Beauty and Apologetics

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One commonly heard line of argument for the Christian faith is from the beauty of God. For example, "The Apologetics of Beauty," by Jesuit theologian Edward T. Oakes, is a thoughtful invitation to believe in the Christian Faith through the encounter with beauty.[1] The author draws on Hans Urs von Balthasar's work, which includes his series on *The Glory of the Lord*. Von Balthasar once remarked, "In a world without beauty … the good also loses its attractiveness.[2] Many similar appeals can be found. Such an approach seems to square with Scripture, which occasionally talks about the beauty of the Lord: The Psalmist longs to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord (Ps. 27:4). God dwells in the beauty of holiness (1 Chr. 16:22; Pss. 29:2; 96:9). His creation was deemed "very good," from the Hebrew word *tov* meaning good, pleasant, agreeable (Gen 1:31). What could be more natural than inviting people to "taste and see" that God is resplendent with beauty?

British philosopher Richard Swinburne famously declared, "God has reason to make a basically beautiful world, although also reason to leave some of the beauty or ugliness of the world within the power of creatures to determine; but he would seem to have overriding reason not to make a basically ugly world beyond the powers of creatures to improve. Hence, if there is a God there is more reason to expect a basically beautiful world than a basically ugly one."[3] Many scientists, not the least of which is Albert Einstein, find beauty in the correlation between mathematics and nature, a beauty that points to the divine.[4] Of course, the argument from beauty has its detractors as well. Predictably Richard Dawkins mocks the argument. Though he agrees Beethoven quartets and Shakespeare sonnets are sublime, he see no connection required between such beauty and God.[5]

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Before we decide about the validity of such arguments, let's think for a moment about beauty itself. While we may believe we have an idea of what it is, beauty is actually very difficult to define. Thomas Aquinas famously characterized it this way: "…beautiful things are those which please when seen (*id quod visum placet*)."[6] Perhaps, to be honest, this does not say very much. Typical of Thomas, it is terse and succinct. But there is more to it than at first appears. Here is the full context for his statement:

> Beauty and goodness in a thing are identical fundamentally; for they are based upon the same thing, namely, the form; and consequently goodness is praised as beauty. But they differ logically, for goodness properly relates to the appetite (goodnessbeing what all things desire); and therefore it has the aspect of an end (the appetite being a kind of movement towards a thing). On the other hand, beauty relates to the cognitive faculty; for beautiful things are those which please when seen. Hence beauty

> consists in due proportion; for the senses delight in things duly proportioned, as in what is after their own kind – because even sense is a sort of reason, just as is every cognitive faculty.[7]

We are here plunged into the depths of medieval philosophy, far from our own world, and far from the popular notions of beauty we may find in our own culture. Thomas here is saying that beauty and goodness are nearly identical. Their unity is in their both belonging to *form*. While form in Thomas is less abstract than for Aristotle, it refers to the shape of things, complemented by matter. The only difference between goodness and beauty for him is that goodness appeals to appetite and beauty to the senses (which he calls the cognitive faculty). We must be careful here. He is not using "appetite" to mean hunger or desire for material things. Rather, he means a kind of human longing that points to the reality of good things, rather the way C. S. Lewis points to *sehnsucht*, the inconsolable longing for heavenly things. Whereas, in slight contrast, beauty appeals to our cognitive faculties. These, like reason, respond to proportion, harmony, and balance. So both goodness and beauty relate to reaching for the form of things.

At the same time, many questions are left open. What are these objects of beauty? And what is the cognitive faculty? Only reason? Are all the senses involved? Is there a special place for beauty in the arts? What kind of "pleasing" are we talking about? What if we disagree on what is pleasing? Are there any objective norms for beauty?

Let us see if we cannot make some headway by briefly tracing the history of thought about the nature of beauty. First, we could cite the many authors who have considered beauty to be at best a danger, at worst an evil enticement which could distract us from the higher matters. With decidedly sexist language, Tertullian (160-c.225) nearly equates Eve's fall with the coveting of luxurious things such as embroidery, precious stones and gold. He traces the origins of female ornamentation to fallen angels.[8] Such a view was not isolated among the church fathers. Proper modesty has almost always been approved by Christian theologians, albeit without Tertullian's radical dualism. French Huguenot women until recently wore plain garb and little or no jewelry.

