

# Psalm 27:4

## *God is Beautiful*

### Open your Bible to...

Ps. 27:4      One thing I have desired of the Lord,  
That will I seek:  
That I may dwell in the house of the Lord  
All the days of my life,  
To behold the beauty of the Lord,  
And to inquire in His temple.

### Pray

### Intro

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If I was to ask you to describe something beautiful you might point to...

Face of a laughing child.

The glitter of light that flashes from a diamond.

The powerful muscles of a well-trained athlete.

Rembrandt's masterful use of light and darkness in his painting of the storm that Jesus calmed on Galilee.

And while all of those things and many more are in fact beautiful they are but a pale reflection of Him Who is most beautiful...

The God Who created all this beauty!

So, in our next installment in our series on the attributes of God we now consider what to many may be a surprising attribute and that is His beauty!

Because it's been almost two months since our last installment in this series it would be good to remind you that the goal of our study of God's attributes is to know Him better...

...because I contend that if to know Him, is to love Him, then to know Him better is to love Him more!

## The Beauty of God ~ a definition

✓ The Beauty of God

Let's begin with a definition;

When we speak of the beauty of God we refer to that aspect of His being which, when perceived by His creatures (that would include you and me)...

...provides us with a sense of overwhelming pleasure & delight!

And, we would add—such pleasure and delight that infinitely exceeds all of the pleasures and delights that we might experience in Creation!

Ex. Consider Eternity

The Bible tells us that in eternity we will see God's face (ref. Rev. 22:4).

When we do our hearts will be filled with an unrestrainable joy and a sense of such pleasure that it must be expressed in our continual worship of God!

Even today though we cannot see Him when we think rightly of God, the beauty of His character should produce

within us a strong desire (a passion really) for Him, and to serve Him, and to know Him better!

Jonathan Edwards may have described God's beauty best when he penned...

*“For as God is infinitely the greatest Being, so He is allowed to be infinitely the most beautiful and excellent: and all the beauty to be found throughout the whole creation is but a reflection of the diffused beams of His Being Who hath an infinite fullness of brightness and glory; God...is the foundation and fountain of all being and beauty.”*

Or we might say, as Steve DeWitt so eloquently put it...

*“God’s beauty is the bouquet of His perfections in His Person, unveiled in His purposes, and displayed in His glory!”*

So we acknowledge that God is beautiful in every expression of His Being...

...including what we can see with our eyes and experience of His Nature.

## The Biblical Foundation for God's Beauty

✓ God's beauty

We look now to God's Word to provide us with a biblical foundation for His beauty, for of course anything we believe to be true of God must be firmly rooted in His revelation of Himself.

So in addition to our opening scripture in Psalm 27:4 where David expressed his longing to see the beauty of the Lord...

...we find that the writers of Scripture throughout the ages have marveled at, desired to see and to experience the fulness of God's beauty.

For example, in Isaiah 33:17 the prophet describes the beauty of Christ that the saints will see during His Millennial reign, writing...

*"Your eyes will see the King in His beauty..."*

The writer of Chronicles calls us to...

*"Give to the Lord the glory due His name;  
Bring an offering, and come before Him.  
Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!"*  
*1Chronicles 16:29*

To which the psalmist cries out...

*"And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us."*  
*Psalm 90:17*

And Isaiah prophecies...

*“In that day the Lord of hosts will be for a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty to the remnant of His people...” ~ Isaiah 28:5*

That is, Isaiah reveals to us that the saints who will inhabit the Kingdom Age will be able to see God the Son with their own eyes...

...no longer through a darkened veil as we see Him now but with perfect clarity we shall see Him in all of His glory, majesty, and beauty!

So we conclude with confidence that God's beauty is well established by the testimony of His Word.

## The Implications of God's Beauty

✓ The implications of God's Beauty

When we stop to consider the beauty of God our thoughts should lead us to a number of logical inferences including that...

