

Session 8 The Beauty of the Bride (Song 1:15; 4:7)

Event/Location: EGS Friday, 6pm

Code: 160708

Series: EJSOS S05

I. THE KING DECLARED THE BRIDE’S BEAUTY (SONG 1:15)

A. The King declared two foundational truths. First, His people are beautiful to Him. Second, He has great affection for His people as the ones He called “My love,” thus, “the ones I love.” Our beauty in Christ reaches the highest place of understanding in the revelation of the Bride of Christ.

¹⁵Behold, you are fair [beautiful], My love! Behold, you are fair [beautiful]! (Song 1:15)

¹Behold, you are fair [beautiful], My love! Behold, you are fair...⁷You are all fair [altogether beautiful; NAS], My love, and there is no spot in you. (Song 4:1, 7)

Well we are continuing in our series this summer on the Song of Solomon. I want to talk about the beauty of the Bride or the beauty of the people of God. In the Song of Solomon you can read this book for those that are just joining us, two different ways. Both of them are biblical and right. It is a story of the beauty of married love, it is a natural love story, it is a love song that magnifies the beauty of married love. It is a wonderful interpretation to take it at face value this poem.

The other way is to interpret this as King Jesus speaking to His Bride, the Body of Christ. This is one of the most powerful declarations that the Holy Spirit makes in the life of a believer. You do not have to use this exact language, there is a lot of New Testament language for what this poem, how it conveys God's heart.

Let's look at it, Song of Solomon 1:15. I cannot imagine the fullness of what this declaration really means. I mean it is one of the most powerful things in my life when I interact with the Lord according to this truth. He says in verse 15, just imagine the declaration from the throne of God by the Spirit over you, behold pay attention, good news, behold, announcement from heaven, behold you are beautiful in the eyes of God. Behold you are the one I love. That is what it means when He says, you are fair, you are beautiful My love.

Verse 15, He declares it again, pay attention, behold announcement, you are beautiful in the eyes of God. Then in Song of Solomon 4 this declaration breaks out again and again. I imagine the throne and the majesty of God and the glory of King Jesus saying, if you knew how I saw you, you would never be the same. You would see yourself differently, you would live differently, you would feel differently if you could see what I see when I look at you through the lens of the grace of God. He says it again, behold you are fair.

Most translations, English translations will put the word beautiful. King James uses the word fair. I prefer that the word beautiful. I asked my wife once, do you want me to call you fair or beautiful. Well she answered it real clear okay. She gave me an option, I will not go in there okay.

Verse 7, it goes up a notch, you are altogether beautiful. This is the Lord seeing the end from the beginning. He sees the end in the finished product. You are My love, you are the one I love. There is no spot in you; that is where this thing is going. Ephesians 1:4 said, He predestined us that we would be perfected in love is what it means at the end of the day. That His people, those that say yes they would end up, He predestined it to be mature in love and in holiness which is the same thing.

Well these two foundational truths you want to declare them over your own life and over those that you love. Again I cannot imagine any declaration more powerful, more significant in my own personal growth in the Lord than this one right here. Though you might use different Bible verses and different terminology. These two truths overlap but they are yet, they have distinct dimension to each one of them. They are different facets of one diamond I like to say.

First that the people of God they are beautiful to Him. Now not just in the resurrection but the very seeds of that beauty are in us right now the moment we said yes to Him in the grace of God. He gave us beauty for ashes. We do not see it like He sees it but we take His Word at face value and we say what He says. The most natural thing to do is to say what the devil says, we are losers, we are failures, nothing matters, our life is wasted, we are forgotten. The Lord says, no say what I say. You are beautiful, what you do matters to Me, I esteem it, it moves Me. Your life is important, you are dear to Me, you are not forgotten, I have written you on the palms of My hands. The second He says, you are the one I love. He calls her, My love, His great affection. He delights in the relationship.

B. The word *fair* is rendered in most translations as *beautiful*. This is one of the main themes in the Song (1:8, 15, 16; 2:10, 13, 14; 4:1, 7, 10; 6:4, 10; 7:1). He calls her *beautiful* 13 times in the Song.

C. God created the human spirit with deep longings that draw us to Him and reflect His glory in us. Our beautiful God created us in such a way that we long to possess beauty—external and internal.

Paragraph C., God created the human spirit with deep longings. He put various longings in us. I and Deborah Hiebert, one of our main leaders here we wrote a book together called, *The Seven Longings of the Heart*. We identified seven longings that God put in us by His creative design. These are longings that will never be able to repent of. We can repent of seeking to fulfill them in a wrong way but these are longings God put into us that would draw us near to Him.

One of the longings that He put into us is the longing for beauty, the longing to be beautiful. The beautiful God created you to with the longing to be beautiful. You cannot ever get free of that longing. Now we repent of seeking to fulfill it in a wrong way because the enemy wants to exploit that longing and destroy our lives with it. The enemy has a number of very dark insidious strategies to take that longing in our heart and to twist it so he breaks our life by us pursuing the longing to be beautiful in a way that is outside of the will of God. Now this longing to be beautiful, now guys we do not really like the word beautiful. We kind of like cool or something but it is the same thing. It is that longing to have beauty, to have fullness of that which is attractive. Now the glorious thing is that longing is going to be answered. It is going to be answered fully and it is going to be answered forever. I mean this is such good news that is why, behold you are beautiful, the Spirit of the Lord is saying to people in the grace of God.

D. The beauty that God possesses is the very beauty that He imparts to His people (Isa. 61:3). One aspect of our salvation is realized when Jesus gives us His beauty for the ashes of our broken lives.

³...*to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes...* (Isa. 61:3)

⁴*For the LORD takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the humble with salvation.* (Ps. 149:4)

Paragraph D., one of the primary descriptions of salvation and redemption of how it is manifest describing the ministry of Jesus, the glory of the grace of God. Isaiah 61:3, to console those that mourn, to give them beauty for ashes. One of the primary things on God's heart in redemption was to take the ash heap of our broken lives. He goes, I want your ashes and I am going to give you my beauty. Now the ashes are all that is left when our passions have burned for long things and our life has been broken and burned out all we have is ashes, we have nothing to show.

