

Being Christlike vs. Being Used

13 upvotes | 5 August, 2017 | by OsmiumZulu

One of my best friends is single. He met a girl a year ago and found her attractive. Long story short, this girl has a rough past and the baggage that comes with it; carry on, checked, and shipped ahead.

He hid his interest initially and began to help her unpack her mess of a life. They texted back and forth constantly and spent copious time together. They shared plenty of intimate life details with one another and he felt a strong emotional connection to the girl.

After several months of this he finally expressed his interest overtly. She turned him down and said that she "just wasn't ready for a relationship yet" and pointed at all the baggage in the corner that hadn't been unpacked yet.

Frustrated but not deterred, he continued to help her unpack and sort out her mess. After all, once the bags were unpacked, she would be finally free to date him, right?

Despite several more months of unpacking her baggage with her, she never showed any overt interest in being more than unpacking buddies. He consulted his Christian bro friends (some married, some single) and they told him he needed to lay it out there and express his interest again.

I advised him that he was going to be rejected and that he should walk away. He insisted that he was going to talk with her about his feelings. I advised him that if she didn't jump on the opportunity to be with him to ghost her and move on.

He spoke with her and laid his heart out. Predictably, she turned him down again for the same reason as before.

He felt rejected, unwanted, and confused. He saw how smart she was, how different she was from the other girls, and how great they would be together. After all, he helped her unpack so much! Just think of all the unpacking they could do if they were a couple! Why didn't she feel similarly about him? He even said that I was right and would listen to me in the future.

Fast forward six months. He is still orbiting her. His attraction is obvious to anyone with eyes. Her lack of interest is just as plain. Nonetheless, he is setting himself up for another crash and burn.

He is being used as an emotional dildo. She gets someone to lean on, someone to cry to, someone to unload all her life-junk on and the validation and ego boost of having a beta-orbiter. My friend gets nothing but blue-balls. It's one sided. She gets the milk for free, so why would she buy the cow? She is going to come across a guy who she is actually attracted to and ditch my friend. She has left herself ample plausible deniability all along the way to make it an easy move.

"Him? Oh no, we were never a 'thing' just good friends!"

"Why does he keep thinking I am interested in him? I made it clear that I wasn't!"

He refuses to believe that she could be so manipulative. Sadly, by not acknowledging the rules of the game he is bound to lose it.

The mistakes made and being made are many. Too many to discuss right here, but if you are familiar with RP or game at all you should have cringed the whole way through this post.

So what's the point? The point is that this happens over and over again in the church because Christian men have intense messiah complexes. We want to be Jesus to the broken women in our life (especially the attractive ones). This is seemingly noble, but ends in heartache and being used. Outcome independence is everything.

TLDR: Don't be used as an emotional playtoy. Don't be a dog that returns to its own vomit.

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Comments

LyinCake • 9 points • 5 August, 2017 12:15 PM

I recommend a book called "No more Mr. Nice Guy". I read it myself and it helped me to see through some things I did almost unconsciously. I had (and still sometimes have) these problems as a Christian, by doing things for other people as I thought they would like me more and in the end I ended similarly like your friend. It's a great read.

OsmiumZulu[S] • 6 points • 5 August, 2017 03:14 PM

He is a major book junkie. I can't believe I haven't thought of giving him NMMNG to read. Thanks for this, it may be a way to get through to him.

Red-Curious • 1 point • 5 August, 2017 10:46 PM

This is exactly what I was going to suggest.

g_e_m_anscombe • 4 points • 5 August, 2017 02:35 PM

I've seen Christian men go for the girls with baggage far too many times.

I think the biggest difference between being Christlike and being used is: (a) whether there's any reciprocation of emotional support (indicating a friendship instead of a counseling situation) and (b) whether the person who needs more support has other people in their life of the same gender that they are getting additional support from (they're not being codependent with one person) and (c) whether the feelings are mutual (either mutual romance or mutual friendship).

