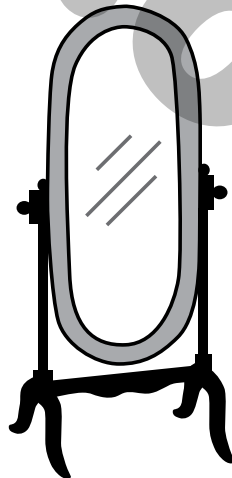


# DIVINE DESIGN

40 Days of Spiritual Makeover

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By Sharla Fritz





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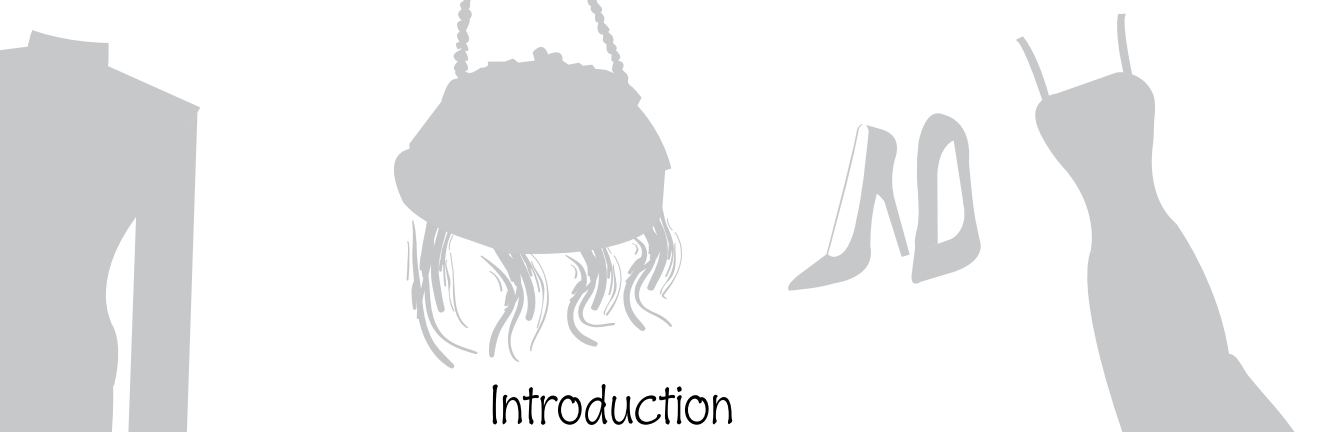
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## Introduction

Imagine. Cameras flash. Applause fills the room. Faces light up and mouths drop open. Cries of “You look fantastic!” and “I can’t believe it’s you!” reach your ears.

You take a few steps into the room. You slowly turn to show off your chic dress and point one toe to display your patent leather pumps. Friends rush forward and you hold out one perfectly manicured hand.

You have just participated in a fashion makeover. You look beautiful, polished, and radiant. For the moment, you feel like royalty.

While it might be exciting to experience a beauty makeover, that kind of transformation doesn’t last long. By tomorrow, the perfectly styled hairdo will be flattened. By next week, the manicure will be chipped. By next month, the shoes will look scuffed. The elegant dress will last a little longer, but by next year, it will be out of date.

*Divine Design: 40 Days of Spiritual Makeover* will lead you through a different kind of transformation. This makeover will result in an alteration of your attitudes. A journey through these pages will, by God’s grace, enable you to experience a renovation of character that will not become chipped, scuffed, or passé.

This makeover may not get you a spot on a reality TV show or land you on the cover of a magazine. Friends may not praise your new look. Your family may not stand up and applaud. However, those close to you will notice a transformation. You will recognize a difference in your spirit. Most of all, this makeover will be pleasing to God.

My hope is that you will trust God to work a change in your heart. Simply reading this book will not transform you. If you take the time to examine your life, read and believe God’s Word, and permit the Holy Spirit to alter your heart, He will.

This book is designed to take you on an important, yet light-hearted, journey. It contains careful examination and study of God’s Word. Because the Bible was written in Hebrew and Greek, we will sometimes explore the words of these original languages. The meaning of specific Greek or Hebrew words often helps to explain



a passage or give a new point of view. This book also contains sometimes painful, sometimes amusing stories of my personal struggle to be conformed to God's image.