Many people have nothing to show for those earlier years of their life or for decades of their life, nothing. They engaged in passions that burned them out and broke their lives and all they have is ashes. Nobody wants them, they do not want themselves, they despise themselves. The Lord comes along with indescribable good news. He goes, I want your ashes. Nobody wants my ashes. He goes, I want them and I will give you beauty.

The very beauty He possesses is the beauty He imparts. When He imparts beauty it is not just an external attractiveness though He does that. Beloved you will have an external beauty for billions and billions of years that you nor I can even begin to imagine the height of it. When He imparts this beauty to us He is imparting to us that which is valuable; that is beautiful to Him, that which He esteems, that which He values.

Beloved that beauty began on the day that you were born again. You were three years old or eighty years old the beauty He gave You and He wants your ashes. David spoke of this truth in Psalm 149. He says, let me tell you how the Lord feels towards His people. Number one He has pleasure in relating with them. David I call him the theologian of the beauty of God, the theologian of God's emotions. David came along and says, let me tell you what I know that you do not know, God actually delights, He has pleasure in the relationship even in your weakness. Not just when you are perfect in the resurrection, He actually delights in the relationship while we are growing, that is a remarkable truth.

That one truth set my life on a whole different pathway some many years ago. When it began to dawn on me just a little bit God actually enjoys and delights in relating with me even in immaturity and brokenness, He delights in the relationship throughout the process of growing. He disagrees with various things I have done but He delights in the relationship itself.

It is not only He delights in us, He finds pleasure in relating to us. He will beautify your life with salvation.

Beloved the very work of the Spirit, there are things you are doing and there are decisions you have made that you do not necessarily remember, you do not think about them that much because they were maybe some years ago. They were beautiful to God. He says, I will never forget them, the seeds of the beauty of even choices you have made I will remember forever. We forget them and we do not esteem them as that big of deal. He says, it is part of Me beautifying you with salvation.

E. Moses prayed that the beauty of the Lord would be upon us.

¹⁷And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us... (Ps. 90:17)

Paragraph E., Psalm 90, this is the prayer of Moses. Moses wrote Psalm 90. He prayed, let the beauty of the Lord be on us. Wow what a statement. Now that prayer is a prayer you can pray for your life even in this age. That Lord let the beauty of the Lord, let the processes, the decisions, my cooperation with You, my relationship with You result in things that enhance beauty being manifest in my life. It is a prayer that the Lord would touch us and we would respond in the grace of God in a way where His beauty will enhance our life.

Now our life can be enhanced in beauty externally in part in a measure in this age but the primary enhancement of beauty is internal but it is not just internal it is eternal, the seeds of it is forever. God sees them now and He relates to us in light of the beauty that we overlook or we do not esteem because the devil lies to us.

Beloved I love this verse, I say it so much, when you give somebody a cup of cold water in His name He remembers that in Matthew 10. It moves Him, it is beautiful to Him. We think, oh that is nothing. He goes, nothing to you but it is to Me. That is part of the beauty of the Lord, even being worked into our life in ways we do not fully perceive.

It is also let us see what God sees now in our life and let us see what God sees in our life in the resurrection. Because when we see what we sees related to beauty it changes the way we feel about ourselves, it changes the way we process our life.

F. There is physical beauty and spiritual beauty; there is temporal beauty in this age, and there is eternal beauty in the age to come. You will possess tremendous physical beauty forever.

I have Paragraph F., there is a physical beauty, there is a spiritual beauty, there is a temporal beauty, there is an eternal beauty, there is an emotional beauty. There is the beauty of your works and your deeds. Again the cup of cold water you never remember giving to somebody years ago. He says, I will never forget it ever and I remember it when I look at you. I see the value of the small things you do when you obey Me.

Now this is a new idea to some people or maybe they never think about it. I think about it a lot. You will possess incredible beauty, physical beauty forever and ever. I know you are pretty cool right now but you are really, things are going to go up not a notch or two. It is going to go way up. You are going to get the shock of your life when you look in a mirror in the age to come. Are their mirrors up there? Yes there are mirrors up there because the sea of glass is like crystal when we come before the Lord in worship. We see the reflection of the Lord on that massive sea of glass. We look down and we go, oh my goodness did He do a good job.

It will be to the glory of His own grace, the beauty He has worked into you in this age and it has carried over. He does not forget it but He magnifies it in the age to come.

G. Some of that beauty touches us physically when our heart is renewed in this age—a happy heart with a free spirit and a bright countenance beautifies a person physically.

Now Paragraph G., this is not my point tonight but I think it is worth mentioning that some of the beauty touches us physical. I mean there is a gift of physical beauty that is in this age. I tell you the enemy is always standing at the door to corrupt that at every angle. It is a, it is glorious and dangerous. I want to mention the glory but the enemy is always wanting to twist it and pervert it and capture the person even through the net of their own beauty.

You know I have met a few people, a few ladies that were, won awards in the beauty queen world. I met a few of them over the years. One thing that struck me how beautiful they were is that how fearful they were. Every one of them, I have met several of them, how fearful they were of losing their beauty, they could not even enjoy their beauty. They were absolutely captured in a snare of fear and anxiety about losing it. It is like well just enjoy it for a few years. Oh I do, I do glory to God but I mean believers even they could not get out of that vortex they were caught in. I believe you can get out of it but do not imagine that the enemy is not coming after this issue the longing and even the external possession of beauty. It is a glorious thing but I tell you it is a thing the enemy has targeted.