In stark contrast to such mistrust, we witness the pressure for many to be beautiful today, at least according to accepted norms in popular culture. Sociologists François Malye and Jérôme Vincent have conducted extensive studies in aesthetic surgery and special elective medicines to enhance physical beauty.[9] Great numbers of women, though not exclusively women, regularly use hyaluronic acids injections to thicken their lips, rhinoplastie to flatten their nose, various lifts and liposuction to hide fat, breast prosthesis, and other techniques to make themselves over into the image they think will please others.

Where do we go to establish true norms for deciding what to wear and what true beauty might be? The ultimate answer is the Scripture. But several factors have introduced themselves which prevent us from recognizing the rich teaching of Scripture on the subject of beauty. Two stand out.[10] The first is the widespread rejection of the Western, Renaissance tradition in modern art. And the second is the path taken by aesthetics, the philosophy of beauty.

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First, art is supposed to be the very place where we look for beauty, the beauty of the work itself, and the beautiful objects that are depicted. However, most people will acknowledge that modern art in considerable part has based itself on a rebellion against many of the assumptions made about the arts and their role, at least since the Renaissance. Barnett Newman, an abstract expressionist from the twentieth century once declared, "The impulse of modern art is the desire to destroy all representations that are perceived as pleasing." Agree or not with all the details of his historiography, surely H. R. Rookmaaker is right to depict *Modern Art and the Death of a Culture*.[11] There he documents various schools of art which react against the worldview where truth was found in higher places, represented by heroes, saints and goddesses. James Hillman has said, "The arts, whose task once was considered to be that of manifesting the beautiful, will discuss the idea only to dismiss it, regard beauty only as the pretty, the simple, the pleasing, the mindless, and the easy."[12] Of course, one could think of exceptions. But in such an atmosphere we are hard pressed to look for beauty in a place where it was always assumed we should look first, the arts.

Before we simply dismiss modern art as lost and facetious, as many do, we ought to take a second look. In addition to rebellion, was there not something important to oppose? Was there not some traditional art that insufficiently depicted the evils and sufferings of this world? Certain academically acceptable art in the nineteenth century seems blissfully unaware of tension or darkness. Think of the works of William-Adolphe Bouguereau (1825-1905), who painted simple shepherd girls or a young woman sewing. Perfectly realistic, and not overly sentimental, but without tension of any kind. It should not surprise us that with the onslaught of the First World War, followed by so many upheavals, art could become violent and chaotic. Think of Edvard Munch's *The Scream*, or the more recent works of Tracey Emins, such as *My Bed* (1998), which shows a montage of an unmade bed with dirty clothes strewn about and a hangman's noose above.

Yet, if art needed to react to the clean-cut academic paintings of the nineteenth century did it need to go so far in the other direction? One point to remember is that beauty in art is not the same thing as beauty in the natural world, or even in a human portrait. We will see that the Bible often calls such natural objects, as well as people, beautiful. But connection is not one-to-one. Beauty in art is a well-crafted way of telling a story. The story may be very bleak, and it would actually be un-artistic to show it otherwise. Think of Goya's *The Shootings of May Third, 1808*. The subject is a terrible firing squad. Not beautiful. Yet Goya beautifully renders what is ugly. We should not rush to judgment and call all modern art ugly, if all we mean by that is that it is not pleasing to look at. Some have tried to stretch the concept of beauty to include painful depictions of suffering and agony. I think there is a half-truth to this idea.

Having said that, there certainly is modern art that is gratuitously ugly. Meant to shock, some of the shock is pointless, lacking any redemption. The challenge for Christians is to be both realistic and hopeful at the same time. That is hard to accomplish. One of the examples I love most of success in this balance is the Negro Spiritual. When a singer intones, "And he never said a mumbalin' word" we feel Jesus' pain and yet his resolve to go through with the crucifixion for our sakes. But the song is beautiful. Similarly there are paintings by Rembrandt which represent ugly or fearful scenes (think of his *Slaughtered Ox* or his *Storm on the Sea of Galilee*) which are hardly beautiful in the Thomist sense of being pleasing, but are beautifully crafted to articulate the reality of a fallen world but yet with meaning and purpose and hope. We might call these works beautiful in the sense that they are moving, or powerful.

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A second reason it is hard to access the Scriptural revelation about aesthetic standards is because of another development in the history of aesthetics. For various reasons, at least since the Greeks, sight or vision have been regarded as the key to perceiving reality. Plato's *Republic* describes an ideal society, the dialogue is between *Glaucon* and Socrates. The Greek word means "clear-eyes"). Using the analogy of the cave, Plato has ignorant people only seeing shadows, because they are not outside in the full light. Even the word for "theory" (*theorein*) means "to see."[13] Immanuel Kant spoke of the *Weltanschauung* which we translate worldview, favoring the optic metaphor. The problem is, that sight becomes detached from the other senses.

