

Christian Appearance (Part 1)

by Paul Lloyd

The sermon emphasizes the importance of inner character over outward appearance in the context of Christian modesty and identity.

Duration: 1:21:21

Scripture: Matthew 11:28

Topics: "Modest Dress"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher addresses the harmful influence of societal expectations and the pressure to conform to a certain mold. He emphasizes the need to focus on the heart rather than outward appearance. The preacher highlights the story of Jesus Christ, who came to earth without any physical attractiveness or worldly appeal. He encourages the audience to seek God's perspective on clothing and not to be consumed by worldly standards. Additionally, he shares a story about a man who realized the powerlessness of his own appearance and chose to fast from looking in the mirror in order to seek the power of God in his life.

Transcript

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A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Good morning. Let's pray together.

Would you stand with me? Father, we do bow our hearts to you again this morning, Lord. Thank you for being in our midst, Lord. Thank you for speaking to us.

Thank you, Lord, for lovingly whispering to us this morning. And, Lord, it's always good to hear your voice. Your voice, Lord, even your whisper, Lord, it breaks the cedars.

It makes the calves the hinds to calve. It scatters the mountains, Lord. Your voice is powerful.

Your word is mighty. Lord, we love your word. We thank you that you change us, Lord, through the word of God.

And we're here today, Lord, because we want to be changed. We don't want to be the same, Lord. We don't want to just keep on as we are now.

We want to grow, Lord. We want to go on with God. And we pray, Lord, this morning that the things that are said and the word of God that's read would have that effect in our life, Lord, that it would change us.

Lord, you said that if we continue in your word, we would know the truth. And that truth would make us free. I pray for that this morning, Lord.

Let your truth make us free. Free from the world's way of looking at things. Free, Lord, from the bondages that come along with that.

Free, so that we can go from this place and rightly discern what is true, what is false, what is of the devil, what is of God. And so that, Lord, we won't be busy being under Satan's yoke, but that we'll be busy under the Master, our Lord Jesus. I pray for a grace today, Lord.

I need you, Father. I pray that you could quicken my heart and my words, Lord. Make me your mouthpiece.

And take this foolishness of preaching, Lord, to bring to naught the things that are. And to show forth your glory. In Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. You can sit down.

I'm blessed to be here this morning with you and appreciate all of you. And I'm blessed to have the opportunity to share God's Word. That's a joy.

And I'm excited that I believe there's some things that God has given me to share with you all today that are life-changing. That can change your life. And these things have changed my life.

And so that's always exciting. It's a thrill to think that we can have a part of that and see God do something like that. When I share the topic of this message, you may wonder how that would be life-changing.

I don't know. But as you bear with me and as I share my heart with you, I think you'll see what I'm talking about. The topic here this morning comes from our brother's meeting on Wednesday night.

We had a real good meeting. And one of the blessings of that meeting was we had a discussion about modesty, clothing, and so forth. And several brothers expressed that they would really like some teaching on that.

And when they said that, I kind of perked up my ears. I knew I was going to be sharing today. And I like to teach.

And I've thought back. It's been at least two and a half years, I think, since we had a message on this subject. The last I could remember was a Wednesday night when we were going through our confession of faith.

So it has been a while. And while it's not one of the majors of the gospel, yet it's something that's important. And as I was preparing yesterday, the Lord put a burden in my heart.

And I realized I couldn't do this in one message. So it's going to have to be two messages. Maybe the next time I get to share, I could finish.

Today, I'd like to focus on probably a little unusual message, considering the title and the subject matter that I've told you about. I can't remember hearing a message quite like it before. But as I was praying about it yesterday, I was asking the Lord.

I said, Lord, I want Jesus Christ to be glorified in this topic. I don't want to just teach about clothes. Not that clothes aren't important.

But that burden was in my heart. How can we glorify Jesus today? That's what it's all about. And He just put something in my heart, took me somewhere in His Word, and gave me a direction there that was inspirational to me.

And I believe it will be to you as well. And as I said, I think it can be something freeing. Very freeing.

So today, I plan to focus on more the underlying attitudes and assumptions and ideas about this matter of Christian appearance. I chose that title rather than something like modesty, because Christian appearance covers a broader range, maybe, of what I felt the Lord wanted me to share about. It's more than just clothes.

Our appearance, the way Christians appear, does it matter? And our appearance has to do with the whole cosmos that is who we are. You may think that's a strange word to choose, cosmos. That's actually the Greek word used in the New Testament to describe adorning.

Turn with me to 1 Peter 3. Familiar verses. And it's speaking about the adorning of the wife. I found that fascinating when I looked up that word.

1 Peter 3. Who's adorning? Who's cosmos? Let it not be that outward adorning of plating the hair, of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel, but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Cosmos. We know what that means, right? Today we use that word to describe the universe, meaning the orderly arrangement of all the planets, stars, everything is ordered.

And that word that we use, and scientists use, is a Greek word that was used here for adorning. Let your cosmos, let the world that orbits around you, let your cosmos be the being of who you are. Let that be not outward things.

Let it be inward. Let your cosmos be something that comes from inside. And this is the opposite of the world's way, isn't it? The world can't relate to that.

The whole world is full of outward focus. It's everything to the world. I looked up figures on how much money is spent on some of these things.

It was shocking. But there's a reason why. It's because that's what they have.

There's nothing inside. We've got something inside, praise God. Something beautiful, something priceless.