Even in our life there is a physical beauty that is even enhanced. When you look at a person that has a free spirit and a happy heart because God has touched them it literally impacts the way they look, their whole countenance changed. So there is a dimension of that and that is not a small thing. I have seen people with the joy of God, I do not mean they are bouncing around you know laughing all the time, I mean something more than that. They have this free spirit and this interaction with God and this lively way with God. I tell you they are, they are clearly more beautiful, their countenance and to behold them. It is a wonderful thing that even happens even in this age.

H. We do not want merely to see beauty—we want to be united with the beauty by fully receiving it, having the ability to love, to think, and to feel like God does. When a believer feels beautiful before God, instead of feeling ugly, condemned, and hypocritical, something powerful is released in them.

Now Paragraph H., we do not merely want to see beauty, meaning I have been talking the last couple weeks on seeing the beauty of the Lord. I mean that is ultimate to see His beauty. I have talked several weeks on Friday night as well as on Sunday morning as well on that theme. We want to do more than see beauty we want to be united with it. We want to be immersed in it, we want to be swallowed up in the beauty, not just a spectator of it which is awesome but we want to be a participant, being caught up and clothed in it because that is what God has ordained for our life.

We want to rejoice in the seeds of God's beauty working in our life now. We want to reject consistently radically consistently the lies the enemy is trying to lie to everyone telling you again your life is wasted, telling you again that you are ugly, you have lost it, there is nothing meaningful, nobody cares. The Lord says, no no do not go there, say what I say about you.

I. Our heart chases hard after beauty because humans feel unsettled and unhappy when feeling ugly. Our culture is obsessed with the longing for physical beauty—seeking it outside of God's will.

Let's go down to Paragraph I., our heart chases hard after beauty because we are built that way, we are built that way. The thing I am highlighting here because we are created that way by God to long to be beautiful we feel unsettled, we feel unhappy, those, more than that we feel anguish when we do not feel beautiful. If we feel ugly, I will say it kind of in a like a raw way, it is nicer to say when we do not feel beautiful but most human beings struggle with that feeling, I mean most in the whole earth. Some of those physically beautiful people they feel ugly. Again that is part of the enemy's attack, they cannot see what God sees.

Now this is not something that is particularly male or female, it is both. Now I grew up in a home with five sisters. Can you imagine how blessed that is to have five sisters? Five quasi moms...no no we are not going there. They are all involved in our ministry and our spiritual family here and it is glorious. Anyway I would go home and we were, there were seven kids in nine years so we are all kind of right the same age one after the other. I would go home and there was always a whole group of girls at our house. I tell you one thing I used to always wonder. They would get ready to go out. They would fix their hair a hundred times.

They would go and say, what do you think? They would go and work on it twenty more minutes, it is exactly the same. They would say, yeah and then a minute later go and fix it again. It changed eight or nine times from blue to blue to blue to blue. Now I am not picking on girls I just saw so much of it because guys are exactly the same way, guys are exactly the same way. It is human to be that way, to be really captured with it in a way again

the enemy wants to take this longing and destroy us. The Lord wants to bring the fullness of what He is after through this longing.

He wants us to believe what His Word says about it, to take our information from His mouth and not from the enemy's mouth and to live in that trajectory because we believe what the Word of God says. I want to talk to the young ladies here just one short little paragraph. The Lord is the only one who can tell us who we are. I can say this to men and women this part and why we are beautiful, this is to everybody. I think of young ladies in our culture and some of them think they are only beautiful if a man tells them they are beautiful. Normally when they hear it from a man it is through a sexual eyes paradigm. There is a sexualized dimension to it, not always but many times.

Our culture has taught a woman you are beautiful when a man tells you, you are beautiful and that is a horrible paralyzing lie, a very destructive lie. You are beautiful men and women, I am talking male and female because God says you are, because God defines it. Because He is the only one qualified to define what beauty is. Not only because He is the ultimate beauty and He is the giver of beauty, He lives in eternity so He is the only one who grasps what beauty really is.

We want to take our definitions from Him. We do not want to have a sexualized paradigm of what beauty is. It is not just women that are caught in that, men are as well. I am just thinking of the culture. The enemy is so after the young ladies in our culture because the Lord is calling upon them. I believe that when I look back at Church History I believe that women, devoted women have had the most incredible impact in church history far more than men. Men write the history books, that is why they get all the story, all the big headlines.

When we look back church history we are going to be really amazed at how women have carried so many things for so many generations in the kingdom. The enemy says, I want to destroy you. I am going to absolutely wipe you out and I got a strategy to do it. We are going to use the Word of God to expose that strategy and to move in the opposite spirit of what the enemy wants.

J. The Lord is the only One who can tell us who we are and why we are beautiful. A lady is not beautiful because men say she is; she is beautiful because God says so. We are to get our identity from the God who created us, loves us, and knows us best. How blessed is the one who really knows that true and eternal beauty is sure to come in fullness and comes as a gift from our God!

How blessed I have here in Paragraph J., here is the person male or female who knows, who knows their true beauty. They know that it is eternal. Beloved when you know it is eternal, you know it is sure to come meaning the seeds of beauty that are in you right now that you cannot even see by the acts that you do, the mindset you have, the choices you make that God calls beautiful. You cannot really see those and we are only trusting that the Word of God is true because God calls it beautiful. Say, okay. We are going to see the fullness of that but not only that.

Beloved you are going to dwell in indescribable beauty for billions and billions and billions and billions of years, you are. It is who you are, it is how God made you. The enemy wants to, he wants to absolutely destroy you in the moments we have in this age, our seventy year internship in this age, he wants to destroy us so we never ever live in the reality and the joy of how he sees us and how everyone will see us in just a minute. What I mean by just a minute David said his seventy years on the earth was a moment, it was a vapor, it was a minute a time when he looked back over it.

If you know, if you have that anchor in your heart like the beautiful God has given me beauty for ashes I got it made you know. I do not have to get caught up in the narrative of our culture and get caught into the net and paralyzed and captured and ensnared by so many lies related to my longing to be beautiful.

