

# Pastor Cancels Wedding Over 'Sexy Dress,' Persecuted for Modest Mindset

About a month ago, I asked a pointed question: "Why Do So Many 'Born-Again, Spirit-Filled' Women Show Off Cleavage in Church?" It set off a firestorm of debate but sparked a number of other stories and sermons on the issue. I got emails from folks telling me about various magazines and bloggers discussing the topic—and pastors preaching on the controversial subject of, yes, modesty.

I don't know if Apostle Michael Canty of the Truth Ministries Holiness Church saw my article or not. I haven't been able to reach him. But the apostolic pastor certainly created a stir in his local church when he refused to marry a bride and groom because he felt her dress was too "sexy," according to a report in . Here's a segment of the story:

"The wedding scheduled Saturday, Aug. 10, was scheduled for 3 p.m. At 2 p.m., the pastor greeted the bride and groom when he noticed the bride's dress. According to the bride's mother, the pastor jokingly asked, 'Where is the other half of the dress?' Not thinking anything of it, the family laughed it off and continued applying make-up on the bride. Around 2:30 p.m., the pastor asked a leader of the church to ask the bride and the family about the other part of her dress.

"The bride informed the leader, 'This is it.' The leader reported the news to the pastor and then the pastor informed personally the bride and groom at separate times he could not perform the wedding with the bride in her selected dress. The pastor told the bride she would have to cover up her breast area and find a way to add length to the dress. The bride informed the pastor there is no way to accomplish this with so

short of a notice and she has to wear her dress. Then the pastor informed her he would not be able to perform the ceremony then walked back to his office.”

Was this pastor, whose ministry is 14 months old and who runs a storefront church, out of line for ruining this young couple’s wedding day? Or did he take a stand for modesty that deserves applause? That depends on whom you ask:

“I am sad for the bride who wanted a church wedding in a hoochie mama dress, but even sadder for the pastor who missed his teachable moment,” commented Kim Trent.

“Can you wear this dress on the senate floor? Can you be a doctor and wear this dress at work? If the answer is NO then you cannot wear this to church as well. Just like the world has its proper decorum, so does the Church of Christ,” Marvin Pierre wrote.

“That was foolish of the Pastor—get out of the way and let somebody else do the ceremony. You don’t wait till the wedding day to embarrass people in front of their family & friends. They should sue him. It’s none of his business,” Marlin J. Reid wrote.

“I believe this pastor did the right thing. He wasn’t rude... he gave them multiple chances to add to the dress. It’s His right to honor God the way he sees fit. People come to church with different ideas, but purposeful pornography should never be celebrated,” Esosa Killingidols said.

“The pastor’s fashion sense overrode God’s will?!? There is NOTHING in scripture that mandates/governs what the bride shall not wear to her own wedding,” Lawrence H. Thompson says.

“God is not looking at her outfit, God is not looking at how ‘sexy’ she is. God is looking at the fact that a man and woman are coming together in unity to become one. We need to stop putting focus on the outside,” Rashad TrueGospel Tarpley

wrote.

“I respect him for standing up for the reverence of God and the sanctity of marriage. Her display of expression doesn’t trump the Holiness of what God is expressing in marriage,” wrote Dean Boyd.

“I feel this is the very reason that people turn away from the church, we as Christians are too religious to be real and be more like Christ who would not have turned away any sinner,” Tricia E. Fields commented.

My opinion? Well, if you read my last article, you know where I stand. I don’t believe women should come to church—even unsaved women looking for a pastor to perform a wedding ceremony—scantily clad. In my first article, some criticized me for not calling men to the same standard. I absolutely do. I don’t want to see men’s boxer shorts, bulging biceps and tight pants any more than I want to see a woman’s cleavage.

But here’s the point: For some reason, this issue is getting more and more attention in the body of Christ. You can lambaste me for bringing it up, but it’s certainly hitting a nerve with anything-goes-anywhere-you-want and modest-minded people alike. I think Christians should model the way with their attire, just like we are supposed to do with our words and actions.

