

In need of prayers

Charlene Antle has been released from the hospital. She will be receiving treatments for some time and will continue to need the prayers of the congregation.

Aiden Powell, the five-year-old son of a friend of Jackie's brother (Joseph Miller), has had his surgery and continues to recover.

The Marksberry's were the victims of a plane crash. All three are receiving treatment.

In need of regular prayers

Our members: Jeff Howerton, Janice Parsons, Glenn Kimberlin

Others: Edith Tirey, Lala Whitson, Tom Curtis, Rita Pagan, Linda Hill, Robin Miller, Vina Krassow, Courtney and Aubrey Reeves, John Bennett, Dennis Brennan, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Gail Stein

Weekly Reading

Su	2 Chron 10-12, Ps 19:7-14, Matt 24
M	2 Chron 13-14, Ps 20, Matt 25
T	2 Chron 16-18, Ps 21, Matt 26
W	2 Chron 19-20, Ps 22:1-18, Matt 27-28
Th	2 Chron 21-23, Ps 22:19-31, Mk 1
F	2 Chron 24-25, Ps 23, Mk 2
Sa	2 Chron 26-28, Ps 24, Mk 3

University Heights Messenger

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Volume 3 Number 10

Today's sermon topics

AM Our Attitudes toward the worship of the church
PM Wine, wine, wine

Today's Scripture Reading

AM Matthew 3:1-17
PM Matthew 4:1-11

Times of worship

Sunday AM

Bible study 9:45

Worship service 10:45

Sunday PM

Worship service 6

Wednesday PM

Bible study and worship 7:30

First and Third Friday's

7:30 PM

There's A Lesson Here!

Do you like to surround yourself with beautiful things? You would be very unusual if you did not. The love of beauty is universal. There has never been a society of culture that has not developed artistically by creating beautiful things. And so it has been from the beginning. Genesis 2:8-9 says, "And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food." So, from the very beginning God provided not only for the physical desires of his creation, but also for the aesthetical, or artistic, needs of man.

Margaret Wolfe Hungerford, in her 1878 novel *Molly Brown*, wrote the line: "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." Quotations which express

essentially the same idea can be traced back in antiquity to the Greeks in the 3rd century BC. While there are some things almost everyone would consider beautiful, there are innumerable things some might consider to be beautiful while others see nothing to admire and appreciate about them at all. Truly, for much that is in the world, beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

What do you consider to be beautiful? When you think about the word beauty or beautiful, what comes to your mind? Is it some glamorous celebrity? A certain piece of art? Some grand building? A sunrise or sunset? The ocean, the sky at night, a rainbow after a cooling shower? Is it a particular landscape or natural wonder that satisfies your need to experience beautiful things? Or perhaps a new sports car, sleek and racy? Or maybe an antiquarian book in pristine condition? It may very well be that there is nothing existing that someone doesn't consider beautiful. If you were to make a list of all that you consider to be beautiful, what would be on it?

Would the Lord be on your list? Do you consider God to be beautiful, when comes to your mind? Consider Psalm 27:4. “*One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek, inquire for, and [insistently] desire: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord [in His presence] all the days of my life, to behold and gaze upon the beauty [the sweet attractiveness and the delightful loveliness] of the Lord and to meditate, consider, and inquire in His temple.*” (From the Amplified Bible)

“To behold and gaze upon the beauty of the Lord” is a statement upon which one can ponder and meditate for a long time to come. God is the very essence of beauty; there is nothing ugly or disfiguring about Him; nothing that would make Him hard to gaze upon. While it is true that God told Moses, in Exodus 33:20, that “*man shall not see me and live,*” we can behold and gaze upon the beauty of the Lord through His Word.

Have you ever seen anything more beautiful than love in action? 1 John 4:8 says, “*Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.*” The entire 4th chapter of 1 John is a treatise on the fact that God is love. John 3:16 says, “*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*” God, who is the very essence of love, is also the highest and purest love in action. Let us behold and gaze upon the beauty of the Lord.

While the world would have us believe that the truth is a thing to be ridiculed, truth is, in fact, a beautiful thing to be cherished. Titus 1:2 says this about God, “*In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.*” Psalm 33:4 says, “*For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.*” Because God is truth we have no fear of the possibility of unfulfilled promises. God is beautiful because God is truth. Let us behold and gaze upon the beauty of the Lord.

Gospel plan of salvation: Hear the gospel (Romans 10:17), Believe Jesus Christ (John 3:16), Repent of sin (Luke 13:3), Confess faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 10:9), Be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), Live worthy of a Christian (Ephesians 4:1)

We can page through our Bibles and read passage after passage that describe God, and every one of them defines his beauty. God is holy, God is faithful, God is longsuffering, and so on and so on. Taking our Bibles in hand, let us behold and gaze upon the beauty of the Lord. The Elders.

“And They Took Offence At Him”

The people of Nazareth in our Lord’s hometown are not the only one’s to have taken offense at Him (Matthew 13:57). People today often find themselves offended by Jesus’ offensive message. Interestingly, the word from which we get our English “offence” (*skandalon*) was originally “the name of the part of the trap to which the bait is attached, hence, the trap or snare itself...” (*Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, page 441). Hogg and Vine say of it, “In NT *skandalon* is always used metaphorically, and ordinarily of anything that arouses prejudice, or becomes a hindrance to others, or causes them to fall by the way. Sometimes the hindrance is in itself good, and those stumbled by it are the wicked” (*Notes on Galatians*, page 262).

The words of Jesus Christ are very good. They are the best words that could ever be spoken. Thus, any stumbling block one feels in accepting and obeying the words spoken by Christ cannot be blamed on the moral or spiritual worth of the words themselves. They are flawless, *perfect*, and they will last forever (Matthew 24:35). Neither may the *source* of Jesus’ words be called into question for *God the Father* is the Source (John 8:28-29)!

So why do so many take offence at Jesus Christ and His teaching? The flaw is not in Him, His Words, nor in His Father who “taught” them to Him. The flaw is in the hearers. Today people hear Jesus’ teaching on divorce and remarriage (Matthew 19:9) and are offended by it. Thus, they ignore it. Today people accept *part* of His teaching on how we can have sins removed (John 3:16; Luke 13:3) but find another part offensive (Mark 16:16). Thus they teach an incomplete plan of salvation. Today people hear Jesus say that He requires their all, each day of their lives (Luke 9:23), and they find that a bit much. Offended, they decide to offer just a small portion of themselves on days when it is convenient for them to do so.

These days people claim to be ardent disciples of the *One who offends them on just about every page of the New Testament*. Even more amazingly, those who emphasize obeying the commands of Jesus Christ to them, *whom they themselves call Lord and Master*, are ridiculed as being “legalists.” May God save us from such a crooked generation (Acts 2:40)! AL

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