Your friend has to get over her, plain and simple. If he's not willing to swallow trp, you should tell him it's not Christ-like to profess support for someone while expecting a romantic relationship out of it. If Christ were here, he certainly wouldn't be looking for a romantic relationship with this girl. He would support her as a friend, bring others to support her as friends. It sounds like your friend can't do that, so he needs to move on. His romantic feelings are too involved, and the best thing to do is extricate himself from a situation where he is failing to imitate Christ due to romantic feelings.

OsmiumZulu[S] • 5 points • 5 August, 2017 03:12 PM

Agreed 100% that he needs to move on. Unfortunately he doesn't agree and is going to get burned.

I think there is a reason Christian men are so prone to white knighting though that is worth examining. We are told to be Christlike but then rarely given any guidance on what that means in pre-marriage romantic relationships. After all, Christ was single so how WOULD he have handled courtship / dating etc? Better than us, but the fact is we simply don't know for sure. So we fill in the blanks the best we can and hope for the best. Further, the church often praises "nice guy" behavior and further conflates the issue.

tempintheeastbay • 2 points • 9 August, 2017 09:11 AM

you should tell him it's not Christ-like to profess support for someone while expecting a romantic relationship out of it. If Christ were here, he certainly wouldn't be looking for a romantic relationship with this girl.

That's a really great way to look at it, I love that! I also like to ask myself, what *is* sincerely the most generous thing I can do for someone? And even though continuing to "orbit" may *feel* generous, in the long

run it doesn't benefit them - they get reliant on support that won't always be there, it may delay from finding the person that is right for them, and it encourages potentially manipulative or selfish behavior in them further.

RedPillWonder • 2 points • 5 August, 2017 06:13 PM*

She turned him down and said that she "just wasn't ready for a relationship yet"

And yet we all know that if the right guy (in her mind) came along during that same time, she'd likely jump at the chance for a relationship.

Willow-girl • 2 points • 6 August, 2017 12:13 AM

Well, yes. That is a typical "It's not you, it's me" excuse people use when they don't find the friend attractive but don't want to hurt his/her feelings, either.

RedPillWonder • 1 point • 6 August, 2017 04:58 AM

True. What is obvious to many people though, still isn't to others, such as the man described in the post. Then again, maybe he knew and simply refused to accept it and pushed on regardless.

Willow-girl • 1 point • 6 August, 2017 12:37 PM

I think our ego gets in the way sometimes. Most times when we're rejected, the reason is simply that the other person thinks they can do better (although they'll usually make up some kind of an excuse to salvage our ego and not look like an arrogant jerk themselves). But who wants to accept, "Sorry, you're not good enough"?

Flathatter45 • 2 points • 5 August, 2017 08:23 PM*

It happens. In certain strains of conservative Catholicism, men are strongly encouraged, and sometimes shamed, into casting themselves in the chivalric role of the knight in shining armor, swooping in to "rescue" a damsel in distress or soiled dove. The most likely scenario is that there is not much you can do, except let your friend take his lumps and learn his lesson the hard way, which he seems intent on doing. At a certain age, i was much the same. No one could tell me a damn thing about women, or much of anything else. I had it all figured out. Lucky for me, that chivalric crap never took hold with me, and women back then were, frankly, better than a lot of what i see around today.

Nyquil-Junkie • 1 point • 6 August, 2017 03:58 PM

So unless the Christian sister is willing to put out or fulfill the Christian brothers expectations, there is no reason a Christian brother should help a Christian sister sort out her problems when she makes it repeatedly clear.... she is not interested in a relationship. Twice.... 3 times.

Because Jesus would not have helped out anyone unless he got what he was after..... right?

Your xtian brother the orbiter needs to be honest with himself and others when he interacts with them.... not cower behind this good xtian brother helping you out as a good friend routine.

RedPillWonder • 1 point • 6 August, 2017 04:47 PM

I was thinking along these lines. If the girl was ugly in his opinion and there was no attraction, would he still help her out?

Or hasn't he helped other female friends out without any expectation of a reward or feeling entitled that they should treat him a certain way?

He may have, and he should treat this woman the same way. And if he wouldn't, he has issues it would be helpful to consider and work on.

