

Session 2 Transformed by Delighting in God’s Beauty

I. THE PURPOSE OF THIS COURSE

- A. There are several purposes for this class. First, to convince you that seeing the beauty of Jesus is not a peripheral subject, but is *essential* to walking in victory, especially in this hour of history. Second, that this is within reach of every believer (not just a special few). Third, I want to expose the lie that Jesus is boring. He is indescribably fascinating. When John the apostle saw Jesus in Revelation 1, he was overcome with His glory and majesty and fell before Him, overwhelmed.
- B. My prayer is that God would raise up theologians of the beauty of God—those who seek to behold the beauty of God, asking the Spirit to show them new things about Jesus’ heart and leadership.

II. DAVID’S DETERMINATION TO SEARCH OUT GOD’S BEAUTY

- A. One of King David’s lifelong goals was to intentionally search out God’s beauty (Ps. 27:4).
⁴One thing I have desired...all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord. (Ps. 27:4)
- B. This verse has been significant to the IHOPKC Missions Base community. Our mission statement is “*The IHOPKC community exists to partner in the Great Commission by advancing 24/7 prayer and proclaiming the beauty of Jesus and His glorious return.*” My prayer is that desiring to behold and proclaim God’s beauty be part of each one’s mission statement for their life and ministry.
- C. I was surprised to learn that the one thing that David, the great warrior King of Israel, sought was to behold God’s beauty. I would have thought it would have been to defeat the enemies of God.
- D. I see David as a “theologian of God’s beauty.” His resolve to pursue God’s beauty in a primary way was a remarkable advance in the kingdom of God.
 - 1. David was the first to cultivate this new view of the world and life and new approach to God.
 - 2. The Spirit will emphasize this in the generation that Jesus returns. David did this over 3,000 years ahead of this time. Thus, he was a prophetic down-payment of this in salvation history.
- E. ***All the days of my life:*** We are to be intentional in searching for God’s beauty all of our days. The beauty of God is a subject we will never ever outgrow. The living creatures around the throne never outgrow their fascination with it. It is impossible to exhaust it.
 - 1. A billion years from now we will see new things about Jesus that will fascinate our heart.
 - 2. We are to be intentional in searching for God’s beauty in the whispers, glimpses, and evidences of it as seen in creation, redemption, His leadership over history, and when He inspires godliness or heroic virtue in people who act in courage and sacrificial love.

F. **Delight:** In Psalm 34, David said something else that was surprising and startling. In the overflow of discovering God's beauty, David discovered delight in his relationship with God. No one in the Old Testament emphasized the beauty and the pleasure in relating to God or the call to enjoy God. The biblical vision of the Christian life is a lifestyle of enjoying God by delighting in His beauty.

⁴Delight yourself in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. (Ps. 37:4)

G. The good news is that our relationship with God is more than dutiful service with sacrifice. It is interacting with the most beautiful Being imaginable who longs to reveal His beauty to His people.

H. *"I do not want to simply live the Christian life, I want to love living it"* **Sam Storms**

I. Paul agreed with David, but Paul used words such as *excellency* and *glory* instead of *beauty*. We can use those words interchangeably in this context.

⁸I also count all things loss for the excellence [beauty] of the knowledge of Christ. (Phil. 3:8)

1. Paul gave up everything when empowered by God's beauty.

2. Pray, "Let me see what Paul saw about You, and I will be able to respond like Paul responded to You," or "Spirit, let me see and feel what You see and feel when You look at Jesus."

J. Paul elaborated on the power of beholding the Lord's beauty, emphasizing its transforming power. Beholding or seeing God's beauty changes our emotions. It transforms us from the inside out.

¹⁸We all...beholding...the glory [beauty] of the Lord, are being transformed... (2 Cor. 3:18)

K. **The beauty narrative:** embracing the truth about a beautiful God who has a beautiful plan for our life, one in which He uses His power to impart incorruptible beauty into our life that continues forever (Rom. 8:28). David was intentional to focus on the "beauty narrative" of his life (27:4).

L. **The dark narrative:** The enemy wants to shift our life into a negative narrative of how bad we are treated, how hard things are, what we do not have, how much we fail, and how worthless our life is. We must refuse to let a dark narrative dominate our heart and internal conversation.

III. JESUS IMPARTS HIS BEAUTY

A. The beauty that Jesus possesses is the very beauty that He imparts to His people. It starts in this age and comes to the fullness in the age to come.

¹The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me...³to give them beauty for ashes. (Isa. 61:1-3)

1. The Lord imparts His beauty into lives that have been burned out on sinful passions, leaving only a "heap of ashes" in their life. We must not neglect this dimension of our salvation.

2. Beholding God's beauty includes more than seeing His beauty in creation, redemption, and His leadership of history, but it includes the beauty that He imparts to His people.

