

Why You Shouldn't Neglect Your Soul Needs

How long does it take you to get ready in the morning? Both men and women shower, fix our hair, brush our teeth and do the best we can to look beautiful on the outside, yet we rarely give any thought to enhancing the souls within us.

The fixation we have with impressing one another has led to the adage, "Beauty is only skin deep, but ugly goes all the way to the bone." When external beauty is a manifestation of the healthy soul that lies within you, it feels authentic, real and attractive.

But when the soul within you is drowning, starving, ignored and unkempt, everything you do on the outside is futile. So beauty is then much more all-encompassing than what our society tries to lead us to believe.

The Great Pretend Game

Many self-help books today are more like acting lessons that teaching people how to behave in the big-screen movie of life. But if we're honest with ourselves, we'll see the training they impart is just spray paint and stenciling for anyone hoping to become like Captain America. It rarely ends well.

It's incumbent upon us to ask the question "Do you pretend?" We are all born with an intense need to feel significant, loved, valued and accepted; sometimes we fear that we are not worthy of these things. So we pretend to be the people we think society wants us to be in order to meet the desperate needs of our souls.

Let me be clear: These are not just wants or desires; these are God-given needs. What water, food, air, sleep and sunlight are to your body; love, acceptance, attention, approval and

significance are to your soul.

Sadly, most believers don't even acknowledge, much less manage, these needs because their pastors actually taught them to ignore their souls. In fact, in many circles, the soul is thought of as inherently evil. In other words, some people teach that to be truly spiritual, you must suppress or ignore the needs of your soul and instead focus only on spiritual things.

If a person is drowning in a pool, nobody stands by and says, "You need air, you airless person! If you would just read your Bible more often, you wouldn't need air!" We all know that no matter how spiritual somebody is, he or she still needs air. You can go to church every day, read your Bible consistently and pray all the time, but none of these things will fulfill the need you have for oxygen.

Soul Needs Are Good and Valid

We must learn to care for our soul needs if we ever hope to cultivate kingdom virtues that empower us to walk in our high callings, and if we ever hope to demonstrate the true beauty of our creator in us. So today, I want to challenge you to take some time and assess what soul needs could use some attention in your life. What does your heart need? Is it rest, fun, connection with a friend? Do you currently need to feel known and seen? The more we go after taking care of these needs—and therefore our souls—the more beauty will radiate from the inside out. And that, my friends, is exciting!

What's one way you like to take care of your soul needs? How do you proactively love yourself? Let me know in the comments section. And for more on how to have a healthy soul, I encourage you to check out my new book, *Destined to Win*. {eo}

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