

12.16.19 - Doing it the Hard Way

Often, we do things the hard way because we feel we know, but don't, how to do it an easier way. Sometimes we know the easy way but are controlled by what other people think or might do. We will look at some examples from the Bible because it might be easier to see the problem in another setting before we get to naturism. We will start with Jeremiah and King Zedekiah.

For nearly three years Jerusalem was under siege by Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon and his army. They were a large empire. The Egyptians, the only hope of earthly help, were already defeated by them. The lack of food was already taking a big toll. There was no chance of outlasting the Babylonians who had the whole country to get food, water and other supplies. Defeat or help from God were the only two outcomes at this point. Zedekiah called Jeremiah for a word of advice hoping God might be willing to help. Here is the answer to that question: **Jer 38:17, 18 Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house: But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand.** God is not going to strike all the Babylonians dead while they sleep or scare them with the sound of a large army, or make them all blind. He empowered them to punish the Jews and others for their corruption, so He is not going to help the Jews unless they follow His instructions which Zedekiah did not like.

With such an easy choice, Zedekiah took the hard way of waiting till the Babylonians broke into the city and fleeing. To him it

looked like the easy way out. He would not need to face the mocking of the Jews who were already in captivity if he could escape from the Babylonians. It should have been obvious that he would face mocking sometime without help from God, which Jeremiah said he would not get. Maybe there is more glory in being captured than surrendering against insurmountable odds. The hard path he chose also cost him his eye sight, the life of his sons and many of his top officers but it seemed easy to Zedekiah.

The solution to the problems caused by clothing, if the real cause is ever recognized, looks hard to most people in the textile world, but often one test of naturism shows the error of this thinking.

Another example...after the Babylonians burned the city, killed Zedekiah's sons, his high-ranking officials, left and returned home, the remaining Jews ask Jeremiah what God wanted them to do. Here is what they promised when they made the request: **Jer 42:6 Whether it be good, or whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we send thee; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the LORD our God.** The answer did not fit their idea of what needed to be done. God wanted them to stay in the land and He would protect them. They already knew the land and the language. They could probably pick any part of it to live in since most of the people were gone. I did not read of the Babylonians importing people to repopulate the land. They took what had worth and destroyed the rest so they would not need to send an army again to subdue the land. It seems that it was a large enough group to defend themselves from raiding bands. No reason to leave other than a reaction from the Babylonians for killing their appointed leader, which the Babylonians were not likely to spend the effort to revenge. No spoil remaining for the soldiers.

Did they keep their promise to Jeremiah? Did they take the easy way out? No! Here is their answer: **Jer 43:2 Then spake**

Azariah the son of Hoshaiiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there: Sounds a little like, "God would never want me to be naked in a public setting." If they thought Jeremiah was a false prophet, why ask him to seek God's will? They did not want God's will, but God's acceptance of their will, which is a large part of the textile position. **Jer 43:4 So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah.** From what we know, they did not do so well in Egypt either. It usually works like that when we do it our way.

Now we are going to the New Testament and the textile way, the hard way. **Mat 5:28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.** This is one of the favorite verses of textile people since they can not believe you can be naked in a mixed group without uncontrollable lust (sex). This is a quote of Jesus from His famous Sermon on the Mount. That makes it hard to say that it is not the word of God like the advice from God given by Jeremiah above. The problem remaining is how to apply the verse.

Hard way to apply the verse. Tell men they should not look at a woman, which is hard to do. They seem to be everywhere you look. Change the meaning of the word "lust". It is usually defined as a strong desire. The problem is how strong can it be before it becomes lust. God uses desire to get a man to agree to live with a woman the rest of his life. That desire is not like a light switch which God turns on for the right woman and off for all others. Most of them are desirable. I read a joke recently where the gal asked, "Do you know what I use for birth control?" A guy answers, "Your personality." I have met some like that, but it is really unusual. She may have been very attractive and her

personality would work that way. Men have to look at women without lusting, while most of them will be desirable. A hard thing to do.

Still on the hard way to apply the verse. If we use Adam as an example, men are quick to blame their shortcomings on women. It is the woman's fault, "She makes me lust by her beauty." "it is God's fault for making the woman so attractive." The application of the verse to women: they should not make a man lust after them. Try that with lust meaning desire and the woman needs to attract the man to get a husband. That would be hard. On top of that, the solution to preventing lust is to cover up the attractive body of the woman to hide it. God's beauty becomes shameful because it causes men to sin. Now we bring out the upper 1% of attractive women dressed in the finest clothing as the standard to judge by. Can we expect the average woman, who compares her body naked to the dressed bodies of the 1%, to have a good body image with such a standard? We should be impressed that any of them accept their bodies as God created it. Even the upper 1% have body features they want changed because they compare their weakest features with someone who has that as their best feature.