During each week in this eight-week study, you will consider a specific attitude or aspect of our spiritual makeover. The weekly chapters are divided into five daily readings and study guides. I hope that this format will help you develop a daily time with the Lord: time to read, reflect, study, and apply His Word to all aspects of your life. I encourage you to mark up your book. Underline or highlight passages that inspire or challenge you. Make notes in the margins. Write questions about things that are unclear or that you want to discuss with your group or your pastor.

A few tools are used consistently throughout the book:

*What key lesson did you learn today?* Each day, you will be asked this question. Your answer can be from the reading, from the Bible passages examined, or from a thought that God revealed to you during your time with Him. Answering this question will help you to choose one idea or concept to inspire your day.

*Memory verse.* Each day, you will be instructed to write out the memory verse for the week. The act of writing out the words will help you to commit them to heart. You might also write the verse on a card to carry in your purse or on a sticky note to display by the sink or computer monitor. Storing God's Word in our hearts is one of the most effective ways of changing our attitudes.

*Study Styles.* Every week, the Study Styles section will examine a different method of exploring the Bible. Hopefully, these techniques will help you to get more out of your Bible study. Once you have tried these Study Styles, you may want to use them with other Bible passages.

*Meaningful Makeover.* The Bible is full of fascinating people, amazing stories, and thought-provoking quotes, but if that is all we get out of it, we have missed the point. In the Bible, God speaks to us, instructs us, and guides us. The weekly Meaningful Makeover section directs you to apply God's Word to all aspects of your life. The power of His Gospel can change you, transform you, and make you new.





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WEEK ONE

**WHAT WE WEAR—  
Wardrobe Woes**

*Memory Verse*

You have heard about Him and were taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which is . . . corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephesians 4:21–24



thought I looked pretty good, especially since I matched my mother. We were quite a pair!

In those days, we watched our pennies and made most of our clothes from material purchased from Herberger's bargain basement. Sometimes we found attractive fabric, like a camel and forest-green cotton plaid I used to sew a skirt. However, a few yards of peach-colored double-knit became a dress that stood out like a costume. Other fashion mistakes included the electric-green bodysuit I made in seventh grade and the purple corduroy bell-bottoms I designed in eighth grade, all with fabric from the bargain basement.

Budget considerations dictated our wardrobes more than anything else. In sixth grade, I remember needing a new winter coat—an essential in northern Wisconsin. My mother took me to a sale at a local clothing store known for quality merchandise. We found a beautiful raspberry-red plaid wool coat that was warm and luxurious. There was only one problem: it was a ladies size 12! I was nowhere near that size at the time, but my mother was certain I would grow into it. (In fact, I never did quite grow into that lovely garment.) I remember sitting at my desk with my coat on one morning as we waited to go out for recess, when the girl behind me looked at my raspberry number and asked, "What is *that*?"

As I matured, I improved at choosing clothes that fit and flatter, but I still make mistakes. Not so long ago, I decided to sew a shirt and skirt from matching fabric. Shirt dresses were in style, and I thought that sewing it in two pieces would make it more versatile because I could wear each piece with other separates. But my frugality got in the way again, and I purchased a print fabric from the clearance pile. Never mind that it was a decorator fabric; I was sure it would look wonderful. When I finished the ensemble, however, I looked like I was wearing curtains. Now where were those television wardrobe consultants when I needed them?

Proverbs 31 describes a godly woman dressed in her best: "Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come" (v. 25). Although I aimed for the image of strength and dignity, I often dressed in the cheap and chintzy. Instead of laughing at the days to come, I ended up laughing at my choices.

God is not terribly interested in our wardrobe selections. Although He certainly desires that we dress modestly, I doubt He cares if we wear boot-cut jeans or pleated trousers, a button-down shirt or a turtleneck. He is, however, concerned about how we clothe our character. In Christ, He loves us just as we are, but He sees our potential for more. He desires to work a spiritual makeover in our hearts. He alone can give our souls strength and dignity, power and poise. He is the only fashion consultant able to achieve a makeover miracle in our hearts. Through His Word, He

can transform our hearts from a fearful, prideful, or vengeful state into hearts clothed in joy, peace, and love. Through His Sacraments, He transforms us, and our signature look will be a trust in His goodness that enables us to laugh with joy at the days to come.

