

## Unfading Beauty (Part 2)

God is very interested in your beauty. Did you check to see if you were beautiful this morning? Beautiful to God is what I mean! Americans spend billions of dollars on beauty treatments, cosmetics, and accessories. Beauty is important to us, but more than that, beauty is important to God. Listen to these verses on God's perspective of beauty:

*Beauty was required in those who were regulars in God's presence!* "And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. For Aaron's sons you shall make tunics, and you shall make sashes for them. And you shall make hats for them, for glory and beauty" (Exodus 28:2, 40). Those who came into God's presence were to wear the most beautiful and the most modest clothes.

*Beauty was expected in corporate (group) worship!* "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!" (1 Chronicles 16:29). All of us as we come together are to offer praise to God.

*Beauty was how God described the praise He desires!* "And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: 'Praise the LORD, for His mercy endures forever' " (2 Chronicles 20:21). Beauty is what God desires in His praise. The praise that He desires involves singing, praising Him, and speaking His Word back to Him.

*Beauty is a mark of pleasing personal worship times!* "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" (Psalm 27:4). True personal worship is characterized by a singular heart focus of seeking the Lord and communing with Him. When we have that focus, we will behold His beauty.

*Beauty is how God describes the holiness He desires for us!* "Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth" (Psalm 29:2; 96:9). The best way we can come dressed before the Lord is in His holiness. Corporately we only gather to worship a few times a week, but personally we should be coming into the Lord's presence every day.

*God is beautiful!* "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God will shine forth. Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; they will see the land that is very far off" (Psalm 50:2; Isaiah 33:17). God is the perfection of beauty. Most of us know more about beautiful cars and beautiful other things than we know about beautiful God. When you and I get alone with God and His Word, we get to see the King in His beauty.

*God wants to make us beautiful everyday!* "And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands for us; yes, establish the work of our hands" (Psalm 90:17). Have you stopped today for your beauty treatment? Hold still, stop, wait, and allow God to take the "wash cloth" of His Word and cleanse and beautify you.

As we are studying Mary, a woman beautiful in God's sight, we need to emulate her! Her beauty marks are:

- She listened to God (Luke 1:26–28).
- She humbled herself before God and said yes to God's grace (Luke 1:29).
- She surrendered to God's will (Luke 1:31–33).
- She experienced God (Luke 1:34–37).
- She served God joyfully (Luke 1:38–45).
- She immersed herself in the Scriptures; she sought God (Luke 1:46–55).
- She never stopped growing spiritually (Luke 2:19).

How did Mary cultivate the beauty of godliness? She discovered God's secrets for eternal beauty! Mary would have applied herself to God's Word to avoid the portrait of the foolish woman in Proverbs 7 and to emulate the godly woman's portrait given in Proverbs 31. Last week we saw what she had learned to avoid; this week our focus will be on the qualities she learned to emulate and develop.

*Mary was beautiful because she had learned how to develop a love for domestic skills:* "She seeks wool and flax, and willingly works with her hands" (Proverbs 31:13). As Paul said in Titus 2:5, she is a worker at home. She loves to tangibly serve others with food and skills, she has a home that is open and hospitable, and she is given to ministering to the sick and needy and less fortunate.

*Mary was beautiful because she had learned how to demonstrate godly concern:* "She also rises while it is yet night, and provides food for her household, and a portion for her maidservants. She extends her hand to the poor, yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy" (Proverbs 31:15, 20). She has learned the love of Christ for others.

*Mary was beautiful because she had learned how to cultivate prudence in financial matters:* "She considers a field and buys it; from her profits she plants a vineyard. She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies sashes for the merchants" (Proverbs 31:16, 24). She is a saver not a spender. She can see beyond today and prepare for the future.

*Mary was beautiful because she had learned the great value of hard work:* "She girds herself with strength, and strengthens her arms. She stretches out her hands to the distaff, and her hand holds the spindle" (Proverbs 31:17, 19). God puts a premium on hard work, so she moves toward it not away from it. There is no slothfulness, indolence, or lack of motivation in her life.

*Mary was beautiful because she had learned how to internalize biblical wisdom:* "She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness" (Proverbs 31:26). The Word is in her heart and life so it comes out of her mouth. Her words are dressed in the clothes of the Spirit, gentleness and kindness.

Mary was beautiful because she had learned these secrets of godly womanhood. Is there any comparison? This kind of woman and daughter is a blessing to all. She is a builder of the home and family. As Solomon said in Proverbs 31:25, 28: "Strength and honor are her clothing; she shall rejoice in time to come. Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her." The future smiles at her, and her

children and husband bless her. This is our goal as parents to raise beautiful daughters who never stop growing spiritually and:

1. Are modest in their dress.
2. Hate sin and avoid sin.
3. Are not deceitful and manipulative in their goals.
4. Are not loud and assertive.
5. Are not argumentative and quarrelsome.
6. Have a love for domestic skills.
7. Demonstrate godly concern.
8. Are prudent in financial matters.
9. Value hard work.
10. Internalize biblical wisdom.