



BATTLEFIELD #2: INNER V. OUTER BEAUTY

What Depravity Specifically Means for Women

Battlefield #1: Nurture for Control

Women have a tendency to trade nurture for control.

I. What is the World's Perspective?

Beauty is measured by . . .

- The Media standard
- The Mirror standard
- The Me vs. You standard

Battlefield #2: Women tend to place a higher emphasis on external beauty and ignore the need for internal beauty.

II. What is God's Perspective?

Scripture reveals . . .

A. Commands for Dress

- 1 Peter 3:3-4: In personal relationships
- 1 Timothy 2:9-10 In public worship

B. Contempt for external beauty. (Isaiah 3:13-24)

C. Congratulations for internal beauty. (Proverbs 31:10-31)

III. What is my perspective?

I view . . .

- My body as a tool.
- My body as a jewel.
- My body as an example.
 - *Example of offering my beauty to my husband.
 - *Example of an internal beauty routine.

* Example that demonstrates freedom from the prison of personal appearance.

Discussion Questions:

1. From our Reflection Assignment last week: What evidence did you see of your own desire to trade Nurture for Control?
2. How much time do you regularly spend on your personal appearance? (Include shopping for clothes, trips to the salon, and working out, as well as personal grooming ...) Compare this to the time you spend developing your character.
3. When you “dress to impress”, are you trying to impress men, women, or both?
4. Do you feel pressure to “look” a certain way? Where do you think this pressure comes from?
5. Do you base your opinions of others on their appearance or their character? Give examples.

Reflection Assignment:

Compare the time and effort *you* invest in your appearance (including things like showering and brushing your hair) with the time and effort you invest in your character. List some items that could become part of a “spiritual beauty regimen” and would help you shift your attention away from external and toward internal beauty.

Passage to Ponder this week: Proverbs 4:23

Week Ten Summary...

We have a God who loves Beauty. In fact, He is the author and creator of Beauty. Beauty is one of his best things. Everywhere we look in creation, we see breathtaking Beauty. The universe itself is stunning in its beauty—even scientists who study the Cosmos have called it “elegant.” And God tells us the purpose of all this beauty in Psalm 19, “The heavens declare the glory of God.” Beauty in creation exists to bring glory to the Creator. When God created Woman, he made something beautiful indeed. And, it’s part of His plan that men are attracted to their wives’ feminine beauty. The Song of Solomon is full of references to the beauty of the Beloved. Beauty is a very good thing.

However, like many good things God created, female beauty has been bent and twisted away from the Creator’s original intent by Depravity. Our beauty, like all beauty, should bring glory to God. But we have twisted things around so that a woman’s beauty brings glory to *herself*, whether via the sexual interest of men or the admiration of other women. In fact, for many of us, our entire worth as human beings is wrapped up in whether or not we are beautiful—or beautiful “enough.” This is the heart of one of the major Battlefields of Depravity for women. ***We tend to place a high emphasis on external beauty and ignore the need for internal beauty.***

Scripture tells us that God is less concerned with what we look like than he is with our character, and He asks us to share that priority with Him. External Beauty, as fine as it is, is corrupted and will decay (Proverbs says it is fleeting). But, Internal Beauty grows more radiant with age. No matter how little value we *think* we place on external beauty, all of us spend a certain amount of time on the care and maintenance of our physical bodies. Rare indeed is the woman who spends an equal amount of time on the development of a beautiful, godly character.