



*The Journey*  
Week of 09.12.10

## **Imago Dei: Beauty**

By Sarah Leimer

When you look in the mirror what do you see? What does that quiet voice in your head tell you? Are you hearing lies or truth? Are you believing what you hear? As a society, we are held captive to the images we see in television, movies, magazines and the internet. We are bombarded by our culture's message that you are only as valuable as you are beautiful, and as a culture we are constantly searching for the beauty secret that will keep us young and beautiful. According to the media, beauty is found in a product, a treatment, a work out or a clothing line. We are told by the world that beauty is external and purchasable, and if you don't have "it", you don't count.

It is a harsh message to which we are all vulnerable and therefore we strive toward this empty image of perfection. However, God's word tells us differently. God tells us that we are valuable simply because he created us. He tells us that we are fearfully and wonderfully made, and as his creation, our job is to reflect his glory into the world. We literally get to wear his beauty and it is his reflection in us that makes us beautiful.

The enemy of our hearts does not like it when we feel beautiful because of who we are in Christ. So often, when we seek our own reflection in a worldly mirror, we cannot help but compare ourselves with others and feel "less" or "empty" or just "not enough." Believing the empty promises of our culture, we believe there must be some way to improve the way we feel, so we try more dieting, more make up, more free weights, more surgery or more accessorizing (whether it be cars, handbags, the latest and greatest shiny object, jewelry or shoes).

The truth is that real beauty sometimes has wrinkles. Sometimes beauty has white or gray hair or may have none at all. Sometimes the most beautiful smiles radiate from mouths filled with crooked or imperfect teeth. Beauty can be found in a laugh, in a listening ear or in encouraging words spoken with intention. It cannot be bought. Our earthly treasure can only buy empty imitations. However, God paid for our fractured hearts with the life of his son, and called us "very good." In the search for true beauty, his is the only currency that has value.

Despite our struggles, Jesus looks at us and whispers "You are enough. You are lovely. You are on your way to becoming the beautiful person I designed you to be." He longs for us to be kind to ourselves in how we see and treat our physical bodies. The beauty we possess simply by being children of God is both life giving and essential. When we rest in the assurance that we are his chosen child and are beautiful in his eyes, joy overflows from our hearts revealing a beauty whose regimen was never meant to be kept a secret.

*"Mirror, Mirror on the wall, Have I got it?  
'Cause Mirror you've always told me who I am  
I'm finding it's not easy to be perfect  
So sorry you won't define me  
Sorry you don't own me..."*

*Mirror I am seeing a new reflection  
I'm looking into the eyes  
of He who made me  
And to Him I have beauty beyond compare  
I know He defines me..."*

~ [Barlow Girl, "Mirror"](#)

(You are encouraged to use the SOAP – Scripture, Observation, Application and Prayer Method for a guide. Click [here](#) for an example SOAP journal entry. Page numbers refer to "The Story of God" Bible available for free at the Welcome Center in our atrium.)

## **monday, 09.13**

Read: [Psalm 139](#) (pg. 427)

## **tuesday, 09.14**

Read: [Philippians 2:5-11](#) (pg. 804)

## **wednesday, 09.15**

Read: [Isaiah 53](#) (pg. 503)

## **thursday, 09.16**

Read: [Genesis 2:25](#) (pg. 2)

## **friday-sunday, 09.17-19**

Read: [Psalm 27:4-6](#) (pg. 378); [Isaiah 52:7](#) (pg. 503); [Isaiah 61:1-3](#) (pg. 509)

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**grow** (resources to help you in your study)

- **Sunday's Sermon:** Click [here](#) for podcast, or here for [video](#)
- **book:** [Captivating](#), by John and Stasi Eldredge
- **documentary:** [America The Beautiful](#) by Darryl Roberts

**go** (action steps)

- **prayer?** Please send us an email by clicking [here](#)
- **care?** Do you need to talk with someone? Please call us at 913.341.5820 ext. 330
- **go**—Sign up to serve: email Lisa Zulke by clicking [here](#)
- **grow**—Join a small group, a 1:1 spiritual mentorship, or find about the many other [ways to grow](#)
- **give**—click [here](#) to make an online gift to Heartland and learn how you can set up recurring gifts

Small Group/ 1:1 Question Samplers:

1. What things run through your mind when you look in the mirror?
2. What things do you think run through God's mind?
3. In Genesis 2:25, the Bible describes Adam and Eve being naked and without shame. Is that or could that be possible for you?
4. Do you believe that every human being is equally beautiful?
5. In Psalm 139, what is the most difficult part for you to personally believe?