So, we want to look at that this morning. There's another verse that's familiar in 1 Timothy 2. It says, verse 8 we'll start with, I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting, in like manner also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broided hair or gold or pearls or costly array, but which becometh women professing godliness with good works. Again, that word adorn, there in verse 9, that's the word *kosmeo*.

Similar word. And this word we get cosmetics. Cosmetics.

That's where they get that from. Same root word in the Greek. Let your cosmetics be something from the inside.

So, as I said, the message that God put on my heart is not just about clothing. It's about our whole life, our whole attitude, our whole spirit. That's really what God's interested in, isn't it? And so it's more than just the clothes that we wear.

Let's turn to Romans chapter 12. Very familiar verse. It says, I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service, and be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

That sounds like meditation. That you may prove what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God. So here we are as Christians, we find ourselves, I know for myself when I became born again, a whole new world opened to me.

The kingdom of God. And growing up like I did in the world system basically, just typical American person, I had no clue about the clothes I wore or anything like that. In fact, when I came to the Lord, I moved out to Colorado as part of my seeking God.

I went to this church and when I went there on Sundays, I wore blue jeans and T-shirt. And I think there's probably holes in my knees too. Part of that was just who I was.

I didn't get dressed up. Part of it was I wanted to see where these people were coming from. What would they do with me? How would they respond to me if I didn't quite look so dressed up? And it was a blessing.

You know what? They just loved me. They were happy that I was in their church. And they blessed me and they'd give me hugs and they'd encourage me.

And that's a blessing. I hope we can do that also here. Someone's coming seeking God.

They're hungry for the Lord. And they don't maybe have it all together or look like we would feel the Word of God teach us. Praise God.

Praise God for people like that. Amen. Give them a hug.

Give them a blessing that they're seeking the right things. God can take care of all that other stuff, can't he? Praise God. And he's changed me.

I don't know how long I dressed like that at that church. It was probably six months. But I became born again.

I gave my life to Jesus. And I got a heart that wanted to follow God no matter what. And it was so exciting because it was like everything was new, like the Bible says.

If any man be in Christ, he's a new creature. Everything was new. And so I began to look at everything through new eyes.

Well, what about this? What about that? How do I do this? I was a new creature. And one of those areas was the things I wore. And there were times when God just spoke to me.

I had this football jersey that I always wore. And it was a certain player, you know, that I liked. One day I looked in the mirror and I looked at myself.

I had that shirt on and it just struck me. That's not who you are. That thing's got to go.

It doesn't fit. How'd it went? Praise God. Nobody told me to get rid of it.

But the Lord did. Because he showed me that's not who I was anymore. My identity was different.

I got a new identity. So here we are. We live in this atmosphere called the world.

Is there an atmosphere around us? Is there or isn't there? There is actually an atmosphere. There is attitude. There is an attitude.

There is forces around us. It speaks of that in Ephesians chapter two. It says chapter two and verse two or one.

And you has he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world. According to the prince of the power of the air. The spirit that now works in the children of disobedience.

There's an atmosphere. It's all around. It comes out of those billboards that we pass coming down the road.

It's saying something to you and I. If you're a girl, it's saying you need to look this certain way. You need to be a certain weight. You need to have certain clothes.

You need to be cool. You know, I thought about that word yesterday. Cool.

I thought, what does that really mean? Cool. And I said, Lord, what does cool mean? And it struck me. Cool is what the world says is something that's really good.

Cool is what the world loves. Right? Is that right? Cool is what the world loves. Now, are we supposed to love what the world loves? No.

So where does cool fit into our lives? I don't like cool. I don't like the word cool. Because I don't think it's a Christian word.

Cool is what the world loves. I don't want to be cool. I don't want the world to love me.

Because if they love me, there's going to be something wrong. The Lord's not going to love me because the world can't love God, too. So cool, that's something I've had on my heart this morning as well.

That whole idea of cool. The world wants to press us into the mold. You've got to be cool.

Don't be different. Don't be so weird. You guys are weirdos.

Around here, it's not quite so bad. But you go out in Colorado, where we lived for a while, and where my wife is dressed like you all are, she was weird. In their eyes.

Not in the eyes of God. But the Word of the Lord says, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loved the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

God's Word says, Set your affections on things above. Colossians 3. And verse 2, Not on things on the earth. So here I'm talking about clothing, modesty.

It may seem like I'm negating that, but what I'm saying is, as I've studied this, I see that God says, in the verses that pertain to this, it's amazing, but He always sort of points us away from those things. Even after He says what you should do there, He says, But focus on what's inside. Focus on the heart.

And so that's what this message I want to do by His grace. It's to do something in our hearts. To change that very foundational attitude that we have coming against us in this world to try to grip us, to try to mold us, and squeeze us into the mold.

That's what it said there in Romans 12. Be not conformed. One translation says, Don't let the world squeeze you into its mold.

And isn't that what we feel? Yeah, it's a mold. It's a mold that's out there that wants to squeeze us and make us like that mold. But be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Praise God. We're up against a battle. The world is consumed with outward appearance.

TV, books, magazines, everything. As I said, it's because there's nothing inside. 1 Samuel 16, turn there with me.

Here's a very interesting story. God told Samuel, I want you to go anoint a son of Jesse. He didn't tell him which one, but he said go, and I'm going to show you who it is.

We learn something very interesting about human nature and about God in these verses. 1 Samuel 16, verse 6. It came to pass when they were come that he looked on Eliab and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him. But the Lord said to Samuel, Look not on his countenance or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him.

