

5.20.19 - Children and Naturism

Children are born a blank slate...they have no habits, fears or skills other than innate abilities, but they learn fast. Parents deservedly get most of the credit or blame for the success or failure of the formative years, even with the school system encroaching on their responsibility. We could write volumes about our responsibilities of early childhood training, but instead we are only going to deal with the clothing issue as it relates to the subject of nakedness and children.

Children are natural nudists...they do not like clothing. They learn much earlier to take it off than put it on. It is a constant battle to keep it on them. They do not need many lessons on the meaning of the word "hot", but "keep your clothing on" needs to be repeated over and over again. I do not remember my children coming in for more clothing because it was cold outside. Maybe because they could not escape the house without more clothing than they needed for the cold weather. They did come in looking cold, but still almost immediately began taking the layers off. So, clothing seems to be something that needs to be forced onto children.

When the Bible was written, this wasn't much of a discussion like it is in modern times because of the cost of clothing. If a child wants a really expensive toy that we can not afford, we just tell them we can not afford it and not deal with the fitness of the toy for the child. That was the position of most parents in Bible times, they could not afford clothing for themselves in many cases let alone their children. The kids would outgrow or destroy their clothing so fast that a fortune would be needed to keep replacing it. They went without clothing most of the time until they were full grown. Ezekiel's parable in **Eze 16:4-8** would indicate this. Back then it was not necessary to teach a "need" for clothing as society incorrectly demands today...today clothing has become a status symbol, a fashion statement and almost a necessity much as the "need" for a car or a cell phone.

As we all know by looking at our clothing selections every day, clothing is inexpensive today comparatively. So, when our child wants to run around without their clothes on textile parents are now forced to find a “reason” why their child “needs” to wear clothing. The simple reasons do not work all the time. Protecting the body from cold only works when it is cold outside or inside. Protecting the body from hazards only works in a hazardous environment. What reason do you give for the other times?

Let’s consider some of these reasons:

1. You need to wear clothing because I said so. This only works for so long and it only works for the time you can watch them and control them, but we are to train them for the time when we can not see or control them. Teenagers seem to enjoy shaking off parental rules and taking on the rules of the peer group. If "I said so" is the only reason for the rule they are only left with the "reason" for the peer group rule which may not be God honoring. Combine a bit of rebellion with no reason for the rule and they will soon be...not following it.
2. You need to wear clothing because it is not proper to expose yourself (not usually stated, but strongly implied "anywhere were there are people"). Even if it is not asked on first use of this reason, you should have a source for the standard. If you are a Christian, you should not use the Bible as a source for this standard due to the fact that it is not a Bible standard. With easy access to the internet by anyone able to read, it is extremely easy for your child to check your claim of a Bible standard for this reason and get both pro and con positions. The truth that naked and unashamed is God’s preferred method is very likely to win the comparison. If you are closed minded you may not hear the results, but you will have lost a lot of credibility. I can not tell you how many textile Christians who have claimed the Bible as their objective and absolute authority only to find out what It says about the human body being made in God’s image and His desire to

display it as His greatest creation. As soon as they find out that their position doesn't match the Bible you are likely to hear or see the "I don't care what the Bible says I know how I feel" response. Once that happens anything you say to your child is likely to be ignored or at the very least questioned severely.

3. You need to wear clothing because it is a sin to be naked. This is much like the one above except "sin" is determined by the Bible, so no need to ask for the source. For this reason, you should have verses to support your position. You can be selective on which passages you use and misinterpret others and make this one work in most cases. However, you have made the beautiful creation of God sinful and have found yourself on the same side as Satan trying to make humans ashamed of the image of God and desiring to hide it. The result of this type of teaching leads to poor self-image especially of the body. Poor self-image can lead to destructive behaviors like fornication, drug abuse, overeating, undereating, etc.
4. You need to wear clothing to prevent lust. Take a moment to really think about this one, what do we do to young minds when we begin to teach them that the naked body leads to sexual sin. We begin to teach them that nakedness is only for sex, we begin the process of training Pavlov's dogs to drool. You are beginning to sexualize that child for just wanting to enjoy life as God created them. Do you honestly believe that Adam and Eve were only having sex in the Garden of Eden or do you believe the Bible account that they were tending the garden that God had placed them in? Are you only ever naked for sex or are there times that you are naked for other reasons? If we tell our kids to always be dressed or someone could lust, we end up taking the responsibility for lust and placing it on the wrong person. It's like blaming a rape victim for their own rape. Shame on you!!! Lust is a heart condition, which by the way can be lessened and eliminated by frequently being around non sexual nudity. When we ask someone

to cover to prevent lust, we are calling the creation of God (our body) sinful. Think about that, the body that God designed and created, the body that God wanted naked and displayed to show His beautiful creation...you are now calling sinful. Are you absolutely sure that is a position that you want to take...opposite of the God of the Bible? Let's say for a moment that you do want to teach your child that their naked body is sinful and that they should hide it in shame as a means of preventing lust. What if she follows that rule to prevent lust and finds that it does not work? Now the question becomes, "How many other rules are wrong? Is the whole Bible out of date?" It amazes me when you look at the comparison of Islam and Christianity...Islam wants you to die for Allah, Christianity is where God died for you. Islam uses hate to pit one group of people against another, Christianity teaches us to love our neighbor as ourselves, even to love our enemy and do good. Islam teaches to cover a girl from the tip of her head to the tip of her toe, the God of the Bible created Eve in the same naked and unashamed condition that Adam was in...and has never taught anything in the entirety of Scripture to change that naked and unashamed condition. Please think this through before you begin teaching that you should clothe to prevent lust...has Islam's teaching ended the lust of Islamic men?

5. You need to wear clothing because society requires it in most places. You can show the rule for your state by doing a search online. Along with this reason you will be forced to allow them to be naked at home or with like-minded friends since the state rules only apply in public. If they are allowed to be naked with other children of both sexes, they will not have any trouble knowing which gender they belong to. If they also see lots of adults naked then the body development problems of puberty will not be as great, because all the adults have an adult body and all bodies are flawed in some way...us naturists call it perfect imperfections. Since all bodies are made in His image, we see all bodies as beautiful. When they see adults living with the perceived problem

they have, it will give them hope that they will be able to deal with it also.

Rules about staying sexually pure are based solidly on Bible verses...lots of them! With lots of exposure to naked bodies of all ages and both sexes, nakedness will not be a turn on for sex. They are much more likely to wait till marriage to become sexually active. There will be no curiosity about what is hidden under the clothing so pornography loses much of its appeal. They are much more likely to learn that lust is their heart and not the naked body or nearly naked body of someone else that causes it. They will miss the training that men lust more as more female skin is exposed. They might even look at the merits of a product instead of the clothing model that is selling it.

The choice should be rather clear. The textile position has a lot of negative associated with it and the naturist position has lots of positive. When dealing with children, there are no rules that work all the time. Cain and Able were brothers with no bad outside influence, but look at the difference. What worked to teach the one failed for the other, but a Bible perspective and Bible application will absolutely have the best results.