

Major Angela Strickland
Women's Ministries Secretary
Golden State Division

BEAUTY REDEFINED

“Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.”

Proverbs 31:30

Explore how we see ourselves vs how God sees us, through the lens Scripture.

Physical looks are what people typically think of when considering what beauty is. There was a recent news story about the perfect face having a certain symmetry...eyes, nose and mouth spaced just right. They even suggested specific actresses that fit the bill for that perfect look. I giggled out loud after having just read several biblical affirmations regarding the kind of beauty we should actually strive for.

Webster's Dictionary defines beauty as “a combination of qualities such as shape, color, or form that pleases the aesthetic senses, especially the sight; a beautiful woman.

How do *you* define beauty?

What does the Bible tell us about beauty?

You will find answers in both the Old and New Testaments

- ❖ Read 1 Samuel 16:7 (Outward appearance vs the heart)
- ❖ Read 2 Corinthians 3:18 (Transformed into His image)

What does the Lord look at?

(Read the Message version of 2 Corinthians 3:18 for a slightly different perspective)

There were several women that were called beautiful in the Bible - Job's daughters, Rebekah, Bathsheba, Sarai, Esther, and more. However, we are reminded that the virtuous woman of noble character surpasses all.

Based upon what his mother taught him, King Lemuel in the book of Proverbs gives a clear description of a beautiful woman. He writes about a wife of noble character who is more valuable than rubies.

- ❖ Read Proverbs 31:30 (A woman who fears the Lord)

Name 5 characteristics of a Proverbs 31 woman.

-
-
-
-
-

Some of the descriptors are still quite valid for us today.

- ❖ Read 1 Peter 3:3-4 (NIV) (Beauty of great worth)

The Message version talks about our inner disposition and cultivating our inner beauty - *“the gentle, gracious kind that God delights in.”*

Inner beauty is reinforced in 2 Corinthians as we learn that outwardly we waste away, but inwardly we are renewed daily.

- ❖ Read 2 Corinthians 4:16 (Inwardly renewed daily)

How can you cultivate inner beauty?

- **Practice compassion for yourself and others**
- **Be authentic**
- **Develop positive relationships**
- **Cultivate the fruits of the Spirit**
- **Pursue holiness**

As you reflect Christ and grow in your faith, your inner beauty will shine through.

You are one of a kind!

You were uniquely designed by God - who created rainbows, sunsets and that amazing scent after an Arizona rain. Not only were you “fearfully and wonderfully” made, but David reinforces God’s design by saying that God’s works are wonderful. Meaning His creation of you is wonderful.

- ❖ Psalm 139:14 (Fearfully and wonderfully made)
- ❖ Read Ephesians 2:10 (God’s workmanship) (NIV/NLT)

When looking through the lens of God’s eyes, what types of beauty can be found in all people (list some ideas)?

God made all things beautiful. That includes you. God says you are so valued that He sent His Son to die for you.

- ❖ Read Ecclesiastes 3:11a (He has made everything beautiful)

How does the world’s view of beauty differ from the biblical perspective?

- ❖ Read Matthew 10:29-31, *“Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”* (NIV)

What aspects about yourself do you appreciate as God’s Creation?

Can you think of someone in your life that needs to be reminded that they are valued?

Can you write down one characteristic that you like about yourself and thank God for it?

Father, thank you that I am your beloved creation! Help me to understand and to see true beauty in myself and in others. Please help me to live out your beauty in ways that would honor you and help others. Continue your transforming work in my life as I seek knowledge and wisdom that would enable me to have a better self-image. Help me to remember that I was created in your image.