Session 3 The Beauty of God: Transformed by Seeing Who God Is

I. OUR LONGING TO BE FASCINATED

A. One distinctive use of the Song of Solomon is to see, enjoy, and be fascinated with God’s beauty.

B. God created us with a longing to be fascinated or awestruck and filled with marvel and wonder. We cannot repent of our longing for fascination. It is a significant part of our creative design. We will either satisfy it in God or in darkness. The secular entertainment industry has identified, targeted, and exploited this God-ordained longing to their profit and our ruin.

C. We long to be filled with endless wonder. God placed a sense of wondering in the core of our created design. Such fascination is what humanity was created to behold and enjoy. The redeemed can experience this in a measure in this life and will experience its fullest measure for all eternity.

D. Isaiah prophesied that the Spirit would emphasize Jesus’ beauty in the generation He returns. The Holy Spirit will fill the earth with the expression of God’s love and beauty at the end of the age.

17 Your eyes will see the King in His beauty… (Isa. 33:17)

E. One of King David’s lifelong goals was to encounter the beauty of God regularly.

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

F. The Spirit is described as searching or discerning the deep things of God’s being that He may reveal them to us. We have the privilege of searching out and discovering an infinite God.

10 The Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God… 12 We have received…the Spirit … that we might know the things that have been freely given to us. (1 Cor. 2:10-12)

G. The Spirit escorts us on a divine treasure hunt into the beauty of Jesus. He takes the things Jesus is thinking and feeling, and He reveals them to us. This is divine entertainment at its highest.

13 He [the Holy Spirit] will guide you into all truth… 14 He will glorify Me [Jesus], for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. (Jn. 16:14)

H. We have a beautiful God beckoning us to encounter His beauty. It takes time and energy to begin plumbing the depths of God. It takes time and energy to pray, fast, and study Scripture.

I. Without a sense of awe in our relationship with God, we will live spiritually bored. A spiritually bored believer is weak and more vulnerable to Satan’s tactics. A fascinated believer is strong.

J. Longing for beauty and fascination is the battleground of the Church.

1. A fascinated believer is spiritually strong and lives with a greater measure of protection from Satan’s schemes because the believer is preoccupied with the beauty of God.
II. THE FRAGRANCE OF JESUS (SONG 1:3)

A. The fragrance of a rose comes from its internal qualities. In a similar way, the King’s perfume in the Song speaks of His internal life—what He thinks and feels. As the Father “pours forth” (reveals) the beauty of Jesus’ name, it causes believers (the virgins) to love Jesus.

3Because of the fragrance of Your good ointments [perfumes, NIV], Your Name is ointment [perfume, NIV] poured forth; therefore the virgins love You. 4Draw me away! (Song 1:3-4)

B. Because of the “fragrance of Jesus’ perfumes” or His internal qualities—two things will occur.

1. First, God will pour Jesus’ name forth—He will exalt, promote, and reveal it to the nations. The Father “pours forth” His name like fragrance that will spread to many. We have access to the beauty of Jesus which has enthralled the angels in heaven from eternity past.

9God has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name… (Phil. 2:9)

2. Second, because Jesus’ beauty is accessible (poured forth by the Spirit), many will love Him. The knowledge of God awakens love in our heart for Him. Jesus is zealous to declare God’s name or personality, knowing it will awaken love in our heart for God (Jn. 17:26).

26“And I [Jesus] have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You [the Father] loved Me may be in them…” (Jn. 17:26)

III. THE BRIDE FEASTS AT THE KING’S TABLE (1:12-14)

A. The Bride sees Jesus as One who so values her that He went to the cross (embraced myrrh, 1:13) to win her and as the One who is as delightful to her as fragrant flowers (henna blooms, 1:14).

13A bundle of myrrh [burial spice] is my Beloved to me, that lies all night between my breasts. 14My Beloved is to me [as delightful as] a cluster of henna blooms in the vineyards of En Gedi. (Song 1:13-14)

1. Myrrh: This was a gum resin taken from a shrub-like tree to make a fragrant perfume; it was used to prepare a body for burial (Jn. 19:39-40). Jesus was given myrrh at His birth as a prophetic symbol of His death, and myrrh was offered to Him on the cross (Mt. 2:11; Mk. 15:23). It can speak of death and trials. Jesus’ death was a fragrance to God (Eph. 5:2).

2. Henna blooms: A henna was known for its beautiful flowers and for its delightful fragrance used as a perfume. The Bride saw the beauty and delightfulfulness of Jesus (1:14). She compared Him to beautiful, fragrant henna flowers in full bloom. He is delightful to all who see the truth about Him. He is not the boring God that religion falsely proclaims Him to be.
B. **Beautiful**: The more the Bride sees of His beauty and love, the more she enjoys her relationship with God. When we see Jesus as beautiful and delightful, then obedience seems reasonable.

16**Behold, You are beautiful, my Beloved, truly delightful. (Song 1:16, ESV)**

IV. **MEDITATING ON THE BEAUTY OF GOD**

A. God’s beauty speaks of that which is attractive about Him. It includes Who He is, the power He possesses, how He thinks and feels, what He does, how He looks, and much more.

