

The Loveliness of Christ

by Thomas Watson

Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely, and His beauty and loveliness are beyond human comprehension.

Topics: "Christ's Beauty", "Christian Devotion"

Description

Thomas Watson preaches about the loveliness of Christ, emphasizing the divine beauty and perfection found in the relationship between Christ and His people as depicted in the Song of Solomon. He describes Christ's excellence in complexion, glory, and virtues, highlighting His meekness, compassion, and resplendent beauty. The sermon underscores the need for believers to surrender to Christ, acknowledge His surpassing loveliness, and strive to love Him above all else, seeking communion, sympathy, and memory of Him. Watson also encourages believers to reflect Christ's beauty in their lives, commend Him to others, and find comfort in the promise of being transformed into His glorious likeness in eternity.

Transcript

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"Yes! He is altogether lovely! This is my Beloved, this my Friend!" Song of Solomon 5:16

In this book, which is a divine marriage song, are all the strains of holy love set forth in the purest allegories and metaphors, such as represent that dear affection and union between Christ and His people. The text is nothing but the breathing forth of the spouse's love to Christ: "He is altogether lovely!" In the preceding verses, she had made her sacred paeans, and had been setting Christ forth in His spiritual embroidery.

"He is dark and dazzling" (verse 10). This denotes excellency of complexion; in Him is a mixture of the purest colors. He is of unspotted beauty.

"The chief among ten thousand." The Hebrew word signifies "the standard-bearer among ten thousand." The standard is a warlike ensign--and he who bore the standard in ancient times was the most eminent person in the army. Just so, Christ is the most glorious person of renown, the standard-bearer; according to Isaiah 11:10, "He shall stand for an ensign of the people."

"His head is as the most fine gold" (verse 11). Kings have crowns of gold; Christ is described with a head of gold. The Hebrew signifies shining gold, or sparkling gold, to set forth the infinite resplendence of Christ's beauty. It is of such a sparkling luster that the angels must wear a veil!

"His eyes are as the eyes of doves" (verse 12). Christ is described with eyes like a flame of fire in Revelation 1:14. So indeed He is to the wicked. He is a consuming fire; but to His children He has doves' eyes, which are the emblem of meekness. He has eyes dropping tears of love and compassion.

"His cheeks are as a bed of spices" (verse 13). There is an aromatic perfume coming from Him to refresh a fainting soul. Some expositors understand this bed of spices to mean the fragrancy of His virtues, which are in Scripture compared to sweet perfumes.

Thus the spouse goes on enumerating Christ's beauty; at last being in a holy rapture of spirit, she winds up all with this passionate strain of affection, "His mouth is most sweet, yes, He is altogether lovely."

"His mouth is most sweet." The Chaldean version paraphrases it, "The words of His mouth are as sweet as honey." In the Hebrew it is, "His mouth is sweetnesses." That mouth must be sweet which has the words of eternal life (John 6:68). That mouth must be sweet, a kiss of whose lips can make death sweet to a believer! Well might the spouse say, "Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth!" (Song of Solomon 1:2).

"Yes, He is altogether lovely!" It is as if the spouse had said, "What do I do to set Christ forth in His several parts? His head of gold, His eyes like doves eyes, His hands as gold rings set with beryl, His belly as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires . . . alas, what is all this that I have been speaking of Christ? How barren is my conception, how dull are my expressions! Whatever I have said of Him falls infinitely short of His worth; but this I affirm: He is altogether lovely!"

The original language is, "He is all made up of loves and delights; He is all that may excite desire." So Jerome and Ambrose render it: "He is composed of sweetness and amiableness."

The text contains a glorious and magnificent description of Christ, "He is altogether lovely!" Behold here a spring full of the water of life; and whoever brings his vessel here--a heart fit to receive this water--may be refreshed, as was the woman of Samaria coming to Jacob's well--for Christ is here! The text is a sacred cabinet which contains in it, first, the jewel--Christ, in this word "He;" second, the value of this jewel--"altogether lovely."

Doctrine: Jesus Christ is infinitely and superlatively lovely.

He is the most amazing and delightful object; the very name of Jesus Christ is as a precious ointment poured forth. It is said that the letters of this name were found engraved on Ignatius's heart. Jesus Christ is in every believer's heart (Colossians 1:27, "Christ in you"); and nothing can do better there, for He is altogether lovely.

