

Culture Wars #8
The Beauty Culture

Word

Scripture Reference

1 Peter 3:3-4

Discussion Questions

1. Our current society places too much importance on physical appearance as a basis for one's self-worth. Share with the group how you've observed this beauty culture being manifested. Do you think Christians are exempted from this craze of wanting to look good physically?
2. There is nothing inherently wrong with having an attractive outward appearance. As a Christian it is good and decent behavior to take care of yourself and to look your best, but you cross the line when you become overly concerned about your outward appearance at the expense of cultivating inward beauty. Why do you think people want to be acknowledged as physically beautiful? Discuss.
3. As Christians, our perspective of beauty should be viewed through a biblical grid. Read 1 Samuel 16:7 and 1 Peter 3:3-4. What does the Bible say about God's perspective of beauty? Does it matter to Him how you look on the outside? How would you describe a beautiful heart? Why is it easier to be beautiful on the outside than the inside? How can someone develop inner beauty or a beautiful heart?
4. Read Proverbs 31:30. Do you think that in today's culture where the use of cosmetics is considered normal and plastic surgery is accepted and encouraged, that the Bible's description of charm and beauty still hold true? How do you judge beauty in other people?
5. A follower of Christ needs to see the beauty in others by looking for a Spirit-filled life. What does a Spirit-filled life look like? Read 2 Corinthians 4:16. When the apostle Paul wrote these words he was nearing the end of his life. Describe what you think he would have looked like had you met him at that time. Do you think Paul would have aged gracefully? Discuss how your view of someone is affected by how that person lives his or her life. Do you know someone whose life is so Spirit-filled that you don't care what he or she looks like from the outside? What about that person's character and behavior

make him a Spirit-filled person?

6. As a child of God, we also need to see beauty in ourselves, but how do we do that when our culture feeds us with false standards of beauty and makes us feel unworthy if we don't live up to that standard? Read Genesis 1:27 and Psalm 139:14. To see the beauty in ourselves we must come to an understanding that we are made in God's image and likeness. What is the basis of your identity and self-worth? Do you believe that you are made in the image and likeness of God? Does the knowledge that you are a product of an all-knowing Creator who never makes mistakes give you the confidence to "let your light so shine before men?" (Matthew 5:16a).
7. The beauty culture tells us to impress the world with our outward appearance, but what kind of impression to the world does Jesus teach us to pursue (Matthew 5:16b)? In what ways could a believer hide his or her light from the world?

Walk

*"Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me;
all His wonderful passion and purity.
All thou spirit divine, all my nature refine;
Till the beauty of Jesus be seen in me."*

Examine yourself. Are you so preoccupied with your outward looks that you don't have time to work on your inner beauty to shine as light for Christ? Can you honestly say, "I'm just a nobody trying to tell everybody, about Somebody (Jesus), who can save anybody" to the people around you? Consider how in this vain world you can become a beautiful follower of Christ; one possessing a beautiful heart, living a spirit-filled life, and nurturing the knowledge and appreciation of having been made in the image of God.

Worship & Prayer

Pray for...

- For the beauty of the Lord to radiate brightly in the lives of His people.
- Fruitful community fair wherein more unchurched people visit and enjoy GCCP.
- Blessings upon the choir as they prepare for the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.
- All Christmas J.O.Y. shoeboxes to bless needy kids.
- Healing for Danny (sepsis), IB, FC, GL, BC, AU (salvation), MTC (ICU), FW.
- Repentance and spiritual healing for CM.
- OY to complete all his immigration papers before Dec. 15.