So let's open ourselves up for a spiritual makeover. Let's discover what God wants to toss out of our character closets and what design He desires for our souls. Are you willing to nominate yourself for God's makeover show?

*Dear Father in heaven, I thank You that You love me as I am, yet You desire to make my image shine as You work a spiritual makeover in my heart. Help me to be willing to throw out the old, unattractive clothing that wraps my spirit. Give me Your strength and dignity and the ability to laugh at the days to come. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

## Day One



### Wardrobe Workout

1. Pretend Stacy and Clinton from *What Not to Wear* are coming to look in your closet! What wouldn't you want them to see? Pull out an item that has seen better days but that you still wear. Ask yourself why you keep it. If you are doing this study in a small group, bring this item to the meeting and discuss why we hold on to things that are not attractive.

2. "Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come" (Proverbs 31:25). *Strength* can be defined as "the power to resist strain." *Dignity* presents a picture of calmness and poise. Describe how the characteristics of strength and dignity could improve your everyday life.
  
3. What key lesson did you learn today? In the space below, write something God taught you that can make a difference in your life.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Our memory verse for this week is Ephesians 4:21–24: "You have heard about Him and were taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which is . . . corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." To help you memorize this passage, write it out in the space below.

## Day Two

### A More Significant Makeover

*Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.*

*1 Peter 3:3–4 NIV*

Let's admit it: many women spend a lot of time and money on their appearance. We take care to choose jewelry, clothing, and hairstyles that will help us look our best. Tiffany sells millions of dollars of jewelry every year. On Forbes.com, financial analysts claim that Americans spent more than \$87 billion on clothing in 2008. One British Web site estimated that the average woman in Great Britain spends the equivalent of almost two years of her life washing and styling her hair.

As we read Peter's words to the women of his day, it is clear that the focus on fashion is not a modern trend. Peter instructed his Jewish and Gentile readers to turn away from expensive clothing and accessories (1 Peter 3:3). It seems that even in the 60s (and that's AD 60, not the 1960s), women were concerned about having the latest hairdo and trendiest clothing. Perhaps the must-have item of the AD 65 fall season was an "Andrew" veil or a "Thomas" tunic. However, Peter was urging first-century women not to bother themselves with outward fashion trends. They were to cultivate inner beauty—a gentle and quiet spirit.

Peter is speaking to us today too. At a time when styles seem to change faster than traffic lights, we are to concern ourselves with the ageless fashion of our souls. While our culture encourages spending millions on clothes, jewelry, and hairstyles, as God's daughters, we are advised to use our resources to cultivate inner beauty. Instead of searching for the latest style in jackets or the trendiest bag, we are instructed to seek unchanging gentleness and enduring quietness.

In Galatians 5:22–23, Paul describes the fruit of the Spirit: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control," and says, "against such things there is no law," meaning that there is no restraint to these qualities. In the next verse, we read that "those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the

flesh with its passions and desires” (v. 24). In other words, we completely surrender our emotions to Christ. I admit that surrender and acceptance are not always my first responses to God’s actions in my life. As I grow in my trust in His goodness and His love for me, I gain a peace that will never go out of style. As my relationship with my loving Savior matures, I experience a serenity that will always make a fashion statement.

The Greek word for *quiet* means “tranquil, undisturbed.” Fashion trends may come and go, but my spirit can remain steadfast in the Prince of Peace. No matter what complications come my way, I can continue in tranquility because Christ calms my soul.

Why should we pursue inner beauty rather than strive for physical attractiveness? I see three reasons:

- Inner beauty is more fulfilling. The beauty that comes from within is ultimately more satisfying than any external change we make in our appearance. Although cosmetic companies may try to convince me otherwise, no beauty cream will change my life. A fresh hairstyle may make me look younger and earn compliments, but it will not give me peace. Fashionable new pumps may give me a spring in my step, but will they change my outlook on life? (Okay, for footwear fanciers like me, that point might be debatable.)

But seriously, think of the transformation you would see in your life if you could reduce the worry that clouds your mind, remove the envy that robs your joy, or eliminate the bitterness that ties your heart in knots.

