

What She Said, Week 7
Wednesday

God's Beauty and Godly Beauty, a Beautiful Partnership
Godly Beauty: Adorned with Worship
Awara Fernández, Guest Writer

Today's Treasure

Jesus said to them, "Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me."

Matthew 26:10

Today let's dig into that sometimes confusing verse, "Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised." (Proverbs 31:30) When we hear the word "vain," most likely we think of the definition "having an exaggerated sense of self-importance. Conceited." (Vocabulary.com) But, the word is from the Latin *vanus* which means "empty." This is what the writer of Ecclesiastes has in mind when he laments, "Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities. All is vanity" (Ecclesiastes 1:2). He is not saying that everything is conceited, but that everything is fleeting, like a vapor or breath. So, it's not that (external) beauty has no value, but that it's temporary. It doesn't last. In contrast, remember from yesterday's study that a gentle and quiet spirit, fear of the Lord, is imperishable. This is borne out by Jesus' words about the woman in Matthew 26:10 who poured very expensive perfume over Jesus' head, "Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached, throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her"! (26:13) And, two thousand years after her beautiful act of worship, her story is still being told. That's beauty that lasts!

When the church worships rightly, she is beautiful with a lasting, eternal, beauty. Jeremiah 31:4 says, "Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall *adorn* yourself with tambourines and shall go forth in the dance of the merry-makers." (emphasis mine) To adorn something means to make it more beautiful. Where else do we see tambourines and dancing? After the Lord had rescued the Israelites from the Egyptians, "Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing." Miriam led the women in worship as she sang, "Sing to the Lord for He has triumphed gloriously; The horse and the rider He has thrown into the sea." (Exodus 15: 20,21)

We worship in response to what the Lord does. Notice that the Israelites were celebrating that the Lord had rescued them from the Egyptians. And, the woman in Matthew was worshipping Jesus, as He said, by preparing Him for His burial, which would take place because of His work on the cross. Until the Lord returns, all of our worship will take place under the Shadow of the Curse. The greater the darkness, the brighter the light of our worship will shine.

Several years ago, my granddaughter, Eva, who was alive and healthy on the Thursday before her birth, was strangled on her umbilical cord the next day, Friday. But, none of us knew that. When she was born on Sunday, she was already living in heaven with her Lord while our family plummeted down to the deepest, darkest valley of the Shadow of Death. One morning, a few days after Eva's funeral, I was upstairs in my daughter Kathryn's home, when I heard a sweet voice singing. I stopped what I was doing and listened as Kathryn, Eva's grieving mother, sang, "Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father. Morning by morning, new mercies I see. All I have needed Thy hand hath provided. Great is Thy faithfulness Lord unto me." I was stunned. "All she has needed, Lord? Really? She just buried her daughter!" I thought to myself even as I knew that Kathryn had stepped onto holy ground, and she had a heavenly audience.

LIFE-GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT

Have you ever considered how extraordinary worship offered during suffering is? Thomas Paine said, "It is dearness alone that gives everything its value." While angels continually worship God, they cannot worship while they suffer because they do not suffer. Surely, they marvel at such a strange offering. And, our window of opportunity to offer this gift of worship is finite. Once we step into glory, our suffering will be over. Dear one, take any chance you are given to worship while you suffer. The sweet perfume of this worship is exceedingly precious to our Lord. (*Great is Thy Faithfulness* text by Thomas O. Chisholm)

PRAYER

Faithful Father, thank you for providing all we have needed. Give us eyes each morning to see the beauty of Your new mercies for the day.