1) He is the source of all beauty

That is, since God is the Creator, He must be the Creator of all beautiful things (ref. Ecc. 3:11), it follows that He is the source of all that is beautiful.

While God is not the Creation, nor is He in the Creation, nonetheless His beauty is reflected in all that He has made!

For example, when we consider the beauty of the Earth that He has created for our home we see His beauty reflected in...

Every sunrise and sunset that sets the sky ablaze with color.

Every rainbow that brightens the dark sky after a storm.

The assorted flowers that Jesus Himself said are arrayed in even greater glory than king Solomon in his royal splendor!

While many have grown dull in their thinking and daily either miss or ignore the reflection of God's beauty in the world that we see around us...

...we must remember that while the starry night is beautiful to behold from the perspective of earth that no such beauty exists on any of the 700 quintillion planets that spin in the universe!

Rather, those that we have been able to observe in any detail are nothing more than a vast wasteland of tortured soil beaten by a constant barrage by meteorites.

Instead of a blue skies the atmospheres of other planets are either completing lacking or comprised of choking toxic gases that cannot sustain life.

There are no flowers, no grass, no blossoming trees, no purple carrots, no waterfalls, nothing at all on any other planet to stir the heart of man nor bring joy to his soul.

Other planets are nothing more than a harsh dull environment that stands in stark contrast to the beauty of the world that God has lovingly made for our enjoyment.

A beauty that points us to Him Who is the source of all this beauty!

Because all that beauty is intended in part to cause us to stop and ponder...

*“Why all this unnecessary beauty?”*

To which we would respond...

*“It is a testimony of God’s creative genius by which He reveals His love for Mankind that we might both enjoy this good Earth that He has provided for our pleasure and that we might seek to know Him Who made it so.”*

Ap. Stop and smell the roses!

For those of us who know Christ may I encourage you to stop—daily and smell the roses (ex. CCBC).

Don’t rush through life like the ungodly who have eyes to see but cannot see the beauty around them.

Don’t be like the people Hellen Keller, herself born blind lamented over when she penned...

*“...those who have eyes apparently see little. The panorama of color and action which fill the world are taken for granted. It is a great pity that in the world of light the gift of sight is used only as a mere convenience, rather than as a means of adding fullness.”*

Let’s be intentional to daily stop and thank God for all of the beauty in the world that He made for us...

...beauty that reminds us that God is the source of all the beauty we behold!

2) His beauty is evident in every aspect of His Being

That is, when we consider any of God's attributes we must remember that because He is One, without any division or contradiction within Himself...

That every attribute of God, including His beauty, exists and is expressed in perfect harmony with every other attribute of His Nature.

For example...

Because He is infinite, without beginning or end it follows that His beauty is endless!

Because He is immutable—unchanging, it follows that His beauty never fades.

Because He is perfect, it follows that there is nothing that can be added to His nature that might enhance His beauty in any way because His beauty is already flawless.

And so it goes with all of each and every one of His attributes!

Therefore, because His beauty is perfect, unchanging, and infinite we are reminded that we will spend all of eternity exploring the wonder of that endless beauty...

...every moment in eternity a new revelation of just how beautiful He is!

Which leads us to our next point...



- 3) His infinite beauty provides us with infinite reasons to worship Him!

Think about what is in store for us in Heaven...

Because His beauty will provide us with a sense of overwhelming pleasure and delight, and since God's beauty is infinite...

...it follows that for all of eternity we will be continuously overwhelmed with greater, and greater pleasure and delight as God reveals some new aspect of His infinite beauty that was previously unknown to us!

As He does we'll stop and look at one another in bewilderment and say...

*"What!?"*

...and then with minds freshly blown we'll joyfully toss our crowns once more to His feet and worship Him anew as we celebrate the latest manifestation of His infinite beauty!

## Objections to the Beauty of God

### ✓ Objections

You might think that no one would find God's beauty objectionable, however, a couple of issues have been raised to challenge the idea that God is beautiful.

