

General Topics :: "No...I am beautiful

"No...I am beautiful - posted by MaryJane, on: 2011/11/14 9:49

So I have a question for the moms, dads and really anyone who has little ones in their life. I noticed recently that my granddaughter (my daughters, daughter) had developed an attitude lately that I think we (meaning the adults) may actually be feeding into. She is a sweet little girl with long light brown hair and bright green eyes. For a while now we have all told her how pretty she is, how nice she looks in her outfits, how lovely her hair is when she combs it and so on. The thing I notice is that she really relishes in these compliments. SO much so that now if you tell her she looks nice she corrects you and says, "no grandma, I am beautiful." At first I thought this was kind of cute because she is only three and half years old but I am already seeing the ground work of vanity being laid I think. Is it possible for a little one so young to already be dealing with vanity and could all the compliments given be feeding into that? How would you handle this or am I perhaps being overly sensitive?

God bless
mj

Re: "No...I am beautiful - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/11/14 10:09

Hello ma'am,

I see what you are saying. My family has seen a similar problem. I have four beautiful daughters, but I never tell them so, unless they DO beautiful things, unless they are in fact ACTING beautifully.

We saw the pride thing creeping in, and they get it all the time when in public, and I thought about what the apostle Paul commanded in I Timothy 2:9-10:

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

But... with good works."

The apostle Peter says the same thing in I Peter 3:3-4:

"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

Be well in the Good Lord Sister,
Doug

Re: , on: 2011/11/14 10:54

Perfect example... if you've ever seen the try-outs for American Idol (I confess I have seen a couple of them... just the try outs) you see people who can not carry a tune in a bucket who are completely convinced they are the greatest singer in the world. That's what mommy and daddy have told them all their life... and unless mommy and daddy are completely to me deaf... they were lied to.

So what happens? They go on national TV and make fools out of themselves and are totally crushed by a man who will tell them exactly what they should have been told years before.

...and that man is considered "mean".

No, he's truthful.

Krispy

Re: - posted by Solomon101, on: 2011/11/14 11:13

Hey Mary Jane-

I am also in the camp of parents that have dealt with attractive children... and trying to insure that isn't eventually a stumbling block to them. A couple of thoughts that helped us...hopefully they may give you some ideas as well-

1. We never discouraged any of the family, or anyone at all for that matter, from complimenting the kids on their physical appearance. Here is why. The world has lots of people that tear your kids down all week. They hear stuff at school, sometimes church, and everywhere they go. In our home we wanted them to know it is a "safe" place of refuge where we love each other unconditionally. If they got some strokes to their ego it was fine. They had a world of people at school, etc, that would give them multiple cut downs for any compliment they received.

2. An old leadership maxim states, "'WHAT GETS REWARDED GETS DONE". That's true. So...my wife and I started to base virtually ALL our compliments to them on things we saw them doing that revealed good character. We told them how proud we were of them that they served someone else, put value on others, volunteered in ways that helped the community, that the boys honored girls and opened their doors for them, etc., worked hard, studied diligently and pulled good grades, or whatever we could find them doing well. We made it a priority to compliment them on good positive character traits. Well.... they started getting the vast majority of their "atta boys" and "atta girls" for their BEHAVIOR. So..guess what happened. They started taking great care to demonstrate that excellent character. Why...because we rewarded it with compliments and approvals. That was the "reward"... and "WHAT GETS REWARDED GETS DONE".

Hopefully that may give you a few good ideas or thoughts to generate something from. The world tears them down enough,. I don't mind them getting compliments on their looks... however, if we gear the bulk of their strokes to their character and its development we can see them look to it first.

Blessings !

Re: - posted by Lotis (), on: 2011/11/14 15:55

I do NOT have kids so I certainly can not speak from that stand point on this subject, but I am young and can speak from personal experience and it seems to me that it is SO important (especially for young girls) to know that their fathers/family thinks they are beautiful. Otherwise they WILL find someone who will tell them these things to make them feel good, and probably that one will be no good for them, a predator or womanizer.

People generally just don't develop confidence by themselves, but through the encouragement of others telling them that they are good and that they are beautiful. Certainly the Lord should be our main source of encouragement in this area, but in reality the encouragement of our family and friends is nearly just as important.

Though again I do not have daughters or my own, if I ever have one, I will be sure to tell them they are beautiful as often as I can. I would rather end up with a daughter who needs to work on her vanity than one who doesn't know that daddy thinks she's beautiful and ends up finding her compliments in the arms of someone who was willing to say it for the wrong reasons.

