

## 1.25.21 – The Wrong Question

Recently I was asked this question about naturism, "What good does it do?" The first time I got that question, I had no answer. This time I did not get a chance to answer. The person who asked just kept talking. With time to think about the question, I believe this is the wrong question. **Ecc 7:10 Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.** It seems that we should be asking "who is your god" and "what does he want from you". Only if your god has no concerns in the area of nakedness can you entertain the question above...

The question above suggests a pragmatic god. Not that the God of the Bible is not practical. He is. He wants us to have an abundant life, but some of His ways do not seem very practical to us. Ask the Israelites standing on the shore of the Red Sea with the Egyptian army behind them, no weapons, no experience with combat and mountains on either side; how practical did it seem to "be still and wait on the Lord". Without the Egyptian army would you walk between two walls of water hundreds of feet high? Moses, you go through and show us that it is safe and then we will look for another way to join you. God used the Egyptian army to give the children of Israel courage and faith to cross the Red Sea. That seems like a very practical solution, with an additional bonus...He weakened the Egyptian army, so they were not likely to pursue the Israelites some other way.

Another question We often hear associated with naturism, "What will my friends think if they find out about my naturist activities?" This is the popularity god. We are not suggesting you tell everyone you went to some naturist activity, but you must be ready to face resistance from the popularity god when it comes. When you think you are right with this god, he changes the conditions for righteousness. It is like chasing the end of the rainbow or happiness.

This next god shows up as a statement instead of a question usually. "I can not believe that God wants me naked at any time. I almost feel sinful when I shower." This comes from the Beliefs god. Job had to deal with this god in his friends. Job's experiences proved to him that it was a false god, but his friends had to chose between Job telling the truth and their belief that God does not allow bad events in the lives of good people.

Another god we deal with shows up as a statement. "Because clothing reduces sexual lust, we expect our members to dress according to the church rules at all times." This is the legalism god with a little help from the knowledge god. They

often work together. The knowledge god gives the leader information about a problem or an imagined problem and the legalism god gives a rule as a solution. Many times, these manmade rules have the opposite effect on the problem that they were supposed to solve. Putting on more clothing is intended to prevent sexual lust indeed ends up causing more lust. Satan is sitting back laughing as Christians promote the opposite view of the body as God's view laid out in Genesis. This god causes division amongst its believers. Our rules are better than your rules. You are not following this rule as well as we do. We are more spiritual than you because we have a "higher standard". Only immature believers follow that rule, when you mature to our level you will understand, etc.

This division leads right into the next god. This one is represented by a statement also. "I would not do that. I am more righteous than that." This is the self-righteous god. He allows his followers to look down on almost everybody else as less righteous. His followers need a lot of time eating with the swine to come to themselves and return to the father.

We will look at what these gods expect next. The pragmatic god wants some practical result from the behavior or rule. This requires a judgement on some body's part. If the judge is a textile person, then the pragmatic god will see no good in nakedness. If the judge is a naturist, he will see nakedness as doing a lot of good, solving many of the problems created by clothing...no clear answer for this god.

The popularity god is very likely to be opposed to nakedness. We have learned that if everyone is doing something, it is usually best to do the opposite. We have very few friends who think family friendly naked activities are acceptable. That makes naturists a minority and out of the will of the popularity god.

The belief god is related to the popularity god, but he requires some rational reason. The reason seems to also need popularity to be acceptable. The belief that Job was dealing with is still popular today. When hearing of a tragedy in the life of an acquaintance, we ask, "I wonder what they did or failed to do to deserve that?" Jonah would be another example. He was out of God's will and deserved his punishment. Really, and King Jeroboam, the great grand son of Jehu, the ruler of Israel at the time of Jonah, was not departing from what God wanted done? To help answer that, remember that Israel or the Northern Kingdom, had no good kings. We all do things contrary to God's plans/will/commands. Now here is a shock for belief worshipers. Jonah was in God's will until he became upset about not getting to see the destruction of Nineveh. God did not want him going as an

Israelite trying to scare the Ninevites with a message from the Israelite God. A God who could not defend His own nation from their armies. God wanted it to look like Jonah came from the Ninevite fish god. God did not want a fancy message which Jonah was more than willing to obey. He hoped they would ignore him and get destroyed. How else do you think God could get someone to spend three days in the stomach of a fish to prepare for a missionary trip to a hated city? The belief god is opposed to nakedness because the reasons justifying it are not popular.

The legalism god claims to be helping people be more righteous or better servants of God. The effect of their rules and standards is often a cause for the sin the rule was designed to prevent. Clothing does not prevent lust, it increases lust. Rules do not make people righteous...they give more opportunity to sin (break the rules). The legalism god will not allow nakedness because he can give scriptures that he thinks proves his followers are more righteous when clothed. He will back that up with tradition. Clothing kept our fathers on the right path, and it is working today to prevent lust. Of course, the legalism god will not have any real data to prove clothing does what he claims...you're just supposed to take his word for it, because if you don't, he will claim moral superiority on you.

The righteousness god allows his believers to hold the higher moral ground in any conflict, which means they never need to imagine being wrong. They are able to look at the Bible and conclude that it agrees with all their beliefs. They only need to maintain an appearance of righteousness at all times. Those who do not agree with the self-righteous believers have very little chance of pointing out as error in the righteous beliefs. The righteousness god will see nakedness as crude, gross, and sinful. No need to ask, "What good does nakedness do?" here. The answer is obviously none. It will ruin your righteous appearance.

What we actually find in the Bible is that God wanted us naked and not ashamed from the beginning or He would not have created us this way. What we actually find is that the commonplace on nonsexual nakedness desexualizes the naked body, reducing lust, reducing the hold that pornography has and un-objectifies people returning them to the beautiful human creation of God...another person, not an object to be used. What we actually find is that the Bible is full of examples of nakedness in the will of God and even at His command and leading. Rather than asking "What good does it do?" maybe it's time to start asking "What would God have me to do?".