- B. **Imparted beauty:** Our choices for love and godly character are aspects of His beauty imparted in us. We embrace what the Word says about how God sees beauty in us—in a gentle and quiet spirit.

⁴ ***...let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. (1 Pet. 3:4)***

1. **Hidden beauty:** Peter provided significant insight when he taught on the hidden person of the heart. God sees incorruptible beauty in His people. We do not see it, but God sees it. We only know that God esteems humility as beautiful because the Scripture says He does.
 2. **Very precious:** The beauty of humility is very dear to God. Jesus sees our lives so differently than we do. Many believers mostly see their life as weak, broken, irrelevant, and as a failure.
 - a. Jesus sees beauty growing in them. He imparted it to them as part of His gift of salvation—to begin to cultivate beauty in our life in this age and then to bring it to fullness in the age to come.
 - b. Every choice for humility or to respond with a quiet spirit is beautiful to God.
 3. **Incorruptible:** God sees humility as incorruptible beauty or beauty that will never diminish. It will last throughout the age to come as there is continuity between this life and the age to come.
 4. **Gentle spirit:** Some translate this as a humble or meek spirit.
 5. **Quiet spirit:** to trust the Lord's leadership especially in times of difficulty. To have a quiet spirit is in contrast to being fearful. It speaks of trusting Jesus' leadership in our life.
- C. The beauty of our life is "hidden" in Christ—it will be fully manifested when Jesus returns. When Jesus appears, then we will see the full story of our life.

³ ***...your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear [the hidden glory of God in you will be seen] with Him in glory [beauty]. (Col. 3:3-4)***

1. Much of the beauty of our life is hidden from us in this age.
2. The challenge with the beauty that God imparts in us is that it is hidden from our five senses, but the Word says it there. If the Word says it, then that must be our confession or testimony.
3. We are to be intentional in searching for God's beauty because it is hidden. This is a glorious, new way of looking at life. The Lord has the final word over what I look like to Him.
4. We do not have to wait until the resurrection to rejoice with confidence over the real storyline of our life under a beautiful God who imparts beauty in our life.
5. Many believers are not focused on this facet of the grace of God. God sees beauty in them that they cannot see. They live in despair because they cannot connect with what is happening in their life from God's point of view.

IV. GOD'S BEAUTY IS EXPRESSED IN HOW HE THINKS AND FEELS.

- A. God's beauty is expressed in how He thinks and feels—He has the ultimate beautiful mind.
 - 1. How He feels—He delights in His people and in showing them tender mercy, etc.
 - 2. Nobody thinks about us as tenderly as He does. He loves forgiving and giving mercy. He delights in relating to His people.
- B. God's beauty is expressed in how He looks.
 - 1. In this age, He had no special beauty that somebody would look at Him a second time.
 - 2. In His resurrected body, His appearance is beautiful beyond description (Revelation 1).

V. GOD'S BEAUTY IS EXPRESSED IN WHAT HE DOES

- A. God's beauty is expressed in what He does—His creation, redemption, leadership, and how He inspires humans to act and interact.
- B. God's beauty is expressed in what He did and does in His redemption— the salvation story.
- C. God's beauty is expressed in what He did and does in His leadership over history.
- D. God's beauty is expressed in what He did and does in creation. God is beauty itself. All the beauty that we see in this world is a dim reflection of the source of ultimate beauty—God. David exhorted us to look up to the sky to see God's beauty in "His heavenly art gallery" (Ps. 19:1).

¹*The heavens declare the glory [beauty] of God. (Ps. 19:1)*

- E. God's beauty is expressed in how He inspires humans to act and interact. He inspires virtuous acts of courage and heroic love. He will fill the earth with love, kindness, and humility.
- F. The beauty of God is seen in various abilities and activities:
 - In sights, sounds, fragrances***—colors, brilliance, music, melodies, harmonies, fragrances
 - In knowledge***—We are moved by advances in science, medicine, technology, architecture, etc.
 - In noble character***—life stories of courage, generosity, compassion—bios, novels, movies, etc.
 - In human abilities***—singers, musicians, athletes, writers, artists, composers, producers
 - In society***—when justice prevails and reconciliation occurs between races, nations, etc.
- G. We are to search diligently for the knowledge of God's beauty as for hidden silver. There are hints, whispers, and evidence of it in many places. All David's days, he was intentional to search for it in God's creation, redemption, leadership, and the way He inspired people to act.

⁴*If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; ⁵Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God [God's beauty]. (Prov. 2:4-5)*
- H. Proverbs 2 calls us to search for it with the *promise* that we will discover it if we are diligent. If we are casual in our search and intentionality to see God's beauty, then we will only see a glimpse here and there. If we are diligent all our days, then we will see much more.