I have seen way too many young girls (working in youth ministry) searching for affection and acceptance in the arms of young men who want little more than one night stands to think of holding back my words of love in the least bit. God shows his affections on us without limit, and I think we should do the same, he is faithful to correct us if we get prideful or vain, and likewise, I think we should do the same... just my somewhat "inexperienced" two cents.

Re: Lotis - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/11/14 16:15

Hi Lotis,

Your comment may have been directed at mine.

In any case, when I say that I don't tell my girls that they are beautiful unless they are acting beautifully, this doesn't mean I never call them "beautiful."

Their "Daddy" is right there encouraging them and cheering them on, giving them an "A for Effort" when they struggle, and praising them effusively for each spiritual victory along the Way.

My girls already know that the world-system places an undue emphasis on external beauty, but that their Heavenly Father definitely does not. They are learning that the values of the neighbors and of strangers are totally alien to the values of the Kingdom of God and of His Christ.

They are learning that,

"Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised." Proverbs 31:30

Re: , on: 2011/11/14 16:16

I should clarify, I was not saying that parents should not tell their daughters they are beautiful!! (Can you tell I don't have daughters?)

What I am saying is that the whole self-esteem thing in this country has gotten so out of hand that we can no longer allow a child to know that they may not be all that good at something.

I don't think that is healthy.

So you're not good at something. Go find something you ARE good at... and strive to be the best at it.

God does not give us all the same talents and gifts. But He does distribute them PERFECTLY.

Krispy

Re: - posted by Lotis (), on: 2011/11/14 16:29

Thanks for the clarification though I wasn't directing at anyone specific, just saw the topic and thought I would post. I agree that the Lord does not put as much stock in physical beauty as we do, really I don't think he puts any stock in it, and that it's better to be beautiful on the "inside".

But I just also think it's so important that we know someone, somewhere does think we are beautiful in all ways, including physically.

Re: Lotis - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/11/14 16:32

Quote:

"But I just also think it's so important that we know someone, somewhere does think we are beautiful in all ways, including physically."

Amen Brother. I totally agree.

Be well,
Doug

Re: "No...I am beautiful - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/11/14 18:43

Mary Jane,

It looks as though you got a lot of good advice. I am not sure I can add to it...

Having said all this, I cannot help but think how much has changed in the past 64 years. When I was growing up I rarely got complimented for anything and I am not sure my peers did either. It just was not done much. The attitude towards children was still too much that they should be seen and not heard. Adults reigned supreme, not children. But this has completely flip-flopped since then - children call the shots and adults buckle under it.

I have learned that praise is essential for the well-being of children, and other interpersonal relationships. Since this is the case I prefer to praise people for things they did, not what they look like. Let's face it, a young person may be pretty or handsome, another sibling may be kind of, well ugly or dreadfully plain, so how will you handle that?

Character is what should be encouraged and complimented on, not looks because beauty is fleeting. In a few short years, like 60+, your body will begin to sag and bag and go south. One hopes that by this time your attitude towards beauty has matured ...

Mary Jane, I think your concern is justified and you will do well to do what the Holy Spirit has been encouraging you to do: back off. Appreciate beauty but do not tell her!

Grand-parenting is fun, but we grandparents must be careful we do not complicate our children's parenting of their children.

Blessings,
ginnyrose

Re: - posted by menderofnets (), on: 2011/11/14 19:23

Hey Mary-Jane,

A lot of good thoughts here from people who've trodden a similar path.

I have three daughters, all of whom are beautiful, and we've been through a similar thing ourselves. We have always affirmed our daughters as God's gifts to us, but tried to take care so as not to hold themselves too highly, and especially praised/complimented/etc them on being beautiful inside by what they do more importantly than their outward appearance. As a Dad I'm the other side of the gender on this, but I'd hope that how I build up my little girls now will help them, if they do marry in the future, to be able to go into it right, with a humble heart and not proud, haughty, or thinking they are 'better', seeking to affirm and love others rather than orientate others around their own self-perception or need.

I always think that raising children is one of the most demanding yet rewarding jobs on the planet. God bless you as you seek the way forward with your family!

Re: - posted by Dawn10379 (), on: 2011/11/19 4:47

This is a very interesting thread and a topic that I have thought about a lot as well. My son is only 18 months old but he hears how cute/handsome/adorable (and so on) he is all the time. Even when he is sinning people will downplay his sin because of his "cuteness". That is a real problem for me and I have a hard time knowing how to handle it when it happens, what to do or say. I don't want my son to think his sin is cute or that he can get away with it because he is. Sin is serious and it will take root in his heart. I don't want him to have the struggles I have and still do because I was pacified as a child.

