

PSALM 27:1-5
The Beauty of Yahweh

If you had ONE WISH, what would it be???

There's a Sunday morning in church answer and then there's a Monday morning when the real world begins answer.

PSALM 27

A Psalm of David.

1 Yahweh is my light and my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?

Yahweh is the defense of my life;
Whom shall I dread?

2 When evildoers came upon me to devour my flesh,
My adversaries and my enemies, they stumbled and fell.

3 Though a host encamp against me,
My heart will not fear;
Though war arise against me,
In spite of this I shall be confident.

4 One thing I have asked from Yahweh, that I shall seek:
That I may dwell in the house of Yahweh all the days of my life,
To behold the beauty of Yahweh
And to meditate in His temple.

5 For in the day of trouble He will conceal me in His tabernacle;
In the secret place of His tent He will hide me;
He will lift me up on a rock.

v. 1-3 David is in SOME SORT OF a crisis

(Have you ever noticed that this is a common theme in the Psalms and for David? Even a 'man after God's own heart' is not immune from troubles. Why do we think WE should be?)

Foes assail him and are camped against him, YET his heart will not fear. WHY?
HE FINDS HIS SOUL REST IN SOMETHING OUTSIDE OF HIMSELF - in Yahweh.

David doesn't follow the man centered philosophy that says, "Look inside yourself" to find your peace and your truth.

V 4 His desire is to seek Yahweh .

This verse will get a heavy focus this morning because it is so foundational to the Psalm.
It is worth stopping the overall narrative to focus on this verse.

EX: in 1951 a young Willie Mays was a minor league baseball player in the NY Giants system. The team was in Sioux City IA at a movie theater. Mid-way through the film the lights came on and a man asked, "Is Willie Mays in the audience? If so, please report to your manager immediately."

Why stop the movie? Because Willie Mays was an extraordinary talent and he was being moved up to the big leagues. Willie Mays was special, and they knew it then.

In the context of this Psalm, and of the entire Psalter, Verse 4 is special. It is a 'show stopper'.
This verse takes us back to the opening question, "If you could have one wish, what would it be?"

Honestly, most of us would NOT say, “to gaze at the beauty of God and meditate on His Temple.”

Tevye in Fiddler on the Roof gives a nod to what David is saying...

If I were rich, I'd have the time that I lack
To sit in the synagogue and pray.
And maybe have a seat by the Eastern wall.
And I'd discuss the holy books with the learned men, several hours every day.
That would be the sweetest thing of all.

V 4). “Gazing” is not a one-time glimpse but a steady, sustained focus. It is not petitionary prayer but praising, admiring, and enjoying God just for who he is. David finds God beautiful, not just useful for attaining goods.
To sense God’s beauty in the heart is to have such pleasure in Him that you rest contented.

The Hebrew word has the sense of “to contemplate with pleasure.” What do you contemplate with pleasure?
i.e. What does your heart fondle? Where does your mind go when you want to feel good about life, yourself, or your circumstances?

EX: at the extreme end of the spectrum this would be a sense of fulfillment where you might even think, “I could be happy here without God.”

If we were to gaze upon the beauty of Yahweh, what would we see?

First of all, we must remember that David did not see the beautiful temple because it wasn’t built until the days of his son Solomon. The things that David saw or contemplated may have been physical items, but they reminded him of some truths about the nature and character of Yahweh. It is Yahweh Himself, not the trappings of the tabernacle that David finds beautiful.

David wasn’t just having warm fuzzy feelings about Yahweh. He associated the beauty with character traits that were revealed and, in some way, symbolized in “the House of the Lord.”

Based on what David would have seen we can get an idea of what he found to be so beautiful about Yahweh. David had never entered the holy of holies in the Tabernacle, but he knew what was inside- the ark of the Covenant containing the tablets of 10 commandments.

NOTE – thanks to Dr. Davis for some insights into this verse.

1.) The fact that there is even a tabernacle speaks to the HUMILITY of Yahweh.

The tabernacle represented God’s presence with His people. He was willing to make Himself known to and dwell among them.

Andrew Murray wrote a whole book entitled “Humility: The Beauty of Holiness.”

The humility of a right understanding of ourselves in relation to God was lost in Gen 3, so Christ came to redeem us and restore humility to His bride. “He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death.”

WCF 7.1

The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have any realization of him, as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part

The other manifestations of God’s beauty and character are rooted in His humility.

God humbles Himself so that we might experience the blessing of knowing Him. The high and holy One stoops down and pitches His tent with His people.

That should sound familiar to us this side of Christ because that is what John 1 tells us, 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

“dwell among us” = encamp or pup tent among us.

