

Have You Bought Into the World's Unattainable Standard of Outward Beauty?

Body image and weight issues are two of the most overwhelming issues a person deals with on a daily basis. We have a constant reminder on the billboards, radio, TV and in the news what our body should look like and how we are to act.

One day we are to be super woman, the next day Suzy homemaker.

We soon find that we are living in a tug-of-war between the world's unrealistic standard of beauty and God's reality for our body. When we buy into the world's unattainable standard of outward beauty, we believe a lie of the enemy. When we believe a lie, we empower the liar.

Buying into the world's unattainable standard of outward beauty is easy to do in today's world. As we try to gain acceptance by the world's standard, we find bondage that leads us to discouragement and depression. We have been caught in the snare of the enemy that our happiness depends on our outward beauty.

Your outward condition reflects a deeper inner turmoil. Captivity does not start on your exterior frame. It began deep within and has worked its destruction from the inside out. It starts with seeds from a word, rejection or a disapproving glance. How can you overcome the bondage caused by deep wounds to your heart?

The first step is to understand who you really are. As a child of God, there are multiple dimensions of you; you are a spirit, you have a soul, and you live in a body (1 Thess. 5:23). Your physical body, which you see in a mirror, is the image reflected and projected to others. It is the outer shell

that houses the real you, your spirit. Your body can be broken, scarred, wounded, healed and strengthened.

Your soul—your mind, will and emotions—is the place of expression of your personality. It houses your thoughts, hopes, dreams and fears. Your will draws information from your mind in making decisions about your body.

The third dimension is your spirit, which is often described as your heart. “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength” (Mark 12:30, NKJV). This scripture gives a divine order to our life. Our spirit (heart) should direct our soul and mind, which will guide our physical body. As we keep this divine order; spirit, soul and body, our spirit, which is instantly born again when we receive Christ Jesus as our Lord and Savior, will direct our soul and body.

The world is full of information—good and bad. We must discern what is good for us and what is bad. The information from the world tells us the need for change. But only the Word of God can bring transformation to our soul and body.

You are unique, created in the image of God for a purpose. When I accepted my body as He created me, quit comparing myself with others, forgave myself for abusing my body and accepted my responsibility in taking care of my body, change started deep within.

You are so much more than a body. Remember, God looks on the heart.

The world judges you by body image. You are not of this world. I thank God every day for my health. I have been blessed even as an overweight person. But I was coming to a point that travel was much harder and I grew weary in doing good. Like Martha, I had become distracted with ‘busy work’ for the kingdom and lost the focus of my life, Jesus.

It is impossible to reach the world's unrealistic standard; worldly people have planned it that way. God leads by the desire of your heart. That desire comes as you abide in His Word (John 15:7).

God gave me a battle plan that worked from the inside out and took 88 pounds from my body. It did not happen overnight, it's a lifetime walk. We are learning daily to walk in the Spirit so we will not fulfill the desire of the flesh (Gal. 5:16).

Weight loss is a byproduct of obedience. As we learn the ways of the kingdom of God, we don't have to seek success; it will follow us as we follow Him. Ask the Lord to instill desire in you that motivates you in the perspective of eternity, not just day to day. Live for eternity, die to your flesh and represent Him to the best of your ability.

My testimony and walk in this journey of freedom are in my book, *Why Diets Don't Work—Food Is Not the Problem*.

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