

IS NOT LIFE MORE THAN FOOD AND BODY MORE THAN CLOTHING?

Let me start with one of my favourite fairy tales, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, written by Hans Christian Anderson. I read this story in school and has never forgotten it.

The story is about a king, who had a great love to dress splendidly. One day two crooks came to him and said they will weave the most resplendent of clothes for the king. They also laid a condition that the fabric they are going to weave will not be visible to stupid folks or those not fit for the post. They demanded a great sum of gold and silk thread and weaved day after day, night after night on an empty loom. Though no one saw anything, they kept telling, " How gorgeous was the dress they were making," otherwise according to the decree of the two crooks, they should be stupid not to see.

The day arrived when these two fellows, stripped the king naked and pretended to clothe him elaborately, making gestures for every action. Every one including the king fearing that they would be called stupid kept on commenting how wonderful the colours mixed and how the fabric was so fine that they could not even feel it etc.. The crooks took the king to the chariot and left him there and slowly ran out of the country. And the king goes on a procession stark naked and the whole town shouted that the king was splendidly dressed.

In that crowd a small voice, a voice of the child broke out, " Oh the king is naked, he has nothing on."

Are you laughing or do you pity the king? But this story is a very poignant metaphor, an example for our lives.

All our lives are dictated by media – the advertisements, the billboards, the movies and so on.

We all need to subscribe to something, follow a page, do this or that and I really wonder whether anyone ever has an original taste for something.

We are sometimes like fools, like the king, consuming every rubbish that the media offers, be it food, relationships, workplace ethics, dressing, figure maintenance and so on. We are so pressured to maintain a figure to impress people. This is ridiculous.

One of my friends hasn't seen me at all. I know her for more than 4 years now. She had read my messages in tamilchristian.com and then we've corresponded and spoke quite often.

Then this week I put my photo with my dog on the blog and immediately she called me and said, "oh I pictured you very very different." I asked how and she said she had thought of me as someone thin and sober.

I had to laugh and even now am amused. From the time I was formed in the womb of my mother I had always been fat. And fat is not really an ugly word for me, but a real word. Ask anyone who had known me for long.

But being overweight has not robbed me of anything. For me when I knew and realized God loved me however I looked, delivered me from the low self esteem of my school days.

But now I don't feel embarrassed or driven to despair because am fat. But I see people who aren't even overweight forsaking food and living life like hermits.

No no am not advocating eat always and everything strategy, but what do you achieve when you famish all the time, just because a friend or your spouse or a stranger would compliment on your figure? Is that what you live for? To be complimented by someone so you can feel good.

Yes eating should never create health problems. But are my eating habits dictated by the fashions of this world?

I have very very good friends who are not embarrassed by me otherwise they wouldn't be sticking with me all these years. A relationship which is based on food, figure and fashion will give way very easily and crumble.

There are more things than what meets the eye. Read what Jesus said

"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

²⁸ "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;²⁹ and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith?

³¹ "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But

seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ³⁴Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day *is* its own trouble. Mathew 6 : 25-34