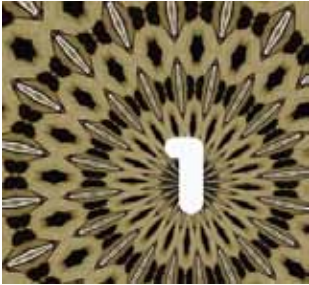




Extreme Makeover: Love



WEEK ONE

THE START OF SOMETHING NEW

I have always loved makeover shows. Give me a Saturday with a “What Not to Wear” marathon, some comfy sweats and a big cozy blanket and I’m completely satisfied. I love watching the transformation from before to after.

It has always amazed me how much of a difference the little things make. The right pair of jeans can take someone from extra ordinary to extraordinary. The right haircut takes blah to beautiful. Little changes add up to a huge difference.

2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

In a way, we are like the people on those makeover shows. When we meet Christ, His love transforms us from the inside out and we become new.

If you could feature your new life in Christ as a makeover show, what would you call it? What elements would you include in this program? _____



WEEK TWO

WORTHY OF LOVE

One of my favorite makeover stories in the Bible is the Samaritan woman at the well. (Check out her story in John 4.) This woman was going about her business on a normal, ordinary day, and met a Man who would change her life forever. She got the ultimate makeover and became a new woman, all in just a few lines of Scripture.

The Samaritan woman knew about love. She had been married five times and was living with a man that was not her husband. She had plenty of experience in love. She knew exactly what it was. Right?

Wrong. She thought she knew what love was. To her, it was just an emotion. Something she used to fill the void in her life. She was so desperate for real love that she filled her longing with an made up version of love. She looked for love in all the wrong places (just like the country song says). But that day at the well, she learned what LOVE really was.

She learned that she was worthy of love.

Do you know a Samaritan woman? I’m not talking about a person that was born in Samaria, I’m talking about an outcast. An outsider. Someone who is living on the edge and desperately longing to be on the inside. Someone who has no self-esteem. Someone who had been beaten up and defeated by the cruelties of this world. She avoids your gaze, she walks down the hallway alone, she carries around her broken heart and searches every face for anyone to accept and love her.

Guess what? She is worthy of love. So are you. So am I. God lovingly created each of us. He placed a longing in our hearts to love and be loved. The Samaritan woman had been passing out her heart to every person that would take it, hoping that someone would finally take care of her and love her the way she wanted and needed to be loved.

That modern day Samaritan woman that you know? She's the same way. She needs to be loved. And since Jesus isn't walking around on the earth in human form anymore to meet her at her modern day well and show her what love is, it's up to us to do it. He told us in John 15:15-17, "Henceforth, I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, that ye love one another."

What are some ways you can follow Jesus' example and reach out to a Samaritan woman in your world?



WEEK THREE

LOVING YOURSELF

One of the biggest changes in the Samaritan woman was in her love for herself. When she met Jesus, she had no self-esteem, and she tried her hardest not to talk to the people around her because she was ashamed. She liked fading into the background because she didn't think she had anything worthwhile to share.

Do you have a healthy self-esteem? We all struggle with body image. We all struggle with loving ourselves. The Samaritan woman was no different. She definitely struggled with her own self-worth.

This is evident from her past. She had been married five times and when she met Jesus at the well, she was living with a man that was not her husband. She used men and their empty promises of love and affection to feel like she was special and worthy of being loved.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 says, "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and you are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

The Samaritan woman was trapped in sin because she didn't understand how special she was. She didn't love herself, and she allowed people to use her and mistreat her. When she met Jesus and He told her all the things she had ever done and showed her what love really was, she finally got it. She was not only worthy of love, she was allowed to love herself. She was created by God and was loved by Him, and she was His temple.

Do you love yourself? Do you treat yourself like a temple of the Lord, or do you allow your body to be used and abused by yourself and others?

One of my favorite things about the makeover shows on TV is when the person on the show realizes that he or she is worth a little pampering every now and then. I hope that you realize that you are a beautiful, wonderful creation of God. He lovingly formed you before you were born, and He continues to mold you into the person that He created you to be. Don't ever take yourself for granted.

What is your biggest personal struggle or greatest challenge in loving yourself? _____

Does remembering you are God's special creation make a difference? How? _____



WEEK FOUR

LOVING OTHERS

After the Samaritan woman spoke with Jesus at the well, the first thing she did was run throughout the streets and tell others about Him and all the wonderful things He had done for her. She was so excited about sharing His love and His message with others, she left her water pot at the well and ran through the streets. The men in the village thought she was crazy.

How excited do we get about sharing God's love today? I'm afraid we've lost the excitement of that Samaritan woman. After she learned she was worthy of love and that she could love herself, she couldn't wait to share that love with others.

She wasn't instantly a Bible scholar. She didn't instantly gain all knowledge and understanding of what had just happened to her at the well, but she did know this: she had finally filled that void in her life; a fountain of living water was springing up in her soul and overflowing and she HAD to share it!

I think it's safe to say that the Samaritan woman's transformation was complete. In a matter of minutes spent with the Savior, she went from a depressed, lonely outcast to a joy-filled daughter of the King.

She met Jesus and she came away as a new person. I think that's a pretty awesome makeover, don't you?

How complete is your makeover? _____

Have you ever shared with someone about your life change in Christ? _____

Is God nudging you to share your makeover story with someone? Who? _____



To read more about the Woman at the Well, check out the book **Paperdoll** by Natalie Lloyd. It's an awesome character study of the Samaritan woman (Sam for short) and how God changed her life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



Christina Hopper is 23 years old and attends Sulphur Springs FWB Church in Northport, AL. She teaches the Junior Youth Group at her church and is an active member of her local WAC group. Check out her Facebook page or email her at cmhopper.warrior@gmail.com. She would love to hear from you.