

**No matter how you're dressed on the outside, allow God to clothe your heart with His special wardrobe.**

**BY ELIZABETH J. DUEWEL**

## Inside-Out Heart

I am glad God never does anything halfway, or should I say inside out, like me. *Sigh*. One day I spent most of the morning running errands, half-dressed – around people no less. I know what I'd have thought if I'd seen someone dressed like me, “*Oh, that poor soul. She must be in a bad way.*” It was Brittany, my daughter, who alerted me to the problem when we were *leaving* a store.

“Mom, the tag on your skirt is hanging out,” she said with a chuckle.

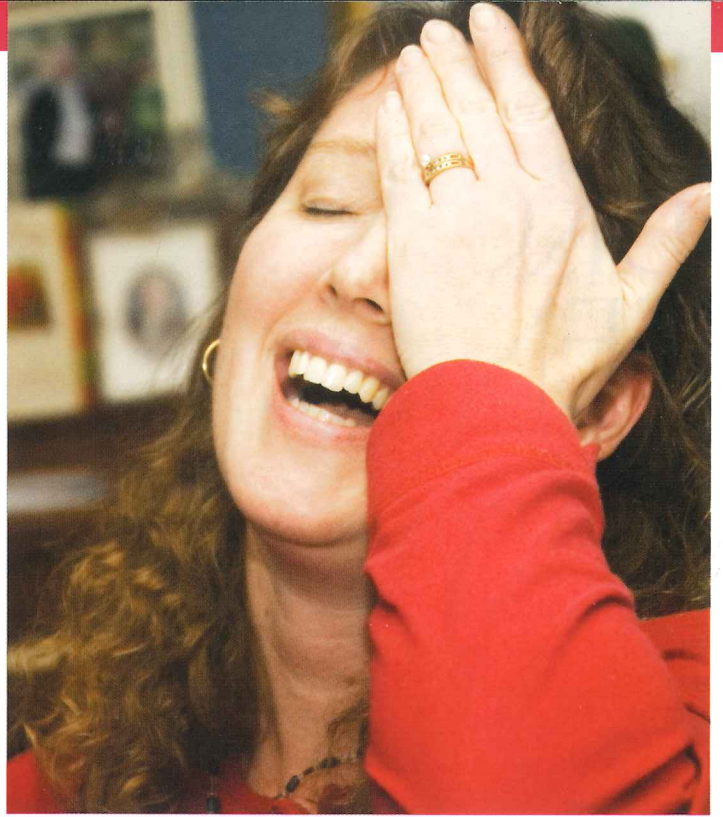
As I reached around to the back of my skirt to tuck in the tag, Brittany started to giggle, while I started to sweat. Just a little tidbit for future reference: If you feel your tag sewed onto the outside of your clothing, something is very, very wrong.

“Mom, I think your skirt is inside-out.”

It was then I looked down to discover my pockets (which were supposed to be neatly tucked in and hiding inside my skirt) were waving like wings from my hips. Not to mention the skirt buttoned up the front. *Now how did I do that?* I must have gotten dressed in a walking coma. Just the day before, a friend had praised me for coping positively with life, even asking me how I keep it all together. Well, obviously I don't – although one could say it takes a secure woman to go out of the house dressed in this manner.

Besides being a great reminder to do a double take in the morning, the skirt incident got me thinking about my heart. What if my innermost thoughts were inside-out in plain sight for others to gawk at? I'm afraid a lot of mine would be unsightly. For instance, what would jealousy look like? Or how about greed? Wonder how my ensemble of selfishness would look when accessorized with anger? *That* outfit might raise a few eyebrows in the checkout line. The only hope I can glean from my pitiful attire is the comforting knowledge that God looks at my heart with mercy and compassion and says, “*Oh, that poor soul.*” Nehemiah 9:31 states, “*But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God*” (NIV).

When it comes to the wardrobe of our hearts, we all need mercy. Can you imagine how Eve felt that day in the



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garden? One minute she was dressed in virtue, and the next minute she was sinfully exposed, looking for a fig leaf and a place to hide (as if one could hide from the Maker of the universe). Genesis 3:7 says, “*Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves*” (NIV).

It's obvious that no amount of leaf wear can conceal the deceitfulness of a human heart turned inside-out. And since the fig leaf won't do, we require a righteous covering to blot out our iniquities before God. That “covering” is Jesus Christ, God's Son. Romans 13:14, tells us about the type of clothing we should have, “*Rather, clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature*” (NIV).

Because God longs to forgive us, and dress us in His goodness, we can ask Him for a new heart-fit. Can you imagine a free wardrobe for our hearts? WOW!

By the way, if you see me running around town with my skirt inside-out, just smile and wave.

Chances are my pockets will be waving back at you. 🌸

**When it comes to the wardrobe of our hearts, we all need mercy.**

**MADE IN USA**

Elizabeth Duewel, a freelance writer, lives in Ashland, Ohio with her husband and three children. Elizabeth says she's still learning to run errands with all her clothes right-side-out.