II. THE FRAGRANCE OF CHRIST IN THE BRIDE

A. Our obedient love is an expression of Christ's fragrance to God (2 Cor. 2:15).

¹⁵We are to God the fragrance of Christ among those being saved. (2 Cor. 2:15)

Top of page two, well in the Song of Solomon I am just going to barely mention this. It mentions the fragrance that emanates out of the Bride in the eyes of the King which is the Bridegroom King which spiritually, the spiritual interpretation of this love song is it is Jesus. Well it begins, Paul makes it clear it is the very fragrance that Christ possesses eternally. It is His fragrance that He puts in us, that He sees, that His Father sees. It is His fragrance that is not just in us in the resurrection, it is in us now.

B. In Song 1:12, the Bride speaks of God's fragrances being manifested through her life. At His table, her worship ascends as fragrance or perfume as she "feeds on" truths related to the King and His salvation. Spikenard is literally a "spike of nard"—perfume. Nard, a plant found in India, is still used to make expensive perfumes.

¹²While the King is at His table, my spikenard [perfume of worship] sends forth its fragrance. (Song 1:12)

One of the verses and there are quite a few verses on it in here in the Song of Solomon but that is not my point to do a whole study on fragrance. Maybe we will do one of the sessions on that, it is a wonderful truth. Here she says, while I sit at the King's table His spikenard, His perfume, His fragrance. His fragrance or the fragrance of my worship it emanates before Him and it rises before Him. This is one of the seeds of beauty. Beloved when you worship tonight you thought, well you know I did not feel that much. You think because you do not feel much, some of you felt a lot tonight but I am saying there are always a few times I did not feel much tonight. I did not feel much that other night, whatever.

Because you do not feel something you think God does not feel something. I got good news for you, when you do not feel something it does not mean God does not feel it. We could lift the veil and you could see what the angel saw when you worshipped tonight. Fragrance, I mean it is in seed form but it is real to God, it emanates out of your spirit, it is real. It is not poetic or imaginary, it is real. I want to enjoy what the Lord enjoys. Someone says, well how was the worship service tonight? I go, I do not care what time, what meeting you pick, it is amazing. The fragrance of Jesus emanated out of my spirit because I said to God, I love You. I said it off key, I said it out of tune, the people around me put ear plugs in their ears but it was fragrance. It was not about how good the band is. I love the good band, we got a lot of great bands. I love a good worship team but beloved there is a fragrance emanating out of you to God in the presence of angels unrelated to the songs that were sang or the music style.

C. Throughout the Song, the fragrance of God is imparted to the Bride. His perfume becomes hers.

III. THE PARADOX OF GRACE: DARK, BUT LOVELY (1:5-6)

A. The Bride's spiritual journey begins with what I refer to as the "paradox of grace," because, as she discovers her sin, she also sees that she is lovely to God. We see this in her twofold confession of faith (1:5). The Holy Spirit allows her to see her sinfulness as well as her loveliness to God. The tents in the fields of Kedar were dirty, while the curtains in Solomon's temple were beautiful.

⁵"I am dark [in my heart], but lovely [to God], O daughters of Jerusalem, like the tents of Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon...⁶I am dark [in heart]...my own vineyard [heart] I have not kept." (Song 1:5-6)

Let's go to Roman numeral three. Well in her journey she begins, I call this eight chapter love song I call it the progression of holy passion in a believer's life. The way that I interpret the song spiritually she begins a journey and it is a progression. Song of Solomon 1, she is immature and it starts. Song of Solomon 2, she has some challenges. Song of Solomon 3, some more challenges and one by one she goes through the seasons. In Song of Solomon 8 she is in full maturity. There are different ways to read this love song but I see it as one progression of a believer's life starting sincere and immature but sincere.

It starts in Song of Solomon 1:5. She ends up in the full maturity in Song of Solomon 8. If that is interesting to you I have a lot of teachings on this on the website. You can follow it, read it if you want. There are lots of books out there in the market on it as well.

Here is my point, she begins her journey with this confession, very significant confession, really important. She goes, I am dark in my heart but I am lovely to God. What an incredible statement. I am dark in my heart but I know I am lovely to God. The enemy will do just about anything to keep that confession out of your lips. Most people are captured by their failure and that is the way they read their life, and that is how they view that God sees them, only through their failure. Their life is weighed down with a spirit of condemnation.

They are very sincere but, they are failure failure. I do not pray like I said, I did not obey like I said, I do not follow through, I do not serve, I do not attend to Him like I said. I do not do anything like I said. I am a failure, I am a mess, I am a wreck.

The Lord says, yeah you do have a dark heart but that is not the whole truth about you. Look at you all the way through. You are saying, oh God I love You, I want to be Yours. He goes, that is beautiful to Me. Oh Lord that is nothing, that means nothing. He goes, it ought to mean a lot to you because I am the sovereign King and it means a lot to me. Beloved I remember when in my early days in the Lord when I got a hold of this truth that in my immaturity but sincere, a sincere believe but immature, failing, stumbling, not following through on a number of things like I wanted to I would read the missionary books. You know at seventeen, eighteen, nineteen our youth group got all of these missionary books. We all wanted to be the most anointed evangelist and go to some far away country and die. That was kind of our goal to go get killed somewhere and they would write a book about us or something. We do not, we never really figured it out. We just wanted to go do it, rah, that kind of stuff.

We all, I read lots of them, man I mean I was on fire for the Lord, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen. I wanted to go but I could, the biggest challenge was so many things I did not follow through on with the Lord. I look at this area, that area, I go ugh Lord but I love You, I really do love You. I do not like prayer, I do not like talking to You, do not be offended God, I really love You I just do not like talking to You. I do not like reading the Bible, I love You I just do not like You talking to me. I really love Your leadership but I do not totally like holiness. I like these a couple of these other areas a little better. I love You and I meant it and it was true.