This whole book of the Song of Solomon is bespangled with the praises of Christ. Homer might praise Achilles, and Jerome might commend Nepotian; but who can set forth Christ's praise? All that I can say will be no more than the dark shadow in the picture; and yet it will be so much as may represent him very lovely. That Christ is thus transcendently lovely, will appear in four manner of ways--by titles, by types, by comparisons, and by demonstrations.

1. Christ appears lovely by His TITLES. These are so many jewels hung upon His crown. He is called "The Desire of All Nations" in Haggai 2:7, "The Prince of Peace" in Isaiah 9:6, "The Holy One of God" in Acts 2:27, and "elect and precious" in 1 Peter 2:6. These are lovely titles.

2. Christ appears lovely by TYPES. He was prefigured by such types as were lovely--and these types were either of persons or things.

Christ was typified by most lovely persons. I will name but three.

MOSES prefigured and typified out Christ in four things:

Moses was a type of Christ in his natural beauty. He was a lovely child (Exodus 2:2). Josephus said, "Moses was so lovely that he drew the eyes of all to him; and those who had seen him were so amazed at his beauty and fed on it with such delight, that they were unwilling to look away again." And herein he was a type of Christ, in whom are all sparkling beauties to be found, "He is altogether lovely!"

Moses was a type of Christ in his education. He was bred up a while at court and, as Josephus said, Pharaoh's daughter set a crown of gold upon his head. But leaving the court, he went and lived in the land of Midian (Exodus 2:15). So Christ left the royal court of heaven--to come and live in the world.

Moses was a type of Christ in his office. He was a PROPHET. Deuteronomy 34:10, "There has never been another prophet like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." He acquainted Israel with the mind of God; he gave them the two tables of the law. So Jesus Christ is a prophet (Luke 24:19). He reveals to His people the mysteries of salvation. He unseals the book of God's decrees and makes known His will (Revelation 5:5). He is counted worthy of more glory than Moses (Hebrews 3:3).

Moses was a type of Christ in his noble acts.

He was a deliverer of the people from the Egyptian furnace; he was a temporal savior. So Jesus' name signifies a Savior. Matthew 1:21, "You are to name Him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins."

Moses was an intercessor for Israel and turned away the wrath of God from them (Numbers 14). So Christ is the saints' advocate. Romans 8:34: "He also makes intercession for us."

Christ was also typified by DAVID. David was a king; so is Christ adorned with regal power. He is a king to govern His people (Revelation 15:3), and to conquer His enemies (Psalm 110:1). David was a man after God's own heart. This prefigured Christ, in whom God was well pleased (Matthew 3:17).

Christ was also typified by SOLOMON, first in his name, which signifies "peaceable." Christ is called "The Prince of Peace" in Isaiah 9:6. The angels proclaimed this at His incarnation. Luke 2:14: "Peace on earth." All his wars tend to peace. And He gives that peace which passes all understanding.

Solomon typified Christ in his government. His was a most flourishing kingdom (2 Chronicles 9:22). King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches. So Christ's kingdom is very glorious; all His subjects are made kings. He reigns in heaven and earth--and of His kingdom there is no end.

Solomon typified Christ in His wisdom. He was the oracle of his age (1 Kings 4:31) and was wiser than all men. So Christ received the unction from His Father. He had a spirit of wisdom and holiness poured upon

Him without measure (John 3:34; Isaiah 11:2). "Behold, one greater than Solomon is here!" (Matthew 12:42). Thus Jesus Christ was prefigured by those persons who were most lovely.

Christ was typified by most lovely things.

Type 1. Christ was typified by the pillar of cloud and fire, which was Israel's guide and conductor in the wilderness (Exodus 13:21). This typified Christ, our pillar of cloud, who guides our feet into the way of peace (Luke 1:79). The cloud was unerring, for God was in it. Such is Christ, who is the way and the truth (John 14:6). How lovely is this pillar to behold!

Type 2. Christ was typified by the manna. This pointed to Christ, who is like the manna in three things.

The figure of manna was circular. Exodus 16:14: "There lay a small round thing." The circle is a figure of perfection; this typified Christ, in whom is all perfection.