For the Lord seeth not as man seeth. For man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart. We have a statement here that's powerful that tells us something that we need to know.

The fact of the matter is man looks on the outward appearance and God looks on the heart. I guess Eliab must have been tall and he must have been good looking. Can we acknowledge that there's such a thing as good looking or pretty? Yes, there's something like that.

The world's got it all twisted and confused and Satan has used it to make most people feel lousy about themselves. He's a liar. Today I want to expose him.

And that's exciting. Because I don't want you all to believe in his lies. And I don't want to believe in either.

There was something about this Eliab that was impressive. He's tall and he's handsome. He must be the one, said Samuel.

And he's even a prophet. But see how much the spirit of man, the spirit of looking on the outward was even in the prophet of God. It seems as though the Lord kind of worked with them.

I mean, Saul was a big man. It says he was head and shoulders above everybody else. He must have been seven feet tall.

God gave him that, but it's like they wouldn't be able to relate if this guy wasn't something impressive. Isn't that the way it is in the world? If you look at the... I read somewhere about like the presidents of the United States. They're not five foot two.

Okay, they're six foot, six foot three. They're big guys. If you look at a lot of the leaders in the world, they're big people.

A lot of them are good looking people. Why is that? Because man looks on the outward appearance. That's why.

Praise God, His kingdom is different. That gives hope for you and me. Hallelujah.

I want to read something to you here. Well, we could just talk about that. He went down the line and he saw the different brothers of David.

And he finally got to David. He also was good looking, but he was small. Smaller, I'm sure.

And God said, this is the one. He saw something in David's heart. He said, this is a man after my heart.

I love his heart. He's the one I want. Alright.

So, the fact of the word of God and the fact that we all know is man looks on the outward appearance. Let's not deceive ourselves and think that we don't struggle with that or we're not affected by that. We are affected by it unless we are consciously aware and say, no, I'm not going there.

I'm not going to think like the world thinks. That's what we're talking about. Renewing our mind.

Being transformed to think like God thinks. Alright, let me read you this little article I got from the YWCA, which is a women's, I think by now it's probably a feminist organization, but it was at one time a young women's Christian association. Every woman in the United States participates in a daily beauty pageant, whether she likes it or not.

Engulfed by a popular culture, saturated with images of idealized, airbrushed and unattainable female physical beauty, women and girls cannot escape feeling judged on the basis of their appearance. As a result, many women feel chronically insecure, overweight and inadequate as these beauty images apply to an ever shrinking pool of women. Do you see the work of the devil anywhere? Moreover, the diet, cosmetic and fashion industries are often too willing to exploit these narrow beauty standards so women and girls will become cradle to grave consumers of beauty products, cosmetic surgery and diet programs.

The issue is not new, but the extent to which it is invading the lives of young girls and women of color and the lengths to which women will go to achieve an unattainable look is an increasing problem. The pressure

to achieve unrealistic physical beauty is an undercurrent in the lives of virtually all women in the United States and its steady drumbeat is wreaking havoc on women in ways that far exceed the bounds of their physical selves. From new levels of spending on cosmetic alteration to health risks and to the emergence of a mean girls culture.

I guess that's girls beating up girls was what I seem to get out of that because there's a pecking order. You're prettier than me, I'm going to beat you up. The lifelong burden of an unattainable beauty and body image is taking a terrible toll in all areas of women's lives from economic well-being to health to interpersonal relationships.

True or false? Isn't that true? We spend \$8 billion a year on makeup in the United States. That's 8,000 million, 6 billion, 6,000 million on perfume, 5,000 million on cosmetic surgery. And that was interesting to look into as they broke it down.

Some women were trying to take things off and some were adding the same thing. Something's wrong, isn't it? Something's wrong. \$50 billion, \$50,000 million spent on diet and weight loss programs.

We're sick. This culture is sick. It's consumed with the outward.

Now, with all of what we're doing to spruce things up, you'd think that American women would be fairly satisfied with the way they look, right? Eighty percent of women in the United States are dissatisfied with how they look. Eight out of ten. Well, I wish this was different.

Eight out of ten. It's the work of the enemy. He is a liar, a thief who came to steal, kill, and destroy.

Think of the untold misery and bondage that he has put women and men in in our country. Because they have to live up to this mold that is promoted as being of cool. What's cool? What the world loves.

Seventy-five percent of women today have dyed their hair at least once. As opposed to in 1950, seven percent. That's ten times as much hair dyeing is going on.

And just a side note, I mentioned all those billions of dollars that are spent on makeup, perfume, and surgery and hair. Oh, hair care was another six thousand million. A billion.

No, six thousand million. Six billion. Nine billion dollars would take care of all the water and sanitation for all the third world countries in the world.

Providing them with safe water to drink and healthy situation, sanitation. Thirteen billion more would provide health and nutrition to stop the starvation of I think it was eighteen thousand people a day dying. That's only twenty-one billion dollars would take care of all that.

We spent fifty billion on diet and trying to get rid of our weight. Fifty billion. There's eighteen thousand a day who are trying to just put on a little weight.

Trying to live. It's a lie of the devil. And I'm not going to believe his lies.

God has something to say about this. You know, as I prayed about this message like I said earlier, I had a burden that I wanted Jesus Christ to be seen by us today. I don't want us to just talk about I don't want to talk about I want to close this morning.