Paul said not to be conformed to this world (Rom. 12:2), but when we dress like lingerie models in church—or anywhere else—we’ve given the spirit of the world too much influence. If God doesn’t care what we wear, Scripture wouldn’t tell us to adorn ourselves in modest apparel, in clothing that is proper for women professing godliness (1 Tim. 2:9-10).

The bottom line: We shouldn’t wear clothes that contrast with the biblical command for modesty, which kicks off an entirely new debate of what modesty means. I can assure you, based on the photo of the wedding dress the bride chose, it was

anything but modest.

**Jennifer LeClaire** is news editor at Charisma. She is also the author of several books, including *The Spiritual Warrior's Guide to Defeating Jezebel*. You can email Jennifer at @ or visit her website here. You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter.

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## **Vintage Billy Graham**

Watch archived video of Billy Graham preaching at a 1975 crusade in Albuquerque, N.M.

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## **Muslims Converting to Christianity at Record Rates**

Watch a video of the growing phenomenon of Muslims converting to Jesus because of a dreams.

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## **Bringing the Crusade to**

# America

Reinhard Bonnke explains why now is the time for him to bring the gospel to the United States.

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## Video: Sidewalk Sunday School

Find out more about Luis Reyes' Sidewalk Sunday School ministry and how it is impacting thousands weekly.

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## Why I Would Not Appear on 'The Daily Show' With Mocking Jon Stewart

There's a lot of talk today about the "triumphant return" of Jon Stewart to *The Daily Show's* anchor desk after a summer hiatus.

Stewart had been off in the Middle East directing and producing a movie. During that time, he missed out on poking fun at Anthony Weiner, Miley Cyrus, Paula Deen—and me.

A few weeks after writing the article "Gay Agenda's Intimidation Tactics Won't Stop Me From Speaking Truth," I got an email from the producer at *The Daily Show* that read, "We want to do a piece about the absurdity inherent in the idea that one cannot support traditional marriage

without getting torn apart by those who march around demanding tolerance. You've been great at pointing out this dynamic so I thought you could be a fit for this piece."

Can you spell *setup*?

I was advised to take a call with the producer to discern the situation—and I did. The producer was very friendly and laid out the concept of the segment to "explore the ways in which people who come out and simply express a belief in traditional marriage and continue to support the traditional definition of marriage are finding it is becoming increasingly difficult to do so without getting just torn apart by people who, you know, are out there demanding tolerance and are out there acting pretty atrociously."

The producer went on to say that the team thought it would be interesting to cast a wide net. She came across my writings on Charisma and said, "You seem to be dealing with this on a pretty regular basis."

She went on to ask me about my recent experiences receiving persecuting comments from those who oppose my views on gay marriage. I confirmed that I regularly receive vicious emails and Facebook posts with expletives when I address the topic.

From there, she politely started trying to put words into my mouth.

"Would you say that the number of people who are attacking Christian principled people is overwhelmingly larger than people who are attacking. ... Does it seem like the balance is uneven?" she asked. I told her I see extremes on both sides of the fence and that I disagreed with the approaches from the radical likes of Westboro Baptist Church and other hate groups from any belief system, gay or straight.

She didn't like that answer, but she didn't give up. Next she asked me, "Are we moving towards a sort of standard where if

you don't support same-sex marriage you are some sort of [pariah]?" I explained that it's not popular to be against gay marriage and that although the gay lifestyle is more mainstream, it's not just Christians who have opposing value systems. She agreed with me, but it still wasn't the answer she was looking for.

Next question: "Do you feel like it's safe at this point for people to be honest about their higher truths?" Safe? I know that Stewart doesn't buy into the idea that Christians are being persecuted for their beliefs, though the New Mexico photographers who were fined for refusing to take pictures at a gay ceremony and the Christian-owned bakery that shut down after harassment from gay bullies would suggest otherwise. So would the Christian florist who is being sued for declining to make flower arrangements for a gay wedding and the Christian bed-and-breakfast owners who were punished for "discriminating" against gays.

Persecution is increasing, I told her, and will continue to increase.

She concluded our phone interview by explaining again, "We are just trying to figure out if there's a way to do a story with regard to the sort of absurdity of demanding tolerance and being totally incapable of practicing what you preach."

