

THE MYTH OF YOUTH AND BEAUTY

By Nancy Arant Williams

QWY EXXWU, UH R0B2D27(P)M(P)K1 (N)DCH)B672279D(0)K242D0D(0)K21@2020KGO

outward appearance belied the world's standard of attractiveness?

I believe that is how Jesus appeared—~~just average, but with such a glowing internal beauty that he could help even the most~~

So how is that even we, as Christians, have bought into this lie?

Now, before you get your feathers ruffled, let me say this. There is nothing wrong with looking and feeling our best, but to try unceasingly and forever, with all our resources, to erase years and set our focus on physical beauty as a goal, we do a disservice to those watching. *We* are perpetuating the lie.

The world, Hollywood, to be specific, has fed us the line that if we aren't svelte and beautiful, we are nothing, less than worthless. But that is not so. God values us, no matter how we look, and He wants us, as His people, to see others with the eyes of the spirit. To see each one as precious, bought with a price, the precious blood of Jesus. To be known by our love—that will make us far more beautiful than cosmetics and facelifts could ever dare to do.

In fact, if you've noticed, the more lifted and tucked someone's face is, the harder the edge to their appearance. And some of the most physically attractive people I've ever met left me cold with their self-centeredness and rudeness.

There are consequences for buying into the lie. If I feel old or unlovely, I will probably hide my lamp under a bushel, feeling unworthy to speak the message God has placed on my heart. And that would be the greatest travesty of all, because the world is *dying* to hear that message.

So how about this--as Christians, let's start a new trend, telling the world--it's a loving, tender heart that makes someone beautiful. Let them catch the refreshing scent of the fragrance of Jesus, for if we are truly and unconditionally loved, we are transformed into something beautiful, something whole.

Instead of aiming to look forever young the way the world does, let's focus on becoming a reflection of the Lord Jesus, refusing to swallow the world's lie.

So you and I may be aging, with new wrinkles, thinning hair...so we don't have the perfect figures. So what? You and I are still usable to the kingdom of God if our attitudes are right and we have laid hold on treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt, thinking ministry and loving people first of all. That, my friends, is the secret of true beauty. You are beautiful in Jesus.