

Bolt Your Eyes to the Beauty of God!

A Meditation on Psalm 27:4

Geoffrey R. Kirkland

Christ Fellowship Bible Church

1. God's Beauty Is Pleasant.

The beauty of God pleasantly satisfies the hearts of His people. God infinitely delights and supremely gladdens the hearts of those whom He has redeemed. God's worth and His glory manifested in His works, ways, and Word brings happiness to His people. An infinity of delights that are infinitely beautiful and infinitely mysterious are wrapped up in the pleasantness of God. To be God is to be eternally pleasant and beautiful. God satisfies. God pleases His people. God satisfies and pleases His people because He is infinitely satisfied and pleased in and of Himself. God lacks nothing. He is eternally pleasant and because He Himself is the source of all divine and eternal pleasures. The beauty of God is worth meditating on in this age for the beauty of God will consume and bring pleasure to His people for endless eternities to come in glory. The beauty of God beckons the people of God to gaze upon God in a relentless pursuit of God's pleasures. True pleasures are found in God. Eternal pleasures are sourced in Christ.

2. God's Beauty Is Perfect.

David looks to one place where he can find hope and consolation in the midst of distress. The one place is the temple of the Lord so as to gaze upon God's beauty. God has revealed Himself perfectly in His earthly dwelling. God's perfect beauty is perfectly manifested even though it cannot be exhaustively comprehended. In heaven, the people of God will not exhaust infinite knowledge of God but this does not mean that believers will not be perfect. So it is with God's perfect beauty. God reveals Himself beautifully, perfectly, and supremely and this rightly consumes the thoughts and affections of the man of God. To consider anything other than God and be satisfied and delighted in it is thus to dwell upon an imperfect manifestation of beauty. Why settle for a lesser beauty when the source of perfect, eternal, supernatural, and supreme beauties reveals Himself in the person and work of Jesus Christ most magnificently demonstrated at the work of redemption at the cross! "The infinite agreement, harmony, and manifestation of God's perfections is in fact is the beauty of Christ" (John Owen).

3. God's Beauty Is Manifested in Christ Jesus.

The place where God revealed His glory and His beauty is the Temple of the LORD. The psalmist longed to dwell in the house of the Lord and inquire in God's Temple. The fullness of God's beauty takes residence in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. God dwelt among His people in the Tabernacle in Israel's early history. Centuries later, the Lord Jesus Christ came in the fullness of God and tabernacled among His people. The great God of glory in His magnificent splendor and perfections takes bodily form and manifests Himself to people on the earth that He created. To see the beauty of God, one must gaze at the beauty of Jesus Christ. To understand the magnificent wisdom, the supreme tenderness, the unswerving justice, the unstained holiness, the Fatherly affection, the compassionate forgiveness, and the eternal worth of Jesus Christ is in fact to see God Himself. The supreme delights of God find themselves taking on flesh and blood when Christ lived and walked and healed and redeemed people on earth. In considering the scene of heaven in the early chapters of Revelation, the Apostle John reveals the

One who sits on heaven's throne is none other than the Lamb who had been slain. He deserves worship. He is the very definition of supernal beauty. To gaze upon the beauty of God is to look at, ponder at, marvel at, and stand in awe of the Sovereign Lord Jesus Christ.

4. God's Beauty Can Dispel Fears.

In a world clouded by trials, tribulations, troubles, and tragedies one must examine the glory of God in all its beauty so as to dispel fears. Gazing at God's beauty shatters anxiety's chains. The claws of fear are loosened when the beauty of God comes to the forefront in a Christian's mind. Fears that are dwelt upon that result in overwhelming anxiety and troubles reveals a small god that is not trusted. On the other hand, when a supreme God infinitely powerful and supremely providential pervades the heart, mind, soul, and affections of someone, fears seem to fade away. One of the greatest ways to dispel fear is to gaze at the infinitely brilliant beauty of God as He has revealed Himself. Fears on earth, fears of the future, fears of the past, fears of the unknown, fears of wars, fears of enemies, fears in the supernatural realm are all quieted at the divine hush and the Fatherly care of God's glorious beauty. To fear is to not be consumed enough with God's all-satisfying beauty. To dispel fears, one need not go elsewhere than the amazing beauty of God.