I did love Him and He broke through in my young heart in those early days. This was the transforming moment when He let me know He delights in me. I wrote a book many years ago called *Passion For Jesus* where I tell the story. Because passion for Jesus the real, that is the title of the book but the real title of the book is Jesus' passion for you even in your weakness. When I figured out He liked me in my weakness it was like, wow wow that changes everything. That means I run to Him and open my heart instead of run from Him and try to hide and make excuses and try to get cleaned up before I actually enjoyed Him.

I am really into saying yes to His leadership as a sincere believer when I sin and I sin a lot. Over the years I did lots of things that I which I would not have done. If you call it sin, do not make up some, find some Bible verse where you twist it, call it sin, repent of it, declare war on it and just start receiving God's enjoyment of your life and jump right back into the relationship wholehearted. You might even do it again tomorrow. You say, wait this is not a game Lord, I am really against this. My flesh is weak but I really love you. Beloved it is real. You are dark but you are lovely.

B. Spiritual immaturity is not rebellion. They sometime look the same, but they come from different heart responses. A sincere yet immature believer shows their sincerity by quickly repenting and renewing their war against the sin they just stumbled in. God enjoys His relationship with the sincere believer who stumbles, but rebellion (consistent, intentional compromise) arouses His anger.

C. One who genuinely loves God has a “willing spirit”—they are sincerely seeking to obey Him. Our obedience and love for God are sincere, even while weak and flawed; weak love is not false love. But the *sincere intention* to pursue full obedience is different from the *attainment* of it.

⁴¹“***The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.***” (Mt. 26:41)

Paragraph C., God, I remember reading this, oh I loved it, Matthew 26 when I saw this, that before Peter denied the Lord, well all of them denied the Lord, the apostles. He said, every one of you will stumble tonight. Here is what He told them right here in this same passage. We are all going to stumble tonight. I mean Jesus' closest friends they all you know ran away. He said, but I want you tell, I want you to know this your spirit is willing but your flesh is weak. What Peter heard is, Peter looked at Jesus and said, I am not going to deny you. He says, the Lord says, actually you are. He goes, no no You do not get it Jesus, I know, I know You are really something special but You do not get it. You do not get how committed I am to You.

The Lord says, well Peter you do not really get how committed I am to you. You have more confidence in your commitment to Me but You need more confidence in My commitment to You. That is what is going to save you Peter is your confidence that I am committed to Me. I know you are committed to Me but you got weak flesh. He did not really pay much attention to that. Then when he stumbled he was so overwhelmed by his weak flesh but he lost the first part of the sentence. The Lord said to Him, but Peter you got a willing spirit. There is a yes in your spirit, it is real. Yeah you are going to stumble but the yes is not false because you stumble. You really do love Me, the yes, Your spirit is willing.

D. God enjoys and delights in the relationship with His people, even now in our spiritual immaturity (Lk. 15:4-5, 8-10, 20). A hypocrite is not one who says one thing, but does another thing; rather, it is one who says something about obeying God without *seeking or intending* to obey it.

E. We grow spiritually with confidence in God as we feel loved and beautiful in His grace. Many believers only see their sin, and thus they feel dirty and ashamed. A person who feels dirty will live dirty. An immature believer who feels beautiful and loved will run *to* God, not *from* Him.

Paragraph E., we grow in our confidence with God, I mean we grow spiritually when we have confidence. The enemy does not want you to have confidence that God delights in You, that He sees beauty in You, that He has ordained fullness of beauty for you. He does not want you to see this the enemy because he wants you condemned, confused, running away hiding from God like Adam did when he sinned. He went under the fig tree and you know tried to figure it out, you know try to hide under his own fig, his own religious fig tree so to speak.

Many believers, Paragraph E., they only see their sin. They love Jesus, they see their sin, they do not see their love. They go, I know I love You but that does not really matter. I tell you this, I have learned this over the years as a pastor, I have been a pastor forty years. If a believer feels dirty they will live dirty. If they come before God and say, I am a failure, I am a hypocrite, I am a fake anyway they will live dirty if they feel dirty in God's presence. They will come by the truth of the Word, take what God says, reject what the Devil says, and feel loved even in their weakness. I am dark in my heart but I am beautiful to God. Beloved you will run to Him not from Him.

F. The Lord values His people as a great treasure. Jesus saw “jewels” as He walked on earth. The beauty God gives deeply touch His people as they gain understanding of this glorious gift.

¹⁷“They shall be Mine,” says the LORD ... “On the day that I make them My jewels.” (Mal. 3:17)

Malachi 3, He says, they are Mine. He is talking about you, He is talking about His people. They are Mine. On that day I will make them My treasure, I will make them jewels. What a statement, that one day He is going to openly manifest the diamond that you are. Again the enemy tells you, you are average, you are mediocre on a day, and you are a failure on an usual day, that is his storyline. It is so effective he does not have to change it. He gets the most brilliant people, the most dedicated people and that story works so well he goes, why should we change it it is like wiping out so much of the Body of Christ over the centuries.

I have good news for you, you are His, you are His. He is not just yours, it is not just you committed to Him you are His. He says, you belong to Me and I am going to make you a jewel. I am going to manifest you as a diamond, as a treasure. That is what I love so much about the group we prayed for to turn the hearts of the children, it is Malachi 4:6, the turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children. It is the believers who see jewels when they see children. They see what God sees. I tell you when the enemy comes he says, give up, give in. Tell the enemy it is written, I am His and I am a jewel, I am a treasure to Him. He is not just a treasure to me, I am a treasure to Him.

IV. WE ARE LOVELY BEFORE GOD: 4 REASONS

A. **God's personality:** God has a loving and kind personality. In other words, because of who God is, He sees us as beautiful in His generosity—“*Beauty is in the eyes of the Beholder.*”

Top of page three, well you say, how could this be? I mean come on. I have had people say, this is, I understand it, really? I go, really yes, really really yes, it is true. How could I have God's beauty? How could He possibly

see beauty in me? Well I have four reasons not that there are not a few more but I will give you four to start with.