So let's respond to those objections.

#### 1. Beauty is subjective

The first objection to God's beauty is raised most often by non-believers who generally reject all absolute statements. Typically they'll say something like...

*“Isn’t beauty in the eye of the beholder? If so, then beauty is subjective, thus it cannot be applied to God Who you claim is the ultimate objective reality.”*

In other words, the unbeliever who rejects absolute truth thinks this is a clever way to tie the Christian into a philosophical knot!

Ap. Our response

While there is some truth to the statement that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, nonetheless there is universal agreement among all people that some things are in fact beautiful...

...like a rainbow.

Furthermore, it is universally agreed by all people that some things are more beautiful than others...

Like roses, which everyone agrees are more beautiful than rotting garbage!

Therefore, there must be an objective standard by which we judge the beauty of one thing, roses for example to be more beautiful than something like garbage.

Since God is the ultimate objective reality then, He must logically be the objective absolute standard by which we judge what is beautiful!

2. The Bible says that Jesus wasn’t beautiful

The second objection is sometimes advanced by Christians, or those who have some familiarity with the Bible who point out that Isaiah tells us that Jesus wasn’t much to look at!

Sure enough the prophet tells us...

*“He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.”*  
*Isaiah 53:2b*

Since Isaiah tells us that Jesus wasn't beautiful to look at, and Jesus is God, then the objection is raised that God cannot be beautiful.

Ap. Our response

We would respond that the critic only has part of the story correct.

That is, we agree with Isaiah that during Jesus' earthly ministry at His 1<sup>st</sup> Advent that there was nothing spectacular or unusually attractive about His physical appearance.

However, this fits perfectly with what we know of Christ Who according to the apostle Paul willingly laid aside all His divine attributes, including His beauty when He took on human flesh.

Yet Isaiah also tells us in a number of scriptures that at His 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent the true beauty of Jesus' divine nature will be clear for everyone to see! In Isaiah 4:2 we read..

*“In that day the Branch of the Lord (Jesus) shall be beautiful and glorious...”*

So the fact that Jesus wasn't beautiful during His earthly ministry in His physical appearance...

In no wise diminishes the beauty of His divine nature that He has possessed for all of eternity past.

That He manifests today in Heaven.

And that we will behold in the eternal Kingdom!

So, the objections raised by critics are found to be without merit, thus we conclude that God is beautiful just as the Bible says!

## The Blessings & Benefits of God's Beauty

### ✓ Blessings & Benefits

With each of the attributes of God that we've studied so far it has been fairly easy to discern the blessings and benefits of those attributes in our lives.

#### Ex. Blessings and benefits

When we think of God's omnipotence we can easily make the connection that because He possesses all power we understand that He is well able to protect us!

When we consider His omniscience we recognize that since He knows all things, including what will happen tomorrow...we don't have to worry about our future!

However, when we consider the beauty of God we may find ourselves struggling a bit to connect His magnificent splendor to any real benefit that we might receive...

...other than the pleasure of beholding such beauty.

Yet, I would suggest that His beauty provides us with some very real, very tangible, and eternal blessings including the following...

1) God's beauty reminds us that you are beautiful

The Bible teaches us that every person has been created in the image of God...God Who is beautiful.

Thus, no matter how much of God's image has been marred by sin—both by the sin nature that we inherited from Adam and by our own willful disobedience.

Nonetheless to whatever degree we reflect God's image there is still beauty to be seen in each of us.

Therefore, we ought never to think of ourselves as unattractive, nor wish that God had made us differently, for in His great wisdom He has made you and me to reflect some unique expression of His infinite beauty!

And when looking at others we ought always to look for and to recognize the beauty of God that can be seen in every person we meet!

It might be in their contagious smile, or the evidence of God's spirit shining out from their eyes, or the hope and encouragement they bring to every relationship.

