

First Peter Chapter 3

SUMMARY: We should be less concerned about OUTWARD BEAUTY and ADORNMENT, what we in the C21st call IMAGE and more concerned about what's going on INSIDE (1 Samuel 16:7).

→ *If that's the case, where do outward beauty and adornment fit in? Are they okay? Are there limits? If you're honest, where do they fit in your personal list of priorities?*

* We live in a world that puts a huge premium on BEAUTY, FAME, STATUS, POPULARITY & POWER, and, if we're honest, tends to trample on GODLINESS, HOLINESS & PURITY (see Matthew 5:1-12).

→ *Do you agree? Has the world trampled on godliness, holiness and purity, and, if so, how? What have they been replaced by?*

→ *Read the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12). How counter-cultural are they? Do they look like inward or outward beauty?*

* Peter's message = Perhaps we have it UPSIDE-DOWN ... Should we instead ESTEEM a very different set of VALUES?

→ *What values do you think we should esteem ahead of 'outward beauty?'*

WHAT SHOULD WE ESTEEM?

1. A PURE and REVERENT life (v1-2).

2. A GENTLE and QUIET spirit (v3-5).

→ *Describe each of those? What do people who have them look like? What is attractive about them? What is effective about them? How do you get them?*

WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE?

1. INTEGRITY → What I SEE is what I GET.

2. KINDNESS → I can tell they have MY BEST INTERESTS at heart.

3. GENTLENESS → I am in SAFE HANDS.

→ *Define integrity, kindness and gentleness. Are they commonly seen? Do we see them, for example, in politics or sport or on social media? Is that a problem? How might we fix it?*

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

Stage 1: GIVE your LIFE to JESUS (Romans 10:9-13).

Stage 2: Let Him IN to MOULD, REFINE & PURIFY your heart (2 Corinthians 3:17-18).

→ *How do we 'let Him in?' How does He mould, refine and purify our hearts?*

→ *Max Lucado wrote: "God loves you just the way you are, but He refuses to leave you that way. He wants you to be just like Jesus. He wants you to have a heart like His." Discuss!*

* Discipleship is not about what you KNOW, so much as who you BECOME.

→ *Do you agree? Do we, in church, have too high a premium on knowledge and not enough on fruit and character? How are knowing, doing and being related?*

→ *What does a true disciple look like? (see John 13:15, 15:8, Psalm 1:1-3, Colossians 2:6-7)*

* You judge a tree by the quality of its FRUIT.

→ *How does the tree metaphor fit with our growth as disciples (Roots? Trunk? Branches? Fruit?)*

→ *What fruit is He looking to produce in our lives (see Galatians 5:22-23).*

* As God ENTERS OUR LIVES, we become BRIGHTER and more BEAUTIFUL ... We become LIKE HIM.

→ *How does God 'enter our lives?' What does it mean to become brighter? What does it mean to become more beautiful? Is it realistic to expect us to become 'like Him?'*

THE CHALLENGE

1. *Have you given your life to Jesus? Really, truly?*

2. *Are you letting Him in to change your heart? How is He trying to do that right now? Are you resisting or co-operating? What still needs to be done in your heart? How can we pray for you?*