5. God's Beauty Is Found in the Corporate Gathering.

When the psalmist found himself in dire situations with enemies rising up deceitfully, murderously, and powerfully, he took comfort in the single-minded focus of being with God in the house of the LORD. The house of the Lord was where God met with His people. It was where the people of God came to worship the Living God. In other words, in the moment of despair, the sufferer did not isolate himself from the people of God but enjoined himself to them all the more. In hours of hostility, the Christian must draw near to the throne of grace in not forsaking the assembly of saints so as to enjoy the great congregation worshipping God together. Fears should breed fellowship. Hardship should encourage fellowship with God's people. God reveals Himself specially when His elect people come together for corporate worship to hear from Him in His Word, to take hold of Him in fervent prayer, and to uplift His name in shouts of praise. God's beauty is recognized when His people come together corporately to praise, honor, adore, thank, confess, and hear from Him!

6. God's Beauty Is the Most Supreme Affection to Long for.

A lesser delight will always prompt the searching for something more satisfying. A lesser delight must be replaced by the greatest delight. The greatest affection one could long for is the utter satisfaction found in God and in Him alone. To find delight and joy in anything else is to find delight and joy in a lesser thing. The supreme joy and the supreme delight is God alone. Therefore, the most noble pursuit in life is to hunger after and seek greater affections for God alone. Whatever will enhance the knowledge of God should guide decision-making. Whatever will delight the soul the greatest and bring an indomitable happiness should be sought after. This greatest pleasure is in fact the beauty of God. To find contentment in anything else is to settle for a lesser pleasure. And furthermore, if any lesser pleasure is sought after and attained, it will always leave the soul longing for something else, something greater, something supernatural. That which will never leave the soul insufficiently satiated is the beauty of God's revelation. God's beauty contained in His majestic greatness and in His magnificent Son is the most supreme affection that a human being can long for.

7. God's Beauty Is Unquenchable.

The beauty of God cannot be extinguished for it always reveals itself in endless forms. No person can ever fully understand the infinite ways in which God's beauty appears. The flowers in creation, to the stars in the galaxy, to the ants in a forest, to the planets in orbit, to the people walking on earth, God's beauty is found in limitless ways. None can understand the infinite beauty of God even in one way because the infinite mind of God is behind every created thing and God's mind is inexhaustible. The beauty of God cannot be stopped. It cannot be stifled. It cannot be hushed. It cannot be ignored. All people see the beauty of God and sinners who live in the darkness and thus hate the Light are those who despise God's beauty even though they recognize it. They suppress the truth that is revealed by God Himself within their own hearts. The beauty of God revealed in the fact that they in fact know about the one, true God is evidence of the amazing glory of God. The beauty of God that existed from all of eternity past and has revealed itself in manifold ways in space and time will remain for endless eternities in the future. No one can quench God's sublime beauty. No one can exhaust the beauty of God in His triune essence, in creation, in redemption, and in His infinitely good and sovereign ways.

8. God's Beauty Is Triune.

Perhaps the most glorious way that God's beauty has eternally been revealed is in the Trinity. The trinity, or perhaps the Tr-unity, consists of three co-equal, co-eternal, co-existing beings within the one, true and living God. They have eternally lived together and eternally manifested themselves as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. There is an unbreakable, family-like, divine love within this triune relationship that no man has fully grasped nor will ever grasp in its entirety — even in eternity. The beauty of God is fully expressed in God the Father who has eternally loved the Son and designed to redeem a particular group of elect people from before the worlds began. His wise plan, His sovereign decrees, His providential workings, and His fatherly mercies arise from His beautiful character. The incarnation of the second member of the Trinity, born of a virgin, born under the law, clothed fully in human flesh as a real man, who accomplished perfectly atonement for the sins of His sheep is most wonderfully revealed in Jesus Christ's beauty. His humanness, his proneness to temptation, his weakness in human flesh, and his impeccable sinlessness magnifies the mysterious beauty of His godliness. The regenerating work of God the holy Spirit, the irresistible drawing of the darkened sinner to salvation, the imparting of life, the empowering for godly works, the filling and controlling of a born-again saint, and the glorious inheritance that He guarantees for the elect magnificently reveals the beauty of the third member of the Trinity. The three members of the Tri-une God who have eternally existed together, fully enjoying fellowship with one another, fulfilling different roles within the Tri-une relationship and yet glorying in perfect equality and harmony emphasizes the beauty of the one true God of the Bible.