But we want to see Him. And He has something to say about everything. But as I prayed that prayer, the Scripture came into my mind.

The only Scripture in the Bible as far as I know that actually describes how Jesus Christ looked. Do you know where it is? Isaiah 53. Nowhere in the New Testament is there any physical description given of Jesus Christ.

Was that an accident? No. He said the one time he did speak, he said the only thing he said about himself was I am meek and lowly of heart. Come and learn of me.

And you know, that's my next. That's my next verse. Take the backdrop of all I just shared with you about all the bondage, all the people spending all the money.

Got to keep up with the Joneses. I've got to make myself look good like the lady on the magazine at the checkout stand. I've got to get rid of my weight.

I've got to do this and that. It's a bondage. Now, take to the backdrop of all that bondage, hear the words of Jesus Christ.

Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. And you shall find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Praise God. He wants to take some burdens today, I believe.

He wants to get rid of some of that baggage, some of that lie from the devil. What did Jesus look like? I want to read to you something out of a children's book. You have to be careful what you read in children's books.

Did you know that sometimes we get lies out of children's books? I happen to like this children's book, but this particular passage, we got it X'd out in our book. Listen to what he said as he described Jesus growing up. As for Jesus, the Bible says that He grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him.

What a fine boy He must have been. So strong, so healthy, so good looking. With His perfect little body, I'm sure He could run faster and jump higher than any other boy or girl in town.

Isn't that funny? Well, we had a laugh about that yesterday at lunch. I mean, it's not funny, but it's sad. But isn't that the way the world thinks about things? If He's so special, He must be able to jump higher and run faster and be better looking than anybody else.

With His marvelous eyesight and hearing, He saw and heard everything that went on around Him. He missed nothing and stored up all sorts of priceless memories for use in days to come. Now that is garbage.

That's not true. Let's turn to Isaiah. Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

We're going to find out how He chose to come to earth. And it's beautiful. Look what it says.

Chapter 53 Who has believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? It's almost like He's saying who would believe it? Who could believe it? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant

and as a root out of a dry ground. He has no form nor comeliness and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. I looked up some of these words.

He shall grow up before Him as a sucker. A sucker coming out of the ground. That's what that word literally means.

He's going to be like a sucker. And like a root out of a dry ground. What does that look like? Is that something impressive? I mean, you think about this A cake packed in ground and this little spindly thing coming out of there.

God said, He's going to be like that. My son. The one who's going to glorify me.

That's how He's going to look. He has no form. He has no goodly appearance or countenance.

The word of God says He wasn't good looking. That's God's word. And when we shall see Him, And there is no beauty that we should desire Him.

Oh, comeliness. He has no form nor comeliness. Comeliness means no magnificent ornament or splendor.

Now, my children and I looked through the book real quick yesterday. Let's find the pictures of Jesus. Let's see what He looks like.

As we went through, what did He look like? Tall, dark and handsome. Right? Every single picture. He wasn't bald.

Now Peter was bald when he was falling down through the waves when Jesus was reaching out to him. Peter was bald. That's how the world looks at bald people.

We had a good laugh on that one, too. No, we never saw a bald Jesus, did we? Now, I don't know if He was bald. Probably wasn't, but... No, because the artists have a problem.

They've got this perfect person, this God who is man, this totally unusual, totally beautiful inward person. How am I going to depict Him to people? How are they going to know that this is Jesus? If they actually drew Him like He looked, you couldn't tell it was Him or not. You wouldn't be able to pick Him out.

You'd look at the picture and you'd go, well, which one is He? That's the way He was, according to Isaiah. But do you see how the world system even has confused that whole thing, that we think Jesus must be a superstar? Right? Remember years ago, Jesus Christ, superstar? What does a superstar look like? Right? They look really cool. I asked the lady if I could bring these back to the store after I used them, and she said I could, so... What would you think of me if I stood up here and gave you a message with these on? It doesn't fit Jesus, does it? It just doesn't fit Him.

Now, am I saying you can't wear sunglasses? No. But do you have to get the superstar kind? You can get some that are superstars. Jesus was not a superstar.

In fact, He was just an ordinary looking man. There was nothing about Him to commend Himself to people. There was no great being or persona of appearance that made thousands of people want to come and hear what He had to say.

Nothing. Yet, look at our churches in America. What are the churches that have 10,000 and 20,000 and 30,000 people in them? What does the pastor look like? His wife looks like a fashion model, and he looks like a superstar.

What does that say? Is that a representation of our Lord Jesus Christ? No, it's that whole American and world lie perpetuated in the church. That we're supposed to be superstars. No, Jesus was not a superstar.

He was an ordinary man. In fact, so ordinary that people would look at Him and say, there's no beauty that we should desire in Him. I think that's one of the reasons that the Jews missed Him.

This man from Nazareth? This man, the Messiah? He doesn't look like a Messiah. Messiahs are supposed to be tall and handsome and altogether wonderful. And so they turned Him off because He didn't fit the mold.

Let's not have that mold in our church. Let's have His mold. Praise God.

He'll grow up before Him like a sucker and like a root out of a dry ground. He has no goodly appearance or countenance, nor magnificence, ornament, or splendor. And when we shall see Him, there's no beauty that we should desire in Him.

Yet, He's the most beautiful being in the universe, isn't He? That's how the Lord spoke to me. Yeah, we want to talk about clothes, and we'll do more specifically that in the next message. But God's interested in something way better than that.