Number one, God's personality, He is so kind. He is the kindness you will ever know. He is the embodiment of kindness. He sees us through His generosity. I mean if I evaluated me I would be in trouble. If I gave myself a full evaluation I would go, tell the kid to start over, I mean no way. The Lord looks at my life through the grace of God through His generosity. Beloved beauty is in the eyes of the beholder and the beholder is God and He is a beautiful God. He sees beauty when He sees you. He sees you through the grace of God.

B. *The gift of righteousness:* We receive the beauty of Jesus' righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21).

¹⁰...He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness...[it is] as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. (Isa. 61:10)

Paragraph B., through the gift of righteousness, He gives you the gift of righteousness and He sees you through the beauty of the Lord Jesus. The day you said yes to Him, the day you said yes to Him He gave you His own righteousness as a free gift.

Look what He said in Isaiah 61, that righteousness, that robe is as beautiful as the garments a bride puts on herself on her wedding day. He goes, you think of a bride adorning herself in the most beautiful way that she could within her means her wedding day is she uses all of her, all of her resource to beautify herself the best she can. The scripture says here that that robe of righteousness the Lord has adorned you in the same intensity and the focus and the fullness that a bride adorns herself on a wedding day. That is how beautiful the gift is, the gift of righteousness is that He gives to you.

C. *A willing spirit:* A willing spirit, the sincere intention to obey God, is beautiful to Him (Mt. 26:41). Any believer with a willing spirit will inevitably grow in the inward beauty of holiness (Ps. 29:2).

⁴Let 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. (1 Pet. 3:4)

²...worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. (Ps. 29:2)

He sees Paragraph C., the yes in your spirit. He sees the willing spirit. Again we see our dark heart, we see our failure. He sees even our intention. Our intentions matter to Him. The fact that you are crying out, God I want to know You, I want to go forward, I do not want to be like this, I want. He says, I love that, that is beautiful to Me.

Look what it says here 1 Peter, it is an incorruptible beauty, what an amazing phrase. The beauty of the yes in your spirit and that yes is eventually walked out. It takes a while sometimes for the yes in our spirit, the intention to become full follow through. I tell you the beauty starts with the yes and the beauty is magnified in the follow through. Look what Peter calls it, well it is the Lord calling it, incorruptible beauty. It is beauty that time cannot erase, it is beauty the grave cannot erase, it is the beauty that weakness in your life cannot cancel out.

There is weakness in our life but it cannot cancel out the incorruptible beauty of when you say yes. Then when it is magnified when you follow through fully. Look what Peter says, it is very precious to God, not just in the resurrection, it is precious to God now.

Oh I love this verse because natural beauty is corrupted, it is corruptible. Meaning you can have beauty at one age and then eventually when you get to be 120 you do not have the same beauty you had when you were twenty. It says that beauty, physical beauty is lost in those later years. This beauty that God gives no time can cancel it out, nothing, even failure in another part of your life that you are working through does not cancel out the beauty, it is incorruptible.

D. Our eternal destiny: In the resurrection we will respond to God forever in perfect love. God sees the end from the beginning; He sees us now in the light of eternity's reality as having perfect love and obedience.

Paragraph D., God sees us as beautiful because of our eternal destiny. See God does not only see you as twenty years old or fifty years old. God sees you as a billion and twenty and a billion and fifty. He takes a step back, He sees you from the end, He sees the beginning, I mean He sees the end from the very beginning. He knows where you are going to be. He already knows for billions and billions and billions and billions of years you are going to walk in perfect love.

He looks at you just like a parent looks at the child, the two to three year old, the ten to twelve year old acting in this way verse that way. The parent says, oh I already can see where this is going in the positive sense. I am not that short sighted, I can see. They are not going to always be doing this or that. The Lord looks at you, do you know that 99.999999999999 percent of your life you are going to walk in perfect love and righteousness billions of years.

God looks at you and He says, I am a generous God, I am a beautiful God. I see you with generosity, I see you through the gift of righteousness that is as beautiful as a bride on her wedding day. I see the yes in your spirit and I see your destiny, 99.9999999 percent you walk in perfect beauty, I get it. He relates to us through the grid of beauty right now.

Beloved this, this reality has radically shifted my life over the years of where I would have been. I enjoy this so much. I want to enjoy it more, I want to see more. I want to live in it more consistently but I see it a lot more than I did years ago. I go, oh I love this truth, I love this. Jesus I love the way You love me, I love the way that You made me, I love Your plans for me. I love me, I love the whole thing.

No it is a great way to live, it is called loving who God made you in the grace of God. We do not, we deny ourselves and we hate our own lives in as much as our lives are out of the will of God. That is the part that we deny. We love our neighbor as we love ourselves. We love who we are in the grace. We enjoy the way God enjoys us. I would rather be me than anyone. I see so many weaknesses in my life but I get the big story of who I am to Him. It is the same with you. Beloved you are the best you imaginable. You are the only one that can give Him all of your love. Nobody else can give Him all of your love. He wants your heart. It makes your life so powerful. So you are beautiful for those four reasons if not more.

V. A RESURRECTED BODY THAT EXPRESSES GOD'S BEAUTY AND GLORY

A. You will enjoy great beauty physically, emotionally, and spiritually forever. We will have a resurrected body with the capacity to express the beauty and glory of God in great measure.

²¹ "...who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body..."
(Phil. 3:21)

Let's look at Roman numeral five, just take a minute on this. I mean we could go on and on and on. I love this. It is the beauty of the resurrection because it is the beauty you will have externally for billions and billions and billions of years.

