Imparted Beauty

I. REVIEW: DAVID'S DETERMINATION TO SEARCH OUT AND DELIGHT IN GOD'S BEAUTY

A. One of King David's lifelong goals was to intentionally *search out God's beauty (Ps. 27:4)*. He prioritized seeing God's beauty and delighting in his relationship with God. The biblical vision of the Christian life is a lifestyle of enjoying relationship with God by delighting in His beauty.

4 One thing I have desired…all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord. (Ps. 27:4)

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

B. God's beauty (glory, majesty) speaks of all that is attractive about Him. It includes how He thinks and feels, what He does, how He looks, and the power and knowledge He possesses. His beauty is displayed in His creation, redemption, leadership, and even how He designed humans to interact.

4 If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; 5 then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God [including God's beauty]. (Prov. 2:4-5)

C. ***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).

D. ***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.

E. The way to delight in Gods beauty***: 3 activities (Ps 145:5-12)***

1. ***Activity #1: Meditating on God***
2. ***Activity #2: Blessing God***
3. ***Activity 3#: Declaring to others***

F. ***Principles of Beauty:*** "*Beauty is the battlefield where God and Satan contend…for the hearts of men.*" Dostoevsky

1. *Delighting in the beauty of Jesus is essential to walking in victory*. (Ps 27:4)
2. *Beauty will be our stability. (Is 33:6)*
3. *God's beauty brings lesser things into perspective.* (Phil 3:8)
4. We are *transformed by beholding beauty*. (2 Cor 3:18)
5. *Jesus imparts His beauty to His people.*

II. JESUS IMPARTS HIS BEAUTY

A. 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. 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.

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

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.

4…let it be the <u>hidden</u> person of the heart, with the <u>incorruptible beauty</u> 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. ***Incorruptible:*** God sees humility as incorruptible beauty, or beauty that will never diminish. It will last throughout the age to come. There is continuity with this life in the age to come.

3. ***Gentle spirit:*** Some translate gentle as humble. Every choice for humility is beautiful to God.

4. ***Quiet spirit:*** Having a quiet spirit speaks of trusting the Lord's leadership in our life, especially in times of difficulty, rather than being fearful.

5. ***Very precious:*** The beauty of humility is very dear to God. Jesus sees our lives so differently from us. Many believers see their life mostly as weak, broken, irrelevant, and a failure. Jesus sees beauty growing in them. He imparted it to them as part of His gift of salvation.

C. The beauty of our life is "hidden" in Christ it will be fully manifested when Jesus returns in glory. Only after Jesus appears at His second coming, will we will see the full story and glory of our life.

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

1. ***<u>then you also will appear:</u>*** the hidden glory of God in you will be seen with Him in glory.

2. The challenge with the beauty that He imparts to us now is that it is hidden from our 5 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 our life. The Lord has the final word over what we look like to Him.

4. We do not have to wait until the resurrection to rejoice with gratitude over the real storyline of our life, because our life is ordered by a beautiful God who imparts beauty in our life.

5. Many believers do not realize that God sees beauty in them. They live in despair, because they cannot connect with what is happening in their life from God's point of view.

III. TRANSFORMED BY THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD

A. Paul elaborated on the transforming power of beholding the Lord's beauty. Beholding God's beauty includes seeing His beauty in creation, redemption, and His leadership of history, but it also highlights the beauty that He imparts to His people—the "beauty narrative"

18But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory… (2 Cor. 3:18)

B. ***Unveiled face:*** We come with confidence without any shame because Jesus paid the price.

C. ***Beholding the glory of the Lord:*** Beholding God's glory includes focusing on (study, meditate, encounter) His character (emotions), power, and wisdom as expressed in creation, redemption (the cross), and His leadership over history. We also "behold His glory" in the many small ways that He provides for, inspires, and uses us (i.e., giving expression to the Spirit's impressions on our heart).

D. ***Being transformed into the same image:*** *The "beholding and becoming" principle:* Whatever emotion we behold in God's heart is imparted to our heart. God empowers us to love Him by revealing Himself as One who loves us.

19We love Him because [we understand that] He first loved us. (1 Jn. 4:19)

E. The quality of our beholding the Lord is "dim" beholding like a mirror in the ancient world. We all "gaze dimly," i.e. we lack clarity and focus in the process of coming before Him in prayer and meditation. This is the only type of beholding that God requires from us.

12For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. (1 Cor. 13:12)

F. ***From glory to glory***: Our growth is progressive and usually in small steps. Do not try to measure how much you are growing. Many overlook the small expressions of God's glory in their life.

IV. SEEING THE LORD GOD GRACIOUS

A. Isaiah was undone when he saw the Lord's holiness or transcendent beauty (6:1-5). Seeing God's holiness empowers happy holiness in affectionate obedience with a spirit of gratitude and humility.

1…I saw the Lord sitting on a throne…2Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!"… 5 I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone…for my eyes have seen the King…" (Isa. 6:1-5)

B. Moses prayed to see God's glory. God answered by promising to proclaim His Name to him. Proclaiming the Lord's name includes His character (personality, emotions, and moral qualities).

18Moses said, "Please, show me Your glory." 19Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you..." (Ex. 33:18-19)

6 And the LORD passed before him [Moses] and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth… (Ex. 34:6)

1. ***The LORD God:*** First, God revealed His authority to direct the nations and our lives.

2. ***The Lord is merciful:*** He does not give us what we deserve. The Lord is tender in relating to us in our weaknesses and sin. God's tender mercy is the first aspect of His personality that He revealed to Moses.

   18Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity…He delights in mercy. (Mic. 7:18)

3. ***The Lord is gracious:*** He is generous in how He evaluates our weak efforts to obey and serve Him. He understands the weakness of our frame and does not reject us because of it. He graciously uses and rewards us for every act of obedience (Mt. 10:42; Heb. 6:10). This dignifies every day of our life.

   10He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities… 14 He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. (Ps. 103:10-14)

4. ***The Lord is longsuffering:*** He bears long with us instead of "writing us off." God suffers long with our sinful responses to Him. He does not lose enthusiasm for us when we fail.

5. ***The Lord abounds in goodness:*** He overflows with good plans for us. He will not withhold His best from us in relationships, ministry assignments, finances, etc. (Ps. 84:11).