Nyquil-Junkie • 1 point • 6 August, 2017 06:43 PM

As a very devout xtian, when I was one..... I saw this in varying degrees quite a lot. If the troubled young ladies resisted too much they got the scarlet letter, branded as loose, a tease or a whore.

Many xtian men seem to think helping a woman in any capacity should result in the woman throwing themselves at their feet in gratitude and undying devotion.

But not the homely, fat or ugly ones. Funny that.

It is a trap young xtian men should be warned about. Your help and ministering and/or friendship is not some spiritually guided dating/mate selection service.

I think a lot of the time, the men are a bit clueless about what exactly they are doing and why.

OsmiumZulu[S] • 1 point • 6 August, 2017 11:51 PM

UPDATE: I don't have the details about it, but, much to my surprise, it sounds like he finally gave her an ultimatum, got shot down, and walked. Here's hoping he will stick to it and not go grovelling back to her.

sonder_one • 1 point • 22 August, 2017 11:48 PM

I've been that guy.

And let's all observe, for the record, that women regard HIS behavior as unethical. He's "pretending to be her friend to get in her pants", and that's all there is to it.

Even though his "pretending" is genuine affection and is as real as any love could ever be.

No matter what she does, they would never consider her to be immoral in the least. They can't. Women have no agency; men are always at fault.

Slipknot_Is_Metal • 1 points • 5 August, 2017 01:10 PM **[recovered]**

I'm sorry but it takes two to be actively used. Your friend, now that he is aware this girl is a user, must take responsibility for his willingness to be a passive, kind shoulder to lean on.

This is not AWALT. This is your friend not flowing biblical principles for finding a mate. He was, like so many man and women, blinded by the outside packaging. I've seen this happen to both sexes so many times. There is the woman who always goes for the "bad boy" and the guy who always goes for the hot damsel in distress.

I will just be honest, this has nothing to do with RP, IMO. A user will be a user. I was hoping this sub would give Christian men some advice besides repackaged RP with Jesus included.

So what's my beef really? Ok, here it goes as concise as I can be. Please note I'm not a prolific writer and don't use big words or get into theological debate as to why my views are IMO the correct ones.

Your friend fell for hotness, not quality of character. While your buddy is obsessing over Ms. Hot, there is a girl close by who is being overlooked because she doesn't act or play the part. She doesn't know how to flirt and dresses more modest than the others. She's probably noticed your buddy from afar but either shyness, lack of self esteem, or modesty prevents her from going for it.

Your friend, just like some other Christian men, will look over this girl. He will never get to know her or really see her. If he could imagine her in another outfit, updated hair style and color, and with an outgoing personality, he would see that she is very close to SMV as Ms. Hot.

This is the girl he could share his feeling with, especially if she is looking for a Christian mate and to be married.

While Ms. Hot sees your friend as providing free counseling services, the quiet girl who is looking for a Christian guy will see his kindness and willingness to advise her as a plus because she knows under Christian marriage he will be her leader.

Your friend would be acting correctly towards Ms. Hot if she was a sincere Christian girl, not a user.

There are girls in the church who still want a traditional mate. But just as feminism has invaded the church so has worldliness. The quiet girl, who basically screams submission through her acts, deeds, and dress will always be overlooked because until Christians, men and women, stop chasing after the illusion of beauty or handsomeness, the quiet girl and move guy will continue to be overlooked and have to find a mate outside of church.

Your post expresses what happens when you are blinded by looks, not what happens to a good Christian guy because he is trying to be Christlike.

OsmiumZulu[S] • 2 points • 5 August, 2017 03:05 PM

Notice my post didn't include anything about her looks other than he found her attractive? No exaggeration, she is at best a 4-5 and he is in the same range. AWALT bro.

She isn't consciously using him, she is just doing as women do and he can't see that and because he can't see the rules of the game, so to speak, he can't win the game.

And you are correct, my friend is not following biblical principles or RP, he has no game and that is part of the point. The fact is we all probably have a friend just like him and elements of it in our own past.