So why do we not think about this very much? Why are we so focused on how we were going to look in the next three to five years, the next three to five weeks? We do not think of how we are going to live and look the next billions of years. It really matters because if we could only see a glimmer of a little bit of beauty now and we get frustrated by it and then if we get it then we get fearful we are going to lose it. If that is all we can see we are just in this tailspin going downward trying to get out of this vortex sucking us down. I want beauty but I cannot get it and if I get it I cannot keep it. It is going to be gone in a minute and oh my.

The Lord says, wait wait wait, do you know who you are? Do you know the beauty in you now? Do you know the beauty you are going to have for billions of years? Do you get the storyline of your life? He says in Philippians 3, Paul says that He is going to transform our lowly body. I do not care how gifted your body is, how beautiful it is, how strong it is it is lowly and it is weak and all of its virtues will be gone, its strengths in one day unless you are alive when the Lord appears and you are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, that is a different story for another day, okay.

You are going to be conformed to His glorious body. Put the word instead of glorious put the word beautiful. Because glory and beauty are often times interchangeable concepts in the Scripture, not every time but many times. You will be conformed to His beautiful body.

B. The body that God custom designed for Jesus is the same type of body the Bride will have forever.

2“...when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him.” (1 Jn. 3:2)

Paragraph B., John said the same thing. When you see Him you will be like Him. God the Father designed a custom made body for Jesus. I mean here is God the Father, here is the Son you know in heaven before the Incarnation. Son You are going to become a man. Okay okay, what am I going to look like, Father? I am trusting You with this. What am I going to look like?

He says, well Isaiah 52-53 it says, He did not have any comeliness or beauty that made Him stick out. He looked like a common man. He did not have beauty where He stuck out in a crowd. You would not have noticed Him in a group. He goes, that is, that is the front end thirty-three years. You will have beauty that nobody even recognizes. Okay.

That is how I am designing the human race, most of the human race they do not have an external beauty that most people recognize. You are going to be like that but I have designed a body for You. That is what it says in Hebrews, God designed a body, prepared one for Him. He goes, what does it look like Father? He goes, your human body is going to be raised from the dead. He goes, oh You are really going to like it. I am making up this conversation of course.

Well like what? Well Son You are really going to like it. You will be common for thirty-three years then, you are not going to stick out at all, you are going to blend in the crowd, no one is going to look a second look at you. When You get that new one You are going to have a beauty and a glory in Your eyes, in Your face, in Your voice. You are going to pass through walls, You are going to fly through the sky. You are going to love everything that tastes good, everything sounds good, Your voice will be beautiful. Everything will be amazing. Wow, how about her? Will I be beautiful and her a little bit you know challenged? No no.

The most beautiful Man in the age to come will have the most beautiful eternal companion. The angels will be awestruck by the Lord and His eternal companion. The beauty He possesses is the beauty that He imparts. Oh it is beauty, it is wonderful.

C. Our eternal body will have the same supernatural properties and abilities that Jesus' body has.

42...the body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption...43It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. (1 Cor. 15:42-43)

1. Supernatural beauty—eyes, hair, face, skin, fragrance, light, color, etc.
Supernatural voice—speech, musical, singing, etc.
Supernatural strength—speed, endurance, energy, flight, lifting objects, etc.
Supernatural health—no fatigue, injury, sickness, or death, etc.
2. Beautified with supernatural abilities in our five senses
Sight—seeing at a distant and at close range
Hearing—at distances, with great perception, perfect balance, etc.
Taste—enjoyment of food, etc.
Touch—to discern and feel perfectly, etc.
Smell—to enjoy and discern, etc.

Look at this, Paragraph C., the body verse 42, this is what Paul says, it is sown incorruption. Sown means it goes to the grave. When it goes into the ground when they bury it the last story was about that guy's life, His body was not that strong, it gave in to decay, disease, death, and failure, it broke down. It is going to be raised incorruptible, it will not ever wear out, and disease will never touch it. The beauty will never fade, never ever will the beauty fade ever.

Like in Isaiah 40 it says, the beauty fades in man in this age but it will not fade in the age to come. It is sown verse 43 in dishonor. When the body goes to the grave boy it sure did not do that well. When it is on the earth it goes down in weakness and dishonor. It is going to be like the Lord, it is going to be raised in glory, put the word beauty there, it is going to be raised in power, it is going to be raised incorruptible.

The incorruptible beauty that is in them in this age will be fully manifest externally in the age to come. The two dimensions of incorruptible beauty will be fully joined together internal and external incorruptible beauty. I put just a few things there just to kind of stir you up there in the supernatural beauty that you will have in the resurrection. Your eyes, your hair, your face, your skin, your fragrance, the light of the glory that emanates out of you, the color all the dimensions involved in it, your voice, oh will I sing better than Misty. Well I will sing better than Misty does now but she will get a resurrected body then so we will be in the same dimension that we are in now. I will sing better than she sings now. I cannot wait.

Strength, I mean endurance, you will be able to pass through walls. You got a body like He does, the angels they go right through the walls, they do not knock on doors. You will have a body far superior to angels. Paragraph two, your sight, you will be able to see so clear so far. Oh it goes on and on.

VI. BRIDE'S IDENTITY AND LIFE PURPOSE (SONG 2:1-2)

A. The Father promised to give Jesus an inheritance—an eternal companion (Bride) who loves Him.

17...that the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation...that you may know...what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints... (Eph. 1:17-18)

Go to page four, it is beautiful. We do not want to sell out for a temporary fading corruptible beauty and sell out our walk with God to try to get beauty on man's terms. The devil's counterfeits many of them are clever. Sell out for a beauty that is fading, that is momentary and superficial when we have beauty that is unfading, that is eternal, that is incorruptible. Beloved we do not have to sell out. Beauty is our destination forever and forever. Well let's look at this just real quick here, just a little bit of page four. Well we know that we are Jesus' inheritance. Right? Ephesians 1 says that. Note, look what it says in Ephesians 1, that the Father of glory would give you insight; that is what the spirit of wisdom and revelation means, insight. You would know the riches of the glory of being that Man's eternal companion. You are His inheritance. Beloved the riches of the glory. We live in the poverty of though we have been rejected by Him. Paul says, I am praying that the fog would lift, the lie would lift. You would see the riches of the glory of belonging to Him, of being who He wants.

