

Picture Day!



*Everyone seemed excited about picture day.
Everyone except me.*



By Tori Holman

(Based on a true story)

“Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).

Everybody needs to look their very best tomorrow,” Mrs. Santos called out in a sing-song voice. “Tomorrow is picture day!”

Whispers and giggles spread around the room. Everyone seemed excited about picture day. Everyone except me. I felt a knot in my stomach.

At recess, all my friends wanted to talk about was what outfit they were going to wear for school pictures. With each thing they mentioned, the knot in my stomach got bigger.

I didn’t have any of the pretty things they talked about. How could I look beautiful if I didn’t have anything beautiful to wear?

The next morning I dug through all my drawers and decided on a red and white striped shirt and my denim skirt. I had two flower hair clips, but one had a broken petal. My shirt had a little yellow stain on it. Maybe it wouldn’t show. My skirt was faded, and my shoes were scuffed. Nervous butterflies joined the knots in my stomach. I worried and worried all the way to school.

When I got to school, I ran to the washroom, hoping no one had seen me yet. Hot tears ran down my face. I quickly wiped them away when I heard footsteps.

“Are you OK?” It was Mrs. Santos. “A couple of your classmates said they saw you run in here and thought something might be wrong.”

I didn’t say anything as I stared down at my shoes. A question bubbled up inside of me.

“Are you disappointed in me?” My voice cracked.

Mrs. Santos put her arm around my shoulder. “Why would I be disappointed in you?”

“Well . . .” I sniffed and tried to think of how to say what I wanted to say. “You said to look your very best for picture day. And . . .”

I slowly traced the stain on my shirt with a fingertip.

“I don’t have anything pretty,” I continued. “My clothes are kind of old.”

Mrs. Santos was quiet for a minute. Then she gave my shoulder a squeeze.

“Let’s have a look and see what we can do.” She lifted



“The gospel teaches us that true beauty is more than skin-deep.”

Elder Lynn G. Robbins of the Presidency of the Seventy

“True Beauty,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 30.

my chin so that I was looking into the mirror. “*Hmmm*. You know what I see?”

“What?” I asked.

“I see a special girl who looks sad today,” she said, “and who forgot to wear her prettiest feature.”

I stared at Mrs. Santos. What was she talking about?

“Try a smile, and then let’s take another look,” Mrs. Santos said.

I gazed in the mirror. Slowly the corners of my mouth turned up.

“You aren’t beautiful because of what you wear or the way you look. You are beautiful because of who you are,” Mrs. Santos said. “Your happy personality always puts a smile on everyone’s face.”

I tilted my head and watched my smile grow bigger and bigger. I started to feel the knot in my stomach loosen. Mrs. Santos was right. My smile was the best!

I looked down at my shirt—the yellow stains, the scuffed shoes. Who cares? I was a child of God, and it wasn’t my clothes that made me. They didn’t matter. I looked in the mirror again. My teeth sparkled as my grin stretched out.

“Ah! There it is,” Mrs. Santos said. “Picture perfect!” ♦

The author lives in California, USA.

