

Christ

An Introduction to The Beauties of The Lord

Introduction

At some junction in David's life, perhaps as age began to become a reality to him, I imagine he was sitting musing on, "What are the priorities of life?" As he pensively contemplated the deepest yearnings of his heart, he wrote, "One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple" (Psa. 27:4). The same words are spoken seemingly by Israel, "Let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us" (Psa. 90:17).

To the natural unredeemed individual, and even to a present world addictive saint, there is no beauty in the Lord. The attitude could be that when they get to Heaven they will be changed, but in this present world which lieth in wickedness, there is little desire to be disassociated with it.

God the Father holds such a high estimation of Christ that the Holy Spirit will not reveal His beauties if they are to be viewed as Esau did with his birthright. In the meditation of the Lord, we are faced with the beauty of holiness, exhibited in the many facets of the Lord's demeanour.

What Is Beauty?

The expression, "The beauty of the Lord" occurs twice, (Psa. 27:4; 90:17) and on one occasion we read, "He is altogether lovely" (Song of Sol. 5:16). The beauty of the Lord is His holiness and it is the only attribute in triplicate occurring twice (Isa. 6:3; Rev. 4:8).

- a) What is meant by "The beauty of the Lord?" It is the beauty of holiness manifested in His attitude toward God, His balancing perfections, His compassion, etc. It is much more than the beauty of character, features or moral idealisms. It is the perfection of every feature in itself and with all others.

The beauty of the Lord is in contrast to:

- a) Moses, who was a "proper child" (Heb. 11:23) was "a goodly child" (Ex. 2:2), and yet had the heart of a murderer (Ex. 2:12) and spoke rashly (Num. 20:10).
- b) David, as a teenager, was "fair" (1 Sam. 16:12; 17:42), yet had a heart that responded to the promptings of Satan in his sin with Bathsheba and numbering the people (2 Sam. 11:2-4; 1 Chron. 21:1).
- c) Joseph was spoiled and a very proud young man (Gen. 37:3, 9-10). The second dream was not from God for his mother died before they went to Egypt and God is never wrong in His revelations.
- d) Solomon was so very wise, yet behaved so foolishly in later years (2 Chron. 1:11; 1 Kgs. 11:1).
- e) Peter is so courageous in speech, yet so carnal in speech (Matt. 16:16; Matt. 26:74).

No matter how these men looked outwardly, their temperament and attitude at times were not honouring to God. Their beauty was external and undoubtedly in some measure, also their character. In contrast to our Lord, the more we ponder the Lord's motives, goals, activity and words, the more His beauty shines forth. When the Spirit of God causes the heart to "indict a good matter" (Psa. 45:1), there is a developing appreciation of a little of His beauties, and the heart responds, "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips" (Psa. 45:2); "He is altogether lovely; the chiefest among ten thousand" (Song of Sol. 5:16; 5:10); and "Thou art fairer than the children of men" (Psa. 45:2).

In what ways was the Lord beautiful?

The simple answer is, He was beautiful in everything. His entire being was beautiful to God. Every work was beautiful, every expression, tone of voice, look, and listening was beautiful when speaking about the Lord as the personification of the beauty of holiness (1 Chron. 16:29; 2 Chron. 20:21; Psa. 29:2; 96:9). Referring to the excellences of an unblemished moral life (1 Pet. 1:15, 16) and governmental perfection (Rev. 4:6, 11), He is perfect (Psa. 19:7); His ways are perfect (Job 22:3); His knowledge is perfect (Job 37:16); His way is perfect (Psa. 18:30); His law is perfect (Psa. 19:7); all creation cries of His perfection (Isa. 41:20). Perfection to God is complete conformity to His holiness (Psa. 145:17).

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The question of old is, “Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?” (Prov. 20:9). God answered, “There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not” (Eccl. 7:20). The stark reality is the natural earth-born man is marred by sin, is distorted in his judgments, earthy in his perception and judgments, and sinful to the core of his being. Consequently, the natural man is not beautiful to God. Furthermore, not only is the individual not beautiful to God but there is no beauty in the Lord for the natural man to desire. When the Lord saves an individual it is not only a miracle with the spirit, it can change the individual’s interests and appetites. When a cannibal gets saved he no longer eats people. With some people, a long durational habit can take time, and with some, they can never stop. Like Israel, God let some of the enemies stay so that Israel would be constantly reminded of their dependence on Him. This is the teaching of Judges 1:19; 34; Romans 6:6-14.

- a) At the moment of salvation, the spirit is made alive and the individual begins the journey of coming to God and to see that which David longed for, the beauty of the Lord.
- b) At the moment of salvation, the individual is given the life which can start to appreciate the true beauty of holiness and therefore the beauty of the Lord.

The beauty of the Lord in two levels

No matter how greatly the saintliest individual in any time frame, in any sphere, on any continent or country sees and appreciates the beauty of the Lord, they all would acknowledge it is like seeing through a glass darkly (1 Cor. 13:12). The difference between our appreciation of the Lord now and when we shall see Him is beyond comprehension. Paul could not describe the fulness of Heaven's glories, how much less could we unveil the glories of the Lord of glory?

Only God the Father knows Christ and appreciates the richness of His perfections. God declares by His prophet Isaiah, “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth” (Isa. 42:1). When He was being baptized the Father spoke, and in so doing gave His verdict on the past approximately thirty years saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:17; 2 Pet. 1:17). God found pleasure in the Son of His love, not because He was that, but because He was a man living solely for the glory of God, a man from despised Nazareth whose single focus was the manifestation of God and the Father. Every movement and word brought glory to God.

In truth but in poetic language, God says, “He is Altogether Lovely The Fairest of ten thousand” (Song of Sol. 5:16). In Hebrew, “Altogether lovely” is one word and indicates delightfulness. The word “Fairer” (Psa. 45:2) is a double adjective, He is beautiful, beautiful. Uniting these clauses it can be said, “He is gloriously delightful in beauty unsurpassable”.

His is true beauty and perfection that is unchangeable, for any change would automatically result in a defect. The most beautiful and enduring things on earth have inherent weaknesses that make them subject to corrosion, etc. In contrast, there was no sin, hereditary weakness or tendency to sin in our Lord. In Him there was no “law of sin and death” (Rom. 8:2), nor “the old man” (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9). In Christ there was never the urge of the flesh to respond to sin in any way, thus His beauty was and is permanent. Furthermore, nothing external could ever tarnish or defile Him, for although He lived amid a perverted sinful people, His purity remained unblemished. In a world of coarseness, His life was one of finesse. Surrounded by self-centredness, He lived for others. This beautiful man began His day in spotless purity and ended it as it had begun. What a man!

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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