



Cultivating a Godward Life Not Your Outward Glow Melanie Cogdill

*So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away,
our inner self is being renewed day by day. — 2 Corinthians 4:16*

As a woman with mature skin, I am a big fan of Korean skincare and the glass skin look. Snail mucin for skin hydration? You should use it. Facial sunscreen? Required daily. I wish I knew back when I was 25 what I know now about taking care of my facial skin barrier. In 2024, it is estimated that the revenue of the skincare market in the United States will be more than \$24 Billion.¹ And in South Korea, most of its billion-dollar skincare market sales come from the United States.² In April 2024, California bill [AB 2491](#) was introduced to restrict skincare sales to children younger than 12. At the April 23 bill hearing, California legislator Alex Lee was joined by a 10-year-old girl who testified, “I ... looked for ... products with words like ‘glow,’ ‘hydrating,’ ‘brightening’ and ‘anti-wrinkling,’ cuz I didn’t want to get wrinkles, and, no offense, look old,” she said.³

Don’t Conform. The Apostle Paul in Romans 12 tells Christians that our bodies are to be living sacrifices to God and that we are not to conform to the world and its standards but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. There are many worldly conforming pressures in our Western culture. Social media has only exacerbated our inner fears—women ages 10 to 90 scroll through our feeds and see influencers showing us how we are not pretty enough (use this photo filter), thin enough (do these exercises), or look young enough (use this product). As we meditate on our social scroll instead of God’s Word, we start conforming our beliefs based on the culture rather than on Scripture’s teaching on what it means to be a Christian woman.

Pursue Godliness. We change our thinking in two key ways. One is by renewing our minds and dwelling on Scripture. The Psalmist in Psalm 119 talks about the Christian loving and desiring the Word of God above everything else. And as the Holy Spirit works through God’s word by illumining it to us, our minds and hearts are transformed. We realize the measuring stick of what is true is Scripture, not social media. The other key way we pursue godliness is outlined in the rest of Romans 12—we live fully in the context of God’s people—the church.

Live in Community. Romans 12:9-18 gives us a picture of relationships in the church that help us live transformed lives. We rejoice with others, we serve others, we weep with others, and we love one another. In that context, God gives us other women who are gospel friends who encourage us with what is true, good, and beautiful according to God and His word.

Let’s Chat!

- What are some fears/struggles you have of getting old?
- Share some things you like about getting “older.”
- Describe ways you cultivate your relationship with God.
- Who are the women in your church community who are older than you and who encourage you with gospel truths? How do they do that.

Take-Away Truth

Our bodies are living sacrifices to God and when we renew our minds with God’s Word in the context of life in the church, we are transformed.

Find more conversation starters: <https://women.pcacdm.org/made-for-more>

¹ <https://www.statista.com/outlook/cmo/beauty-personal-care/skin-care/united-states>.

² https://www.statista.com/outlook/cmo/beauty-personal-care/skin-care/south-korea#:~:text=In%202024%2C%20%5Bglobalrevenue_currentlayer_yearoday_maxcountrynameprep%5D%20is%20expected%20to%20see%20revenues,market%20is%20estimated%20to%20be%20US%24175.10%20in%202024.

³“California bill targets ‘Sephora kids’ with skincare ban for children younger than 13,” USA Today, May 17, 2024, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2024/05/15/california-bill-skincare-ban-children/73697846007/>.