The manna was a food prepared for Israel. The Hebrew word (from whence manna seems to be derived) signifies "to prepare." Manna was a food cooked and dressed in heaven. God Himself prepared it--and then served it. Thus Jesus Christ was like manna: He was prepared and set apart by His Father to the blessed work of mediatorship. Hebrews 10:5: "A body have You prepared for Me."

The Jewish Rabbis say that manna suited itself to everyone's taste; whatever he desired, that he found in manna. So Jesus Christ suits Himself to every Christian's condition. He is full of quickening, strengthening, comforting virtue. What fools are they, who prefer the earthly mammon--before this heavenly manna!

Type 3. Christ was typified by the mercy seat, which was a sacred emblem representing the mercy of God to His people. There the Lord gave forth His oracles and answers of peace to His people. Exodus 25:22: "There will I meet you--and I will commune with you." This mercy seat was a type of Christ, in and through whom God is appeased towards us. Therefore He is called a sacrifice of atonement in Romans 3:25. Oh, how lovely is this mercy seat! We could not speak to God in prayer, nor would He commune with us--were it not for this blessed atoning sacrifice. The Hebrew word for mercy seat signifies a covering--to show that in Christ the sins of believers are covered.

Type 4. Christ was prefigured by the brazen serpent (Numbers 21:9). The brazen serpent resembled Christ in two ways:

It was made like a serpent--but it was no real serpent. Just so, Christ was made in the likeness of sinful flesh (Romans 8:3), but He was not a sinner. He was made sin--but He knew no sin. Christ was as void of sin--as the brazen serpent was of a sting!

When the people of Israel were stung by the fiery serpents, then whoever looked upon the brazen serpent was cured. Thus, when sin stings the souls of men (for it is a serpent with five stings: it stings men with guilt, shame, horror of conscience, death, and the curse of God), then Christ, that brazen serpent, being looked upon with a penitent's believing eye, cures these deadly stings! Oh, how lovely is this brazen serpent! Many of the Jews worshiped the serpent of brass, "He broke into pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made, because the people of Israel had begun to worship it by burning incense to it. The brazen serpent was called Nehushtan." (2 Kings 18:4). Let us in our hearts adore this brazen serpent--the Lord Jesus.

Type 5. Christ was typified by Noah's ark, which saved Noah and his family from the flood. Thus when the wrath of God, as a deluge, overflows the wicked, Christ is the Ark in which the believer sails above those bloody waves--and is preserved from drowning!

And is not the Lord Jesus most lovely? All these types did but serve to shadow forth the divine excellencies of Christ and render Him lovely in our eyes!

3. That Christ is this lovely appears by those RESEMBLANCES to which the Scripture compares Him. He is compared to things that are

most illustrious. There are seven lovely resemblances of Christ in Scripture:

1. Christ is resembled to a ROSE. Song of Solomon 2:1: "I am the Rose of Sharon." The rose is the queen of flowers; it is most delicious for color and scent--to show that fragrant perfume which Christ sends forth. All roses, though beautiful, have their prickles; only the Rose of Sharon does not! So sweet is this rose of paradise that it makes us become a sweet fragrance to God (2 Corinthians 2:15). This rose never loses its color nor fragranciness! Is it not then, very lovely?

2. Christ is resembled to a VINE in John 15:1. The vine, as Pliny says, is the noblest of plants--and to this Christ is compared. Oh, what lovely clusters grow upon this Vine: the fruits of justification, sanctification, and so on! These bunches of grapes hang upon the Lord Jesus. We are indebted to this Vine. Hosea 14:8: "From Me is your fruit found." Nay, Christ excels the vine. For though there are many things on the vine besides the fruit that are useful--the leaves, the gum, the ashes of the vine--yet the wood of the vine is useless "Can wood be taken from it to make something useful? Or can anyone make a peg from it to hang things on?" (Ezekiel 15:3).

Now herein Christ is more lovely than the vine; there is nothing in Christ which is not useful. We have need of His human nature; we have need of His divine nature; we have need of His offices, influences, privileges--there is nothing in this vine which we can be without. Oh, how blessed are the branches of this Vine! Mary was saved not by bearing the Vine--but by being grafted into the Vine!

