

4.1.19 – Body Image

I would be ashamed to be seen naked.

There are places where that is the proper feeling, but we are going to look at this statement as an objection to going to a naturist resort. This may be a big reason there is so much emotion associated with naturism. If I can make a big scene and call it sin I will not need to expose my imperfect body. We are going to present some ideas that may help with the body image problem.

In the beginning God made us in His image. **Gen 1:26 - And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.** That makes Adam and Eve perfect, but that does not help me, you say. You are still made in God's image and He supervised the forming of your body in the womb. **Jer 1:5 - Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Psa 22:9 - But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. Psa 22:10 - I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.** If God was there for Jeremiah and David's formation in the womb, it is safe to think He is there for all of us. When you claim your body is ugly, you are telling God He did not do such a great job on your body. God does not make any mistakes, so where does that leave your opinion of your body?

Another source of poor judgement about our bodies is how we compare them. You see your body naked like God made it with all the odd features exposed. Unless you are a naturist, you compare yourself with clothed people. You probably know how to hide your oddities and forget that other people do the same when they select clothing. Your negative features may

not be as bad as the person you think is much better looking due to the fact that they have also learned how to cover up their oddities with clothing as well.

You also need to remember that familiarity breeds contempt. You accept the good features and concentrate on the negative ones. The time spent thinking about something increases its importance. Paul address this in **Phl 4:8 - Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.** Notice it is all positive, not how wicked people can be. You can improve your body image by concentrating on what is good and overlooking what you can not or are not willing to take the time to change.

If you plot human characteristics on a graph with the number of people going up the page and a rating scale across the page, you get what is called a bell curve. Most of the people are near the average rating. For example, if we took an average high school class and rated the attractiveness of the girls from 1 to 10 where 10 is very attractive. Ninety five percent of the girls will be between 3 and 8. The standard that is held up by TV and films is the 9s and 10s. In our example that is about 2% or less. Even the 10s have oddities they would like to change. The problem is that the standard is not within reach of most of the population. Everybody has something that is negative. So here again you will not score so well because the standard is a very select group and out of your reach. **Mat 6:27 - Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?** This verse applies to most other body features.

Jesus was without sin, but He would have been average or below average in attractiveness. **Isa 53:2 - For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire**

him. This verse is a prophecy about Jesus. The fulfillment of this verse is seen when Judas was needed to identify Jesus so the soldiers did not come back with the wrong person. Jesus was not outstanding like King Saul or Absalom. He may have had some of the negative features that you have. He did not get a perfect body. He was like us in every way on his human side, so He could claim to understand our problems, in a way that we would be more likely to believe. If your body is below average, there are some great people with the same problem. There were people in Bible times who were bald, short, left handed, tender eyed-unattractive (**Gen 29:17 - Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured.**) to name a few. God gives us the ability to deal with the body he made for us. It maybe the solution is to see lots of other people naked so you can see that you are not the only one with negative features, and see that they are not ashamed of how God made them.

If your negative feature is not easily hidden by clothing, look for others that have the same problem. You may discover that there are a lot of people with the same problem. Better yet look for features that you are glad you do not have, not to be prideful about, but to be thankful for what you have instead of fretting about what you do not have.

Another cause for the shame about being naked is thinking of it in a textile environment. Yes, if you are the only naked person in a room of clothed people you will get everyone's attention and probably feel ashamed. If, however you are naked in a room of naked people you will just be one of many in the group. To get a lot of attention in this environment you would need to be outstandingly attractive, clothed or act strange. Remember that most people are so busy with their world that they are paying very little attention to you.

What is attractive to one person is not to another. If every man or woman were looking for 9s and 10s in the illustration above, there would be a lot of men or women who would not have mates and there would be a lot of old unmarried people

in the world. God's solution to this problem is to make sure everyone is not looking for the same features. To avoid talking about your embarrassing body oddity, we will use an analogy to illustrate the point. Everybody is not looking for a luxury car, or an electric car or a pick-up or a minivan. Some of this is unexplainable, but taste and need are important factors. A pick-up would not work if you need to impress clients with your success level or take a family of 5 children and your wife on a long trip, but a luxury car is not good for hauling sheets of plywood or bails of hay. It is more difficult to do the same with body features, but what is negative to you isn't negative to everyone.

They say that you can not learn to ride a bicycle by reading about it or, to up date the saying, by watching YouTube videos, but we would like to think that some of the things above will help you overcome your objections to being seen naked.

Conclusion: If you take the time to visit a family friendly naturist resort you will quickly see that there are tall people and short people, fat people and skinny people, white skinned, tanned and black skinned, hairy people and bald people, the very young, the very old and everywhere in between. Naturism isn't about a beauty contest, it's about enjoying creation the way God intended it to be enjoyed. Unashamedly declaring the image and likeness of God. Your skin is the body's biggest receptor of feeling, the skin was made to soak up the warm rays of the sun, it was designed to feel the breeze on it, it was designed to feel the warm refreshing water from the pool on it...all of it. When you are in a group of all ages, shapes and sizes absolutely no one cares what you look like, the truth is, no one even notices because everyone is that way.

Get out there and enjoy life as God intended!