As with Zedekiah choosing between God's will and his easy way, there is little chance either of the applications above will work. Does not look like that is what God had in mind for the application of the verse. God is not the author of confusion. He would not make women desirable and tell men not to desire women. He would not make them beautiful and tell men not to look at them. He would not make the woman beautiful and ask her to hide it. He would not make average women and ask them to be like the most attractive 1% in appearance.

Well, what is your application? First let's look at the Greek word for "lust" G1937. It is used 16 times and seems to have a wide range of strength of desire. It is used in **1Ti 3:1 This is a true**

saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth G1937 a good work. The word "desire" here is a different Greek word. It is used in both **Luk 15:16 And he would fain G1937 have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.** and **Luk 16:21 And desiring G1937 to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.** I do not have a strong desire for a job, but food after a few days without food is another thing entirely. Not the insight I hoped for. I could omit the verse in 1 Tim and others like it and only use the two in Luke, but that is done too often in Bible study. Oswald Chambers teaches that if we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, He will clean up our hearts which is where the lust comes from. Then the strength of the desire will not matter. We should not be asking how close to the edge can I get without slipping over the edge. The important question is how do we control the desire, strong or weak, so it does not become lust.

An illustration I read recently which applies to relationships. Men are expected to have a desire for their wives only. Dating could be view as practice for that relationship. The guy used a pie chart or a circle with lines showing sections of the circle to represent importance. He divided the circle in half first and then divided the one half into 5 sections. If you want you can divide the one half into as many sections as you think you need. His wife was the half that was not divided and the other sections were other women in his life. He said what he liked about the other women: beauty, cooking ability, sense of humor, ability to uplift others, skill with children and etc. His wife must have had some or all of these to some extent, but she got the large section because he had a relationship with her which he did not have with the others. He overlooked any shortcomings because of the relationship. Borrowing a little from the love chapter, it does not matter if a woman is outstanding in all the strong points of the other women, without a relationship she would come in second or lower.

Covering the woman does not take the desire or lust away in fact it adds to the problem. Except for the burka, clothing covers only part of the body. We have covered parts and exposed parts. We are seeing the body divided it into parts, visible and hidden. As an analogy, instead of walking through a parking looking at cars, we are looking at hoods, or wheels, or paint jobs, or interiors and comparing parts instead of the whole unit. Now we are looking for the woman with the best parts instead of seeing a person. And if you think a burka is the answer you should take a look at the rape statistics in Muslim countries, the amount of clothing a woman wears or doesn't wear isn't the answer to a heart condition.

It is a hard comparison because the clothing calls attention to the covered parts and that is what we are conditioned to consider important. The answer to the question, "Why is that part covered?" is, "If a man sees that part he will lust." This programs the man to lust when he looks at that part and imagines what it looks like without covering. I remember a story from my college days about an experiment to show the power of suggestion. The class picked a student they would see often during the day at school. They were to comment on his appearance when they met him and say he did not look well. The student was in good health at the start of the day, but by noon he was in the nurse's office asking to go home because he felt sick. Every time a man looks at the covering of that part of a woman's body, he is reminded that he would lust if he saw it without clothing, how many times a day will he see that part of a woman or girl? More than the number of students that ask our victim above how he felt. He is constantly programming himself to lust

Add to that the natural curiosity to know what is covered, the ability to imagine what is covered and lust is sure to follow. It would also follow that a naked woman has no artificial lines to call attention to any one part over another so we see the whole body as a person. Nothing is hidden to arouse curiosity. Viewing lots of

women shows that they are basically the same which makes the personality and a relationship more important. Men who grew up in households with sisters and mother, where nakedness was common, have less trouble with porn and sexual misconduct. They know what is covered from viewing their relatives instead of seeing a porn picture that had the flaws removed.

Women are designed by God to love and care for others. There is only one verse that instructs women to love their husbands. The Greek word is used only in that verse. No chance to see how it is translated in other verses. Husbands are told to love their wives in two verses directly and I am sure implied in more. The word for love in this case is agapao which is the strongest of the three usual Greek words translated love. As a result of their loving nature they seem to be given the greatest burden by men applying "Bible" teaching since they are less likely to oppose the teaching.

To prevent lust by covering the woman is adding fuel to the lust. Lust is in the heart of the man and the woman can not stop it by covering her body. As explained above clothing makes it harder for the man not to lust. When a woman can only compare herself with clothed women, she will compare herself naked with the best efforts of the clothed woman to cover all her flaws. She is also competing with other women to get closer to the unattainable standard held up by the media. In a society where so much emphasis is put on appearance, a woman is not likely to want to be seen naked by anyone if it can be avoided even if she is attractive. She thinks the clothing is the only way she can keep her attractive rating high enough to be noticed at all. Satan has done a great job in this area of keeping God's image hidden and the woman bound to her clothing. The solution is obviously social nakedness so she can see where her body fits on a fair attractiveness scale. How does her body compare with other naked bodies? For most women that is the last thing they want to try regardless of logic, or what the Bible says, or what her husband wants her to do.