Every person has the potential to reflect some aspect of God's beauty because everyone is made in His image.

Ap. Do you want to be more attractive?

Don't panic! I'm not here to sell you makeup or to promote some diet plan!

Rather, we all recognize that God's beauty is more than something we behold with our eyes...

...it is also His beautiful nature that we experience when we come to know Him!

Thus, if we want to become more attractive then we must make it a priority to develop the eternal spiritual beauty of the inner person to better reflect the image of God!

That's exactly what Peter had in mind when he wrote...

*“Do not let your adornment be merely outward—  
arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting  
on fine apparel—rather 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.” ~ 1Peter 3-4*

While we understand that Peter was writing to Christian women I believe there is a spiritual principle that can be applied to both men and women...

...that is to recognize that the inner beauty of a godly character is far more attractive than even the physical beauty of the Shulamite who captured the affection of king Solomon!

Ap. So, give yourself to developing that spiritual beauty that will never fade by...

...spending time every day with Him who is beautiful!

We do that by studying His word, time in prayer and daily surrender to the work of the Holy Spirit to transform our inner man to better reflect the image of Christ! (ref. 1John 3:2).

2) God's beauty reminds us that He's building a beautiful home for us!

The attribute of God's beauty assures us that the Eternal home, that He is preparing for us will be the most beautiful place we

could ever dream of! A place that the apostle John described in Revelation 21-22 where we find...

A multi-terraced city with Jesus' throne set on the top tier and a river flowing out from that throne, which then cascades down each level of the city in brilliant rainbows.

A city where we have access to the both the crystal-clear River of Life and the eternally fruitful Tree of Life.

A city whose foundations and walls are built from the most precious and colorful gemstones known to man.

A city where the light of God's glory shines through each of those gemstone walls and foundations to create a rainbow prism that shimmers in every direction throughout the new heavens!

A city that John metaphorically describes as "*a bride adorned for her husband*" (ref. Rev. 21:2) communicating to us that just as bride on her wedding day is unmatched for her beauty...

...that so too the Eternal City that God has prepared for us will be unrivaled for its beauty as the city will perfectly reflect, refract, and disperse the brilliant rays of God's beauty!

Ap. Brothers and sisters, are you looking for that city?

In the "Hall of Faith" recorded in Hebrews 11:9-10 we read of Abraham that...

*"By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God."*

What we know of Abraham is that he was fabulously wealthy and had he wanted too, could have settled down and built himself a beautiful palace to dwell in.

But we're told by the author of Hebrews that he was content to live in a tent because his heart was set on the City that God is building for His people...

...a place of such unimaginable and eternal beauty that Abraham didn't want anything in this world to compete with his longing for that City.

Ap. May that be an exhortation to us!

That we would not invest all of our time and resources chasing after the fading beauty of this world but instead...

...give ourselves to the service of God Who is preparing a place for us that is more beautiful than we can imagine!

- 3) God's beauty reminds us that He will fashion all of our hurts and pains into something exquisite!

Listen to what God has promised to do in our lives; Isaiah tells us that He will...

*“...console those who mourn in Zion,  
to give them beauty for ashes...”  
Isaiah 61:3a*

This promise of God may be a little bit vague to you and me reading it as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century American.

However, it would have been crystal clear to Isaiah's original Jewish audience who understood the picture language he used.



So let me unpack the text so that we can appreciate and apprehend this extraordinary promise that God has made to us.

Ex. Ashes

Ashes are often used as a symbol of grief because they represent desolation and ruin.

Thus in many cultures when a person is sad or overcome with grief they throw ashes on their head, or rub them onto their forehead to display the depth of their pain.

They are literally wearing a symbol of their hurt, suffering and pain on their heads.

One prominent example in the Bible is found in the life of Tamar, one of king David's daughters who was after she raped by her half-brother Amnon, and then cast out of his house like trash...

