

Beauty and Character
Proverbs 11:22
April 24, 2016

Introduction

As people, we tend to look at the outward appearance when we try to cultivate friendship or search for a future spouse. We tend to think that beautiful women and handsome men are smarter, healthier, and harder working. We think that because of how they look. However, Solomon, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, arrests our attention by giving us a striking comparison about us relying just on beauty (or outward appearances).

I. Solomon's Proverb

Proverbs 11:22 *Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman who shows no discretion.*

- Ring of gold in pig's snout (nose)
 - Ring of gold
 - Worn on nose to symbolize beauty

Ezekiel 16:11-13 *I adorned you with jewelry: I put bracelets on your arms and a necklace around your neck, 12 and I put a ring on your nose, earrings on your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. 13 So you were adorned with gold and silver; your clothes were of fine linen and costly fabric and embroidered cloth. Your food was fine flour, honey and olive oil. You became very beautiful and rose to be a queen.*

- Usually an expensive piece of jewelry
 - On pig's nose
 - Pig = unclean animals
 - Very filthy and smelly; not attractive
 - Using jewelry to make the pig prettier
- Beautiful woman who shows no discretion

Note: Solomon wrote and collected Proverbs and he is writing from a man's perspective; however, we can also apply this to a woman's perspective

- Beautiful woman (or handsome man)
 - God created beauty
 - Beautiful woman can turn men's head in seconds (as will a handsome man with women)
 - Beautiful woman can cause a man turn into something silly—babbling and self-conscious (so can a handsome man to a woman)
- No discretion
 - However, this beautiful person has no sense (lacks brains)

1 Chronicles 22:12 *May the LORD give you discretion and understanding when He puts you in command over Israel, so that you may keep the law of the LORD your God. (David speaking to Solomon)*

- Discretion = ability to judge what is the right way
 - This beautiful person cannot judge what is right
 - This person will choose the wrong way more times than not
- The meaning
 - Pig = unclean and ugly—expensive jewelry will not make it attractive
 - Beautiful person with no discretion = a very ugly soul
 - Solomon is not saying that beauty is a bad thing
 - Beauty is wasted when a person does not fear God
 - Solomon is telling his son not to waste his time with such a woman

- This is a person that does not fear God
- This type of person is very dangerous

Ecclesiastes 7:26 *I find more bitter than death the woman who is a snare, whose heart is a trap and whose hands are chains. The man who pleases God will escape her, but the sinner she will ensnare.*

- This person will cause the other to lose their vitality as man or woman
- By staying with this person, a man would lose his manhood and the woman would lose her womanhood
- Examples of a beautiful people without discretion
 - Women
 - Nagging
 - Refusing to submit to husband
 - More concerned about her image than about others
 - Thinking that she has the power to change others by herself
 - Men
 - Bad boys—machismo
 - Power hungry (he will put down people who are “beneath” him)
 - Lazy and will not take responsibility
 - Unfaithful
 - In general
 - Shows anger easily
 - Judgmental and critical
 - Cruel words (especially when teasing others)

Transition: What Solomon does not say but does mean is that character counts far more than outward beauty.

Proverbs 11:16 *A gracious woman retains honor, but ruthless men retain riches.*

Proverbs 12:4 *A wife of noble character is her husband's crown, but a disgraceful wife is like decay in his bones.*

II. Character

- Character starts at the heart
 - It is something that God sees and He wants us to see it as well

1 Samuel 16:6 *When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed stands here before the LORD."*

- Samuel at first was enamored by Eliab's physical characteristics
- Eliab might have a similar build as Saul and probably was just as handsome

1 Samuel 9:1-2 *There was a Benjamite, a man of standing, whose name was Kish son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah of Benjamin. 2 He had a son named Saul, an impressive [handsome] young man without equal among the Israelites—a head taller than any of the others.*

- However, God rejected Eliab because of his heart

1 Samuel 16:7 *But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*

1 Samuel 17:28 When Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, "Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle."

- Godly fear is the inner beauty radiance

1 Peter 3:3-4 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. **4** Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

- Physical beauty is not what wins souls (or spousal affection)
- It is the godly character of a person
- Such beauty is precious to God because that inner beauty glorifies God
- Reflection of His character

2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

- Even though our outward beauty fades over time, we become more beautiful everyday inwardly
- Biblical examples
 - Abigail

1 Samuel 25:2-3 A certain man in Maon, who had property there at Carmel, was very wealthy. He had a thousand goats and three thousand sheep, which he was shearing in Carmel. **3** His name was Nabal and his wife's name was Abigail. She was an intelligent and beautiful woman, but her husband, a Calebite, was surly and mean in his dealings.

1 Samuel 25:17-18 Now think it over and see what you can do, because disaster is hanging over our master and his whole household. He is such a wicked man that no one can talk to him." **18** Abigail lost no time. She took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five dressed sheep, five seahs of roasted grain, a hundred cakes of raisins and two hundred cakes of pressed figs, and loaded them on donkeys.

1 Samuel 25:23 When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed down before David with her face to the ground.

1 Samuel 25:24, 26-28 She fell at his feet and said: "My lord, let the blame be on me alone. Please let your servant speak to you; hear what your servant has to say. **26** Now since the LORD has kept you, my master, from bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hands, as surely as the LORD lives and as you live, may your enemies and all who intend to harm my master be like Nabal. **27** And let this gift, which your servant has brought to my master, be given to the men who follow you. **28** Please forgive your servant's offense, for the LORD will certainly make a lasting dynasty for my master, because he fights the LORD's battles. Let no wrongdoing be found in you as long as you live.

1 Samuel 25:32-33 David said to Abigail, "Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. **33** May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands.

- She defended her husband even though he was such a fool
- She humbled herself before David
- She reminded him of God's calling and encourages him to keep on obeying God
- She came before him to stop him from sinning through her submission
- Boaz

Ruth 2:1, 4-6 Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, from the clan of Elimelech, a man of standing, whose name was Boaz. **4** Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, "The LORD be with you!" "The LORD bless you!" they called back. **5** Boaz asked the foreman of his harvesters, "Whose young woman is that?" **6** The foreman replied, "She is the Moabitess who came back from Moab with Naomi."

Ruth 2:8-12 So Boaz said to Ruth, "My daughter, listen to me. Don't go and glean in another field and don't go away from here. Stay here with my servant girls. **9** Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the girls. I have told the men not to touch you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled." **10** At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She exclaimed, "Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?" **11** Boaz replied, "I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. **12** May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."

Ruth 2:14-16 At mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar." When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over. **15** As she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his men, "Even if she gathers among the sheaves, don't embarrass her. **16** Rather, pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don't rebuke her."

- Boaz is a man's man!
- He is kind, considerate of others, and protective
- He glorified God with his inner beauty
 - God blessed Boaz (and Ruth) by placing them in the lineage of Jesus Christ
- Application
 - As Christians, we should be attracted to those who fear and love God
 - We should not be judging a person based on what they look like, but by their actions and character
 - We should be selective in who we are friends with
 - If we ignore Solomon's warning, we are cultivating a bitter and worthless relationship

Coram Deo

Our Lord Jesus, according to Scripture, was not a handsome man, but rather an ordinary man.

Isaiah 53:2 He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to Him, nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him.

Yet He is God and Man. He is the creator of beauty, but more than that—He gives us new life. He is fully glorious and beautiful, perfect in all areas. When we trust Him as Lord and repent of our sins, our inner beauty will be as Christ's beauty (**2 Corinthians 3:7-16; Revelation 1:12-16**).