Enters the father of aesthetics, Alexander Baumgarten (1714-1762). He established aesthetics as a recognized disciple for philosophical study. The very word *aesthanomai* in Greek means "to perceive, or to see". Although Baumgarten saught to underscore the importance of the senses, he remained firmly within a mind-body Cartesian dualism. In his *Metaphysica* § 451 he famously defines the notion of taste to be of central importance in making aesthetic judgments. By it he meant that the intellect alone was not capable of making such judgments. Taste is based on the feeling of pleasure, or the lack of it. His science was to give us rules for evaluating either natural or artistic beauty. Interestingly, vision, along with hearing, were considered more noble senses than smell, taste or touch. Vision and hearing belonged to the intellect, and thus had access to freedom, whereas smell, taste and touch were tied to natural functions. Ironically, then, Baumgarten wanted to highlight the senses, but he ended up not taking the human body very seriously.

Similarly for Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) underscores the role of feeling in aesthetic judgments, not the crass or thoughtless feeling, but the "finer feelings," those associated with the intellect. There are two kinds of these feelings, the sense of the sublime and the sense of the beautiful.[14] He gives numerous examples of these two feelings, generally assigning to beauty such things as flowerbeds, grazing flocks, and so on; and to the sublime mountain peaks, raging storms, and the like. Such feelings are universal, although they can vary slightly according to a person's temperament or nationality or gender (men generally feel the sublime, women the beautiful!). Like Baumgarten, Kant divided the senses into higher and lower. Even certain artists around the time of the Enlightenment fell into this problematic. Cézanne once said of Monet, "He is only an eye, though what an eye!" The implication is that glorious as Impressionism can be, it can lose touch with reality by ignoring a whole-souled perception.

In more recent times this eyes-plus-brains approach to perception is being challenged. A number of philosophers and psychologists are calling for a renewed understanding of how we relate to the world through more than the mind. One interesting study of perception urges us to consider how the entire person is involved in perception, not just the eye. Martin Jay walks us through a number of (particularly French) philosophers who question the privileged status of vision in engaging culture.[15]

Significantly, Christian theologians are also urging us to go beyond the optic metaphor implied with *worldview*. Some of the work of James A. K. Smith urges us to add a "liturgical" sense to the more cognitive nature of traditional worldview thinking.[16] Liturgies for him are affections, they describe what we love, more than what we believe cognitively to be true. Similarly, Michael Goheen and Craig Bartholomew argue, in *Living at the Crossroads*, that worldview is connected to properly telling the *story* of creation-fall-redemption as it intersects with modernity and postmodernity.[17] It is interesting to note that Timothy Keller posted a blog entry in 2011 titled *Coming Together on Culture,* in which he compared the "transformationist" (Kuyperian) approach to culture to the "Two Kingdoms" view, faulting the former for its triumphalism and its weak view of common grace. This earned him the retort by Michael Goheen, telling him he and others had incorporated a missions element and insights from Lesslie Newbigin, who spent his life setting forth non-triumphalist approaches to the transformation of culture.[18]

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These authors are moving toward a much deeper understanding of how the Bible speaks to us on these matters. The Bible does not divide human beings into higher and lower components.[19] Rather, it describes the *heart* as the center of our disposition. The heart includes the five senses as well as our moral commitments and even our worship. The Wisdom literature puts it this way: "Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life" (Prov. 4:23).

One may rightly ask, then, why Jesus singled-out the eye as the lamp of the soul (Mt 6:22-23; Luke 11:34)? The ancient Hebrews viewed the eye not as a window through which light entered, but as a lamp which actually projects light, and thus grasps the external world. When the eye is sound, or whole, then it means your entire self is illuminated. "Whoever has a bountiful eye [literally a *good* eye] will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor" (Prov. 22:9). If the eye is evil because of such things as envy or hatred, then it means your *self*, your person, is corrupt (see Prov. 23:6; 28:22). The eye, in this sense, is not the physical organ in our heads, but the leading indicator of one's soul. This understanding is confirmed by Jesus teaching about removing the log in your eye before criticizing the speck that is in your brother's eye (Mt. 7:3-5; Luke 6:41-42). When understanding is diminished, the eye is dimmed (Job 17:7).