- Inner beauty is unfading. A gentle and quiet spirit bestows an “unfading beauty” (1 Peter 3:4 NIV). Favorite hairstyles grow out. Our best sweaters shrink or pill. Jewelry tarnishes with age. On the other hand, trust in God’s goodness and tranquility in Christ not only endure but they also increase with time. Peter tells us that “this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful” (v. 5 NIV). Think of the truly beautiful women you admire, those who shine with an unshakable confidence in a loving Lord no matter what comes their way. That beauty is attainable at any age.

There is nothing wrong with wearing beautiful and fashionable clothes, but God wants to shift our attention away from what designers are creating for the upcoming season and what fashion editors are promoting as the latest styles. He directs us to find the finest fashions, discover His spiritual style, and pinpoint which pieces are truly timeless.



- Inner beauty is precious to God. We may turn heads when we walk down the street in a smart new suit. A Gucci bag may incite admiration from our friends. Co-workers may ooh and aah over a new diamond necklace. But how do we please our Savior? With our “inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit” (v. 4 NIV). A “quiet spirit” will make God smile and bring Him pleasure. Unshakable hope in His goodness will land you on the cover of *Heavenly Vogue*.

So while it may be fun to impress others with our savvy fashion sense, let's set our sights on pleasing the Wardrobe Consultant who really matters.

*Heavenly Father, please forgive me for the times I have been too concerned about fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes. Help me to concentrate on inner beauty. Give me the gentle and quiet spirit that is so precious to You. In Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen.*

## Day Two

### Wardrobe Workout

1. How do you define *inner beauty*? What are some characteristics of women you know who shine from the inside out?
2. Read Ephesians 4:22–32.
  - a. Paul tells us to “put off” certain behaviors and to “put on” others. Why do you think he used this imagery of putting off and putting on?

b. We take off and put on clothing. How do clothing metaphors help you to understand the transformation God wants to work in your life?

c. Ephesians 4:22 (NIV) states, "Your old self . . . is being corrupted by its deceitful desires." Using a dictionary, define the following:

deceitful \_\_\_\_\_

desires \_\_\_\_\_

Now describe "deceitful desires" in your own words and explain how these desires can corrupt us.

3. What key lesson did you learn today?

4. Write out our memory verse for this week: "You have heard about Him and were taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which is . . . corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true

righteousness and holiness” (Ephesians 4:21–24). Read a phrase, then cover it and write it. Try to write as much of the verse as you can without looking.

## Day Three



### Essential Garments

*I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;  
my soul shall exult in my God,  
for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation;  
He has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful  
headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

*Isaiah 61:10*

Where do we start? How do we begin our spiritual makeover? We know that our miracle-working Wardrobe Consultant, the Holy Spirit, is prepared to give us a fresh, new image. We are ready to nominate ourselves for our Lord’s makeover show. We realize that inner beauty is more lasting and satisfying than anything we see in the pages of *Vogue* or *Glamour*.

When a fashion expert plans a wardrobe for a client, she starts with basic pieces and essential garments. Fashion magazines tell us that key pieces are clothes

in neutral colors that act as building blocks for multiple outfits. However, our divine Wardrobe Consultant is designing a different look for us.

The prophet Isaiah tells us that God gives us the most essential garments in our wardrobe: “He has clothed me with the garments of salvation; He has covered me with the robe of righteousness” (Isaiah 61:10). The garments of salvation and the robe of righteousness are the must-have pieces, not just for a season, but for eternity! Without these indispensable articles of clothing, we cannot enter God’s kingdom. Because of His great love for us, our gracious Father dresses us in the robe of righteousness when we receive the gift of faith in Christ our Savior through water and the Word. He wraps us in the garments of salvation and clothes our hearts with His Spirit and His love.

In the Old Testament, the prophet Zechariah tells of a vision he received about a significant wardrobe change. In the vision, Joshua, the high priest, stood in the presence of the Lord, wearing filthy, soiled clothes. Satan was right there with them, making accusations against Joshua. But God Himself interrupted Satan and rebuked him. He instructed the angel to remove the dirty clothes and dress Joshua in royal robes. He said to Joshua, “See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you” (Zechariah 3:4 NIV).

