

GET OVER YOURSELF

REBELLING AGAINST THE CULTURE OF NARCISSISM

Part 3

APPEARANCE: The Culture of HOT

INTRODUCTION – Narcissistic Trends in Fashion

NARCISSISTS TEND TO WEAR MORE...

- expensive clothing,
- revealing clothing,
- attention-getting clothing
- make-up
- put-together outfits.

Does that mean fashionable people are ego-centric and slobs are spiritual?...

DINE IN – Girls Gone Mild: The Biblical Ideal of Modesty

THE VALUE OF PLAIN...

1 Timothy 2:9-10; James 2:1-13; 1 Peter 3:3-4

DRESSING UP ON THE INSIDE...

Christ-followers are told to clothe themselves

- with Jesus (see Romans 13:14; Galatians 3:27)
- with their renewed selves (Ephesians 4:24)
- with the spiritual armor of God (Ephesians 6:11,14-17)
- with "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" (Colossians 3:12-14; also see 1 Peter 5:5)
- with good works (1 Timothy 2:10)
- with a gentle and quiet spirit (1 Peter 3:4)
- with perseverance and righteous acts (Revelation 3:4-5; 19:7-8; also see Psalm 132:16; Isaiah 61:10; Zechariah 3:3-5).

TAKEOUT – I'll Have That to Go Please

TAKEOUT #1 – Precision Without Legalism

Talking about specifics can lead to legalism and unwarranted judgment. Avoiding specifics can hold us back from real change. Nothing can stall our rebellion against our culture of narcissism like agreeing on principles in general without making the connection to application. This means we need to take the risk of making practical suggestions within community partnered with the commitment to avoid the legalism of rule-based morality.

TAKE OUT #2 – Celebrate and Compliment Character

Church should be a counter-cultural community where we compliment and celebrate who we are and are becoming in Christ, rather than how we look. There is value in developing the social habit of complimenting people's kindness, etc., the way our culture automatically compliments how people look.

TAKE OUT #3 – Applying Our Freedom With Love

Without love, freedom leads to anarchy and people can be hurt. Just because something is technically allowable, doesn't mean it is the best choice in every situation. Make choices case-by-case, context-by-context, always with the good of others in mind.

Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 8

TAKE OUT #4 – Dress To Serve

We can practice other-centredness even in our appearance, offering our presence as a gift to others, not using their attention as a gift to ourselves. Let's think before we dress – what is the context and how can I serve the people in that context rather than use that situation to meet my own ego needs. **Philippians 2:3-4**

CONCLUSION – The Other-Centred Experiment

- Ask one question when leaving your home: *How can I help people see Jesus in me today?*
- Hold one thought when seeing people: *This person bears God's image and is infinitely valuable to him.*

FOR FURTHER RESEARCH...

- Wendy Shalit, *Return To Modesty: Discovering The Lost Virtue*
- Wendy Shalit, *Girls Gone Mild: Young Women Reclaim Self-Respect and Find It's Not Bad to Be Good*
- Hayley DiMarco, *Sexy Girls: How Hot Is Too Hot?*
- Jean M. Twenge, Ph.D. & W. Keith Campbell, Ph.D., *The Narcissism Epidemic: Living in the Age of Entitlement*

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS

Warming Up...

- Talk about your reaction to this quote by Hannah Witall Smith (1832-1911) and how it relates to the theme of this series: *If you could only learn the lesson of absolute self-forgetfulness, it would save you a great deal of trial. Out of self and into Christ are the two essential steps always, and the last cannot be fully taken without the first. For just so far as we dwell in self, we are not dwelling in Christ, and just to that degree, therefore, all goes wrong.*
- To what extent do you intentionally practice modesty in your appearance?

Look to the Book...

- Read **Philippians 2:1-11**, from different translations if time permits. A) What verse or idea stands out to you the most in this passage? Why? B) How do the principles of verses 1-3 push back against our individualist culture? C) Talk about examples of what verses 4-5 might look like at a party, a family meal, school, work, Home Church, and other contexts that come to mind. D) How is the example of Jesus the undoing of Adam, that is, the opposite of the failure of Adam and Eve, who though they were like God, tried to get more, and lost so much? E) How does this passage challenge the popular notion that there are many paths to God?

So What?...

- Return to **verse 5**. Take time to mediate on its truth. This week, commit to inviting the mind of Christ into your conscious awareness when making decisions about appearance, attention-seeking, and serving others.
- How have you and the rest of your Home Church practically applied the teaching from this series so far? Have you talked about how you'll support the AIDS Care Kit Challenge? Talk together about your next steps. Kits are due on December 6!

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Notes are available online at themeetinghouse.ca/teaching