

“What’s so offensive about the human body?”

This is not my question but one posed in a recent TV guide advertising one of those late-night SBS numbers.

This question set me thinking.

As I see it, that question is both a moot point and a red herring.

There is nothing offensive about the human body. God made it and called it good.

The real question is to do with the display of the body - for post-eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, God also provided covering.

I, like many, could make a case for the offensiveness of nudity on display – but is that all God cares about?

Yes, I get the fig leaf thing. And I understand the arousal/lust/ not-causing-anyone-to-stumble-Matthew-18-thing.

But I think the real offence (or shame) is in the honour.

“Huh?”

The real shame is in the honour.

Or to be more concise – the shame is in the failure to give honour to something of great value.

^{1 Cor 12:22-24} ...*On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it...*

“Your enemy wants to strip you, make sport of you, and merchandise your body, but your Heavenly Father wants to clothe you with beauty, strength, dignity, and honour that will endure.”

Lisa Bevere

“The Greek Slave” is a statue by Hiram Powers. Without question, a work of beauty and a credit to her creator and her Creator.

She stands on a podium – captured and for sale as a sex slave.

She is hailed as modest – though naked – for her eyes are averted and her demeanour is shy.

When I think of this girl stripped of her covering in the market place, I want to comfort her and cover her; return her to her home and tell her she is Loved.

I see her as a real person - not someone that we can look upon and speculate about, for modesty is a two way street.

Just because she is modest in attitude, does not give me permission to be immodest by looking upon her.

We have daughters too.

Ravi Zacharias writes...

“Art does not have a sovereignty over morality but dares to assign itself that privilege. Sinister minds, whether or not they are artistic, cannot whitewash evil by renaming it.”

“A rose by any other name...”

Nudity in art and other aspects of life seems to have become pretty much a norm of Christian acceptance... as a sub-culture, we have become sophisticated - cosmopolitan ^(pun intended) you might say.

God however has some things to say about nudity and clothing... the attached scriptures copied in from a n NIV word search on 'nakedness' and 'naked' reveal (pardon this pun) some of His thoughts. Some common themes seem apparent.

In many Bible studies over the years with my Dad we have discussed 'typology' - where God foreshadows a deeper meaning of spiritual/eternal significance to come. I was interested to see as I read these attached scriptures, an example of typology emerge that I'd never seen before... the text of this verse is in blue - but you'll need to have an understanding of the others to pick it up. In a culture that has shifted the goalposts; eradicated the base-line, how will we recognise the need to be clothed in Christ?

Let me know what you think!

GE 9:22 Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside. 23 But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father's nakedness.

EX 20:26 And do not go up to my altar on steps, lest your nakedness be exposed on it.'

DT 28:48 therefore in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and dire poverty, you will serve the enemies the LORD sends against you. He will put an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you.

ISA 47:3 Your nakedness will be exposed and your shame uncovered. I will take vengeance; I will spare no one."

ISA 57:8 Behind your doors and your doorposts you have put your pagan symbols. Forsaking me, you uncovered your bed, you climbed into it and opened it wide; you made a pact with those whose beds you love, and you looked on their nakedness.

LA 1:8 Jerusalem has sinned greatly and so has become unclean. All who honored her despise her, for they have seen her nakedness; she herself groans and turns away.

EZE 16:8 Later I passed by, and when I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for love, I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness. I gave you my solemn oath and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Sovereign LORD, and you became mine.

EZE 16:36 This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Because you poured out your wealth and exposed your nakedness in your promiscuity with your lovers, and because of all your detestable idols, and because you gave them your children's blood, 37 therefore I am going to gather all your lovers, with whom you found pleasure, those you loved as well as those you hated. I will gather them against you from all around and will strip you in front of them, and they will see all your nakedness.

EZE 23:18 When she carried on her prostitution openly and exposed her nakedness, I turned away from her in disgust, just as I had turned away from her sister.

HOS 2:9 "Therefore I will take away my grain when it ripens, and my new wine when it is ready. I will take back my wool and my linen, intended to cover her nakedness.

MIC 1:11 Pass on in nakedness and shame, you who live in Shaphir.

NA 3:5 "I am against you," declares the LORD Almighty. "I will lift your skirts over your face. I will show the nations your nakedness and the kingdoms your shame.

RO 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

REV 3:18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

GE 2:25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

GE 3:7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves

GE 3:10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

GE 3:11 And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

2CH 28:15 The men designated by name took the prisoners, and from the plunder they clothed all who were naked. They provided them with clothes and sandals, food and drink, and healing balm.

JOB 1:21 "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised."

JOB 22:6 You demanded security from your brothers for no reason; you stripped men of their clothing, leaving them naked.

JOB 22:7 You gave no water to the weary and you withheld food from the hungry,

JOB 22:8 though you were a powerful man, owning land--an honored man, living on it.

JOB 22:9 And you sent widows away empty-handed and broke the strength of the fatherless.

JOB 22:10 That is why snares are all around you, why sudden peril terrifies you,

JOB 22:11 why it is so dark you cannot see, and why a flood of water covers you.

JOB 24:7 Lacking clothes, they spend the night naked; they have nothing to cover themselves in the cold. JOB 24:8 They are drenched by mountain rains and hug the rocks for lack of shelter. JOB 24:9 The fatherless child is snatched from the breast; the infant of the poor is seized for a debt.

JOB 24:10 Lacking clothes, they go about naked; they carry the sheaves, but still go hungry.

JOB 26:6 Death is naked before God; Destruction lies uncovered.

ECC 5:15 Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs

ISA 58:7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-- when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

LA 4:21 Rejoice and be glad, O Daughter of Edom, you who live in the land of Uz. But to you also the cup will be passed; you will be drunk and stripped naked.

EZE 16:7 Then I passed by and saw you kicking about in your blood, and as you lay there in your blood I said to you, "Live!" 7 I made you grow like a plant of the field. You grew up and developed and became the most beautiful of jewels. Your breasts were formed and your hair grew, you who were naked and bare

EZE 16:39 Then I will hand you over to your lovers, and they will tear down your mounds and destroy your lofty shrines. They will strip you of your clothes and take your fine jewelry and leave you naked and bare.

EZE 18:7 He does not oppress anyone, but returns what he took in pledge for a loan. He does not commit robbery but gives his food to the hungry and provides clothing for the naked.

EZE 18:16 Therefore I handed her over to her lovers, the Assyrians, for whom she lusted. 10 They stripped her naked, took away her sons and daughters and killed her with the sword. She became a byword among women, and punishment was inflicted on her.

EZE 23:10 They will deal with you in hatred and take away everything you have worked for. They will leave you naked and bare, and the shame of your prostitution will be exposed. Your lewdness and promiscuity 30 have brought this upon you, because you lusted after the nations and defiled yourself with their idols

HOS 2:3 Otherwise I will strip her naked and make her as bare as on the day she was born; I will make her like a desert, turn her into a parched land, and slay her with thirst.

AM 2:16 Even the bravest warriors will flee naked on that day," declares the LORD.

MIC 1:8 Because of this I will weep and wail; I will go about barefoot and naked. I will howl like a jackal and moan like an owl.

HAB 2:15 Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbors, pouring it from the wineskin till they are drunk, so that he can gaze on their naked bodies.

HAB 2:16 You will be filled with shame instead of glory. Now it is your turn! Drink and be exposed! The cup from the LORD's right hand is coming around to you, and disgrace will cover your glory.

MK 14:52A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.

AC 19:16 Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

2CO 5:3 Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, 3 because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. 4 For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

2CO 11:27I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked.

REV 3:17 You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.

REV 16:15 Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed.

REV 17:16 The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

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