And those clothes can actually enhance that thing that's way better. Matthew chapter 6. Turn there with me, please. I hope what I shared with you alters the way that you look at pictures of Jesus for the rest of your life.

Because, you know, if He was the superstar, the tall man with the goodly appearance, I can't be that. You know, I'm lost out. If that's what it takes to be like Jesus, I can't be there.

You know, I believe that's why God allowed Him to be to earth this way. Because the life of Christ can be in every one of us. It doesn't matter what your outward appearance is.

It doesn't matter whether you're somebody that the world says is contemptible. You know, that's what they said about Paul, isn't it? He said, well, he's weighty in his letters, but when he's here in person, he's kind of... You know, his name means small. Paul means small.

When he's here in person, he's kind of unimpressive. But what did God do through that unimpressive little man? He filled him with Jesus Christ. He built his church.

He wrote half the New Testament. That's what God uses, is the things that are not. To bring to naught the things that are.

So if you're an are not this morning, you're in good company. If you're a sister, a woman who's been burdened all your life because you're not the prettiest one, you're in good company. Your Lord Jesus wasn't that way either.

He was just a real ordinary looking guy. And maybe even less than that. Maybe there were some things about Him that just really weren't very attractive at all.

It almost seems that way. I don't want to go too far beyond the Scripture, but... All right, Matthew chapter 6, verse 24. No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other.

You cannot serve God and mammon. And mammon is more than money, as we're going to find out here. Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor yet for your body what you shall put on.

Take no thought for your life, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment? I get from this that God doesn't want to spend a lot of time thinking about our clothes. Now, when He says take no thought, He's not saying don't ever think about it, right? Because that's not right.

He's saying don't be anxious about it. Don't be hung up on it. Don't be focused on it.

Take no thought for your life. Let's see here. Verse 27, 28.

And why take ye thought for raiment or clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Wherefore if God so clothed the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek. Isn't it true? Consume with clothes. In America, it's \$700 a person for clothes every year.

So if you've got ten people in your family, that's \$7,000 on clothes. I'm not sure if we've spent that much in all our lives. My wife and I, as long as we've been married.

That's the way of the world, though. For after all these things do the Gentiles, the heathens, seek. Your Heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things, but seek ye first the kingdom of God.

And His righteousness in all these things shall be added unto you. God will give you clothes. He'll give you what you need.

By the way, who invented clothes? Anybody else? Okay, you're both right. Adam invented the first inadequate clothes. God invented the first good ones.

I have a son that likes to grow seeds. Any kind of seed that comes in the house, he's going to grow it. I'm not sure what we're going to do with all these trees one day, but he grew a fig tree.

And I don't know if you've ever seen a fig leaf. I don't know if you've ever seen a fig leaf, but they're these kind of scratchy, skinny things. They wouldn't feel real good up against your skin.

That's what they chose for their clothes. And it wasn't very good. You know what? Man needs God's help.

Isn't that right? All the French designers and so forth, it's fig leaves. God is the one who invented good clothes. And we still need him today to help us.

All right. So again, the message is seek first the kingdom of God. Don't make this a major thing.

Don't make this a big deal that you're consumed with it. You're all caught up in and hung up on. Find out what God says about it.

Put it in perspective. Get you some clothes that are right. And then go on and serve God.

How much time do you spend in front of this? I heard a message one time about a young fellow. He wasn't young when I heard him. He was an old man.

But he said, when I was 20 some years old, I wanted so bad the power of God in my life. I saw that I was powerless. He was an evangelist, young evangelist, 20 years old or so.

And he felt that God said to him, I want you to fast from the mirror. He liked how he looked. And I don't know about some of you young men, but when I was a young man, I just spent a lot of time in front of the mirror.

A lot of time. Maybe that's why my hair fell out. I combed it too much.

I'm not sure. You know, there was a time when that really bothered me. Seriously, it was hard.

Somebody in my high school told me that my hairline was receding. I didn't even know what receding hairline was. But when I found out, it just really hurt.

And I was like, wow, this is awful. I like my hair. But you know what? If I had it to do over, I wouldn't have the hair back.

You know, I don't look in the mirror a whole lot and think about my hair anymore. Praise God. I'm free.

And I'm not going to put one of those things on that looks like hair, because then I'll be back in bondage. Because it might fall off, and then you'll all find out. God brings freedom.

The world wants to tack bondage on you. Make you have to put something up. So this man was challenged by the Lord.

Go on a fast from the mirror. Just put the mirror aside. I'm not saying don't comb your hair and so forth, but you can do that without the mirror, right? So this young man, he got totally serious with God.

I think he may have been fasting food as well. And I just wanted to challenge this young man especially. If you want the power of God in your life, you're going to need to be radical.

Normal doesn't get His power. Average doesn't get His power. It's the people that hunger and thirst and say, God, I want Your power no matter what.

If you tell me to get rid of my car, I'll get rid of it, Lord. If you tell me to cut my hair, I'll cut it. If you tell me to throw out the mirror, it's gone.

God gives His power to people like that. And sisters as well. Not just brothers.

See, it's the world's way. That is the world's system. Focus on how you look.

Put forth all this energy and effort into your outward appearance. And it's an abomination to the Lord. What are the things He hates? A proud look.

Number one. Seven things that God hates. Alright.

But you know something? There's a mirror that you can look in as much as you want to. Praise God. The Bible says this is a mirror.

