

Troubled by the non-problem of pain, most people do not feel the real problem. The real difficulty is the problem of pleasure. While in a sinful world, pain is to be expected, and pleasure is not to be expected. We should be constantly amazed at the presence of pleasure in a world such as ours.

John Gerstner

An expanded definition of common grace is “(a) those general operations of the Holy Spirit whereby He, without renewing the heart, exercises such a moral influence on man through His general or special revelation, that sin is restrained, order is maintained in social life, and civil righteousness is promoted; or, (b) those general blessings, such as rain and sunshine, food and drink, clothing and shelter, which God imparts to all men indiscriminately where and in what measure it seems good to Him.”

Louis Berkhof

Unlike common grace, which extends to all mankind, the special grace of God is the unmerited favor that God extends to His people. By means of common grace, God restrains sin in the world. By means of special grace, Jesus Christ bears the curse and penalty of sin for His people. In common grace, God gives good things to all men. In special grace, God gives the very righteousness of Jesus Christ to His people. Through common grace, God provides unmerited favor to all mankind for a time. Through special grace, God provides unmerited favor to His people for all eternity.

Keith Mathison

The first principle we should consider is that the use of gifts of God cannot be wrong, if they are directed to the same purpose for which the Creator himself has created and destined them.

John Calvin

If we study, for instance, why he has created the various kinds of food, we shall find that it was his intention not only to provide for our needs, but likewise for our pleasure and our delight.

John Calvin

(We should) choose the leisure activities that bring us closest to God, to people, to beauty, and to all that ennoble us.

J.I. Packer

Beauty Matters

Psalm 104; Acts 14:14-17; 1 Timothy 6:17

Introduction: As Christ-followers, we are pretty good at encouraging one another to persevere through tough times, and to rest in God despite the challenges of our sin-drenched, broken world. But what are we to think about all the good and pleasurable things this world offers? How do we explain the presence of beauty in a broken world? And even more, are we allowed to enjoy it? And if so, how do we avoid the risks associated with all that brings pleasure to our lives?

The Problem of Beauty

Psalm 104

- Defining beauty
- The theological problem of beauty
- The practical problem of beauty
- Solving the problem

Beauty as Witness to the Reality of God

Acts 14:14-17

- Defining *common grace*
- The voice of beauty
- The obstacle of unbelief

Beauty as Revelation of the Heart of God

- The enjoyment of beauty
- The appreciation of beauty
- The beauty of moderation

A Final Thought ...

“For we are His workmanship (His crafted work of beauty) created in Christ Jesus for good works ...”

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Defining beauty

The theological problem of beauty

The practical problem of beauty

Solving the problem

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Kids Notes

Beauty Matters

The Questions

Answer the following questions. The answers are on the back.

1. Common Grace is:

- A. all those ways in which God is good to His world.
- B. a witness that God is real.
- C. never enough to bring about saving faith.
- D. all of the above.

2. Beauty is the characteristic that makes something:

- A. a source of joy and happiness.
- B. new.
- C. popular.
- D. all of the above.

3. For Christ-followers, beauty is to be:

- A. seen as an extension of the very heart of God.
- B. appreciated with moderation.
- C. used, not abused.
- D. all of the above

For Family Discussion: *What does your family consider "beautiful?"*
How does this "beauty" represent the heart of God?

Space to Doodle

Did You Hear It?

Mark the times you hear these key words:

BEAUTY _____	TOTAL: _____
GRACE _____	_____
WITNESS _____	_____
REVELATION _____	_____
HEART _____	_____
SIN _____	_____

Word Search

Find the following words in the scramble below. Letters are sometimes used twice, and words may go around corners.

BEAUTY GRACE WITNESS REVELATION HEART SIN GRACE
 COMMON RESTRAINT HAPPINESS GLAD HEART GOOD RAIN JUST
 SUNSHINE DESPAIR JOY PRESENT EXTENSION GOD JESUS WORLD
 PROBLEM SOLUTION MODERATION APPRECIATION ART MUSIC

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A A J A Y E J P X J R K D N J K N
N P R E C T P B S O E L E Y N R I
O T P A S R U M J S V N S P O D A
I D R R E U U A E R E O P R M W R
S G O S E S S N E M L N A N M O Y
N P E O I C I C O B A S I N O R U
E N Y C G H I D R T T W R P C L S
T T Y P S I E A S V I B H I P D T
X W O N V R W U T P O D A L G A G
E T U M A E J I H I N S P Z O Q H
N S T T S O L U T I O N W E D P O
T N I A R T S E R N J N H E A R T
O O M E L B O R P Y E O A Q U D A
N Y I S Z D O V L O D S Y W J C X
M T M G B N X H J M O V S J U X F

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