

Why are we drawn to beautiful things? To creating art? To feeling the sense of awe and wonder? Creativity doesn't help us survive and until recently in world history, it didn't put food on the table. Yet, human history is filled with story tellers, cave drawings, music, and fables. Human beings are naturally creative and every culture has their own artists and storytellers. Why? This is a big question because if humans are merely products of evolution and natural selection then it doesn't make sense that we'd be drawn to beauty. We'd be drawn much more to utility...in other words, we shouldn't care what something looks like as long as it gets the job done.

Yet, we do care. For instance, have you ever heard of the 'golden rectangle?' There's a reason nearly every device you read on is shaped like a rectangle. From your phone, to your computer screen, to a book, our brains are wired to more easily process information if it's on a rectangular device or paper. Biologists call this the "golden rectangle" and it's been around for thousands of years. You could create more efficient shapes to put information on but it would stress your brain out to read from a circle or a triangle.

Or how about that in every culture, the people considered the most attractive are those with the most symmetrical faces? Then there's the studies that show your levels of kindness and empathy go up when you have an experience of awe and wonder. So, when you go on a walk in nature or go to an art museum or watch an awe-inspiring movie, you become more hospitable and generous and empathetic.

The need for beauty to engage our heads, our hearts, and our hands is universally recognized. But why is this 'need' there in the first place? How did it get wired into our brains?

Our Creator placed it in us. Our love for beautiful things is one of the ways we bear the image of God, because our God is a **Glorious Creator Who Creates Beautiful Things**. He takes a blank canvas of nothingness and speaks into existence this Universe with all of these patterns and shapes, flowers and animals with a wide array of colors, mountains and canyons, oceans and rivers, stars and galaxies and nebulas, He creates all of these things not just to provide for us but to also take our breath away. So we could have these moments when the beauty of the world would make us pause, not just because of its grandeur but because of what that beauty is saying: I am created by a glorious God. This is what David is saying to us in **Psalm 19**. Let's look there together and see that:

Our Glorious Creator Creates Beautiful Things

1. Creation's Beauty declares God's Glory (19:1-6)

How does it do this?

a. *Beauty draws us out of ourselves (1-2)*

- i. The heavens declare the glory of God. The heavens and skies: there are 100 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy and there are 100 billion galaxies. Why did God do that? So, we would be amazed at the Universe outside of ourselves.
- ii. Or to put it another way: No one looks at the Grand Canyon and thinks about how great they are...that's by God's design. He doesn't want us to be self-involved all the time.
- iii. And when we are truly enthralled with something beautiful, it will always take our minds off of ourselves and onto that object. It naturally makes us self-forgetting.

b. *Beauty speaks to our heart (3-4)*

- i. I like the way the NLT translates **19:3-4** this just a bit better than the ESV.
They speak without a sound or word;

their voice is never heard.

Yet their message has gone throughout the earth,
and their words to all the world.

- ii. This translation gives a clearer view of what David means: the natural world doesn't audibly speak to our ears but it does emotionally speak to our hearts.
- iii. Maybe it's helpful to think about God like an artist. ***What's the purpose of art?*** One definition I found is that *art is designed to communicate the artist's stories, beliefs, character, and emotions in a way that stirs up emotions and reactions in others.*
 - 1. It can be as simple as a mural on the side of a building creating pride in your neighborhood. Or as complex as a good movie forcing you to sit and think long after you finished watching it or a painting bringing up memories of your childhood. When you experience beauty, it's never because someone convinced you it was beautiful. It's because you **felt** it.
- iv. And **Psalm 19** is saying, the beauty of nature testifies to the glory of its Creator not through words we can hear but through feelings we experience. And...

c. God's Beauty speaks to all of us (5-6)

- i. The sun shines on all of us...every person has seen the beauty of creation and has felt/heard the beauty of God. Everyone sees that there is a **Glorious Creator Who Creates Beautiful Things.**
- ii. Now, if this is true, then why do we not think of God much more than we do? If the beauty of Creation declares God's glory, then why are their atheists and agnostics? Why do so many of us go a whole day and never give Him a thought?

2. We Ignore Creation's Voice (look at Romans 1:18-25)

The apostle Paul tells us two reasons we don't see the beauty of creation and immediately think about God.

a. We suppress the truth about God

- i. We're easily distracted people.
 - 1. Busy schedules and tasks that consume our time and energy.
 - 2. Screens that constantly grab our attention. **How long can you sit in silence before pulling your phone out? I'm at 30 seconds, tops.**
- ii. We've built lives where it's difficult to sit and appreciate beauty:
 - 1. Living in the city already makes it difficult. But we don't help ourselves by creating any margin in our lives to sit and observe the world around us.
 - a. We ignore Sabbath rest and personal pursuit of God.

b. We worship the created thing instead of the Creator

- i. When we talk about objects of worship, we talk about those things we believe have ultimate power and influence over our lives.
 - 1. For thousands of years, it was the Sun, Moon, and the stars.
 - 2. Today, it's sex and relationships and romance and approval. It's money and power and control and influence.
- ii. We take created things, often good things, and instead of them being ways we see the glory of God...we make them God.

- c. This distorts our hearts and our relationships. We become ugly.
 - i. We view people as tools to get what we want, we judge people by their looks, we dehumanize people into nothing more than sexual objects, we abuse nature to get rich or to get high...
 - ii. And then after we get what we want, we just throw these immensely valuable things away. We feel guilt and shame because we know what we did was wrong. We get depressed because we're still lonely and anxious and dissatisfied because this created thing we've treated as god is not able to fulfill us like only the true God can. We may feel good for a moment but the hangover will always come.
- d. So, what do we do? We need to intentionally view the created things as signposts to Someone much greater, to a **Glorious Creator Who Creates Beautiful Things**.
- e. But then, the question is: How do we know Who this Glorious Creator is? *It's one thing to know a country is ruled by a King, it's another thing to know the name of that King, and another to know that King personally. It's the same with God.* How do we know who He is? And can we know Him personally? Yes, because He takes the initiative...