You can stand all day, Brother Bobby. You can look into that mirror all day long. And you can meditate on it.

And you can find out how you look. And you can say, whoa, that doesn't look real good. I need to do something about that.

There's a blemish there. Oh, I don't like what the mirror shows me there. But praise God for a mirror, because I'll get rid of it.

This mirror here, we can spend as much time as you want. That's what Christians are supposed to be doing. We are deceiving ourselves.

If we are focused on outward things, we have incredible riches and treasures that the world has nothing of. Why should we copy their harlots and their cool guys? That's garbage. That's so low.

We've got the treasure of Jesus Christ that we can actually have in these earthen vessels that is priceless. Let's look in the mirror of the Word. All right, 1 Peter 3. Let's turn back there.

I told you earlier that in these two key passages in the New Testament that talk about particularly women in clothes, and I think there's a reason that God talks about women in clothes. The fact is that men are attracted by sight. And women know that.

And that's just the way God made us different. Not that it doesn't matter what men wear either. I believe it does.

And we'll talk about that the next time as well. But it's interesting to note that in both these passages, God says, yes, this is how I want you to not be clothed, and how I do want you to be clothed. But He focuses on the inside.

It says in verse 1, Likewise, you wives, be in subjection to your own husband, that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives. While they behold your chaste conversation, manner of life, coupled with fear, whose adorning, whose cosmos, let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel, expensive clothes. But let it be the hidden man of the heart.

Let that adornment be what's inside you, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price. Back to 1 Timothy 2, verse 9. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel. With shamefacedness and sobriety.

That's attitudes. Not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array. But, which becometh women professing godliness with good works.

Sisters, if you want to put on cosmetics, cosmeo, you can put as much of these on as you want. God wants that too. But let it be, that which becometh women professing godliness with good works.

You can put as much of that makeup, if I can use that term, cosmetic, as much as you can get. Praise God. Much of that character of Jesus Christ.

It says here, and I'm just going back to Peter there, it says, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price. You want some expensive cosmetics? The best? It's right here. It's right here.

And men, we need to change how we think too, men. What are we upholding? What are we lifting up? Are we going after the world's thing? Are we wanting our wives to look like the whores? Or are we encouraging them I mean, those priceless, priceless treasures that Jesus Christ puts in there, that makes Revlon look pretty cheap. Forget the paint and putty.

Jesus. You know, that's what drew me to my wife. When I first met her, she was only 17.

I was 21. Like I said, I moved out to Colorado. And I never met any girl like her in my life.

She was totally different. I grew up in Philadelphia in this real preppy, if you know what that means, background. Everybody had the right clothes.

Everybody wore these shirts with the little alligators on them, you know. Did they make them still? I don't know. But anyway, you had to have just the right thing.

The right little signs and trinkets, whatever. It had to be just right. And I grew up in that system.

And you just had to be that if you wanted to fit in there with this mold. And personally, like I said, I was just sick of all that. I just wanted to wear jeans with holes in them and t-shirts.

For one thing, I didn't love myself and I didn't like myself. And one of the reasons I didn't like myself was because I just wasn't cool. I didn't fit the mold of the world.

That was a bondage to me. When I moved out to Colorado, I was like, I want to leave everything behind. I want to seek for God.

There is a God. So here I come to this youth group meeting and I saw my wife the first time. And the thing that struck me was that she seemed to not care a bit how she looked.

You could say in one sense it's a bad thing. But she was a little bit kind of like what the world would say is a nerd. She had on stripes and checks and dots and plaids and everything kind of just didn't blend.

I told her I was going to share about this today. So don't be horrified. She didn't mind at all.

She's at home with our newborn baby. We laugh about it. We have a good time.

She admits it, but she wasn't cool at all. She just didn't know how to be cool and didn't want to be cool. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. But there's one thing that she did want to do and that's she wanted to be like Jesus. This 17-year-old girl, I was coming to this youth meeting for the first week, Wednesday night.

And I was 21 and I was just looking around at the different things. And I saw her over in this little group of youth. So I went over to the edge of them and I was just listening in to what was happening.

And she was talking about Jesus. And I could see in her heart that this person is real through and through. I never knew a girl like that.

I never knew a girl that was for real. The girls that I grew up with, they were all dolled up like the world and just putting on, putting on. She was for real.

I could just see right in there. I was just captivated. I didn't want to look too interested but I couldn't help but just, I just struck me, she is for real.

The thought just came to my mind, I'd like to marry her. Which was, if you know who I was, that was like way out there. There's no way.

It even shocked me when I thought it. I had to like shake my head and just, because I didn't even want to get married. My experience of home was bad and I just, I didn't even want to have a girlfriend.

But God spoke to me right then, I believe now. And the thing that drew me to her was the beauty of Jesus Christ in that 17 year old girl. No, she wasn't somebody that the world would beat down their doors to want to put on their magazine cover.

But she was the most beautiful person I ever saw. That's the standard that God wants to lift up today. Satan's a liar.

You don't have to live up to any standard of the world's mold. There's many people, girls that even die because they starve themselves to death. Why? Because they're too fat according to the devil.

Listen to what Adam Clark says. He was a 17th century, I believe, commentator on this verse in Timothy. When either women or men spend much time, cost and attention on decorating their persons, it affords a painful proof that within there is little excellence and that they are endeavoring to supply the want of mind and moral good by the feeble and silly aids of dress and ornament.

I like that. Shall I read it again? When either women or men spend much time, cost and attention on decorating their persons, it affords a painful proof that within them there is little excellence and that they are endeavoring to supply the want of mind and moral good by the feeble and silly aids of dress and ornament. Be free, sisters.

Be free. If you're in the body of Christ, you are the bride of Christ. The most wealthy, talented, interesting, powerful, loving, caring, attractive and manly groom has chosen you to be his forever and ever.

You got the best one of all. Praise God. There's no better groom on earth or anywhere else.

Let's get our identity from that. Let's not get our identity by putting on this, making up that, trying to be attractive in this way or that physically because my identity means if I'm attractive, people will like me. I will get somebody to marry me or I will be thought well of.

What I just shared with you is all the identity that we need. It's way more. If we really get that down in our hearts about who we are in Jesus Christ and how he has accepted us in the beloved and what it means that we have found the one who is fairer than 10,000 and not only we found him, but he accepted us.

He received us. You know, it says in 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 30, but of him are ye in Christ Jesus. God put you in him.

You didn't put yourself there. Let's just turn there to close. 1 Corinthians chapter 1. Let's start in verse 25.

Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

And God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. He's chosen the base things of the world and the things that are despised has God chosen. Yea, and things which are not to bring to naught things that are.

Why? So that no flesh would glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God has made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that according as it's written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. If it was good enough for Jesus to be ordinary, totally unspecial physically, and if God could show through him the most glorious life ever, let's throw out the world's mold and it's way of thinking about all that stuff and let's follow the Master.

What a beautiful example. What a humble man. What a humble man to choose to come and just be an ordinary guy.

Not that big, not that tall, not that handsome. Nothing that anybody should think he's great. That's our God.

Amen. Let's be like him. And just to close then.

Like I said, there was another part to the message that I'd like to share sometime if the Lord gives me freedom to do that. But this is the foundation, in my opinion, from God's Word. His heart about these things.

Amen. Amen. What a beautiful word from the Lord this morning.

I really appreciate that teaching. So blessed to have God giving the body of charity here a teacher. The gift of teaching.

God gave gifts unto men for the perfecting of the saints and for the edifying of the body. And that's such a beautiful thing that God has done. And I say amen to the message.

I look forward to part two. And I thank you, Brother Paul, for taking that initiative there from the Brothers' Meeting. I think it's a beautiful follow up and continuing in the direction that we desire to walk in.

I thought of reading 1 Peter 3, verse 3 into verse 4. And hear what this says. If we leave out the part of not being adorned according to the fashion of the world and read it in this sense. Then it says it like this.

Who's adorning? Let it be the hidden man of the heart. And that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. You know, God is concerned about our adornment.

Who's adorning? Let it be the hidden man of the heart. And that which is not corruptible. And Brother Paul, if I may just expound on that word a little bit.

Uncorruptible. Corruption is that which decays. It starts to stink.

It gets ugly. And it just, it's repulsive. And isn't that how the world's adornment is? You know, like Stanley said it.

You know, all the putting and all the pain. And the more the outward begins to age. You know, they just don't want to accept that.

You've got to put more paint, more putty, more powder. And it's really sad, the bondage that people live under. But then what about us here this morning? Is there a standard of adornment that we, you know, compare ourselves and we need to measure up? That is also very real.

Even in plain circles, if I may say so. So God help us that we pursue after the inward adornment. Which is, oh, it's the most precious.

It's the most costly. And the most beautiful. Amen.

Maybe someone has something they'd like to share. I love when we can open it up and have some input. Some words of edification from the congregation.

Brothers or sisters, raise your hand if you have something you'd like to share here this morning. So it can be a blessing to the congregation. So hand on the brother's side here in the back and one here in the front.

Hand on the sister's side then also. Amen. All right, put your hand up there on the sister's side.

Okay, in the back on the brother's side. I was just thinking here as Paul was preaching. Just, you know, saying how Jesus actually looked.

He wasn't necessarily, there was no maybe physical beauty that we should desire Him. And I just, I was just, it just brought an overwhelming sense of thankfulness in my heart for what the Lord Jesus is to me. He's everything to me.

He's all I need. And He's beautiful to me. Just because of, He's my life.

He's all I ever need. And so I just think in my, I guess in the way I, you know, I didn't see Jesus physically, but the way I picture Him and what He's done for me, He's everything. And I just thank God for that.

Praise the Lord. Amen. I so appreciated that as well.

All right, on the sister's side. Thank you for that message, Brother Paul. I just want to say a word to the younger sisters.

I just want to encourage you. I know a lot of you have parents that are godly and are instructing you how to dress and how to have your hair and everything. There was a time in my life when I was really struggling.

I was giving in to sin in my heart and it began to come out in other ways. And I started wanting to adorn my hair and comb it maybe in a different way. And I realized that every time I do this, I want my veiling to be smaller.

And I just started changing my clothing here or there. And there was a problem in my heart. I like what Brother Bobby said.

Every heart issue, with every heart issue, there's an issue in the heart. And that was true. And so if you're struggling with the way your parents are asking you to do things, please take a look at what's in your heart.

My heart was wrong in it. And it was coming out in the way I was doing things. So God bless you.

Thank you again, Brother Paul. Thank you, Sister Sarah. It's so good to hear that word from a sister.

Amen. All right, on the men's side. Yes, I want to say thank you to Sarah.

That's something that's been on my heart very much already and try to get into my children as well. But I feel like this morning, I don't know where to start or stop, but I'm just overflowing with the blessing that the Lord has poured out on us again this morning. And just thank you all for the participation.

