Culture Shock: a challenge to examine our presumptions

By Kasey Carty-Campbell

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Columnist

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Spring Break is teasing us like the forbidden cookies in the kitchen so close you can taste the warm chocolate chips in your mouth, but the papers and tests serve as the insurmountable shelves keeping you from your goal.

Although most have eagerly begun the official countdown to the weekend freedom of Spring Break, others are becoming increasingly more aware that it is nearly impossible to lose two clothing sizes in one week.

During the few days that have resembled spring this semester, the increase in temperature was accompanied by an increase in the number of runners, skaters and walkers on campus. This says a lot about the importance of health for many students.

First Corinthians 6:19 encourages this behavior. “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?”

A few years ago I felt convinced that I was not treating my body as a temple of the Holy Spirit. I began to exercise regularly (as regularly as a college student can manage) when I observed my dad, who is no longer able to run because of a knee operation, because I realized the gift that I was overlooking.

There is one question that must be asked, though. When do people go too far? When does a healthy lifestyle turn into an eating disorder that affects one out of four college women? This includes three types of problems.

Binge eating is episodic compulsive overeating that can lead to weight gain. Sufferers of this disorder exceed excessive amounts of food, often when they are not hungry.

Bulimics rapidly consume food, followed by self-induced vomiting or laxative use. Fasting and compulsive exercise are other symptoms of bulimia.

Anorexia is an intense fear of weight gain and a refusal to eat. Light eaters can be classified as people who weigh less than 85 percent of their recommended body weight.

The National Eating Disorder Information Center studied third and fourth grade students in Canada. Some of these children said that they would rather lose a parent, get cancer, or live through a nuclear war than be fat.

Media plays a role in this epidemic, but the lifestyles of parents impact children even more. Seventy percent of women and 35 percent of men are dieting at any given time. Therefore, most children live in a home where at least one parent is dieting. What does this tell children?

Living a healthy lifestyle is important in order to glorify God through our bodies. But have we made our health our idol? When looking at bookstores, there appear to be more books about dieting than books written on God. This is a simplistic way to sum up the problem, but as Matthew 6:21, says, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will also be.”

Scholar-in-residence David Cook challenged students with his story about an unbeliever who said, “The only thing that stops me from being a Christian is that I don’t see any difference between how Christians and non-Christians live.”

This is true in the issue of health. It seems that half the Christians spend an enormous amount of money on all the latest health gadgets while the other half practices gluttony.

We are more than willing to point out the lung-damaging effects of smoking, while overlooking the artery-damaging effects of cafeterias pizza, hamburgers and fried chicken consumed every day.

Whether students are running five miles a day for the purpose of feeling confident in the way their clothes showcase their figure or whether a person eats to the point of making themselves sick, both are neglecting to glorify the God who made them in his divine and holy image.

Does the state of your health and your motivations behind your daily exercise routine reflect a godly lifestyle to the world?

Just for the Record

By Scott Bryant

I am about to make a bold statement: I don’t only listen to Christian music.

Furthermore I don’t believe in conforming to a mold in which Christians should only listen to “Christian” music; for some, that may not be very daring, but for others it may be on the verge of controversy.

I agree with the Mars Hill Forum Series, which is grounded in integrating faith into a more worldly view. Worldly being the key word here.

I also don’t think of it as a key word here. I’m looking for,” said Crystal Lewis followed by Counting Crows.

I am saying, though, that music is something that should be enjoyable, and Christians shouldn’t be forced into a bubble where the internal speakers only play Rebecca St. James.

Eiffel 65 speaks the truth in “Bubble.” “Livin’ in a bubble, baby, a bubble’s not reality. You’ve got to have a look out.”

Pick of the Litter: Right now I have U2’s Joshua Tree in my car, but I still haven’t found what I’m looking for,” said Chris Blair, assistant professor of communication arts.

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