

Sermon # 114

Why are we so concerned about the way we look? It seems as if the majority of us are constantly obsessing over our height and weight. Is it important to keep healthy and exercise regularly? Yes. Is it healthy to be five-foot six inches tall and weigh eighty pounds? I think not. We have this image of how we are supposed to look. If we are not dangerously thin, then are we “overweight?”

The pressure to be a size three comes from two main directions: your peers and the media. How about whenever you walk into a mall (or most any public place for that matter)? The very second that you step foot into that establishment, it seems as if there are a million eyes judging every inch of you. It makes you feel as if something is automatically wrong with you (no matter how big or small you be).

What about the media? There are two ways that the media affects us. The first is through television and the radio. Almost everyone (especially in the U.S.) watches television or listens to the radio. It seems as if during every commercial, on almost any station, there is a weight loss advertisement. People are crying, saying how miserable they were when they were “fat.” But wait, there’s more. Now that they have paid \$100 for some utterly repulsive “food,” which could barely fill up your cat, they are so much happier and better off with themselves.

To say nothing about the fashion industry. Every fashion magazine has these tall girls who are WAY too skinny. As if that were not enough, now and then they retouch the girls to make them even skinnier! The magazine industry lets you feed right into the idea that this is how you are “supposed” to look. Does the word “degrading” come to mind?

It has gotten to the point that there are so many anorexia nervosa and bulimia cases that it should be considered an epidemic. Did you know that not only young girls are affected? This crisis starts at an early age and affects both men and women. How about this one? Did you know at one point Barbie was almost banned? You bet! People thought the doll gave little girls the idea that they should look, dress, and act like her.¹³ This predisposition of how we should look starts roughly at age four and, in some cases, does not end until the day we die. Isn't it cute to watch little six-year olds in beauty pageants walk the runway looking like twenty-five year olds? Aren't you proud to know that your little girl has dentures so that her teeth look perfect twenty-four-seven?

Will Botox and liposuction really solve our problems? The reality is that we need to learn how to take care of our bodies properly and to accept others as they are. Can we stop letting ourselves proceed to be brainwashed long enough to discover that if we learn to be comfortable with ourselves, there would be a lot less problems in the world?

-Grade 11 winner, Stephanie Greenlaw

¹³ If you were wondering, Barbie is completely disproportionate. It is physically impossible to naturally have a body like that. You would have to undertake multiple surgeries. Let's see, there would be breast augmentation, liposuction, maybe a face lift here and there, a nose job, and many more. Why use money to eliminate problems like disease or helping the homeless when you can make yourself look like a plastic doll?