[deleted] • 1 point • 5 August, 2017 04:40 PM

"AWALT bro." Nah, I'm a female but I've seen this behavior by males and females. There are some women who don't play games. Unfortunately, most people can't stop. Life is too short.

RedPillWonder • 2 points • 5 August, 2017 06:43 PM

because until Christians, men and women, stop chasing after the illusion of beauty or handsomeness

I get your point and generally agree, especially if it's to the exclusion or overlooking of qualities and traits that make for a great relationship.

That said, men are very visual creatures. We're attracted to female beauty, obviously.

To stop chasing after attractiveness (I'm specifically speaking of a single man looking for a girlfriend/future wife) is to deny a part of who he is.

Of course, it's certainly not the most important part. We can list all kinds of character traits one should look for that are far more important.

But if women want to find a husband, they should focus on their appearance in addition to all the things we'd agree are far more important. The same for a man looking for a wife.

The problem is when looks becomes **the** thing, and it leads to the scenarios you describe.

I was hoping this sub would give Christian men some advice besides repackaged RP with Jesus included.

List some topics/subjects or areas of advice you'd like to see on here, and I'm sure we'll have contributors write up related posts on them.

If you're more comfortable sending a PM, send a note to /u/Red-Curious or myself. He's got a lot planned and I'll be working on this subreddit as well.

And sure, while it's likely to be more geared toward men, they'll be posts both men and women will be

helped by. We had one specific post titled "Advice to young women today" awhile back, and a good portion of the advice in new posts will likely apply to both sexes.

So feel free to share your thoughts and comments on what you'd like to see. It'll help.

• points • 1 January, 1970 12:00 AM

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RedPillWonder • 3 points • 5 August, 2017 09:43 PM

I gotcha.

Good points.

I would add that a woman can still be modest while doing more to outwardly present the attractiveness she has though.

I think there's a happy medium between dressing trashy and looking plain jane.

Thoughts and opinions will greatly vary, but I'd say a nice dress that highlights a woman's feminine curves or shows a slim figure but without looking like her boobs are about to make a jail break lol would help.

And keeping her hair made up a lot of the time is good, rather than the overall "frumpy" look. It can be little and big things that help.

I agree with you, though. There's so many things that give a false impression of attractiveness. I was browsing channels a year or so back and there was a woman on Shark Tank hawking jeans that make you look like you have a nice, curvaceous butt, to which one guy called it false advertising lol

You're right, take away the make up and a lot of other stuff, and the beauty will drop a notch or two or more. While if the more modest woman did it, hers would increase.

Thanks for sharing what you'd like to see. A couple of those are already planned and the rest we can work on in the coming days/weeks.

• points • 1 January, 1970 12:00 AM

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RedPillWonder • 1 point • 6 August, 2017 04:38 PM

I know this will get blasted

Maybe not.

showing curves is not IMO modesty

I'm sure people's definitions (or applications of it) will vary on this one, with some overlap.

Question: Based on how you think Christian women should dress publicly, would you as a wife/when you become one (or would you encourage/advise married female friends if they asked) to dress more seductively in the privacy of their home with their husbands?

Whether that's sexy lingerie at times, or simply short shorts and a cute top as you lounge around the house together, or similar situations/outfits?

Or do you think that for the most part, even in the privacy of their home, a Christian woman should always be somewhat modestly dressed unless of course she's about to be intimate with her husband?

• points • 1 January, 1970 12:00 AM

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Red-Curious • 1 point • 7 August, 2017 05:20 AM

The concept behind what you're describing is a noble one. In an ideal world, everyone would be able to do this without two (off the top of my head) pitfalls coming up:

1. Falling into the same trap that Jesus ragged on the pharisees for doing: creating too many rules that went beyond the direct requirements of the law (Matthew 15/Mark 7).
2. The psychological implications of body-shaming women. Although it could be argued that you're really exalting the value of her body by concealing it and making it something that only a prized husband gets to see ... from what I recall reading in several Muslim sources back in the day, the reverse is actually true: women get so used to hiding their bodies in public and that it's "bad" for a man to see her skin that when she gets married she has great difficulty overcoming that psychological perception that has been ingrained in her for so long that she still can't be fully open with her husband, leading to many sexual problems.