I may have gotten off topic here but I think it's very interesting and glad it is being addressed by others as well! :0)

Blessings!

Dawn

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/11/19 6:33

QUOTE:

"That is a real problem for me and I have a hard time knowing how to handle it when it happens, what to do or say."

Just wondering, Dawn...what about the possibility of telling these people - who will compliment your son when he is doing wrong - your wishes in the matter? Just tell them gently your position and why you believe what you do...Just a thought.

Our daughter was a very pretty girl - ever since her hair grew out. And she stayed pretty until she got cancer and radiation and steroids spoiled it. She used to say how she heard people talk about how pretty she was as far back as she could remember and how it wearied her! For her, it did not go to her head - maybe her mom and dad gave her the reality checks she needed?!

About boys: the thing is is that you do not want to raise a bully and this is a serious weakness for males that a parent has to work to control. You want your males to be aggressive but not bully people. They need to be teachable and meek, yet remain strong and responsible. Some of these qualities seem to be at odds with each other but they can and do complement each other. As a mom of four boys I did not allow our boys to run over me. And they grew up to be responsible adults.

It is tough to raise children. I consider the present times to be harder than when our children were born back in the 60s-1980 and I thought it was hard then! SIGH We did not have the electronic gizmos to distract us. Fortunately, so far our children have not purchased cell phones for their children and the oldest ones are 18...but they do play video games...

I would encourage modern parents to move into the country onto a small acreage, like 3+ acres so you can grow a garden, raise animals, fowl and give them plenty of room to play. Let them play with the soil, build tree houses, climb trees...they learn much in an environment like this. Our children consider this a valuable part in their childhood. (EDIT: back then our children would literally roam the country side with their bicycles, ride the horse down by the river bottom. We did not know where they were most of the time - had no cell phones back then...Sure we knew what they were doing but their exact location was unknown to us.)

Anyhow, this is free - am not charging you for this...{{smile}}

Re: "No...I am beautiful - posted by mguldner (), on: 2011/11/19 6:49

Hey MJ,

I see absolutely nothing wrong with telling a little girl she is beautiful especially my little girl. Hearing Your beautiful is something that secures a girl in her own body. My wife being a good example she doesn't believe me that she is beautiful and I said why should I tell you if you don't even believe me? She said because I enjoy hearing it even if I don't believe it.

When a girl doesn't feel beautiful they go through the ringer of trying to match the world's beauty, vomiting their food, crazy diets, globs of makeup etc. I have always told my wife she is a natural beauty and doesn't need any of those things. These past couple of days God has recaptured my heart with my wife's beauty.

Going to Krispy's example I feel it's an apples to oranges example, why? Because scripture says We are fearfully and wonderfully made, that we are the apple of God's eye, that when we seek Him it excites His heart with Love and passion all the more, EVEN in our weakness We are beautiful.

Scripture doesn't ever say we will all sing beautifully intune on the earth, that's reserved for heaven :). So telling your daughter, grand daughter, or any female they are beautiful lines up with the Word and it would be a devastating thing to tell a woman especially a young girl they are a troll. That's not how God sees you is it? :)

My course of action wouldn't be to go the opposite but ask simple questions to redirect her to what God finds beautiful about her. Ask her questions like do you know why your beautiful? (she may say something vain) but tell her that God sees something beautiful in you. Also Godly teaching on inner beauty would greatly help her and any woman. Read her Proverbs 31, and teach her God's standard of beauty and praise the beauty you already see in her whether it's inside or out but make special note of the inner. Phrases like wow you are so thoughtful, that's what I find beautiful about you will

help.

As a husband and a dad my opinion of my girls are biased they truly are beautiful to me but does that make God biased as well? :)

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/11/19 6:53

Matthew, you ought to be prejudiced! :-) I think most parents are...

Good dad...:-)

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2011/11/19 7:03

That was kind of my point, God is our heavenly Dad. Ever try and tell a dad otherwise about his wife or daughter? I am just saying I would hate to call something ugly if God says its beautiful. :)

Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2011/11/19 7:29

Thank you for all the wonderful replies. I am grateful to see what the LORD lays on the hearts of other believers on this topic. Having raised both a girl and four boys I still go back and forth on which is more difficult to bring up :)

I think for our little miss, my daughter and I talked this over and believe it is best to redirect some of my granddaughters praise. Not to focus so very much on her beauty, but to recognize her for making good choices, listening and obeying.

God bless
mj