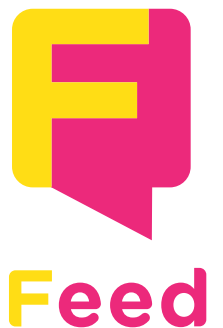


Wonderfully Made

What are we?

Lesson 1 Sermon



Overview

Summary

The Wonderfully Made Catechism series addresses the issues of insecurity and body shame which are common among adolescents. Through the small group and sermon content, you'll help your students to rethink the ways they value and judge themselves and others, ultimately inviting them to embrace God's design of them for the purpose of loving and serving others. Today, you'll lay the foundation by preaching about how wonderfully and intentionally God created each person in his image.

Key Takeaways

1. God designed each of us, and we are all examples of his marvelous workmanship.
2. Our bodies are a part of our God-given identity and purpose.

Scriptures

Genesis 1:26 / Genesis 2:7 / Psalm 139:13-18 / Ephesians 2:10



Sermon Script

Introduction

Have you ever looked in the mirror before and wished you saw something different? Whether we admit it or not, we have all had our moments of wishing we looked different, acted different, or carried a different personality. Comparison is just too easy. Social media, pop culture, even our own friends flood us with messages about what is attractive and what is not. Boy or girl, it's hard to avoid this culture of comparison.

Let me ask you this... when you spend a lot of time on social media or Netflix or YouTube, how does it make you feel about yourself? Do you find yourself wishing you could look like the people on screen? There is a saying that goes, "Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder." Sometimes it feels more like beauty is on the screen of my iPhone. The world is constantly showing us its unattainable versions of perfection, flooding us with messages about body image. Without using words, the pictures we see online and on TV persuade us that our bodies are our source of self-worth or shame and a way to earn the love and approval of others. At the same time, though, you've probably heard messages like "Love yourself" and "Appearances don't matter." So why do these messages fall flat and fail to make us feel better? Why are so many of us struggling to love who we see in the mirror? Is it really possible to break free of insecurity and self-consciousness?

Freedom is exactly what God wants for us, and when we embrace his view of our bodies, we'll find that we are free to love ourselves and others the way he does. When it comes to who we are in Christ and the way we view ourselves, it can all boil down to this simple truth:

Point #1: We are all created in the image of God.

If you have grown up in church, you have heard this said before. It's worth repeating because there is power found in this simple statement! When we know we are created in the image of God, we come to understand that every part of who we are holds purpose and meaning. We see that we are created in the image of God beginning all the way in the book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible.

Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."

Genesis 1:26

God created us to be like him! He made us to rule over his creation in such a way that all life would thrive. And the next chapter of Genesis gives us even more info about what it means to be made in God's image:



Then the LORD God formed the human from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the human's nostrils, and the human became a living person.
Genesis 2:7

In Hebrew, the word for "human" is "adam," and the word for dirt or earth is "adamah." Our "earthiness" -- our physical bodies -- are essential to who we are as God's creatures. We aren't just souls inside the shell of a body. Our body, mind, and spirit are intertwined to make us the creatures that we are, and we couldn't accomplish our purpose of caring for God's creation if we didn't have bodies.

In a world filled with comparison, filters, and a need for perfection, what would it look like for us to walk in peace and confidence knowing that every part of us is created intentionally in the image of God? You see, students, you were created with great purpose and value knit into every part of who you are!

Point #2: Every part of who we are holds value, and you are created for a purpose.

We can be tempted to think of our bodies and souls as completely separate, that we have a physical side and a spiritual side, and to be more spiritual, we just have to forget or overcome the physical. But our body isn't something in the way of our purpose; it's part of it! We are God's image in creation, tasked with taking care of the world on God's behalf. We have a unique role as mediators between God and the rest of the creation, and we could not fulfill this purpose if we didn't have bodies.

As we read these Scriptures together, let's allow the truth of how God created us form the way we think of ourselves.

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body
and knit me together in my mother's womb.

Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex!
Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.

You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion,
as I was woven together in the dark of the womb.

You saw me before I was born.
Every day of my life was recorded in your book.
Every moment was laid out
before a single day had passed.

How precious are your thoughts about me, O God.
They cannot be numbered!



I can't even count them;
they outnumber the grains of sand!
And when I wake up,
you are still with me!
Psalm 139:13-18

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.
Ephesians 2:10

These passages allow us to celebrate each human's individual worth and uniqueness. Did you catch how intimate and intentional God's design is? There is no one else in all of creation that is like you. God made you specifically to be yourself, and you're the only one. Every day of your life was ordained and is known by God. That is great news! When we grab hold of that truth, we are able to walk in great freedom and confidence knowing that God is able to use us, even in all of our brokenness and flaws, for his purposes.

How awesome is it that God made each of us on purpose! We know that all of God's works are wonderful, and we are also God's works, his creation.

Point #3: We are wonderful because God made us!

Do you think of yourself as wonderful? Why or why not? If the answer is "no", ask yourself what messages you are believing and whether or not they line up with Scripture. You see, our society sends us two conflicting messages about our bodies: The spoken message is "Love yourself" or "Appearances don't matter," but the unspoken message is told in the flawless, unrealistic images that are praised online and on TV. So which one is it? How can those spoken and unspoken messages both be true? The short answer is that they can't. Looking around to the world for answers won't lead to lasting satisfaction. We can only break free from self-consciousness when we look to God. He made our bodies, and he calls them good because we bear his image. When we embrace the fullness of who God made us to be, we are free to truly love ourselves and extend that love to others.

Let's take a moment to reflect on the way Psalm 139 and Ephesians 2 describe each of us. How does it feel to think of yourself as a wonderfully complex masterpiece, known and loved by God? When you reflect on God's intentional design and purpose for your life and body, how does that lead you to respond to him?

Instead of feeding into the messages the world gives, let's begin to allow the truth of God's message to become rooted in us.



Discussion Questions

- If you really believe what these verses say about your intentional design, how might that change the way you saw yourself and your purpose?
- How might knowing that God designed our bodies for a purpose change the way you think about or treat your body?