*“...put ashes on her head, and tore her robe of many colors that was on her, and laid her hand on her head and went away crying bitterly.”*  
*2 Samuel 13:19*

The ashes on her head represented her great sorrow, distress, and mourning, as she considered her future...

A future that in her mind held no hope because now she saw herself as ruined...

...a woman who was robbed of her virginity, her dignity, and any opportunity for future happiness.

Ah, but Isaiah tells us that God has promised to give Tamar and all of us who trust in Christ, who like Tamar have suffered great hurt...

*“beauty for ashes”*

What’s fascinating is that the Hebrew word that is translated as “*beauty*” in our Bibles actually means...

*“An ornament, a tiara, a crown, an elaborate headdress”*

In other words—listen saints—God has promised to take all of our pain, sufferings, sorrows, and hopelessness...

The ruin and desolation of our lives and turn those ashes that we that once wore on our foreheads...

...into a beautiful headdress, a shining ornament, a brilliant tiara, a crown that we will wear on our heads for eternity!

An eternal symbol to remind us that not only is God is able wipe away our tears and erase the pain we suffered in life...

...but that He is also able to make something beautiful out of our pain and suffering!

Ap. What about me?

Someone here this morning might be thinking...

*“But pastor I’ve suffered so much, I’ve been the victim of so many crimes and violated in unspeakable ways...*

*...how can God make anything beautiful out of the ashes of my life?”*

Others may be thinking...

*“But I’ve sinned against God and man in so many ways, my hands are stained with the blood of the innocent...”*

*...how can God turn the ruin that I’ve made of my life and others into something beautiful?”*

Great questions! Without diminishing the depth of your pain I would simply ask that you consider the pain, sorrow, and suffering that Jesus endured on the Cross, and ask you...

Has not Jesus suffered more than you, and me, and all of humanity combined?

Did He not take on the full weight and pain of every sin and evil ever done and experienced by people when He was tormented, beaten, nailed to the Cross and forsaken by the Father?

Did He not bear an ugly crown of thorns on His head—thorns that represented the curse of sin and sins evil manifestations.

And is He not now seated in Heaven “*crowned with glory and honor*” (Hebrews 2:9)?

Wearing a beautiful crown in place of the thorns that He wore when He suffered here on the earth?

The point is that just as God’s power to raise Jesus’ from the dead guarantees our own victory over death...

...so too we can trust that God will make something beautiful out of our hurts and sorrows even as He has done for Jesus.

How? Because God is beautiful and He has promised to turn even the worst of our experiences into something beautiful.

## Close

✓ God is Beautiful

Ap. You don't have to wait for eternity!

God's promise is sure, but you don't have to wait until you enter Heaven to have your sorrow, pain and suffering turned to joy...

How can I be sure?

Just ask ("Fan Ti Kim Foo"). Oh you may not know her by that name, but maybe by the name given to her by the media... "napalm girl."

She was the little Vietnamese girl photographed running from her home naked after being firebombed.

Her back and arms covered with napalm leaving her a lifetime of pain and horrific scars.

But Phan found relief from her pain—both the physical and emotional scars when she met Jesus on Christmas Eve 1982. Listen to her testimony...

*"When I woke up that Christmas morning, I experienced the kind of healing that can only come from God. I was finally at peace."*

And speaking of that terrible day when she was firebombed she says...

*“Today, I thank God for everything—even for that road. Especially for that road...(because) I realize there is nothing greater or more powerful than the love of our blessed Savior.”*

Since God was able to turn the ashes of Phan’s life into a beautiful testimony so too is He able to release you and me from the bondage of all the hurt, pain and suffering that we’ve endured in life—to turn the ashes of our life into something beautiful...

...a testimony of His love, grace, and healing.

And He is able to do that because God is beautiful.

*Lord help me to see beauty in the world, to appreciate it, and to be thankful for it as it all reminds me of You...the source of all beauty, the God Who is beautiful.*