It is with the heart that we perceive beauty, for the objects of beauty are not simply sights, but much more. The account of the fall of our first parents is instructive here. The tempter suggested to Eve that in taking of the forbidden fruit her "eyes will be opened," so that she would be like God, knowing good and evil (Gen 3:5). Her response was to perceive that it was good for food, a delight to the eyes and would meet the desire to become wise (v. 6). The word translated "delight" here is a strong Hebrew term (*ta'avah*) meaning "longings of the heart" (usually positive) or "lust" (negative). And "desirable to make one wise" translates *chamad*, which implies a strong desire, one that usually brings pleasure. This is so much more than Kant's rather disinterested intellectual feeling. As Chaplin puts it, "In other words, the trees described as 'pleasing to the eyes' were very likely being perceived not just as pretty but as ravishingly stunning and, paradoxically, possibly even painfully beautiful. And this will have included not only their visual surface qualities, but also the feel of their bark, the aroma of their blossoms, the gentle movement of their luminous leaves in a light breeze, the reflection of the sun on their branches and, not least, the promise of sweet taste evoked by the sight of juicy fruits ripe for picking."[20]

A close look at Tintoretto's *Adam and Eve* (1554) gives a sense of the rich nature of their delight in the tree. Eve is actually hugging the tree and is gazing rather thoughtfully at the fruit as she hands it to Adam. Of course, the act was forbidden, and so we would hasten to qualify any aesthetic principles derived from Genesis 3 with a caution: such desire, such appreciation of beauty can be lustful, not aesthetically innocent. But they are not *necessarily* lustful, as Tertullian possibly thought. It follows that whenever we look for instruction in the Scripture on such questions as the nature of beauty we must discern whether the object is legitimately beautiful or merely seductive. Paul is helpful here, when he says, "test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thess. 5:21-22).

What do we find when we do look at the Scriptural data? Several insights. First, the creation is often called beautiful (some scholars calls it "nature," but because of problematic associations of the word nature with Enlightenment philosophy it seems better to use the more solid theological term creation). The Genesis account of God's creation concludes, "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good" (Gen. 3:31). The Hebrew word for good is *tov* which carries meanings beyond simply "good." It includes happiness, kindness, welfare, pleasantness, and, indeed, beauty. The original goodness of the creation is fundamental to a biblical world and life view. Throughout, even after the fall, we are told that God cares for his creation, and that the creation bespeaks his beneficent presence (Ps 19:1-6). Certain animals are considered beautiful as well (Gen. 49:21; Jer. 46:20). One of the heresies of the end times is to deny the goodness of God's world and to drift into asceticism. Paul tells Timothy that people will forbid marriage and refuse certain foods, whereas, "everything created by God is good," and should be received with thanksgiving (1 Tim. 4:1-4). Indeed God made "everything beautiful in its time" (Eccl. 3:11).

Now, for an important qualifier. A perfectly good, beautiful original creation does not mean there are no tensions. Without getting into debates about the length of the days of creation, there is no reason to think that before the fall animal deaths were absent. Predators feeding on their prey could well have been a part of the good creation (Ps 104:21). What was absent in the visible world was evil or sin. When God told mankind to go and subdue the earth, that presupposes an untamed quality. When God forbade our first parents from partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he was not, contrary to the Tempter's suggestion, keeping them from any understanding of good and evil at all. He put them to a test, called the "probation" by theologians, which, had they succeeded in resisting the temptation, would have led them to greater maturity. Geerhardus Vos argues that this maturation is a part of the way people grow in strength and knowledge. By putting Adam and Eve to the test, God meant to improve their estate, going from sinlessness to eternal life.[21] As we know, they did fail, however God provided another way to achieve eternal life. Through Christ, who himself would learn obedience through suffering, we may obtain eternal life as a free gift (Heb. 5:8).

Thus, any notion of beauty that derives from Scripture must include tension. Too many Christians portray beauty as "prettiness," or as "harmony" which is more from Plato than from Moses. This is all the more so in a fallen world being redeemed. Not only is it wrong, but irresponsible to leave tension out of the equation. One thinks of the paintings of Thomas Kinkade, with his garish colors and over-cheerful scenes. Or one thinks of some Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) which is more "happy-clappy" than true to life. Compare that to the beauty of the Negro Spirituals, which is all about suffering, loneliness, homelessness, and yet profoundly hopeful.

