



#NOFILTER

Are you the real you?

About Us

Sometimes we just need to pause, take a step back, and ask the obvious “Why?” —Why am I here? What’s my purpose?

Join us at YMI, an initiative of Our Daily Bread Ministries, as we question the reason behind why we do, think, and feel what we do.



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FOR THIS REASON





#NOFILTER

Are you the real you?

Taking a holiday snap or a selfie used to be a bit of a hit-or-miss affair. Sometimes, the photo would come out dull, ordinary, or just lacking that “wow” factor. Digital filters, however, have changed the photography scene. Now, you can turn the most average-looking photo into a work of art with just a click, just like what photographers used to do with expensive physical filters on their cameras.

Want to give your photo a nostalgic or more traditional feel? Try Instagram's *Inkwell*, which transforms colored photos into black-and-white ones. Got a breathtaking view of a majestic mountain? Slap on a *Hefe* to show off that blue sky and those dramatic ridges. Or do a *Hudson* on your day's breakfast

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of coffee and toast to make them look more appetizing.

Filters can make you look good too. Got a shot of you in your gym gear with a tall smoothie in one hand? A *Lo-fi* will give you extra glow on your face. Remember to include those hashtags, #eatinghealthy #keepingfit. Or how about that photo of you and your best friend having brunch? Try *Rise* for a softer, more natural look, and tag it #bestfriends #brunch. For those photos of yourself dressed to the nines for date night, use *Nashville* for a more romantic look.

Sometimes, of course, you might manage to snap a really good photo that's just *perfect*. Perhaps the sky had the right tinge of blue, the fields the right hue of green, and the faces that healthy glow that no filter could improve. Or, you might snap a selfie that shows you in your best light, and you want to show your friends that hey, you *do* look good without your make-up—really.

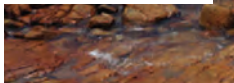
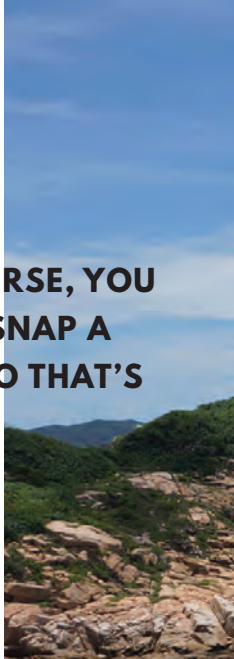
FILTERS

can make you look good too.

SOMETIMES, OF COURSE, YOU MIGHT MANAGE TO SNAP A REALLY GOOD PHOTO THAT'S JUST *perfect*.

That's when you proudly post your photo on Facebook or Instagram and tag it #nofilter, showing that what viewers see is exactly what you snapped—no filters, no tricks, no touch-ups.

That is, if you're honest.



#nofilter



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#NOFILTER POSERS

Instagram has tens of millions of photos tagged #nofilter. But according to social media marketing company Spredfast, 11 percent of #nofilter pictures on the photo-sharing site are “posers”. What this means is, as many as eight million (possibly more) supposedly filter-free photos have in fact been improved with filters. Popular choices include *Amaro*, which brightens the centre of a picture, *Valencia*, and *X-Pro II*.

There's even a website with a “faker catcher” tool, which lets you run your friends' “#nofilter” photos through a software which checks if they are filter fakers.

It appears many of us are quite comfortable with telling a little white lie to make our photos look perfect. It shows our wish to look good to others—and sometimes, to pretend we're as good as we seem to be, even when we're not.

This need to hide our imperfections, and the desire to be admired for our beauty, is well portrayed in Oscar Wilde's classic novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. It tells the tale of a hedonistic young man who is so captivated by his good looks when he has his portrait painted, that he does not hesitate to sell his soul to keep his youth. While he stays young forever, his portrait ages and decays with every evil act he does.

HIDE

our imperfections



Women in ancient China who were hoping to be selected to be one of the emperor's wives or concubines were also said to have bribed the court artist to paint them in the best light and to have a "beauty spot" added, or a wart or two removed.



