

Dear brother _____,

I want to write on the subject of natural law for you, as well as principles like simplicity and modesty, because of the question you brought up the other day: Why do I wear a beard?

I answered with this -- natural law. I respect the way that God made mankind, as well as the way God made the male. He gave us a beard. So while many people consider beards today a minor thing, it is still a part of the way God made the male body, so it is a rejection of God's creation to cut it off. If you think about it, I don't think it will seem strange to you at all. It is the very same principle which makes it wrong to alter a woman to try and make her a man, or alter a man to try and make him a woman. Or even to cross a man with a canine. People complain about transsexualism everywhere, but chopping off a unique male sex trait like a beard is a minor version of what the transsexual does. He rejects God's creation! We should not do this. To people who say they respect what the Bible teaches about men and women being different, BUT choose to chop off their beards, I have this question – are there any other male sex traits you plan to chop off?

Naturally, I don't simply want to write about why we should wear beards, but rather about the principles that choices like this come from. These are principles from the Bible and from common sense, which we apply as best we can in the world we live in. You will notice that we do not use makeup either. This is not some random choice or personal taste, as it might seem to an outsider. It is simply an application of a respect for the way God made us as well as an application of modesty and humility, for we should not be motivated by vanity or insecurity. We have nothing to prove. We don't need to paint our faces. We don't use hair dye either, for basically the same reasons. We've got nothing to prove. I go grey in the beard. I have no need to cover it up. The Bible says we should rise for the grey haired. It does not say we should rise for the black haired! Is says -- The silver-haired head *is* a crown of glory, *if* it is found in the way of righteousness. We also avoid jewelry, nail polish, face lifts and silicon, and like the other choices I've mentioned they are not random preferences we have. They are a natural outworking of a respect for natural law, and a natural outworking of a respect for modesty, simplicity and humility. Who needs to attract attention to oneself? We only need to proclaim the Lord and to do our jobs.

The early Christian fathers had a lot to say about modesty, and living in the natural. If you read their instructions to their flock, you will see many of the same things preached; they taught against painting the face, dying the hair, fancy adornment and other cosmetic dalliances. These dedicated believers COULD have gone with the culture had they chosen, as the culture certainly had plenty of these things. They COULD have chosen to say – we'll attract more people to Jesus if we allow these vanities and luxuries -- but they did not. They went against the grain of the surrounding culture, and as I've mentioned before, and as is very central here, they did not do it based on their random preferences or random opinions. They preached the natural and modest life because of a few simple guiding principles. They respected Scripture. They respected natural law. They respected modesty. They respected humility. These few principles grew into a recognizable lifestyle, and one which was not worldly as the surrounding Greco-Roman society. You can see some of the same thinking in the Anabaptists who came centuries later. You can see I am deeply inspired by this thinking as well. I hope to inspire you too.

I also hope you can see the clear conflict between the worldly way of life and the godly way we have been given in our new life. The worldliness of Christians, and I am speaking of mature and sincere ones here, makes the congregations seem like hypocrites. It is not rare to see believers shake their head at the teenager who does the wildest thing with his body, dyes his hair purple, tattoos himself and sticks a bone through his nose. Yet the same Christians dye their own hair, paint up their faces and get plastic surgery, among other things. Nor is it odd to see believers show disgust at the sodomite and transsexual culture surrounding it and invading it, yet the same believers mix gender roles, destroy gender distinctions and show a disgust for natural law that almost makes them sound like LGBT leaders themselves. This is the way of life of most Christians, and I am speaking of the sincere ones! We should be able to be an example to the world. Instead we cannot.

So I'd like to sum up this presentation I've given you with a short phrase. Just as the culture has been invaded by the perverse LGBT movement, I have presented you something radically different, and one which is in accord with the Bible and natural law. I have a name for it too. I call it MNPS: Modest Natural Plain and Simple. This is a life which has been respected by saints from the early era, and which is still practiced by some today. It is more typified currently my Mennonites, but they are not the only ones. Please consider all I have said above. Please consider that what you see me preach and do are not some random personal preferences I have. They really are an ordered outworking of a few simple principles. I believe those few

things are good solid ground. If you stand where I am standing, I think you will see them clearly too. It is a natural life we should have. We've got nothing to prove. We are just passengers here proclaiming the Lord until He comes.

God bless you, _____. I have placed a few quotes from scripture and the early Christians below.

Modesty scriptures (notice they're all directed to women):

1 Timothy 2:9-10 in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, ¹⁰ but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.

1 Peter 3:3-4 Do not let your adornment be *merely* outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on *fine* apparel— ⁴rather *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible *beauty* of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

Proverbs 31:30 Charm *is* deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman *who* fears the LORD, she shall be praised.

Natural Law:

Romans 1:26-27 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Genesis 5:2 He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created.

Here are some quotes from the early Christian leaders:

Silly women who dye their gray hair and anoint their locks, grow speedily grayer by the perfumes they use. For they are of a drying nature – Clement of Alex., 2.255

Neither is the hair to be dyed, nor gray hair to have its color changed...Old age, which conciliates trust, is not to be concealed. – Clement of Alex., 2.286

I see some women turn the color of their hair with saffron. They are shamed even of their own nation, ashamed that their birth did not assign them to Germany or to Gaul. To there, as it is, they transfer their hair. Ill, most ill, do they predict for themselves with their flame-colored head... **God says, "Who of you can make a white hair black, or out of a black a white?" And so they refute the Lord!** They say, "Behold! Instead of white or black, we make it yellow." – Tertullian, 4.21

If you feel no shame at the enormity of (wearing a wig), feel some at the pollution. You should fear that you may be fitting on a holy and Christian head the excess of someone else's head – perhaps unclean, perhaps guilty and destined to Gehenna – Tertullian, 4.21.22

You dye your hair, so that it will always be black...but these things are not necessary for modest women – Commodianus, 4.214

How womanly it is for one who is a man to comb himself and shave himself with a razor, for the sake of fine effect, and to arrange his hair at the mirror, shave his cheeks, pluck his hairs out of them, and smooth them!...For God wished women to be smooth and to rejoice in their locks alone growing spontaneously, as a horse in his mane. But **He has adorned man, like the lions, with a beard, and endowed him as an attribute of manhood, with a hairy chest – a sign of strength and rule** – Clement of Alex., 2.275

Although it is written, "You will not mar the figure of your beard," he plucks out his beard and dresses his hair! – Cyprian, 5.445

Bu no means are women to be allowed to uncover and exhibit any part of their bodies, lest both fall – the men by being incited to look, and the women by attracting to themselves the eyes of men – Clement of Alex., 2.246

Neither are we to provide for ourselves costly clothing – Clement of Alex., 2.263