

## “STOP JUDGING MY MERE APPEARANCES” (Jn. 7:24)

When Jesus healed on the Sabbath His critics assumed He was demon possessed. Jesus admonished them to take another look and the miracle. Things are not always like they first “appear”. Jesus was doing exactly what God wanted Him to do, and a careful examination of the facts would prove it. That’s why He admonished them to go deeper and stop judging by mere superficial appearances. To stimulate your thinking, please consider the contrast between the way the Old Testament Scriptures and the New Testament Scriptures deal with personal appearances.

- In the Old, Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Abigail, Esther, Job’s daughters and many other women are described as “beautiful”. By contrast, how women “appeared” is never dealt with in the New. We have no way of knowing, for example, whether Mary, the mother of Jesus, was beautiful or not! Her “appearance” is never discussed.
- In the Old we are told that Esau was red and hairy, Joseph was well built and handsome, Saul was a head taller than the others, Goliath was over 9 feet tall, David was ruddy and handsome, Elisha was bald headed, and Daniel and his friends were handsome and intelligent without any physical defect. We are never told what Christ or any of His Apostles looked like. Obviously their physical appearance was not important to God. Why should it be to us?

Let’s consider these two categories in order and see if we can stop judging by mere appearances. First let us consider the way we look at women, and second the way we look at men.

Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines. His personal experiences, enhanced by inspiration, caused him to write: **“Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman who shows no discretion.” (Prov 11:22)** How graphic! No rational man would be attracted to a pig just because it had a gold ring in it’s snout. Similarly, no rational man should ever be attracted to a woman merely because of her physical beauty. Jezebel painted her face and fixed her hair, but her physical beauty didn’t fool Jehu. He knew what kind of a woman she was regardless of how she appeared. Wise man will think like Jehu and stop judging by mere appearance.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John do not tell us what Jesus looked like, but Isaiah said: **“He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.” (Isa 53:2)** No matter how you interpret these words they are still stunning. The wise men who came from the East to worship Jesus were not attracted to Him by His appearance. He was only an infant at the time. Yet, these wise and powerful men decided to travel hundreds of miles and worship the baby Jesus months before they had even seen Him. Further, they also decided to give Him gifts of gold, incense, and myrrh. What they “knew” was far more important than what they “saw”. Wise men, then and now, do not judge by mere “appearances”.

When Samuel was sent to anoint a new king, the Lord rejected the tall and handsome Eliab and said: **“Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” (1 Sam 16:7)**

Let us, like God, look at someone’s heart, and not judge them by merely outward appearances!