

Week 5 – Beauty to Unveil

Read

Beauty is an essence that dwells in every woman. It was given to her by God. It was given to you. Surely you would agree that God is nothing if not beautiful.

All around us God's creation shouts of his beauty and his goodness. The silhouette of lace on a barren tree draped with ice, the rays of sun streaming forth from a billowing cloud, the sound of a brook trickling over smooth stones, the form of a woman's body, and the face of a child anticipating the arrival of the ice-cream truck all speak of God's good heart if we will have but the eyes to see. The coming of spring after a hard winter is almost too glorious for a soul to bear. God's beauty is lavished on the world.

As we tried to illumine in chapter 2, Beauty is powerful. (You might want to read that passage again.) Beauty may be the most powerful thing on earth. Beauty speaks. Beauty invites. Beauty nourishes. Beauty comforts. Beauty inspires. Beauty is transcendent. Beauty draws us to God. As Simone Weil wrote, "The beauty of the world is almost the only way by which we can allow God to penetrate us . . . Beauty captivates the senses in order to obtain permission to pass straight through to the soul . . . The soul's inclination to love beauty is the trap God most frequently uses in order to win it."

God has given this Beauty to Eve, to every woman. Beauty is core to a woman—who she is and what she longs to be—and one of the most glorious ways we bear the image of God in a broken and often ugly world. It's messy to talk about. It's mysterious. And that should not surprise us. Women are creatures of great mystery; not problems to be solved but mysteries to be enjoyed. And that, too, is part of her glory.

Women want to impact their world for good. As co-rulers with Adam, we are created to do so, and one of the key ways we influence our world is in making it a more beautiful place to live. We decorate our homes. We put flowers on the table. Pioneer women brought china teacups into the wilderness, and I bring a pretty tablecloth to eat on when my family camps. Some of us wear perfume, paint our toenails, color our hair, and pierce our ears, all in an effort to be ever more beautiful.

Beauty is the most essential and, yes, the most misunderstood of all the feminine qualities. We want you to hear clearly that it is an essence every woman carries from the moment of her creation. The only things standing in the way of our beauty are our doubts and fears, and the hiding and striving we fall to as a result.

A woman in her glory, a woman of beauty, is a woman who is not striving to become beautiful or worthy or enough. She knows in her quiet center where God dwells that he finds her beautiful, has deemed her worthy, and in him, she is enough. In fact, the only thing getting in the way of our being fully captivating and enjoyed is our striving.

“He will quiet you with his love” (Zeph. 3:17). A woman of true beauty is a woman who in the depths of her soul is at rest, trusting God because she has come to know him to be worthy of her trust. She exudes a sense of calm, a sense of rest, and invites those around her to rest as well. She speaks comfort; she knows that we live in a world at war, that we have a vicious enemy, and our journey is through a broken world. But she also knows that because of God all is well, that all will be well. A woman of true beauty offers others the grace to be and the room to become. In her presence, we can release the tension and pressure that so often grip our hearts. We can also breathe in the truth that God loves us and he is good.

This is why we must keep asking. Ask Jesus to show you your beauty. Ask him what he thinks of you as a woman. His words to us let us rest and unveil our beauty.

Reflect

1. How has beauty been defined for you in the past?
2. Though neither may be easy, is it easier for you to discuss your outer beauty or inner beauty? Why?
3. In what ways do you—or would you like to—intentionally cultivate beauty in your life?

Scripture

Psalm 34:5,8

5 Those who look to him are radiant;

their faces are never covered with shame.

8 Taste and see that the Lord is good;

blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.