

## 6.8.20 - Is Nakedness the Issue

Many years ago, we had a church sponsored marriage retreat on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. During one of the video lessons, the speaker made the statement that the issue may not be the issue. How can that be, I asked myself, if it is an issue it has to be the issue. That changed how I looked at conflicts and conflict resolution ever since. We argue about what we think we can win when the real reason is not being discussed and sometimes not even allowed to be discussed. If you and your mate disagree strongly about naturism and she comes home from work in a foul mood. You may argue about whatever she claims is the cause of the foul mood, but may not even realize that the real issue is your disagreement regarding naturism. In fact, we have even witnessed couples in a disagreement where one or the other may even try holding the other hostage in some way or another. He refuses to change the oil in her car until she sees it his way. She refuses to make his favorite meal or even slightly burns the meal. And you have to wonder..."did she burn the meal to force me to see it her way. If I do not want to eat a lot more meals like this one, I will need to agree with her position or cook my own meals." This kind of act leads to trying to determine if it was an accident or deliberate. The oil change or the burnt food is not the issue in this case. All of that to ask, "Is nakedness the issue?"

On the surface the answer seems to be obviously, "Yes". We are learning that the "obvious" is not always true. We as humans are so complicated that it is difficult to ever be sure if the issue is the issue. We are giving possibilities for other issues that may be the cause of the reaction to nakedness. Most of the time the person will not see any other issue contributing to the reaction. It often seems like there is a list of issues and we try to decide which issue is the main one.

We could use logic to claim nakedness is not the issue. We are all born naked. We were naked for bathing and diaper changes, especially when we messed up the clothing as well as the diaper, when we were infants. We see ourselves naked when we bath or shower. Most married people

see their spouse naked. Most people have used locker room showers where members of your gender are naked. The only naked experience missing most of the time is with people other than our spouse...aka members of the other gender. Does not seem to be that large of a jump from one member of the other sex and infants to lots of other examples of either male or female bodies between babies and the very aged.

As it relates to Satan, we believe that nakedness is the actual issue. He does not want to see God's image being displayed in all of us due to the fact that he and God are at odds regarding good and evil or controlling with fear or with love. Satan is smarter than we are so even this could be a deception of his. We are much more concerned with people we often have to deal with, since we seldom deal directly with Satan. It is important to realize that Satan probably has a hand in the issue somewhere.

We all resist change and complain of being bored because everything is the "same old, same old" pattern. Nakedness being approved by God may mean that I have to make a change in how I see the world and how I act in it. The easy solution is to claim that God sees nakedness as a sin. Just find a few verses to support your view (even if you have to mis-define words and take verses out of context) and suddenly I have no need to change. If we change in one area, it may lead to changing other areas as well. It could lead to too much change. One of our greatest fears is the fear of change.

Laziness may be the real issue in many cases. We are confronted with the possibility that nakedness is not a sin in a non-sexual setting. Before we accept a new doctrine as true, we need to verify it with the Bible. At least that is how it should be done. To verify it we need to do some Bible study which is time consuming and often not very entertaining i.e. it's work. It's much easier to claim, "That is not what we have believed for generations." As if that were the test for truth. If we can come up with some statement like that then there is no need for study or for change. If it turns out that this tradition is wrong, we might have to look

at other traditions which could lead to more study and possibly more change.

Pride certainly is an issue as it always is in any relationship. If I change my behavior or opinion, it means that I was wrong before. That will mar my reputation as a perfect person who knows everything. If I admit that you are right it will suggest that you are smarter than I am in Bible knowledge. Another unacceptable idea for a proud person.

Closely related but more obviously fear based is going along to get along. If I believed that, people would think I was a pervert. They might call me names...I might even lose some friends. My wife would be hard to live with for a long time. I might have to find a new church if they learn that I believe something like that.

Belief worship is also a reason to condemn nakedness without a search of what the Bible says or forcing the Bible to agree with the condemnation. "I can't believe that God would allow people to socialize naked." Whatever this person does believe about God does not come from the same Bible that I have been reading and studying. They can't be worshiping the God of my Bible. Instead they are worshiping a set of beliefs about their "god" and nakedness is a sin in those beliefs. Beliefs are attempts to make God more understandable. We need to be ready to change every "belief" when confronted with a Truth where it does not match.

Here are three examples to illustrate people worshiping their beliefs:

1. Job's comforters believed that God blesses good people and punishes bad people.

Job appeared to have been punished by God. No matter what Job said about his righteousness they would not believe him.

Believing Job meant accepting that their belief was wrong in this case.

2. The Jews all expected Jesus to set up an earthly kingdom.

When there was no evidence that He was going to do so they questioned His divinity and then demanded that He be crucified, even demanding a known criminal such as Barabus be released in place of our innocent Lord.

3. Once people are dead, that is the end.

Look how hard it was for the disciples to believe that Jesus was alive even though He taught them repeatedly that He would die and that three days later He would come back from the dead. The people that Jesus raised from the dead did not even change this belief. I figured this would have been the easier one for them to accept with all of the people that He raised before His own death

Legalism is often the issue instead of nakedness and certainly another example of belief worship rather than accepting of truth. The legalist claims that a naked body has to cause people to lust. Instead of dealing with the heart condition of these people which is not visible, they tell everyone to cover their bodies to be right with God. The evidence is that the common place of non-sexual nakedness is part of the cure for the heart condition of lust. Legalists are quick to force everyone in line at the smallest hint of departing from the rules. Masks are a great illustration of this today. They are very visible, but they do not stop viruses. In fact, the medical experts tell us that it's like trying to stop a mosquito with a chain link fence. Yet, those who believe different are quick to stop anyone who is not wearing a mask and demand that they mask up. It's almost identical to naturism, the Bible is very clear that God intended from the beginning that we be naked and not ashamed. There are many illustrations of the commonplace of nakedness throughout the whole Bible. God's prophets were naked and some even at God's direct command. And despite all of this Bible absolute truth, the legalists of today will stop anyone who believes the Bible on naturism and demand that they mask up so to speak. The Pharisees were

the legalists in the New Testament and you do not need to read much of it to see how far they went to stop people who did not follow their rules. I'd say that the Pharisees of today aren't too far behind.

So, what do we do when the issue isn't really the issue? What do we do when spouses, friends or church members won't actually deal with the real issue? Our advice is that we ought to please God rather than men. That if God intended for us to live naked and not ashamed then that is the best way to live. We also advise, as the Apostle Paul did...to not eat meat in front of those who don't eat meat. In other words, to try as much as lieth within you to live peaceably with all men. You can be right and live right confidently without having to make everyone else see it your way too.

Live as God intended in the naked and unashamed condition you were born in, just decide today that you don't need to "fix" the rest of the world...even the Christian world.



**BEFORE YOU ARGUE WITH  
SOMEONE ASK YOURSELF  
A QUESTION:**

**IS THAT PERSON EVEN  
MENTALLY MATURE ENOUGH  
TO GRASP THE CONCEPT OF  
A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE.  
BECAUSE IF NOT, THERE IS  
ABSOLUTELY NO POINT.**