

**A PREZ RELEASE**  
**from AGTS**

Monthly commentary from the President of  
the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary

**Jesus is My Homeboy**  
April 2003

People magazine recently noted that the fashion statement of the moment is "Jesus is My Homeboy" T-shirts and sweatshirts. (Also available is Mary is My Homegirl). From Pamela Anderson and Carmen Electra to Springfield, Missouri "homeboy" Brad Pitt, this new "tongue-in-cheek" attire has caught the attention of the celebrity trendsetters.

Anderson, Electra and Pitt et.al. do not readily conjure up images of piety nor do I think they have any intent to do so. We could blast the Urban Outfitters retail chain for selling this line of clothing and celebrities for making it trendy for image conscious consumers to consider purchasing these items. That would probably just result in more people scurrying off to purchase this momentary phenomenon.

Let me be a bit more self-critical. Somehow, Jesus has been reduced to a fashion trend. Urban Outfitters is not the problem nor are the people who buy this fashionable line of clothing. If Jesus is reduced to the latest "vision of cool", Christians who are serious about following Jesus ought to take note.

One of my favorite texts is II Corinthians 5:20. "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us." (NIV) What kind of appeal to the world is being offered by the Church when fashion designers have such a limited view of Jesus that relationship with Him is merely a (poorly) designed image on a T-shirt? I have a feeling that God's gaze of concern is not at Pamela Anderson or Brad Pitt (nor any other "lesser known" consumer). God may well be staring at Christian communities inhabited by followers of Jesus and wondering, "How did it ever come to this?"

Animosity toward Jesus is quite understandable; that's a standard reality in Christian history! But purporting alignment with the Son of God by means of a trendy piece of clothing.....? Somehow I think we Christians have some explaining to do. Being reduced to an inspirational source for the fashion industry to make money is not what is meant by being "salt of the earth and the light of the world."

Byron D. Klaus, President Assemblies of God Theological Seminary

**Did you miss our latest Leadership Roundtable in Carlinville, Illinois?** You will have another chance to hear Leonard Sweet at General Council 2003. Make plans to attend the "Ministry on the Edge: The Mission to Post-Christian America" on July 28 (6-9 p.m.) and July 29 (9 a.m. - 3 p.m.). Dr. Sweet, author of *Soul Tsunami* and *Carpe Manana*, will focus on developing and sustaining ministry for the changing culture for the new century. Graduate credit available. For further information or to register, call Randy Walls at 800-467-2487, ext 1044 or visit [www.agseminary.edu](http://www.agseminary.edu)

**Are you an alumnus/nae of AGTS?** Join us for our alumni reception at General Council 2003--August 2 at 9:00 p.m. in Room 151B of the Washington Convention Center.