The original creation was indeed beautiful both in its loveliness and its wildness. Of course, because of the fall, the creation has been cursed, subject to futility and bondage, as it awaits the freedom of the glory of God's children (Gen. 3:17-18; Rom. 8:19-22). Without speculating too much we can surely assert that there is sorrow and pain in the creation which is not normal. When we talk of "natural disasters," we mean hurricanes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions and the like. These too are connected in Scripture with the fall, and thus profoundly unnatural. So if there is room for beauty, it is out of the ashes (Isa. 61:3). We do not want to say here that evil is good or pain is beautiful, as do certain philosophers such as John Dewey.[22] Neither do we want to justify evil in the manner of Leibniz, who sees it as a necessary part of the best of all possible worlds.[23] We do want to say that beauty ought to involve tension, but not evil.

A second place to look at is how nations and places can be called beautiful. The Hebrew people's homeland was deemed beautiful. God said, "How I would set you among my sons, and give you a pleasant land, a heritage most beautiful of all nations…" (Jer. 3:19) Jerusalem, God's city, was considered beautiful beyond all others. "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain, beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth…" (Ps. 48:1; cf. Lam. 2:15). And within Jerusalem, the temple is called beautiful. The king could "beautify" the house of the Lord there (Ezra 7:27). Still in the New Testament the entry to the temple was by the "Beautiful Gate" (Acts 3:2, 10). A nation, a land, a building can be called beautiful because they embody far more than simple lovely landscape. The bucolic scenes on church bulletins and Hallmark cards belong more to sentimentality than to the rich, many-faceted beauty of a place in biblical parlance. They are beautiful because of what they signify. Thus, we may have pleasant places, a "beautiful inheritance" (Ps. 16:6).

Non-Israelite rulers and lands can also be deemed beautiful. Although he and his country would be judged, the Pharaoh of Egypt are called beautiful by the prophet Ezekiel. Similarly, Assyria was like a cedar of Lebanon, "with beautiful branches and forest shade… It was beautiful in its greatness" (Ezek, 31:3, 7, 9). Similarly the king of Tyre, also to be judged, was "the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty" (Ezek. 28:12). Interestingly, in both these cases, their beauty was compared to the Garden of God, the apex of earthly beauty (cf. Isa. 51:3; Joel 2:3). Samaria was described as a fading flower of "glorious beauty" (Isa. 28:1, 4).

Third, human beings in scripture may have beauty. Several women are identified as beautiful in various ways. This includes Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Abigail, Tamar, Abishag the Shunamite, Bath-Sheba and Esther. Men also can be described as beautiful, or fair: Absalom, Daniel, David, Joseph and Jonathan. Even a man's eyes may be beautiful, as was the case of David (1 Sam. 16:12). Again, we must not imagine a fashion model or a movie celebrity. Rather, human beauty is a combination of good looks with character. Abigail was called "discerning and beautiful" (1 Sam. 25:3). The opposite is a beautiful woman without discretion (Prov. 11: 22). One may gather this deeper sense of beauty from reading through the song of Solomon, with similes that rather astonish the modern reader. Solomon's bride is beautiful, with eyes like doves, hair like a flock of goats, teeth like shorn ewes, and so forth (S. of S. 4:1ff.).

Particularly beautiful are God's redeemed people (Isa. 60:9). So are those who bear the good news. The feet of messenger are beautiful (Isa 52:7; Rom 10:15; Nah 1:15). People's clothing can be beautiful. Achan coveted a beautiful cloak from Shinar (Josh. 7:21). To celebrate, one may put on beautiful raiment, or headdress (Isa. 52:1; 61:3, 10). Royal garb, like a beautiful crown, can have beauty of a dazzling nature (Prov. 4:9). The priest's garment is radiantly beautiful (Ex. chs. 28, 39).

Fourth, we find in the Bible a strong connection between beauty and the work of the artist. One thinks of Oholiab and Bezalel, who were specially gifted by the Holy Spirit to craft the stones and furnishings for the tabernacle (Ex. 31:1-11). Of course, it is noteworthy that artistic skill may also be used to make idols, which have superficial beauty (Ex. 32:1-6). A striking account of how something well-crafted for the good can become an object of corruption is the bronze serpent ordered by Moses for the rescue of the people from real serpents (Nu. 21:4-9; see John 3:14). By the time of Hezekiah, the reformer, this same serpent had become an object of worship, and so it had to be destroyed (2 Kg. 18:4).

