, the Lord knows. The Bible says that we are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together--that includes while on vacation (Hebrews 10:23-26). So, this summer, don't forget to pack your faithful attendance patterns.

Matthew 6:33; Hebrews 4:12, 13; Ecclesiastes 12:14; 1 Samuel 16:7

**What about quitting the church?** Most of those whose views about attendance are loose are opposed to quitting the church all together. Why is it wrong to quit the church?

It is wrong to quit the church entirely because it is wrong to forsake one single service which leads one to quit the church.

### **Don't forget to pack your *c-ontribution*.**

I have known of members of the church to miss several Sunday's during the summer weeks. I trust that most of them faithfully attend a sound congregation wherever they are. But what about the home congregation?

The home church must continue to expand the borders of the kingdom through the summer weeks. Missions will still be supported; preaching the gospel will still take place; benevolence will still be practiced; etc. The reality is, your charitable contribution is needed to continue the work (1 Corinthians 16; 2 Corinthians 8). From a practical standpoint, what if you were to be gone for an entire month? During that month you withheld your contribution. That puts a strain on the local church to meet it's financial obligations.

Here's what you can do. Leave your contribution with a member. Give that member an envelop with your contribution inside for every week you will be gone. Or, if you're going to be gone several Sundays, why not mail your contribution in so that it can be put in the collection plate on Sunday? The point is, don't forget your obligation to give upon the first day of the week, and that your giving is needed by the local church to continue the expansion of the kingdom in this area.

### **Don't forget to pack the right *k-ind* of clothing.**

While on vacation, you are still representing the church and the Lord. How will you represent Christ and his church with respect to your dress this summer? Some, I know, will wear shorts that are too short; bathing suits in front of the opposite sex; midriff shirts; tank tops; etc. Will this please the Lord?

The Holy Spirit inspired this principle. For an individual to be clothed modestly in the eyes of the Lord, he or she must be covered from the shoulder to the knee--a fashion unacceptable to the world at large, and more tragically to many who wear the name Christian.

Let me prove the above principle. When Adam and Eve tried to cover themselves following their sin in the Garden, they put on "aprons," Heb. *chagowr* (covering similar to the modern day lower portion of a woman's swimsuit) (Genesis 3:7). Later, God says this is not good enough, and so he clothes them with "coats of skin," Heb. *kethoneth* (covering from the shoulders unto the thigh--that would be a covering of the shoulders down to the knee, whether standing or sitting--Genesis 3:21). Remember, Bible principles never change!

This summer, don't forget to pack the right kind of clothing--that which will please God and demonstrate your desire to show purity among those with whom you will come in contact while on vacation.

1 Samuel 16:7; James 2:16; John 2:17; Exodus 28:42

The word "naked" is a translation of *gumnos* and means "clad in the undergarment only." Swim suits cover no more (and often much less!) than underclothes. We may conclude that one is naked and, therefore, immodest when wearing swim suits in mixed company as in a beach or swimming pool setting.

~adapted from Neil Richey