

“Jesus stands for reverence for the personality of the woman. In one place it is said of Jesus, ‘He laid his hands upon her: and immediately she was made straight.’ When the hands of a good deal of modern teaching are laid on woman, immediately she is made crooked. Jesus insisted that she not be a means to a man’s ends, but that she is an end in herself, and must be treated as such. Looking on her as a sex-being and that alone is adulterous thinking. . . .The holiest among the Pharisees were called ‘the bleeding Pharisees.’ They went around with their eyes on the ground, lest they look on a woman, and as they were constantly bumping against trees and posts and walls, they had bleeding foreheads—hence holy. How sane and yet how severe Jesus was! He lifted up men’s eyes to look frankly at life, but in that freedom there was the restraint of an inner purity. [from *The Christ of the Mount* (New York; Abington-Cokesbury, 1931), p.148-149].

A proper and godly view of the human body comes straight from the heart of its Creator, and He shares that holy view with us through Christ. If we behave as “*the bleeding Pharisees*” and “*bounce our eyes*” at women, we manifest the “*adulterous thinking*” described above, treating them as sex objects. God’s will is that Christian men—with holy eyes wide open—look at all women as He does. He’s calling us to conform no longer to the world’s way of seeing, but to prayerfully present our minds and eyes to Him for transformation (Romans 12:2). It’s the only **true** key to freedom!

“Men are visual”??

BUSTED!



(The above viewpoint has been an avenue of freedom from porn addiction for many men and women through the message of the MCAG ministry: www.mychainsaregone.org. If you have further questions, feel free to contact me: www.pastordavidrn.com – pastordavidrn@gmail.com.)

A Dangerous Male MYTH: “*Men are visual.*”

by Rev. David L. Hatton, RN



I used to believe God made men *visual* in how they are sexually stimulated. I heard this myth from pulpits, even from female leaders. It was usually directed toward how women dress, but most Christian men heard it gladly, adopting it as a great excuse to explain episodes of weakness in succumbing to lustful thoughts and pornography.

This myth has been even more firmly sealed in the minds of many by a popular prescription: “*bounce your eyes*” at attractive women as a means of avoiding lust. Ever try that trick? Well, just tell a child, “*Don’t look at that!*” The command itself suggests visual interest.

Before I blow this myth to smithereens, I’ll tell you what busted it for me: *becoming a male nurse*. For over 30 years I’ve worked with naked women of all ages, shapes and sizes, first in the ER and, for the bulk of my career, in OB. I’m fully a male, but I don’t *bounce my eyes* as I help deliver a baby or get one latched on a mother’s breast!

“*Obviously, you just got numb to feminine beauty, David.*”

WRONG! I think the female of our species is the pinnacle of God’s artistic craftsmanship! I see the curvaceous state of pregnancy as the height of loveliness! But I look at women’s bodies with eyes that have been deprogrammed from the cultural indoctrination I grew up with. God makes beauty of *form* follow beauty of *function*. Female curves aren’t about sexual allurements but about *new life*: broad hips for delivering it, bulging bosoms for nurturing it. God even uses maternal breasts to illustrate His own nurturing nature (Isaiah 66:11-13). This divine view of female anatomy must become ours. The truth of God’s reality can set our minds free from the “vain imaginations” that have infected us from our surrounding sex-crazed culture.

“*But I’m not imagining this! If God didn’t make men visual, then why am I tempted at the sight of shapely women’s bodies?*”

Visible beauty in God's creation—including the human body which bears His image and becomes His temple—is meant to awaken praise, not to arouse temptation. By nothing God created “does he tempt anyone” (James 1:13, NIV). But wayward cultural influences lead us to turn God's glory in the female form into a sexual “*sight*.”

Remember Pavlov's experiment with the dogs? He created a “conditioned reflex” by habituating them to an audible stimulus at mealtime, so that eventually the sound alone caused them to salivate. Men in our sex-obsessed society have been similarly programmed—by Hollywood, TV, fashion designs, advertisements—to salivate sexually at the sight of certain aspects of feminine beauty.

“But this visual thing started with the Fall! If not, then why did God hide nudity with animal skins after Adam sinned?”

Read it. The Bible doesn't say God gave our first parents leather clothes to hide nudity. He might have been protecting them from thorns and storms in a fallen world. Some see His action as a foreshadowing of sacrificial atonement. But how awkward, if He was hiding naked spouses! That couldn't have been his purpose. They weren't nude anymore, but wearing their own fig-leaf (textile) outfits!

Also, unless men in “naked people” cultures shouldn't be counted among Adam's fallen race, males are definitely not by nature *visual* when it comes to sexual stimulation. I saw a documentary about one tribal group where single young men weren't staring at naked breasts and buttocks but at female ankles. Strong-ankled wives could carry heavier loads! These people still married and reproduced quite well without our Western visual habits. This *visual* myth is cultural!

“But the Bible does teach men are visual! What about King David falling into sin because of seeing Bathsheba bathing?”

Really? He tripped up by seeing a naked woman? In Bible times, both rich and poor bathed outdoors. There was no indoor plumbing. The “*men are visual*” idea didn't exist! All his life, David often saw his neighbors bathing. And when God sent the prophet Nathan to convict him through a parable, Bathsheba was included in the story as an innocent “lamb,” not as an instigator of lust.

King David's task (and this is the **real** *everyman's battle*) wasn't

to gain victory over his eyes but over his heart. Let's finish the above quote from James (1:14, ESV), “But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.” By shifting the emphasis to externals—such as, how women dress or what men see—traditional wisdom misses the true source of the trouble. Jesus, however, keeps the spotlight clearly focused on the internal nature of the problem:

“There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him. . . . For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.” (Mark 7:15, 21-23, ESV)

“So you think I'm hiding behind a “men are visual” concept?”

It's an easy way to avoid personal responsibility for lust, but it's a dangerous practice, if you want to maintain a pure mind.

God pronounced “very good” (Genesis 1:31) when He created male and female bodies. He will never cancel the gift of feminine beauty nor our male capacity to appreciate it. Neither will He rescind from His 10th Commandment, “You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.” (Ex 20:17, NIV). What He graciously *will* do is change hearts.

When Jesus says, “Follow Me,” He's calling us to look at others and their physical bodies as He does—through His eyes. That holy vision and viewpoint come only when He controls the heart, which is His unique target for transformation by the Holy Spirit. The danger of the myth is that it leads us to aim elsewhere and *miss the mark*.

“So what's the trick? How do I change my visual focus?”

No trick, just truth. The Lord's truth has power to set us free. The sacredness of human embodiment must become an ongoing meditation. Beginning with your own body, start retrieving every divinely designed part of the male and female anatomy from the falsehood that gave birth to the “*men are visual*” myth.

The world treats women's bodies as sex objects. Sadly, religion has often promoted that same attitude. Jesus said in Matthew 5:28 (ESV), “But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” E. Stanley Jones had great insight in commenting on this verse: