

Christian Living

purpose: To explore the topic of adornment and to find out how much is too much.

Is the use of jewelry sinful? (No. It is inherently sinful to lie. But the 24 elders around God's throne are wearing crowns!)

Revelation 4:4,10

- Had crowns of gold on their heads. A crown is an item of ornamentation. A crown is jewelry.
- The use of jewelry is not inherently sinful.
- Must understand as a Christian the difference between things that are inherently sinful and things that are prohibited because they can lead to sin.
- Think of people who wear a ton of jewelry (Mr. T, Liberace, etc.). Does it go along with your picture of the character of Christ?
- How much is too much?

Ezekiel 28:13-15,17

- Lucifer- an anointed cherub that stands in the presence of God.
- In God's presence, his ornamentation reflect and refract the glory of God.
- Lucifer was perfect until his "heart was lifted up because of thy beauty".

John 3:3

- Something was wrong with the way he was born, so Nicodemus needed to be born again.
- What was wrong with his birth?

Psalm 51:5

- Born *inside* sin. Born crooked and bent on evil.
- If a perfect being could become proud because of his beauty, could the use of jewelry present a danger to a fallen, sinful creature?

Genesis 35:1-4

- Family of Jacob going to meet with God at Bethel.
- Jacob asked his household to put away the strange gods, take a bath (purify themselves), and change their clothes.
- Vs. 4 says they removed the earrings from their ears. Earrings had become an idol to these people.
- This was a very good family with a strong connection with God. If the use of jewelry became an idol to the family of Jacob, could it become an idol to the average person now?
- A person can be in danger and not notice they are in danger.

Exodus 33:1-6

- Why won't God go in the midst of His people? They are stiffnecked and His presence would burn them up.
- What does it mean to be stiffnecked?
- Bowing head is a sign of respect and humility. Could you bow your head if your neck was stiff?
- Is pride intrinsically sinful? Yes.
- God sees the problem of pride in His people and therefore asks them to take off their ornaments.

- The ornaments must have had something to do with their pride or He would not have mentioned it.
- The Israelites had seen and lived many miracles, even heard the voice of God Himself. If ornaments were contributing to pride in God's people the Israelites, could it possibly be a problem for me, too?

1 Peter 3:1-4

- According to Peter, the focus of beauty should be putting things of beauty inside our hearts.
- Compare the hours I spend taking care of my looks with the hours I spend on my knees and in God's Word.
- The word "merely" is a supplied word.

Hebrews 12:1

- Lay aside two things: 1) every weight 2) every sin.
- Did the use of jewelry weigh down the Israelites and the family of Jacob?
- Yes, the people of God were hindered by the use of jewelry.
- Could we, the people of God also be hindered by the use of jewelry?
- If you were the leader of a group of people and were responsible for their spiritual lives, would you encourage or discourage the use of ornamentation?
- Don't just lay aside the sin, lay aside the weight!
- Does this apply to things other than jewelry? Of course!
 - Cars, Internet, surfing, looks, anything you see in your life that may be becoming an idol.

John 19:23,24

- If ever there was anyone who deserved to be adorned on this planet, it would have been Jesus Christ.
- Jesus was wearing a quality piece of material, so that the soldiers chose to cast lots for it rather than rend it.
- Jesus did not want anything to interfere with other's seeing the Spirit of God in Him. He avoided external adornment so people could more easily see the adornment of the Spirit of God inside Him.

appeal: Three state coach drivers. Man wants to hire one of them so he asks them to meet him up on a ridge. Says he will hire the one who makes it down the narrow ridge the fastest, closest to the edge. First guy goes 30 mph and 1 foot away from the edge. Second guy one-ups him and goes 35 and .5 feet away. Third guy goes 10 mph and as far from the edge as possible. Who gets hired? The third guy is hired because he wasn't willing to risk the lives of his riders in order to get the job. Many Christians try to do the same thing. They try to get as close to the world as possible without losing salvation.

defend it:

The SDA church discourages the use of jewelry that is not functional.

- Some imbalanced presenters in our church have tried to show that jewelry is intrinsically sinful.
- We simply refrain as a measure of protection, so as not to be hindered as a group of people.
- John the Baptist- mission to prepare the way of the Messiah. Are we not doing the same thing? We are preparing for His 2nd coming. John wore camel's hair and ate a simple diet because he lived in a materialistic world and he wanted to ensure that he was protected from the world around him. He did not want to be hindered in his mission.