

Sermon Notes Sunday 1st July Mind the Gap 'Self Image'

Bible readings: Psalm 139 1:-17, 1 Samuel 16:6-7

To consider/discuss:

- Are you conscious about the way you look? Why/why not?
- Does thinking about how you look impact your life? Does it take up a lot of your time/money?
- What influences the way you think about yourself?
- Does social media play a large role in your life?

How I look determines how valuable I am

The world puts so much emphasis on appearance, giving out the message that we need to look a certain way to fit in or have friends or be important. The amount of money being spent on beauty treatments, cosmetic surgery is on the rise (average spend in UK £4500/year). There is also a rise in mental health issues and eating disorders – photos and images on social media are a contributing factor. 45% of people refuse to post pictures without first working on their appearance. This is very different from the message of the Bible.

Read 1 Samuel 16:7 and 1 Peter 3:3-4

How does God see us? Does he value the way we look?

If I've got it, it's ok to flaunt it!

Whilst it's ok to take some pride in ourselves, being boastful about our image whether it is beauty, physical strength or intellectual brilliance, does not match up to what God teaches in the Bible.

Read Jeremiah 9:23-24, Romans 12:3 and Ephesians 2:8-10

In Max Lucado's book 'You are Special' the Wemmicks stick golden stars and grey dots on each other. Punchinello realises that spending time with his maker Eli and knowing that he is special and loved means that the stickers fall off.

Spend some time praying and asking God to reveal to you how much he loves you. You might like to meditate on some of the Bible verses shared here, or others in the group may have helpful verses to share with you. If people have said hurtful things to you in the past that have stuck (your grey dots) ask God for his healing. If you have been overly proud about your achievements (gold stickers) give thanks for the gifts God has given you and ask him to show you how to use them for his glory.

(Note from Jo: Example of overcoming poor self-image in the Bible: Mephibosheth in 2 Samuel 9)

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