This is virtually identical to the way the western church over-emphasizes the "sex before marriage is sin" aspect, without actually teaching on the fun of it in marriage. Because most people hear this message repeatedly during their teenage years, and even long before, they spend a very, very long time in that phase. Because they're not married for, say, a decade of hearing that, and our brains filter out inapplicable information, that's 10 years straight of hearing "sex is sin" (because "before marriage" doesn't mean anything when you know you're not married - they just think, "For me right now, sex is sin" and "right now" gets really hard to change).

Anyway, good thoughts and discussion :) Thanks for sharing your views on this! I wish more people processed information on this topic like you do. I would definitely prefer Christian women to err on the side of modesty than sluttiness. Unfortunately, outside of church itself, we're too far into slut territory and there needs to be a swing in the pendulum back a little ways.

Tag: /u/RedPillWonder (since I'm really piggy-backing on your conversation)

Also, as RPWonder noted, I'm happy to see some of your suggestions get put up on the front page for discussion :D You're always welcome to make a post. At the same time, some of those things will naturally be addressed as we continue in the series I've been doing and hearing from others, although it may take time. Due to time constraints and the mass amount of reading I do (presently on RP stuff), my free time is mostly limited to about 2 primary posts per week, which I think isn't too bad of a pace.

• points • 1 January, 1970 12:00 AM

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Red-Curious • 1 point • 7 August, 2017 06:02 AM

1. Totally understood.

2. I'm not going to deny your experience for what it was. But the literature I remember reading a few years back was also fairly persuasive. To be clear, Christianity has similar commands and expectations, and when I mention "body shaming," it's subconscious and psychological, never overt. Nobody will ever say, "You should be ashamed of your body!" It's the fact that it must remain concealed that makes people develop subconscious thought-processes about it being "bad" to reveal their bodies, which can be difficult to overcome later.

In fact, it bothers me that I have no good explanation as to how Christian women dress so worldly that they can't be told apart.

And right you are to be bothered by this!

but I can't distinguish the average Christian woman from the masses

Well, you have to remember that the "average" self-identified Christian is not actually Christian.

/u/ruizbujc did a research study on this once, doing in-person interviews with a few hundred people to try to figure out what % of the church would meet a basic standard of "saved." You'll have to ask him about his criteria, but it was fairly low-level basic stuff that most people would agree with.

His conclusion? 18.65% of church-goers/3.8% of self-identifiers would meet the criteria of "saved."

Okay, I was curious, so I looked up his comment. Here's his criteria:

Can "articulate what they believe and why"

"Their beliefs affect their daily life."

"Can give specific examples of how Jesus had impacted the way they live" (as opposed to general examples).

Even if we ignore the "saved" language (if you disagree with his standard, which is fine), the bottom line is still that 81.35% of church-goers can't articulate a way that Jesus changed their life. This means that 81.35% of church-goers can't acknowledge their attire as something that has been affected by Jesus. This number rises to 96.2% when dealing with all self-identifiers (i.e. including those who call themselves Christians, but don't actually attend church regularly).

Bottom line: your point is well-taken and statistically verified :p

Why don't we look more like out nuns who dress like Mary?

Is that why nuns dress that way? I've never really thought about it :p How would they know what clothes Mary wore?

OsmiumZulu[S] • 1 point • 6 August, 2017 11:46 PM

Yeah I'm going to challenge that definition of modesty. It is a traditional import that has almost nothing to do with the relevant texts of scripture. The specific texts that are most often

cited to defend that notion of modesty are 1 Timothy 2:8-10 and 1 Peter 3:3-4.

