

The Contented Heart

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I love my 9-year-old granddaughter. One quality that has endeared her to me is her desire to read. Abby would come home from school, do her home work, eat dinner, and read until she had to be stopped in time for bed. When Abby received an electronic tablet for a gift last Christmas, I assumed her love of reading would go to the next level. Yet, Abby used the device to watch MTV videos. She began to stand in front of her mirror, twitching her little body, and asking me, “Grandma, do you think am pretty?”

Our society takes its cue as to what is beautiful from a Hollywood standard. This standard places excessive pressure on today’s woman to want to look like the image of the “perfect” woman that is projected through media day in and day out.

The benchmarks for this pseudo-image are distorted and far from Gods design and intent. The unspoken expectation placed on women by our society to look a certain way is not what women of God should subject themselves to as their standard of beauty.

We do not need to spend money on plastic surgeries, such as nose jobs, tummy tucks, Liposuctions, breast Implants, butt implants, etc. I am not saying that any of these beauty enhancements are evil in and of themselves. Instead, women of God need to check the reasons why they pursue these procedures. They need to search what their motive is. Has anything been pressuring them to subject themselves to these surgeries?

God, the Creator, endowed some of us with big bone structures. We can never be size two, no matter how long and hard we starve ourselves. God gave other women small frame structures, who cannot be otherwise. This variety is as beautiful as the color of skin or the ethnic influence on eye shape.

Let’s stop yielding to the worldly pressures. Let’s stop spending money we don’t have trying to please people who won’t be impressed anyway. Let’s fight the mindset of trying to live by the world’s standards and focus our attention on what matters most in life.

Let me be clear that I am not saying we should neglect ourselves and look like cave women! We should look our best to show we care about what God has given to us. Life is about living in this world but not of this world Jesus said that. We must do what it takes within the parameters set by the Holy Spirit to ensure our success. Master yourself and present yourself with dignity and class. We must resist the temptation to make it all about the looks the lip, the hip, and the finger tips. You can

look fabulous and not spend a fortune. Learn to bargain shop, shop off-season, or shop at consignment stores and you will be surprised at the deals you can find.

What I am realizing about my granddaughter is that the continuous dose of MTV and the constant comparison of herself to the images shown are causing discontentment to gradually edge into her young soul about who and how God has created her. This must be addressed quickly before her morals are formed by popular culture.

Here are a few points to help overcome discontentment about who you are.

1. PRAY FOR THE HEART OF CONTENTMENT

God invoked a blessing on Adam and Eve, telling them to be fruitful, multiply and dominate the earth. He then provided them with all that they needed to succeed. It is God's will that you do well, beloved, but He also warns, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of things he possesses" (Luke 12:15).

Whisper a quick prayer with me, "Lord, I am so sorry for allowing discontentment and dissatisfaction to fill my heart. Please forgive me, and give me the grace to be content with those things You have provided. In Jesus' name, Amen!"

2. COMPARISON CREATES DISCONTENTMENT

The Bible says only the unwise compare themselves with others. No matter how smart you are someone is smarter. Even if you are the next crowned Miss Universe, someone is prettier. Therefore it is most logical to see that the best place to be is in the place of contentment – being happy with who God says you are. Theodore Roosevelt said, " Comparison is the thief of joy."

3. BE GRATEFUL

Gratefulness is the key to contentment; there is always someone who wishes they had what you have. Start praising God with those obvious assets that you have and move toward those that are more questionable to label as assets. But give Him honor for making you unique and absolutely special in His eyes.