B. In poetic language, the Bride declares her identity is in being Jesus' inheritance (2:1-2). The Bride is pictured as a *beautiful rose* and a *pure lily*, whose life purpose and spiritual identity is found in seeking to fully love (rose) and obey (lily) Jesus (2:1-2). The Bridegroom declares that she is as a lily (2:2). The rose and the lily are the same person—identified as the Bride (2:2).

¹I [the Bride] am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys. ²Like a lily among thorns, so is My love among the daughters. (Song 2:1-2)

1. ***The rose:*** A rose is the chief of flowers—it is symbolic of love—because of its beauty and fragrance. Thus it is used in our celebrations for weddings and wedding anniversaries.
2. ***The lily:*** A lily speaks of purity, of obeying God with all our heart. The valley speaks of the low and dark places in this fallen world. As a lily, she lives in purity in a fallen, dark world.

So in Paragraph B., one of my favorite verses in the Song of Solomon, I got a bunch of favorite verses, this is one of them, she stands before the Lord. Song of Solomon 2, she is still in weakness, she is still in her immaturity. It is an eight chapter love song, she is not mature yet. She started off remember a minute ago in Song of Solomon 1:5, I am dark of heart but I am lovely. Now she is Song of Solomon 2, she is still weak, she is still new in the Lord, she still has unsettled issues.

She stands and she says, I am the rose, I am the rose of Sharon, I am the lily of the valley. I am the rose You want, I am the beautiful flower that You desire Jesus. I am the lily of the valley; that is her confession. She saw herself through His eyes. She could have said, I am the broken weak one. She goes, no I am the rose. The rose, Paragraph one, the chief of flowers, it is spoke of mature love, the fragrance and the beauty of love in this poetry.

I am the one that loves You. She is not only a rose that loves, she lives in the purity of the lily. She goes, I have committed myself in the valley of this fallen world, this dark world. I will stand out like a lily before Your eyes. I will chose light instead of darkness. A lily speaks of purity. She says, I am committed to purity, I am committed to loving You. I know who I am, I have failures, I have weaknesses. I know who I am and I know who I belong to. I know my identity, I know where I am going. I am the rose, I am the lily, I am the one that loves You. My love is weak but my love is real.

Do you know that weak love is not false love? The fact that my love for the Lord is weak does not make it false. It is still real. I love to stand before the Lord and say, I am the rose. I am a rose before You. I am one that responds in love, I am one that moves Your heart, my love moves Your heart. I am a lily, I have chosen purity. I stumble and I fall but I have chosen purity. I am a lily, this is my confession, this is my identity, this is my purpose, this is who I am before You. Some people think it is the King calling Himself the rose of Sharon, the Lord. That is not what is happening if you read it carefully. It is the Bride's confession of her identity and her purpose.

- C. Our identity is based on the way we define our value or measure our success. Our primary identity and success is to be found in our relationship with Jesus—in being desired by God and in loving Him, not in our recognition or accomplishments before people.
- D. When our primary success comes from being desired by God and loving Him, we need not fear being a failure. We confess, *“I am loved by God, and I love God; therefore, I am successful.”*
- E. Our primary identity is not in what we do with our hands, but in what we pursue with our hearts. Seeing that we are *His rose and lily* breaks any sense of purposelessness, failure, and inferiority.
- F. The Bride's beauty is compared to two earthly cities (6:4) and three heavenly bodies (6:10).

⁴O My love, you are as beautiful as Tirzah, lovely as Jerusalem, awesome as an army with banners! ⁵Turn your eyes away from Me, for they have overcome Me...¹⁰Who is she who looks forth as the morning, fair [beautiful] as the moon, clear [brilliant] as the sun...? (Song 6:4-5, 10)

1. ***Beautiful as Tirzah***: He said that she was as beautiful as the city of Tirzah, one of the most attractive cities in the ancient world. Tirzah means *beautiful*.
2. ***Lovely as Jerusalem***: He declared that she was as lovely as Jerusalem—the capital of Israel.
3. ***Awesome as an army with banners***: When an army in the ancient world returned victorious from battle, they displayed their banners in a military parade.
4. ***Turn your eyes away***: This is one of the great statements in the Song. The King was not asking her literally to look away from Him. He was speaking poetically of her love for Him.

Then I am just going to leave you with this little teaser in Paragraph F. Then He speaks back to her. Oh My love, Song of Solomon 6:4, you are as beautiful as Tirzah. You are as lovely as Jerusalem. He is looking at her and says, your beauty moves Me beyond what you know. Verse 5, one of the most glorious passages in this whole book, this love song. He says, turn your eyes away from Me, this is in poetic language, for your love has overcome Me. He is not really saying, turn away, He is going, oh your heart has moved Me. In the most poetic way He goes, your beauty moves Me more than you will ever understand. Beloved the devil is a liar and we are not selling out for a counterfeit beauty or a counterfeit pleasure or a counterfeit anything. We are going for the whole thing that we were created for.

Amen, let's stand before the Lord. Lord here we are before You. Oh we love Your leadership Jesus. I want to invite people to come forward. Here is what you are saying, well it is everybody really but you say, I want prayer. The enemy has been attacking me on this issue. Of course he is, it is what he does. It is one of his number one things. You are saying, no I am being hit hard, I want that prayer of Ephesians 1 that I would know the riches of the glory of being the rose and the lily, His inheritance. I want to know that, I want to fill that more. If that is you, you would like prayer I mean everybody, I need that tonight. We all need that. You are saying, I want prayer for that tonight. I want to break off the devil's lies more. I want to enter into this more. I want to enter into it more. I want to pass this on to the children that I give myself to. I want to sing songs about the beauty of the Lord.