I didn't figure she'd call me back because I didn't play into the Christian extremist mold they were seeking for the segment. Nevertheless, I sought counsel from Christian leaders wiser than me. Although some of my younger Christian friends told me I should jump at the opportunity, the consistent theme of the counsel I received from my spiritual elders sounded like this: "Without a clear word from the Lord, I'd steer clear of this one."

When I sought the Lord, He simply said this: "Don't cast your pearls before swine." Those may seem like strong words, but

when I finally saw the segment they produced—the segment I decided I would not appear on—I could see clearly why the Holy Spirit spoke in those terms. Click [here](#) to check out the segment for yourself and witness the mocking spirit in action.

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## 20 Tips to Move Into Full-Time Ministry

Here are 20 tips from ministers currently in apostolic leadership that will help make your journey to full-time ministry a successful one.

1. Develop an intimate relationship with God and learn to know His voice.
2. Have a heart to fulfill God's kingdom vision and your destiny.
3. Find your identity in God. Determine what your calling is, and step out in it with confidence as God provides opportunities.
4. Don't get frustrated trying to make it happen. Put your hand to what is already in front of you, study to show yourself approved and enjoy where you are on the way to where you're going.
5. Start serving in small ways. Prove your faithfulness in those and then follow God's direction from step to step as He expands your responsibility.

6. Get a core group of people around you who believe in you and who will support and pray for you.
7. Do not be diverted from your call by circumstances or people who don't line up with it. Be sensitive to ungodly counsel.
8. Find a mentor who has experience, who believes in you and your potential, and who is willing to provide the necessary training and equipping to help you fulfill God's call on your life.
9. Go to places where the Spirit of God is moving and get around people who are anointed, particularly in the areas in which you feel called, so you can receive an impartation from them.
10. Attend short-term apostolic training events.
11. Study the lives of people who have gone before you in ministry, including men and women in the Bible, to learn from their experience.
12. Prepare in every area of your life to pursue God's call. Be ready financially, physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually for what God is asking you to do.
13. Remember that ministry comes out of relationship. Continually seek to deepen your relationship with God through prayer and study of the Word.
14. Have a clear understanding of what ministry is. Ministry is simply helping somebody with the love of Jesus wherever there's a need.
15. Don't neglect your family. Take care of your husband, wife, children and responsibilities at home.
16. Don't become a prima donna. Remain touchable.
17. Make sure you don't hold any bitterness in your heart toward men.
18. Do what you do with excellence.
19. Attend a strong local church for accountability purposes and as a covering for your ministry.
20. Grow in authority by continually obeying God.

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# The Lurking Wolves in Sheep's Clothing

Watch as Rich Rogers explains the various wolves in sheep's clothing that have infiltrated our world.

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## Church Requests 'Only White People' to Greet

In a stunning request, a North Carolina church has asked "only white people" to greet at its front doors in an effort to "bring [the church's] racial demographic pendulum back to mid-line."

The church has issued the following response:

"One of our longtime pastors, in keeping with our church's desire to be inclusive and intentionally reach out to all races, noticed our front door greeting team was no longer reflecting the racial diversity of our entire congregation, and she wanted potential visitors to see people like themselves upon entering our church. However, she made an error in judgment in requesting all white greeters at the front door, going overboard in placing emphasis on any one race over another in trying to highlight diversity within the greeting team. She admits this was a grave lapse in judgment and is sincerely sorry for her actions. She immediately

apologized and has asked our forgiveness. She and senior pastors have made themselves available to meet with any church members who want to discuss this situation with them, and have communicated their true heart in this matter – to be a church welcoming and inclusive to all. Freedom House believes in a diverse relationship within its membership, reflecting the larger community in which the church resides, doing life together as a church representative of everyone – culturally, ethnically, economically, and generationally.”

Watch the video here:

WBTV 3 News, Weather, Sports, and Traffic for Charlotte, NC

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## **Filmmaker Tyler Perry Lays Hands on Bishop TD Jakes**

This weekend, a video of filmmaker Tyler Perry praying for Bishop T.D. Jakes went viral. Some Christians expressed strong opinions about the event. See it for yourself.