Finally, is it proper to call God beautiful? If we are careful to respect the biblical way of describing God's beauty, and not confuse it with the more Platonic way, then the answer is affirmative. Not only does God create a beautiful world, but he is gloriously beautiful. Even terrifyingly beautiful. That is why his tabernacle and his temple had to carry such loveliness. Yet when the Lord came down, it was in a fearsome cloud of glory that filled the entire temple (1 Kg. 8:10-11). That is why both Jerusalem of old and the new Jerusalem are gloriously beautiful. John says the new Jerusalem comes down from heaven as a bride beautifully prepared for her husband (Rev. 21:2). Isaiah describes God as becoming a beautiful diadem for his people (28:5). The Messiah will be a beautiful king, although in his suffering and death, he does not keep that beauty (Isa. 33:17, cf. 53:2). God on his throne has the appearance of jasper, carnelian and an emerald-like rainbow (Rev. 4:3). He dwells in the beauty of holiness (1 Chr. 16:29, Ps. 29:2).

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So then, how can we do apologetics based on the biblical notion of beauty? First, by conducting a critique of the false ideas of beauty that are circulating. We have examined the tendency in the philosophy of aesthetics to overstress the mind, and the eye, in the perception of beauty, whereas in a biblical approach, all of the senses should be involved, centering on the heart. We have tried to show how the Bible opposes any dualism which would separate mind and body. At the same time we tried to demonstrate that while there is much ugliness in modern art, some of that was a healthy reaction against the sentimental or academic art of the nineteenth century. Because the biblical account of the creation includes tension, we may defend art which frankly depicts the untamed. All the more so in a fallen world where sin introduce stress and darkness. If we want to tell the story of redemption it must be done by moving through the valley of the shadow of death to the banquet table, not by circumventing it. At the same time, if we do not fully tell the good news, then we have fallen into the abyss where so much modern art leaves us. True beauty occurs when the whole story of creation, fall and redemption is told well.

Second, we may indeed appeal to the real beauties of God's world as we have represented them above. The condition is, to prove that beauty in the Bible is tied to character, honor, glory, and other moral qualities. Paul encourages the Philippians to think about such things as whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise…" (Phil. 4:8). Beauty should not be isolated from any praiseworthy virtue.

Finally, we may, again with much caution and the right qualifiers, appeal to God's beauty. "One thing I have asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple" (Ps. 27:4).

Notes

1. Edward T. Oakes, S.J., "The Apologetics of Beauty," in *The Beauty of God: Theology and the Arts*, Daniel J. Treier, Mark Husbans & Roger Lundin, (eds.) (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Academic, 2007), 209-226.

2. *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics,* vol. I (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982), 18.

3. Richard Swinburne, *The Existence of God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2nd ed 2004.), 150.

4. For an anthology of such views, see, Graham Farmelo, *It Must Be Beautiful: Great Equations of Modern Science* (London: Granta Books, 2002).

5. Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (Boston: Mariner Books, 2008), 110.

6. *Summa Theologica* 1.Q5.art 1. [http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1005.htm]

7. Idem.

8. Tertullian, *On the Apparel of Women*, Books I and II, Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson, transl., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. IV (Edinburgh: T & T Clark and Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 14-15.

9. François Malye & Jérôme Vincent, *Le livre noir de l'esthétique* (Paris : Calmann-Lévy, 2013).

10. Here I will follow the insights from Adrienne Chaplin in her article, "From Vision to Touch," in *the Other Journal*, June, 2009, [http://theotherjournal.com/2009/06/01/from-vision-to-touch-returning-beauty-to-lived-experience/] .

11. (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1970, republished by Wheaton: Crossway, 1994).

12. "The Practice of Beauty" in *The Sphinx* 4 (London: London Convivium for Archetypal studies, 1992), 13.

13. From Adrienne Chaplin, Op. cit., 3.

14. Immanuel Kant, *Observations of the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, John T. Goldthwait, transl. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), 2003.

15. Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

16. See his series on the Kingdom: *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009); *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013).

17. Michael Goheen & Craig Bartholomew, *Living at the Crossroads: An Introduction to Christian Worldview* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008).

18. Timothy Keller, *Center Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 216.

19. Contrary to appearances, when Paul talks about the elemental spirits of the world (Col. 2:20) or to carnality (1 Cor. 3:1), he is not suggesting an anthropological hierarchy but a moral order.

20. Chaplin, Op. cit., 6.

21. Geerhardua Vos, *Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), 39-47.

22. John Dewey, "The Live Creature" in *Art as Experience* (New York: Perigee, 1934), 1980.

23. Gottfried Leibniz, *Theodicy* (Chicago: Open Court, 1998)