The biblical narrative is that God was seeking ways to be near His people. He rejoices over us with singing, and He delights in our praises.

There is something beautiful about Yahweh’s desire to be near His people.

And His nearness is a great blessing for us.

Ps 73:28 But as for me, the nearness of God is my good;

I have made the Lord God my refuge, That I may tell of all Your works.

2.) The revealed “law” or good instruction is evidence of Yahweh’s Beauty

There is a reason why the Psalmists say, “O how I love they Law; it is my meditation day and night.”

Deut 4:5“See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. 6 So keep and do *them*, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ 7 For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the LORD our God whenever we call on Him? 8 Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today?

Psalm 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul;

The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

8 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;

The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;

The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.

10 They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold;

Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.

Is that your experience with God’s Word? Perhaps not constantly, but at least consistently?

3.) The altar of sacrifice in the Tabernacle revealed the Beauty of Yahweh in His Atonement

The altar was in the tabernacle for anyone to see upon entering the court. This altar was the gift of Yahweh –

Lev 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.’

This also makes biblical religion unique. In other religions, the person must make the sacrifice and hope that it brings salvation. Yahweh gives the altar of atonement to point to the ultimate sacrifice that will be made for atonement.

Thus, the beauty of the Lord is even clearer to us today because of the incarnation in Jesus Christ. Jesus came to dwell among us and give His life at an atoning sacrifice for sin.

1 Pet 1:18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

Though we have not seen Him, we can know the Savior’s beauty as we read the Gospels.

As we go back to verse 4, we need to understand an important application for US.

Christianity is a religion without a central geographical focus.

Most religions have a central focal point. For the Jews it is Jerusalem; for Muslims it is Mecca – a pilgrimage to Mecca is one of the pillars of Islam, and prayers are directed toward Mecca.

Hindus have seven “holy cities”

Buddhists have 4 main pilgrimage sites and 4 “others”

4 One thing I have asked from Yahweh , that I shall seek:
That I may dwell in the house of Yahweh all the days of my life,
To behold the beauty of Yahweh And to meditate in His temple.

For Christians, the mystery and reality of the “Temple”, is that WE ARE temple of God. We are the dwelling of God is the Spirit. God is building us as believers into His temple or His body here on earth.

1 Peter 2:4 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

** “Brick after Brick” God is building his temple.

God used to dwell in a house among His people
But now He has a home that's better than the first
It doesn't look like a building with a steeple
Now, He's living in the people of the Church
Brick after brick, God is building His temple
Brick after brick, He is making it strong
With Christ the sure foundation and His people as the stones
He is building a place He can live
Brick after brick

TODAY, ONE WAY TO BEHOLD THE BEAUTY OF YAHWEH IS TO SIMPLY LOOK AROUND. You are surrounded by God's presence as He dwells in His living stones.

This is a MIND BLOWING MYSTERY. You are not surrounded by ordinary people. You are surrounded by the ‘living stones’ in the temple of God.

As “living stones” we can REFLECT the beauty of Yahweh in three ways:

1. Walk in humility before God and one another. God shows His humility by dwelling among us, so we should remember that God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble. Walking in humility means that we give honor to others.

This may totally change how you view other believers. No one spells it out better than C.S. Lewis
Lewis – The Weight of Glory...

It may be possible for each to think too much of his own potential glory hereafter; it is hardly possible for him to think too often or too deeply about that of his neighbour. The load, or weight, or burden of my neighbor's glory should be laid on my back, a load so heavy that only humility can carry it, and the backs of the proud will be broken.

There are no *ordinary* people....We are all immortal horrors or everlasting splendours. ...
Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbour is the holiest object presented to your senses. If he is your Christian neighbour, he is holy in almost the same way, for in him also Christ (*vere latitat*)—the glorifier and the glorified, Glory Himself, is truly hidden.

2. **Hunger for His Word, which is God's gracious gift to us.** 1 Pet 2:2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk of the Word, that by it you may grow up into salvation— 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.
3. **Appreciate the Atonement that Yahweh has provided – Practice a life of confession AND extending forgiveness to others.** Just as God forgave us at the cost of His Son, so too we can and must forgive others. Your appreciation for the grace of God grows in relation to your willingness to extend the grace of forgiveness to others, and vice versa. Your willingness to extend forgiveness to others grows in relation to your appreciation of God's grace towards you.

We don't worship other believers while waiting for the ultimate dwelling of God in the New Jerusalem, but it does help to have a better understanding of the value that God places on those who are the living stones of his "temple" in this age.

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