Now let's take a very basic view of the effectiveness of clothing. Men learn the sexual functions of their bodies and the pleasure it brings at an early age i.e. soon after it becomes functional. They also seem to be able to imagine that the pleasure would be greater with a woman. The next logical step is to find a partner, a woman. Since the other guys he hangs around are basically the same he assumes that women are basically the same. Any woman would increase his pleasure, but the younger models look like better choices. Making a woman look like a man is difficult with clothing. Not much chance of misidentifying a woman. There are two ways of engaging someone into an activity that requires a partner: talk them into the activity or force them into the activity. Will clothing stop a man who is forcing a woman into being his sex partner? I can't imagine clothing making much of a difference. Might provide an opening to use force to stop him, but that is force not clothing that saved the woman.

Will clothing stop a man from talking a woman into having sex with him? Here we will assume some relation before the attempt. Clothing can tell a man that the wearer is not interested in being anyone's sex partner, but if her behavior does not match the clothing message, the clothing will not stop the attempt. Is it the clothing or the behavior that stopped the attempt in the case where they match? Both you say. Right. If the clothing message is not clear, but the behavior is obvious, what will happen? I am guessing no attempt. The behavior is the protection, not the clothing.

What keeps a dating couple from crossing the line into fornication? Is it clothing? The relation does not go far if either member is unwilling to be a sex partner of the other. So, you have two willing partners separated by clothing. About all you need is a good location and the clothing barrier can be removed in a short time. At least enough to get connected. Clothing again is not the

protection, but the heart condition. Do they have their partner's well being first or their own?

Here is another verse that is used by legalists to do Satan's will.

1Th 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil. The misapplication is, don't do anything that I think is evil. It is like trying to follow the Atkins' diet with a vegetarian wife. Your steak is going to be evil in her eyes no matter what. The misapplication is still a factor when deciding to try going naked in a legal place among like minded supportive people. No one wants to be labeled sinful especially women.

An article I read recently had this story which I think makes the point about when we need to abstain or not. The mother in the story wanted to get caught up on her house work and asked the older neighbor girl to watch her young children while she worked. An uninvited legalist came for a visit shortly after she started on her housework. The mother got approval to keep on with her work while they talked. The neighbor girl asked if she and the children could use the wading pool, which the mother approved. She also inquired if they could be naked. The mother decided it was unfair for them to stay clothed just to please the uninvited guest. Later the baby cried and the mother went out back to nurse the baby and watch the children play. They were playing with a ball which rolled away from the pool and the neighbor girl got up and recovered the ball. The legalist asked the mother if she did not think the neighbor girl was a little too mature to be naked. The legalist was told that this was normal behavior at her place and at the neighbor girl's place. She pointed out that no one could see her from the street. She added that if the legalist was not there, the mother would join them naked. The topic of conversation changed after that. If the legalist had arranged a visit, then the children would have been asked to stay dressed to respect the legalist's views, but she can not expect a scramble to not appear evil when God does not see it that way if she just shows up uninvited.

The solution to body image and lust is to experience one or more activities with like minded people doing normal things without clothing. It is getting the conviction/courage/determination to try social nakedness for the first time. Most people are converted with one good experience. Usually before the first attempt to go without clothing in a group setting the person needs to convince themselves that it is right for them, which this site should do for you if you read it with an intellectual honesty at all. Then read lots of first-time experiences to learn what you will face and how to overcome it. The more you know about what you want to try the better chance of a good first experience. Then find a group of like-minded people. With the internet this is easier than it was with only printed material. An AANR family friendly resort is a good place to start as well. Convincing your spouse is often harder than convincing yourself. As mentioned above, logic, Bible and your wants do not work. Two-way communication about feelings and fears combined with council from a couple, if possible, who solved a similar conflict with their spouse. Women often need to talk to other women who have had similar feelings and fears and overcame them, before they will try going naked in a group of mixed ages and genders.

The bottom line is this...the problem is lust. The solution is a proper perspective on women and the right heart condition. The heart condition is a matter of Holy Spirit fulness that comes from a right relationship with God...ie – daily Bible reading, a good prayer life, keeping your mind stayed on Him through Christian music, movies, friends, church services, etc. The proper perspective on women is to stop looking at them as objects and start looking at them as people. One of the ways to not objectify women is naturism. In naturism, you stop looking at the body and start looking at the person! Like Zedekiah, it might not seem like the easy/right way, but trust God instead of what you think God should have said.