

THE BEAUTY OF JESUS

By

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As Jesus appeared to men, he had no beauty that men should admire (Isa. 53:2). Yet, in the eyes of the Father He was “altogether lovely,” “the fairest of ten thousand” and the only one of Whom He said, “I am well pleased.”

There are millions of words published today on almost every subject that could possibly appeal to a Christian: coping with problems, improving your image, evangelizing, building the church, and hundreds of others. But on thing is lacking. Not much is said about Jesus and His person, His holiness, His completeness, His perfection, and His **beauty**.

Beautiful in His Work. Every week we pick up the Sunday newspaper and read the glowing praise of the work of artists, musicians, community workers and public leaders. But no one else in the world has ever come close to the masterwork of Jesus.

To the ignorant and unbelieving He was a sad victim of cruel injustice. But what He actually did was so great and beneficial that no one will ever be able to express it completely.

By His life of total conformity to the will of God He lived over 33 years without sin, and thus became the sinless One Who could offer Himself as a perfect sacrifice for us who have sinned horribly and deserve death. By His submission to the cross He voluntarily accepted our sin, something we would never have imposed upon another. By taking the initiative out of our hands and making the sacrifice of His own will He made forgiveness available to all who are willing.

In dying for us He took the punishment we justly deserve and removed the thing most dreaded and feared by all reasonable people, the final judgment.

Without His work of a sinless life and a voluntary death, we would all be destined to die in the lake of fire. Therefore, the work of Jesus is the most beautiful work of all history.

Beautiful In His Power. The same Lord who had power to create, to command the wind and waves, to control the demons of Satan, even to give life to the dead, also had power to destroy. He cursed a fig tree and within hours it was dead.

On that dark night in Gethsemene, when His enemies came with swords and clubs to capture him like an animal, He willingly submitted to them. He told Peter that if He needed defending, He could call forth thousands of mighty angels enough to annihilate the whole Roman army. He was fully conscious of this power to save Himself as He yielded to the vile and corrupt mob. Such restraint of power has never been equaled.

He could have used His power to force all people to acknowledge and obey Him, but in doing so he would have destroyed our wills. He could have used His power to destroy all enemies, but instead He patiently suffered under their hate and opposition. He used his power, not for His own pleasure nor to escape suffering, but for the benefit of those in need. Even now He exercises His power only for that which will bring about the ultimate eternal good —salvation from sin and death.

In the last day He will exercise His power in two beautiful ways. He will call forth the dead and give glorious life to all who have believed and served Him. He will withhold nothing in granting glory, beauty, and joy to His people, not making us inferior to Him, but sharing fully His own glory and beauty. John writes that “we shall be like Him” and Paul writes that we will be “joint heirs” with Him. Then He will exercise His power in great majesty as He does the very thing that people so often long for and pray for, the elimination of all sin and evil from the universe. Paul said that “he will judge the world in righteousness.” The end of that judgment will be the total destruction of all the ungodly, leaving a world “wherein dwells righteousness” (II Peter 3:7, 13). What greater act of power can we imagine than one that completely removes all evil and ugliness forever and brings the beauty and holiness of the Creator into complete view and accessibility.

The Beauty Of His Holiness. Beauty as portrayed in the world is highly sensualized and used as the primary tool to incite lust and unholy thoughts. Idols are provided by celebrities, and success is desired above respect. Eros is the motivating factor, not agape. The worldly would rather be known as sexy than holy.

The fact is that true beauty is the purity and wholeness which the Creator designed in His own infinite wisdom. Jesus is unique in that, even in the wicked and corrupt world, He maintained perfect purity and exemplified a wholeness of life — life as God intended — a wholeness of thought and action, nothing lacking and nothing superfluous.

It was the beauty of His holiness that made men fall down before Him in worship, and it is in upholding His beauty that we may draw contrite men to Him today.

How shall we weather the storm of our times? How shall we live in peace and godliness in the midst of a “crooked and perverse generation?” It cannot be by looking to the wisdom of the world, which is foolishness to God, nor by looking to the power of the world, which is wielded by the corrupt, nor by looking to the beauty of the world, which generates lust, nor by looking to the promises of the world, which always fail. We can remain steadfast only by “looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:2).

The world excels in misery and ugliness, and tends to mold us to its image, but we have this excellent alternative: the beauty of Christ. “But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, which comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (II Cor. 3:18).

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