9. God's Beauty Is Fully Realized in Heaven.

Every Christian though complete because of his union *with Christ* is plagued with the already/not yet reality. There is an already element of the Christian life where the saved sinner can enjoy the benefits of being reconciled to God, the enjoyment of worship, the enjoining to a new master, the completely new nature. And nevertheless, there is this 'not yet' element to the Christian life where the believer has not yet fully experienced all of the eternal blessings and realities of salvation. This will find its truest and fullest expression in glory. The Christian is one who loves

God, cherishes Christ, and savors the Spirit who redeemed him from hell. The believer basks in the beauty of God and longs for more of God's beauty to be brazened on his heart and mind. He longs for greater affections for Christ and more of an unswerving love for God alone. This realization of God's beauty — though experienced in part now — will become a full reality in glory. At the moment of eternity, the saint will experience the beatific vision where he will see God as He really is, be like Christ, and be glorified and perfected never to sin again. The worship of God and the manifestation of the beauties of God will be revealed for eternities in heaven. Though the saint will be perfect in heaven the beauties of God will never fully be comprehended in heaven. The inexhaustible wonders of God and the bottomless sea of God's glory will ever amaze the believer in heaven. Though the beauty of God will be realized in heaven, the beauty of God will not be exhausted in heaven. Though the beauty of God will be accurately seen in heaven, the beauty of God will not be fully understood. The beauty of God that will find perfect expression and revelation in heaven will satisfy, enjoy, and delight the hearts of every glorified saint for endless ages to come.

10. God's Beauty Lessens Anxieties Here and Fixes a Heart on Heaven.

To fasten one's mind on the excellencies of God is to dispel worldly anxieties. To worry is sin. To be enslaved by a consuming fear is sinful. The expulsion of anxieties comes when a regenerated soul anchors his heart on God's sovereign, unchanging, and eternal character. In so doing, the believer separates himself from the consuming worries of this world and affixes himself on the beautiful God who will be eternally and most gloriously manifest to him in heaven. To cast out consuming concerns demands something greater and more satisfying to replace it. The greatest object a child of God can meditate upon is the beauty of God. The more one is enraptured with the beauty of God the more his anxieties will be lessened and the more his heart will be lifted high to heaven. The heart of man zealously pursues to be satisfied in something. God hard-wired us that way. Every person has a built-in, sovereignly-given craving to worship. Every human heart is a worshiping heart. And thus, every heart was meant to find its greatest joy and delight in craving for, finding nourishment in, gazing satisfyingly, and hungering incessantly for the beauty of God. When this kind of passion pervades the believer's heart, worries wane and heaven captures the mind, heart, and affections.

11. God's Beauty Is Available to God's Redeemed Child.

Every person sees God's revelation in creation. Every human being is, thus, without excuse and accountable to God for His divine revelation to them. Every human heart has the law of God written on it and its evidence is their own conscience that either accuses or excuses them. But to every child of God belongs such a heavenly blessing. Every redeemed child has the capability — which a nonbeliever is not able to have — of seeing, savoring, enjoying, and delighting in the loveliness of God. The beauty of God's predestination, the delights of Christ's atonement, and the pleasantness of the Spirit's drawing and sealing work ignites the Christian's soul with a burning love for God! The word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. Those in the darkness hate the Light and do not come to the Light. But the child of the Risen King, on the other hand, who has been elected, purchased, and eternally protected by God is able to see the beauty of God in the face of Christ through the precious Word of God. It is the Word that speaks about Jesus Christ. It is Christ, the magnificent God-Man who fully reveals God. He is the fullest revelation of God to mankind. And every single Christian can enjoy the beauty of God by gazing at Christ through the Word of God for enjoyment, pleasantness, and blissful satisfaction.