

PSALM 27:4 — BECOMING BEHOLDERS OF THE BEAUTY OF GOD

INTRODUCTION — My journey in discovering the subject of the beauty of God begins in the Fall of 2018. I had just moved to Chicago to attend Moody Bible Institute and was having a difficult time adjusting to the new environment. One day I went into the prayer room, hoping the Lord would comfort me during this season of transition. While praying, I randomly turned to Psalm 27:4, and the Spirit began resting on me. Yet, as I was praying this verse, another passage came to mind: John 17:24. When I turned to this section it was as if a hot iron was placed upon my heart, marking me as a messenger of God's beauty revealed in Christ Jesus.

I. ONE DESIRE

- A. In Psalm 27:4 David is surrounded by his enemies and is close to death. Armies have been deployed against him and the darkness of the evil of his day is seeking his life. It is under these pressures that David cries:

4One 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 (Ps 27:4).

- B. In John 17:24, Jesus, the Son of David, finds Himself in a similar situation but with greater pressures. He has been betrayed by one of His disciples, He is surrounded by enemies, and the powers of darkness have risen to crucify Him. In the midst of His most trying hour, Jesus prays the exact same words as his forefather David, saying:

24Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world (Jn 17:24).

- C. These two prayers reveal a deep truth about the heart of God: *It is one of His deepest longings for Man to be fascinated with His beauty.* David's prayer touched God so deeply that Jesus would pray the very same words 1000 years later!
- D. It is critical for the beauty of the Lord to be our canopy, our shelter in this time of history. As the pressures of darkness increase and intensify, the question of the hour is: *Who receives our gaze? What we behold is what we become.*
- E. Cultivating this desire in our hearts requires us to continually gaze upon the Lord. The more we behold Him, the hungrier we become to see more of Him. The revelation of His beauty will never be exhausted and will never bore us. Before we can become beholders of His beauty, we first must define the two primary terms: *behold & beauty.*

II. ONE DEFINITION

- A. **DEFINITION(S):** The beauty of God is rich in depth and expansive in breadth, therefore many Bible teachers have varying definitions and language for the subject. The definitions I give for *beholding* and *beauty* is just one drop in the bucket:
1. *Beholding* — To investigate [search out] and meditate [think about] on the character of God revealed in Christ Jesus, whom the Scriptures bear witness to.
 2. *The Beauty of God* — The splendor of God united with His spotless character; the brilliant light of His being harmonized with the absolute purity of His heart.
- B. **BEHOLDING:** No one has ever seen God (Jn 1:18; 1 Jn 4:12), so we must ask the question: *How can David say that He desires to behold the beauty of God?* David defines what it means to behold God in the last sentence of verse 4: *Meditation*.
1. Meditation is not a mystical practice nor is it some strange spiritual exercise, it is the routine of contemplation in the Law of God (thinking about His words).
 2. If we have investigation without meditation, our searching will be in vain. If we have meditation without investigation, we will plateau in the knowledge of God. If we have investigation infused with meditation, it will result in a holy fascination!
- C. **THE BEAUTY OF GOD:** From my limited observation and knowledge, the subject of God's beauty can be divided into two categories: *Revealed Beauty & Hidden Beauty*.
1. *Revealed Beauty* — This glory is obvious to the human eye. This category encompasses creation, God's power, the light around His throne, and His people.
 2. *Hidden Beauty* — This glory requires us to draw close to God. This category encompasses the things of God's heart, character, and nature (Prov 25:2).

III. ONE DEGREE TO ANOTHER

- A. One of the greatest truths about beholding the beauty of God is that it is the primary avenue to maturity as believers. Paul states in 2 Corinthians 3:18 that, ***“we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.”***
- B. Beholding the beauty of the Lord is not ethereal and unattainable, but we behold His beauty by beholding His Son, for ***“He [Jesus] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature” (Heb 1:3)***. Therefore, as we behold the Son of God in Scripture, we behold His Father, being transformed into the very same image.