

Fearfully and wonderfully made

Effective ways to view beauty

Many can resonate with fearfully aging bodies, but can't seem to shake hands with wonderfully. We see celebrities with their nip-n-tuck beauty and airbrushed photos then look back on pictures of our selves as young people and shake our heads. Beneath our struggle to stay fit we begin to struggle with personal issues of self worth.

We all have a commonality in the fact that we can not stop the aging process. However we can all "make peace" with who we are as humans.

Embrace health. Make a choice to participate and live a healthy lifestyle. You may not stop gravity but you can commit to living wisely by eating nutritious food, exercising everyday and maintaining healthy relationships. If you are in a marriage, stay committed by growing each day and building up your spouse. Embrace the responsibilities that you have in your family and make them your number one priority.

Push against the culture. We must push against the culture of "beauty". Let's get real; the culture doesn't understand true beauty. The hottest picture on the most popular magazine cover is no were to be found the following year. They are already off to someone new. I urge you to defy the trend of external beauty that says youth is perfection and devalues anything less. God created you and your beauty is defined by Him.

Be mindful of the big picture. Do not get caught up in the temporal. Everything you see in the mirror is temporary. It won't last. Spend your time wisely, establishing values, traditions and living a faith filled life of service. When you exercise, involve the family. Your kids will catch what you do.

Praise each other. One of the best ways to stop obsessing about yourself is to be complimentary and happy of other people. Do not do things from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility, regard others better than yourself; do not merely look out for your own interests, but care about the interests of others.

Be content. Today is the youngest you'll ever be. Live not as "has been" but for who you are right now. Stop the endless reminiscing about what use to be. Stop chasing someone fictitious ideal. We can all look in the mirror and smile. We can all live a life of thanksgiving for our chance to contribute to life.

Strive for "inside out" beauty. Remind yourself that people look on the outside, but God views the heart. How is your heart? Exercise is good for so many reasons, but if the primary goal has roots in vanity, you'll be left disappointed at what the world esteems as perfection.

Give yourself a gift today. Be known by your worn out hands and the glow in your eyes. Build your mind, body and soul, after all, you are fearfully and wonderfully made.

David Charleston