I was blessed this morning with the opening meditation. I know that it is something that I struggle with and I'm caught up in sometimes. And that acronym that he put before us to be the busyness of life and just to get overwhelmed by it and not have time for meditation.

But I also know that there is a blessing in finding time or making time to meditate. Not just so it's done, but because you feel come out of it feeling refreshed and you can go into your day's work with a purpose. And so that's, I just want to learn to live that way.

And I know for myself, a lot of times it has to do with, you know, I look at my life and many times I'm appalled at the self that's still there. The selfishness that still motivates me and how much of my life is motivated by self. And I think that's many times what it comes down to.

So I just would ask for prayer in that area. I really want to learn how to live for Jesus first and others and not always just self. And also on the line of the message by Brother Paul, try to cut this short.

But I was thinking just this morning as Paul was preaching, there would be many messages that could be preached. Springing off of some of the little points that Paul mentioned this morning where you could expound on some of these. And maybe Paul will do, I know he will do some more of that next time.

But I don't think it, you know, it will all be covered in one more message. But there's just so many little things that come out. And I just so appreciate the foundation that was laid.

And I think if we just keep our eyes on that, on that foundation, I don't think the next message would be necessary. You know, if we focus on and get a hold of the foundation that was laid for us this morning, I don't think we need to even mention clothes. We need to just, we could just leave it at that.

But, you know, I think it is good to make some application and do some things like that. But I do want to, I do so appreciate and I think it's something that needs to be talked about. And I want to thank Paul for taking the courage to do that.

And also just, I tell my wife and my daughters, you know, I say this to all my sisters. I think, you know, I love you all very much. And I think, you know, you're very beautiful just the way you are.

I'm so appreciative of what we have here and how, you know, the beauty of the heart comes out. And, you know, it just doesn't take much, as Sister Sarah was saying, to start tainting that. You know, when you start trying to add to that beauty that is from the Lord Jesus Christ, you just very quickly start tainting that.

And I would just beg of you just to think about that and to allow the natural beauty of Jesus to shine forth and not trying to add to it or take away from it or whatever. So I just feel overflowing this morning. I could go on for a while, but God bless you all.

Thank you. Amen. Thank you, brother.

Oh, there's nothing more beautiful than the glory of Jesus coming forth. Now, if you have the glory of Jesus, why would you want to cover it over with paint and powder? You know, I have to just say this, you know, I've thought already that poor man, when I had dealings with, you know, a couple, like, say, when we were in lawn furniture, and his beautiful in the eyes of the world wife was not very beautiful in spirit and heart and attitude. You know, the demands, the, ooh.

And he had to walk on eggshells, you know, to try to keep his wife happy. Praise God for the inner beauty of Christ likeness, that wonderful ornament. Hallelujah.

All right, we have a sister. I guess my heart just says amen to both of the messages. As I was listening to the first message, I thought back to my life in my first years as a Christian when I was still in the Amish church and in some ways forbidden to be with other born-again believers and really to have any contact with them.

And it was a time that I'd probably not choose to go back to, and yet I've often said it probably was one of the most growing times in my life as a Christian. It literally made me spend time with God alone and seek God. And, you know, I find today it was a very precious time, and I find today there's more of a tendency to not spend that time.

I have to make that conscious choice, knowing God, knowing that there are times when nothing satisfies like being alone with Jesus does. And I also had to think of how the two messages can tie together. We really do get to know Jesus, and we do find our true identity in Him, and we don't have to seek after the ways of the world.

Amen. Accepted in the beloved. Hallelujah.

There's no greater security and satisfaction. Is there the other microphone somewhere else? Yes. I was very blessed with both messages, and I think the demonstration that Paul gave of being cool here probably soaked into everybody's mind and heart, and I was just very blessed with that.

The first message here in the opening, I was so blessed with that busyness, how that is described there. You know, God's yoke is easy, and His burden is light. And we get so busy, and I just had the good news this last week that we might have a couple weeks off because work is kind of slow, and I just rejoice.

So I'm just very thankful to just get to have more interaction with the family and more time alone with God. Of course, I had time to meditate. I had 20 minutes to work, and I had a lot of time to meditate on the road, but it's not quite like spending time with the family.

I just thank God for that. Amen, brother. All right, we have a sister here.

Yes? Just a little comment on the word cool. It's neither hot nor cold, and, you know, it's just a place that I guess I've lived there for too long, whether it's cool or lukewarm, whatever you want to call it. I don't want to live there anymore, that's all.

Amen. Thank you. Is there someone else yet? Okay, maybe we can take that as the last one then.

Go ahead, sister. In 1 Peter 3, where it talks about adorning, in the center reference of my Bible, there was a reference to Isaiah 3, verse 16 to 24. And verse 16 says, Moreover the Lord saith, because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet.

Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion. And it goes on to say what all they're going to lose. And it shall come to pass that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink, and instead of a girdle a rent, and instead of well-set hair baldness, and instead of a stomach a girding of sackcloth, and burning instead of beauty.

I think we do well to stop and just examine our hearts and maybe look up those words, haughty and mincing, and see what they actually mean and see whether our hearts are free of that, because it sounds like the end of it will not be good. And for me, I don't want to end up there. So praise God for a message like that.

Amen. Thank you. It's a blessing to be edified sharing together like this.

Thank you all for sharing.

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