"I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works." - 1 Tim 2:9-10

When I someone drives a modest car, lives in a modest home, or makes a modest salary, do we understand that to mean they drive a car, live in a home, or make money, that doesn't arouse sexual desire? Of course not. We understand that modesty, consistent with Paul's usage here, has everything to do with not flaunting someone's wealth or signaling status inappropriately. This was an issue in that day in Ephesus. In fact, Paul seems to be directly attacking the cult worship in the Temple of Diana (a special place of Diana worship in Ephesus) where priestesses would deck themselves out with braided hair and gold jewelry as a part of their pagan worship. That Paul is addressing the cult of Diana, an extremely powerful and popular cult, is clear from the context. Just prior he was addressing men in worship, then after his next series of instructions about women not teaching men (something characteristic in the cult of Diana worshippers, a woman lead cult) and being saved through childbirth (one of the primary 'blessings' of Diana was that she was believed to help women survive pregnancy). Nowhere in this passage does Paul make any reference to covering to avoid sexual temptation. Even if he was, he only gives explicit *negative* commands (don't wear gold jewelry, braided hair, etc.) The only positive commands he gives are culturally subjective (wear what is respectable, use self-control, etc). Finally, I think the contextual understanding of this passage was that Paul was addressing the church gathered in worship, and to make application to what people wear to work / at the beach / around the home is simply beyond the scope of the context.

"Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious." - 1 Peter 3:3-4

Interestingly, Paul commands women not to adorn themselves with clothes. Scandalous, right? Clearly Paul has the inner person in mind here. He is teaching women to be **more** than a well dressed attractive body, but that doesn't mean he is teaching *against* being well dressed and attractive. In addition, again, nothing in this passage addresses the idea of covering yourself up to avoid sexual sin. It's just not there.

Finally, let's just assume that we want to try and cover ladies up like the Muslims to avoid sexual misconduct or lust. Does it work? Not even close and we shouldn't be surprised. In Colossians 2:20-23 Paul writes:

"If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— 21 “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch”22 (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? 23 These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh."

In other words, Paul tells us that self-mad religion and severity sounds smart, but are actually of no value in stopping indulgence in sin. Such rules do not address the heart of the sinner and

require victory over the temptation, but attempts to dodge it. In India, showing your ankles is seen as scandalous and they must be covered. In America, we don't care.

That which must be covered must become taboo. In the middle east, most of the body, even the hair, is seen as sexual. In America we don't care if a woman's hair is covered or not. Who has victory over "ankle lust" or "hair lust"? We shouldn't ask for bondage that Christ doesn't require of us.

Bottom line, if you are looking in scripture for a dress code, you won't find one in scripture and to look down on brothers and sisters who don't conform to *your* extra-biblical standards is exactly the sin of the pharisees.

• points • 1 January, 1970 12:00 AM

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OsmiumZulu[S] • 1 point • 7 August, 2017 01:45 AM

You didn't actually interact with my argument or provide any positive scriptural support for your view. You simply assumed a definition of modesty and pointed to examples of others who (sort of) agree. Try again.

• points • 1 January, 1970 12:00 AM

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Red-Curious • 1 point • 7 August, 2017 05:29 AM

I just so happen to feel that modesty requires not showing cleavage and curves.

As to the conversation with you and /u/OsmiumZulu, this is what Romans 14 would call a disputable matter. Each one has their own convictions. Sometimes the Spirit legitimately leads people into believing two different things based on what He knows each can handle. Other times, it's a timing thing about when God reveals a new truth (such as a person not yet mature enough to understand something). Still other times there is just legitimately no one right answer, and it's okay to embrace that.

To that end, the message of Romans 14 is to bear with one another in our disagreements on disputable matters, not arguing over them.

All I ask is that you show me the same courtesy by accepting that what I expressed was an opinion and my ideas.

That's a fair request. If I had to guess, OZ is used to travelling in more intellectual Christian circles, where appropriate Scriptural support and terminology must accompany statements of belief, especially when those statements are made as a recommendation to others. To this end, including terminology like, "This is what the Spirit has convicted me; he may not have convicted you likewise," often abates these types of conversations into the Romans 14 framework :) I hope that helps. Otherwise, if you're having a good discussion, don't let me stand in the way :p