

# Avoiding Lawless Liberal Compromising And Man-Made Rules

In the March, 1987 edition of the “Australian Evangel”, the official magazine of the Assemblies of God in Australia at the time, the editor strongly warned of the infiltration of lawless liberal compromising types of Christianity among Pentecostals while at the same time he cautioned about not going to the other extreme of following man-made unbiblical rules:

## **“A QUESTION OF CONDUCT**

*Rules, regulations, standards, conduct, codes; they are a way of life for all of us.*

*When we enter school for the first time, or newly join a company, or listen to the chief stewardess speaking on aircraft procedures, we soon realize that there are rules to follow and expectations of conduct. And when we become Christians and join the local church there is usually the 13 week new Christians Course to introduce us to the faith and ground us in our new lifestyle.*

*Sounds fine, except that liberal Christianity has infiltrated even Pentecostal circles and many new (and even older) Christians, whilst they deeply love the Lord, do not seem to know God’s standards and expectations in respect of certain issues of conduct.*

*When I was a boy everything was cut and dry, black and white – if you were a Christian no way did you go to dances, movies or theatres. The radio was often only used to hear the news and T.V. was highly suspect, indeed mostly rejected. Clothing was spelt m-o-d-e-s-t-y, and the thought of gambling or smoking was repulsive, as was swearing and ‘naughty’ jokes. Without fail you attended church twice on Sundays and the weekly prayer meeting.*

*Praise God we have escaped from the bondage of Christian legalism which painted a Frankenstein picture of God instead of a loving, understanding Father. No way would we want to return to that! However, at least things were clear cut – you knew the standards expected, even if no-one explained the whys and some of the ‘rules’ were man-made.*

*The difficulty in the Church today is that many have rightly welcomed the liberty and freedom and flowing of the Holy Spirit but because no set rules are handed out (after all, that would be religious, robbing us of our freedom and not very spiritual!), many have no sense of direction as far as holiness and righteous living is concerned, and so abuse that spiritual freedom.*

*It is rather horrifying at times to realize in conversations and observations just how casually some Christians treat (mistreat!) their bodies, minds and lifestyles – the temples of the blessed Holy Spirit; how easily and without thinking they have a ‘flutter’ on the horses or ‘Tats’, engage in suspect business deals, light up that health destroying cigarette, compromise their faith, watch R-rated or dubious M-rated videos, still swear or ‘blow their stacks’, hold grudges, talk loosely, dress immodestly especially to church, willingly allow rubbish to enter and feed their minds, over-indulge in alcohol, even have wrong interpersonal relationships, and so on. Often non-Christians cannot tell the difference between themselves and these liberal Christians, and new Christians think it’s alright to follow their bad example.*

*One of the crucial matters that lies ahead for the Church is the question of holiness without the old legalism barrier. In many quarters there is no visible drawn line between worldliness and separation unto God, nor is it taught. To coin a phrase: ‘If it ain’t taught, it ain’t sought!’...*

*Despite our current phenomenal growth. Pentecostals worldwide have recently been accused of a lack of fundamental holiness so I leave you with these questions: Do those to whom we are witnessing – and remember, we are always on display – see that we are different by our speech, thinking, attitudes, actions and lifestyle standards? Could God be holding back certain blessings and progressions because we are not truly displaying His holiness which He has already given us freely through Jesus Christ?*

*I'm not advocating a man-made, legalistic codebook, but rather regular spiritual checkups in regard of our attitudes, habits, dress, speech and conduct, and a fresh respect for the holiness of God. Think about it!"*