

## A MOMENT OF YOUR TIME

### 4. Your image (510 words)

Our image, in particular our body image, is a major issue today.

According to information published by a Commonwealth health agency, only one in five women are satisfied with their body weight and nearly half of all normal weight women overestimate their size and shape.<sup>1</sup> The questions: What will I wear? How do I look? Have become the all important questions for presenting yourself publicly. In some cases, it reflects the superficiality and vanity commonly promoted and exhibited in our culture.

In other cases, anxiety about body image represents a serious emotional reaction to excessive criticism or abusive parenting during childhood years.

Even parents who do not intend to create a negative self-image in their children often don't give much thought to how they can help their children develop a healthy and sensible assessment of themselves.

God has made each one of us, unique individuals. Therefore, it is important that parents don't make a habit of comparing a child's appearance or abilities with themselves or other family members. Even to point to someone as a good example should be done wisely and to encourage rather than dishearten and discourage children.

But the Bible says something even more important than this about the issue of your image. In the first book of the Bible, in Genesis 1:27, it reads:

*So God created human beings in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*

God created male and female human beings to bear his image, to present publicly a picture of some of his qualities and characteristics. If we understand we should be set free from believing that what matters is our physical dimensions, appearance and abilities, and that these are what counts for acceptance and approval.

Our image, your image, is not really all about how you present yourself. The main thing is that our image is about presenting a public portrayal of what God is like. The important issue is whether you use your image to present and promote the attractive qualities of God's character, such as his grace, love, kindness, joy, peace, and faithfulness.

Living without and away from God has ruined our image. No amount of fashionable clothing, dieting, and make-up will every cover up the inward ugliness of a self-centred human ruled by fear, pride, ambition, resentment or bitterness. We are ruining our image.

There is a way to repair your true image. In the Bible, we have the following words on what Jesus can do for our image written the missionary Paul. He wrote:

*Since you have heard all about him and have learned the truth that is in Jesus, throw off your old evil nature and your former way of life, which is rotten through and through, full of lust and deception. Instead, there must be a spiritual renewal of your thoughts and attitudes. You must display a new nature because you are a new person, created in God's likeness—righteous, holy, and true.<sup>2</sup>*

Come and follow Jesus and he will change you and your image.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Better Health Channel. [www.healthinsite.gov.au/topics/Body\\_Image](http://www.healthinsite.gov.au/topics/Body_Image)

<sup>2</sup> Ephesians 4:21-24