

05-13-2024 Lessons From the Berry Patch #4 – Dressed for the Patch

Son, you don't look like you are dressed for work... R. H. (Dave) Davenport

When I was teenager, our family operated a couple of Texaco Service Stations. My siblings and I worked there before and after school and on Saturdays with my Mom and Dad. It was always fun being around my parents, they were fun-loving people.

At 19 years old, I first met my favorite girl, Pat. I wanted to spend all the time I could with her. It took me about 40 minutes to drive from Danbury to her house in Friendswood – so I didn't want to waste the time of going home to change clothes after work. I just came to work in my clothes that I had worn to school that day. I was determined that I would do my work without messing up my clothes. If I could head to Friendswood right after work, I'd have an extra half hour to spend with Pat.

Well, I walked in and Dad noticed I wasn't in my oil-changing, car-washing, flat tire-fixing work clothes. He said, "Son, you don't look like are dressed for work..." I'm not sure, but I think someday he gave me the dirtiest jobs, just for fun, just to see if somehow I could get my work done and still have clean clothes. Some days I managed to keep clean enough to get that extra 30 minutes with Pat. Some days, not so much.

Being properly dressed is important. Even in the berry patch. If you don't want those stickery berry vines to give you a tattoo, you need long pants and a long sleeved shirt.

So before we plunge off into the Berry Patch, we will take a little time to make sure that we are properly outfitted for that stickery place...

- Long sleeves and pants
- High-top boots
- A good hat
- Nitrile gloves!!!
- A sturdy stick
- Sunblock – that sun hits you right on the back of the neck...

We will be talking about those things in the next few lessons.

You know, The Lord has given us instructions about how we should be spiritually suited up each day as we plunge into our own Berry Patch.

No matter where you live or what you do, you are living among thorns, chiggers and water moccasins. OK, they might not look like thorns, chiggers and water moccasins – but you know what it is like to get into a “thorny” situation. You know some people who are as irritating as a “chigger.” You know some people who are as mean as a “snake.” If you want to live a joyful life in the Berry Patch, you need to be properly suited up each day.

Ephesians 6: The Whole Armor of God

¹⁰ A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. ¹² For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

¹³ Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.

¹⁴ Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God’s righteousness. ¹⁵ For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. ¹⁶ In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. ¹⁷ Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. ^{NLT}

The truth is that our Good God has provided us with tools to be victorious and joyful in the Berry Patch. God’s armor includes truth, righteousness, peace, faith, assurance of salvation and the truths of the Bible. If we head out into the Berry Patch each day suited up properly we have a much better chance of being victorious that day:

1. Knowing the truth and living in absolute truthfulness.
2. Knowing God has provided His righteousness for you.
3. Having a peaceful heart, secure knowing that God is with you always.
4. Living a life based on faith, we can trust The Lord to see us through any trouble.

5. Being assured that Jesus paid for your every sin, even those you haven't committed yet!
6. Having spent time gaining wisdom from the Word of God in the Bible.

Remember, when you show up to the Berry Patch, be dressed for work!