I imagine myself in Joshua’s place. I have come before the Lord, and Satan doesn’t miss a stitch—he’s right there to accuse me. I hang my head in shame because I know what he says is true. I have blown it so many times and in so many ways with my family, my friends, and my co-workers. I’ve been selfish, impatient, and unkind. Other times I have been well-meaning but lazy. I look down and I see my grimy clothes. The stains are there for everyone to see. But Christ’s voice pierces the air and ends Satan’s finger-pointing session. “Stop, Satan! I have forgiven her! I have snatched her from damnation!” He looks at me with eyes of love and instructs an angel to remove my muddied garments. The angel peels away the clothes that I have been ashamed to wear. The dirt that has clung to me disappears. Then the angel brings a rich, beautiful robe and puts it on me—I cannot even do this for myself. More than my clothes have been changed. I am no longer grimy and guilty, but clean, unsoiled, and forgiven. God’s mercy removes my dirt, His transforming grace washes away my stains, and His robe of righteousness covers my guilt. Tears trickle out of my eyes in joy.

Don’t you love how the Lord works? He knew we needed that robe of righteousness. He understood the suit of salvation was an essential garment in our wardrobe.

This fashion item is priceless; we cannot buy it at Target or Wal-Mart, at Macy's or J. C. Penney, not even at Saks Fifth Avenue or Bloomingdale's. Jesus already purchased this garment for us with His own blood when He died on the cross for us. Now He holds it out to us, inviting us to slip our arms into the sleeves. As we do, that immaculate white robe of salvation wraps us in His mercy and grace. We stand before Him clean and forgiven.

Perhaps all this talk of robes of righteousness and garments of salvation is new to you. Don't worry. God's salvation is available to everyone. He eagerly desires to give you His righteousness, that is, the state of being right with God. In Christ's death and resurrection, the barrier between us and God was removed forever. We are able to know Him personally.

Perhaps you have heard about God's salvation and His righteousness all your life. Perhaps you're like me, and you received the robe of righteousness at your Baptism. Sometimes I do not fully appreciate this priceless gift of salvation because I have possessed it for a long time. It's like the Christmas sweater I was thrilled to receive but that now sits in a drawer, forgotten. Often I neglect to thank my Savior for enduring unspeakable pain, sacrificing His life for me, and defeating my ultimate enemy, eternal damnation, by rising from the grave.

Let's take the time to express our gratefulness to God who, is ready to give us the essential garments of salvation; to Jesus, who paid the price for the clothes that cover our sin, and to the Holy Spirit, who works righteousness in our hearts.

*Almighty God, thank You for giving me salvation; I know there is nothing I could have done to earn it on my own. Forgive me when I have not treasured Your costly gift. Precious Jesus, thank You for paying the price for my sinfulness through Your death and resurrection. Holy Spirit, thank You for clothing me in righteousness, covering the stains of my sin and guilt. Amen.*



2. Read the following verses and write down the spiritual clothing mentioned.

a. Job 29:14 \_\_\_\_\_

b. Psalm 30:11 \_\_\_\_\_

c. Isaiah 52:1 \_\_\_\_\_

d. Luke 24:49 \_\_\_\_\_

Which of these garments do you wear all the time? Which ones would you like to wear more often?

3. What key lesson did you learn today?

4. Write out this week's memory verse. Try not to peek!





account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

(Colossians 3:5–13)

Paul tells me to abandon my old way of life, which has habits and patterns of behavior that need to be stripped off. My old, worn character may have a comfortable routine to which I am accustomed, but that does not suit my new existence. My natural inclination may be toward worry in times of stress or toward anger when I don't get my way. The fashion of my speech may sometimes include harsh words or so-called harmless gossip. Television commercials and that item the neighbors just bought may shape my desires. "Little white lies" and "looking out for number one" seem to fit naturally. Yet all of these attitudes need to be thrown away. This doesn't mean that I will never make a mistake, never slip up, or never go back to my old conduct. But it does mean that I will no longer make those behaviors habitual. I will not continue to do them unthinkingly, day in and day out.

