

# BENEATH THE SKIN

*“He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.” —ISAIAH 53:2*

The above verse is a physical description of Jesus as a man on earth. It tells us our Lord resembled a regular man, an ordinary Joe. He had no beauty. He was not attractive, nothing in His appearance that would make us desire Him.

Most artists’ impressions of Jesus make Him strong and handsome, but evidence in Scripture points to the reverse. If Jesus came in His physical body to church this Sunday I suspect none of us would get Him right. We would be looking for the alpha male, sitting there with striking eyes and a piercing look. We probably would not even notice Him, as there was nothing to physically attract us to Him, nothing in His appearance that would make us say, “Wow!”

Jesus being the perfect man, as He was, had nothing to do with physical appearance, but everything to do with His moral character. The qualities that made Him who He was were His kindness, His compassion and gentleness; the fact that He would sit and talk with a woman nobody else would be seen with; the fact that He would cross the road to greet and touch a leper while most would cross to the other side to avoid him.

Physical appearance has become of huge value in our world. Maybe it always has been, but it certainly is today. We have super-imposed

this onto Jesus and created a Hollywood Jesus with a superman status. This is the superficial world we live in, but it is not what godliness is about. We spend absurd amounts of money on cosmetics; an indication of our obsession with appearance. Some of us may need that, but it does not hold any significant value outside of our own sense of well-being. Perhaps there is nothing about us that causes people to be drawn to us, so no one notices us, and we feel insignificant. Maybe we are lonely, as it has been said of Jesus Himself, and that loneliness and longing to be noticed are the very mechanisms by which God is doing something in our lives – molding and building.

The qualities that exhibit the presence of God come from within us. Under the surface of our visible lives are deep inner workings that are invisible to most people around us. Our histories, our environments, our struggles, victories, fears, joys, and our faith are all part of our character which more accurately define who we are. The goal of the Christian life is to be molded into the image of Christ, which has nothing to do with appearance, but everything to do with character and attitude.

***PRAYER: Dear God, help me to look past people's outer appearances and more deeply into who they really are. Thank You, Lord.***

***TO REFLECT UPON: Am I overly concerned about how I look rather than who I am?***