3. Our Creator Breaks Through Our Ignorance

God, in order to make Himself known to us in our ignorance, sent His only Son, Jesus. John the apostle says that Jesus is the "**Word of God**", the One who declares most clearly who God is. The author of **Hebrews** calls Him "**the radiance of the glory of God**" meaning that to see Jesus is to see God's own majesty and beauty in the flesh. God did not give up on us!

But how did we respond to the in-the-flesh glory of God living among us as Jesus? We took Him and we crucified Him. *According to the New World Encyclopedia, "The goal of Roman crucifixion was not just to kill the criminal, but also to mutilate and dishonor the body of the condemned."*

Meaning, we took the most beautiful human to ever live and mutilated and dishonored His body. We spit on Him and slapped Him, we crammed thorns into His head, and then flayed Him open with a whip made of metal hooks, and then took long metal spikes and nailed Him naked to a wooden cross on top of a hill so that everyone passing by could see His shame. We took God's only begotten Son, the radiance of God's glory, and in the words of the prophet Isaiah, **Isaiah 53:3**, made Him "**as one from whom men hide their faces.**" We took the in-the-flesh beauty of God and made Him so ugly we couldn't even bear to look at what we did.

What we didn't know is that this was God's plan. Jesus was sent to take all the evil and ugliness we had so that He could give us His beauty. He came to bear our sorrows and our griefs, to bear our wounds and scars, so that we could bear His joy and His healing. The blood shed on the cross was shed so that those who nailed Him there could be washed clean in it. This is the testimony of the early church. In **Hebrews 9:14**, the same person who wrote that Jesus is the radiance of God's glory, says this:

...the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purified our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. (ESV)

And then you have one of Jesus' closest disciples saying **1 John 1:7**

But if we walk in the light, as [God] is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

And then the apostle Paul says to the church in **Ephesians 5:25–27**

...Christ loved the church and [gave himself up](#) for her, that he might sanctify her, having [cleansed her](#) by the washing of water with the word, (WHY?) so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

In other words, Jesus offered His own blood so that you and I in all of our ugliness and sin could be cleansed and made new. All of this is in fulfillment of God's desire for you. A desire spoken to His people in **Isaiah 62:3** while they were still living in exile.

[You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,](#)
[and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.](#)

[You shall no more be termed Forsaken...](#)

Here's the reality you face this morning: the God of the Universe created everything you see and everything you don't by simply speaking, everything that is except us. Except you.

Over and over again, the message of Scripture is this: You are unique among all of His creatures. He formed the first man from the ground with his fingertips and He breathed His own Spirit into his lungs. And while He spoke stars into being and placed the moon in the night sky by His voice, He personally knit you into your mother's womb. And when creation gets out of order and unruly, He simply speaks a command and it listens. But us, when we get out of order and unruly, out of love for us, He took on flesh and stepped into our world. And the hands that formed you and knit you together, were spread out on a wooden cross and pierced for you. Out of all the amazing and wonderful and beautiful things that God has made in this Universe, the One that He loves the most, the One that is most valuable to Him, the One that is most precious to Him and that He would do anything to save...is you.

It is His people that He says are His treasured possession. It is His people that He calls His bride. His people that He says are His children. His own church are the ones He gave Himself up for to sanctify and to cleanse, so that one day you will stand before Him without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish. That in the words of **Revelation 7:14**, "[will have washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb!](#)" Our **Glorious Creator Creates Beautiful Things**. The beauty of creation speaks of a God who takes darkness and ugliness and makes beauty. And God doesn't just do this in nature, He does this in His people! And He doesn't do this just for saints...No, He offers this to us!

So, here's the questions I have for you this morning:

1. ***Are you willing to slow down and take in the beauty that's all around you?*** To enjoy the people in your life a little more? To notice the trees and the animals a bit more this Fall? To let the beauty around you stir up thanksgiving to your God, just a bit more?
2. ***Are you willing, this morning, to take the most shame-filled sins of your life and lay them down at the foot of the cross?*** To be washed clean by the blood of Jesus?
 - a. To give up your alcoholism, your porn addiction, your stories of abuse, all the ways you've manipulated others, your lack of integrity and honesty...things He knows already...and walk out of here washed clean and made new.
 - b. Now, don't confuse that with getting out easy. Laying your life in Jesus' hands will mean that not only you confess your sin, but that you will everyday fight that sin. That you will ask for forgiveness from those you've hurt and everyday you will live Spiritually

empowered to reconcile those relationships. God will honor that and He will take your sin and turn you into someone glorious!

3. ***Are you willing, this morning, to never call someone hopeless?*** To not write people off simply because they just seem to do the same old things with no hint of change?
 - a. God's Spirit is able, in a moment, to revive. So while you want to be wise with your time and energy, you don't need to give up. Keep praying. Keep proclaiming the good news of your Savior.
 - b. Who out there do you need to pray for today? Who do you need to re-engage this week? Who do you need to share the good news of Jesus with this week?
4. ***Are you willing to slow down and take in the beauty of God's word this week?*** For those working through John: to fight the urge to see it as another task and really let it speak to you about who God is? For those in GCs, to truly allow your time in God's word to drive your prayers for those around you?

Our Glorious Creator Creates Beautiful Things...let's not ever forget that. Let's pray.