1. **God’s appearance**: the splendor of His appearance (eyes like fire, face like the sun, etc.)
2. **God’s knowledge**: His omniscience (infinite knowledge, wisdom, and understanding)
3. **God’s power**: His omnipotence (infinite power or sovereignty)
4. **God’s being**: His omnipresence (His self-existence, self-sufficiency, immutability, etc.)

B. **Personality of God**: Who He is, how He thinks and feels and what He does. This includes the Father’s affection for Jesus (His exaltation, redemption), His people (their partnership and obedient love), creation (earth, animals, sky, angels, New Jerusalem, etc.), and His eternal kingdom (the administration of Jesus’ rule including the progressive triumph of His kingdom on the earth). His beauty is heightened as we see it in context to His responses to our sinfulness (Ex 34:6-8).

C. In his book, *The Evidential Power of Beauty*, Thomas Dubay traces the signature of God through the physical world. Ranging from the cosmic rotation of planets to the makeup of earth’s atmosphere, through the wonders of biology on the molecular level and down to the behavior of atomic particles, Dubay sees the revelation of the beauty of God. Reading this book will help you to marvel at the intentionality of God and His commitment to beauty.

D. He makes things beautiful because He is beauty. Since His creation speaks of Him, to encounter these tokens of beauty is to catch a glance at the beautiful God.

E. “God Himself is the absolutely original pattern of all other beauty…Beauty is what God is. His wisdom is beautiful wisdom, His power is beautiful power, His justice is beautiful justice, and His love is beautiful love. But what makes each of these attributes beautiful is not merely that they are infinite and eternal…The attributes of God derive their beauty from their relationship to each other. It is the peculiar proportionality and interplay and harmony of all God's attributes…that constitutes God’s beauty, and makes Him the foundation of all the beauty in the world.”

*(John Piper)*

F. “Every experience of beauty points to infinity.” “The criterion of truth is beauty.” *(Balthasar)*
G. Song 5:10-16 gives us the greatest poetic description of Jesus’ beauty in Scripture. It focuses on His leadership (power and plans) and personality (mind and emotions). The Spirit combined metaphors of the human body (His head, hair, eyes, cheeks, lips, hands, body, countenance, legs, and mouth) and the Jerusalem temple (gold, precious stones, ivory, cedars of Lebanon, spices, myrrh, and pillars of marble) to convey ten attributes of Jesus by images that were familiar in that day.

10“My Beloved is...chief among ten thousand. 11His head [leadership] is like the finest gold… 13His cheeks [emotions] are like...banks of scented herbs…14His hands [works of power] are rods of gold…15His legs are pillars of marble…16Yes, He is altogether lovely. (Song 5:10-16)

H. Jesus’ leadership is compared to finest gold (v. 11), His works of power to hands like gold and legs like marble (v. 14-15), and His personality with beautiful emotions to beds of spices (v. 13).

I. Revelation 4 is one of the greatest passages on God’s beauty. What God put around His glorious throne expresses His beauty. I refer to Revelation 4 as the “beauty realm of God.”

3He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne...like an emerald. 4Around the throne were twenty-four thrones... I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their head.

5From the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. 6Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal...around the throne, were four living creatures... (Rev. 4:3-6)

J. In God’s court, I identify four categories, each having three themes (totaling twelve themes)

1. The beauty of God’s person: how God looks, feels, and acts (Rev. 4:3)
2. The beauty of God’s people: the Church enthroned, robed, and crowned (Rev. 4:4)
3. The beauty of God’s power: manifestations of power in lightning, thunder, voices (Rev. 4:5a)
4. The beauty of God’s presence: His fire on lamps, seraphim, and the sea (Rev. 4:5b-7; 15:2)

V. THE END-TIME CHURCH WILL BE FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

A. Isaiah prophesied that the Spirit would emphasize Jesus’ beauty in the generation He returns. Jesus is called the Branch of the Lord (Isa. 4:2; 11:1; 60:21; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Zech. 3:8; 6:12). His name is called Wonderful because He fill the hearts of people with great wonder (Isa. 9:6).

7“Your eyes will see the King in His beauty…” (Isa. 33:7).

2In that day the Branch of the LORD [Jesus] shall be beautiful and glorious… (Isa. 4:2)

6...for unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given...His name will be called Wonderful… (Isa. 9:6)

B. The Spirit is raising up those who will proclaim the riches of Jesus. The most neglected subject in the kingdom of God is God Himself. The subjects taught about most are good topics, such as leadership, economic principles, relationship skills, ministry skills, how to be happier, etc.
8 To me…grace was given, that I should preach…the unsearchable riches of Christ. (Eph. 3:8)

C. We are to be diligent in our pursuit of God, willing to pay any price in seeking for more of God. There is a deep correlation between the amount of time we spend with Jesus and the measure of encounter that we have with Him. The knowledge of God is the highest and yet most difficult reality in the Spirit to lay hold of. It is the most powerful and enjoyable reality and is what Satan attacks the most. It is the Mt. Everest of the kingdom of God. God gives more based on hunger. God will give more revelation of Himself to those who are hungry for Him.

4 If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures... (Prov. 2:4)

D. One of Paul’s primary prayers for the Church was to receive revelation of God.

17 “…that the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened…” (Eph. 1:17-18)