My Creator fashioned me in His image, but my inherited sin and my own shortcomings have smeared that image. As I allow the Holy Spirit to work in my life, He restores a godly likeness. He will help me remove the old way of life and put on the new. He will guide me to a deeper knowledge of my Maker. The original Greek word for *knowledge* here in Colossians indicates a knowledge that powerfully influences one's life. As I study His Word, receive His Holy Supper, and become better acquainted with the One who fashioned me, He will change me to look more like Him. My image will reflect the image of Christ.

It doesn't matter what I look like before my makeover. The Greeks and uncircumcised people that Paul mentions in Colossians 3:11 were considered unclean by the Jews. My own character may be soiled and dirty. In Paul's time, the barbarians and Scythians were seen as uncivilized and crude. "Coarse and unsophisticated"

might describe my current spiritual wardrobe. In the first century, slaves were tightly bound to their masters. The garments of my human nature may be uncomfortably snug and constricting. But because I live in baptismal grace, Christ in me will free my spirit to live for Him.

Because God loves me dearly and has chosen to give me a clean, new image, He will help me select clothing that fits my fresh, new look. He will exchange honesty for lies, compassion for anger, and kindness for malice. Humility, gentleness, and patience become wardrobe staples, replacing the old standbys of impurity, evil desires, and greed. Christ will help me to wear forgiveness instead of rage. His love is the belt that will tie the whole ensemble together.

*Heavenly Father, I know that my sins and shortcomings have smeared the image that You desire for me. Please remove all the unattractive habits and attitudes from my life and give me new ones that suit my new image in Christ. Amen.*

## Day Four

### Wardrobe Workout

1. We all hang on to attitudes or behaviors that are not becoming. List some reasons why it is so difficult to accomplish change in our spiritual closets.

2. Read Colossians 3:5–13 again. Which verse spoke most clearly to you? How might you respond to Paul’s encouragement to put on Christ in your daily life?

3. What key lesson did you learn today?

4. Write out this week’s memory verse. No peeking!



## Study Styles

There are various ways to study the Bible. In this section, we will consider a different technique for exploring God's Word—a new study style.

One good way to get the most out of your Bible study is to make charts of what you have learned. Using Ephesians 4:22–32, make a chart listing **What Not to Wear** and **What to Wear**.

What Not to Wear	What to Wear

Now circle the characteristics you are currently wearing!



In the same way, our spiritual garments may need editing and our character may require renewal.

Sometimes clothing is just a habit. In the past, I wore navy slacks all the time, because they coordinated with many different color tops. When I went shopping for new shirts, I automatically looked for items that went with navy. Navy became my routine—until I discovered that it is not a very flattering color on me! In the same way, I may carry my bag of worries every day, simply because it is now a habit. I'm accustomed to dragging my anxiety around day after day, and I'm not aware of a better accessory to use!

Just as I didn't know that navy was not a good color for me until I consulted a color expert, we may not be aware that we routinely wear character qualities that are unattractive and project a negative image. Thankfully, we all have our own spiritual wardrobe consultant to show us the proper attire for our souls: God! Our awesome Creator made each one of us in a unique and special way and designed the garments we need to be at our best. God's Word gives us clear instruction regarding the apparel He wants us to wear.

According to the ladies of *What Not to Wear*, "Once you really understand what not to wear the path to chic-dom becomes a piece of cake" (Woodall and Constantine, p. 7). Let's become spiritually chic as we learn what to wear and what to discard. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts to expose our wardrobe flaws gently and to give us the garments that will help our new image shine.

*Holy Spirit, I realize that the attitudes and habits I wear are more important than my wardrobe. Work in my heart. Show me where I need to change. Let me see the character qualities that You want me to wear. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

## Day Five



## Wardrobe Workout

1. What does a spiritual makeover mean to you? What changes would you like to see in your life?
2. Paul says we are “to be made new in the attitude of your minds” (Ephesians 4:23 NIV). The word translated as “attitude” in the NIV is *pneuma*, which can mean spirit, human rational mind or mental disposition. Discuss how our attitudes can influence our actions and govern our souls.
3. What key lesson did you learn today?





Write a prayer asking your divine Designer to help you edit out the unattractive behavior or to clothe you with one that will reflect your new image in Christ!

Remember to bring the clothing item from Day One to your group's meeting!

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