A woman with long, dark hair is shown in profile, looking out a window. She is wearing a black top and has her hands clasped on a white surface in front of her. On the surface, there are several jars containing pens and pencils, and a clear plastic tray with various items. The window has white blinds and a white frame. The background is a light-colored wall.

MEET

*the ultimate perfect
being — God.*

#NOFILTER GOD

Why do so many people fake their #nofilter pictures? Is it because we do not have the rock-solid confidence to present ourselves just as we are? Is it because we need the filters and make-up to cover our imperfections, fears, and insecurities? Do we think, “What if I look terrible without my make-up?” “Oh no, there is no hiding my chubby cheeks now!”

Imagine, then, how much more nerve-racking it would be to meet the ultimate perfect being—God. As the creator of the universe who had planned for each one of us long before we were born, He would be able to see through all our “filters” and pretence. We might be able to hide our imperfections from others by showing them only what we want them to see and hiding the rest behind filters, but God knows our innermost feelings, thoughts, and fears. As an all-seeing being, He is fully aware of our imperfections and our wrongdoings, and will hold us accountable. We will not be able to hide what we feel, think, and do from Him.

In the book of Psalms in the Bible, Israelite king David, who had a very close relationship with God, acknowledged His ability to see him as he truly was.

*“O Lord, you have examined my heart
and know everything about me.
You know when I sit down or stand up.
You know my thoughts even when
I’m far away.
You see me when I travel
and when I rest at home.
You know everything I do.
You know what I am going to say
even before I say it, Lord.
You go before me and follow me.
You place your hand of blessing on my head.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too great for me to understand!”*
(Psalm 139:1–6, NLT).

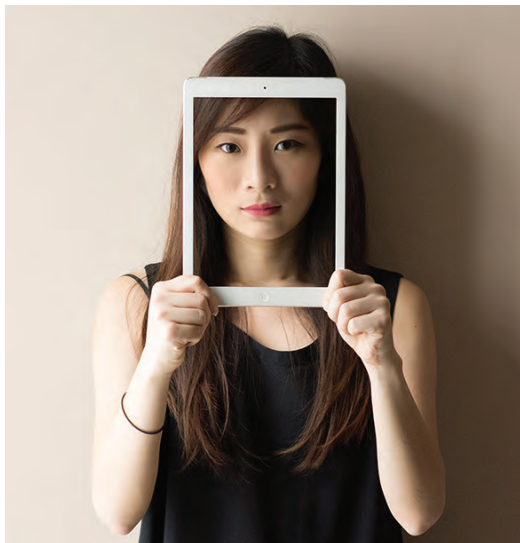
Would we be too fearful to meet God, knowing that He can see all our imperfections and failures?

Well, here’s the good news: Although God is holy, perfect, and righteous, He does not expect us to be perfect when we come to Him. Why? It’s because He loves us dearly and wants to have a relationship with us—in fact, He loves us so much that He sent His son, Jesus Christ, into this world to deal with our



RAW,
imperfect, and
unfiltered.





imperfections on our behalf. He paid the ultimate price for our imperfections, dying on the cross so that we can be accepted into God's presence.

This means we need not worry about presenting ourselves to God exactly the way we are—raw, imperfect, and unfiltered. Why? Because when God looks at us, He does not judge us by our looks and our physical traits, unlike what the world does. Instead, He looks at the heart. And, because of Jesus, we have His stamp of approval. There will be no more need for filters.



JUST AS YOU ARE

The next time you are about to upload a photo onto Instagram—whether it's filtered or #nofilter—take a second to reflect on God, who loves you and accepts you just the way you are. Will you turn to Him and accept His love for you?

If this writing has touched you in any way, we hope you will pick up a Bible and take a look at what it says about God and the good news He is giving you. You can also contact a Christian friend or a nearby church to speak to someone who can tell you more.



YOU CAN ALSO VISIT US AT

WWW.YMI.TODAY

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT GOD AND
TO READ THE MANY RESOURCES
WE HAVE TO HELP YOU.**



RELEVANT & INSPIRING

YMI (Why Am I?), a part of Our Daily Bread Ministries, is all about Christian young people making God's Word known through their God-given talents.

We exist so that God's Word will be shared from one young person to another.

Write to us at: contribute@ymi.today

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