3. Christ is resembled to a CORNERSTONE in 1 Peter 2:6, and that in two respects:

First, the whole weight of the building lies upon the cornerstone. Just so, the weight of our salvation lies upon Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11-12).

Second, the cornerstone knits and unites together both parts of the building. Just so, when God and man were at variance, Christ, as the cornerstone, united them together, yes--and cemented them with His own blood! Oh, how lovely and precious is this cornerstone!

4. Christ is resembled to a ROCK. 1 Corinthians 10:4: "That Rock was Christ." He is a Rock in a threefold sense:

First, He is a rock of offense. A rock breaks the waves. The church, being built upon Christ--all the adversaries that come against her are like a ship coming full sail against a rock.

Second, He is a Rock for defense. The dove hides in the rock. Song of Solomon 2:14: "O my dove in the clefts of the rock." Christ's wounds are the clefts of the rock where the believing soul, this dove, hides itself!

Third, He is a rock for comfort. The rock is a screen to shade off the heat; so Christ is called in Isaiah 25:4, "a shade from the heat." He shades a poor sinner from the scorchings of God's wrath! Also, honey came out of the rock in Deuteronomy 32:13: "He made him to suck honey out of the rock--and oil out of the flinty rock." The honey of the promises--and the oil of gladness come out of this blessed Rock!

5. Christ is compared to a RIVER in a desert. "He will shelter Israel from the storm and the wind. He will refresh her as a river in the desert and as the cool shadow of a large rock in a hot and weary land." (Isaiah 32:2). When by nature we are as a scorched wilderness, dry and barren, Christ sends forth the sacred influences of His blood and Spirit, making us like the fields of Sharon--full of moisture and fertility! Are not these silver streams lovely!

6. Christ is resembled to a rich TREASURY. Riches are lovely in men's eyes. Ephesians 3:8 speaks of "the unsearchable riches of Christ." The angels can never dig to the bottom of this golden mine! Christ has the true monopoly, because He has those riches which are nowhere else to be found: the riches of His merit--and the riches of His Spirit. Christ has a partnership with His Father. John 16:15: "All that the Father has, is Mine." He is crowned with the riches of the Deity. Alexander had no regard for the kingdom of Macedonia when he heard of the riches of India. Just so, a Christian will in a manner despise all other riches--when he has Christ's riches (Philippians 3:8).

7. Christ is resembled to a beautiful ROBE. Isaiah 61:10: "He has covered me with the robe of righteousness." Christ's righteousness is a lovely robe; no robe of gold or ermine, with which kings are invested, is so honorable as this one. In this robe we shine as angels in God's eyes. The high priest's glorious vestments (Exodus 28:2)--the miter, the robe, the ephod of gold, and the breastplate of precious stones--did all serve to set out the beautiful garment of Christ's righteousness, with which a believer is adorned. Thus Christ appears lovely in these several resemblances, which can but faintly shadow out His beauty.

4. Christ's loveliness appears by His DEMONSTRATIONS. He is lovely in Himself--and He is lovely in the account of others.

A. He is lovely in HIMSELF--and that in five ways.

1. He is lovely in His person--as He is MAN. Psalm 45:2: "You are the most excellent of men." The Hebrew is emphatic, denoting excellency of beauty; for though it is said He had no loveliness (Isaiah 53:2), that was in regard of His afflictions, which so disfigured Him and, as it were, drew a veil over His glory. Yet certainly the person of Christ was incomparably fair, as Jerome and Chrysostom observe; and if His body on earth was so beautiful, what is it now in heaven! The apostle calls it a glorious body in Philippians 3:21. If Christ can make a lily of the field more beautiful than Solomon in all his glory, how lovely is He Himself? How white is that lily which grows in paradise?

2. Christ's person is lovely--as He is GOD-man. He may not unfitly be compared to Jacob's ladder, which reached from earth to heaven. Christ's human nature, which was the foot of the ladder, stood upon the earth; and His divine nature, which was the top of the ladder, reached to heaven. The Arians and Socinians deny His Godhead, as the Valentians do His manhood. If the Godhead is in Him, He must be God; but the Godhead shines in Him. Colossians 2:9: "In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead."

To confirm us in this truth, let us consult with those Scriptures which clearly assert His Godhead:

1 Corinthians 8:6: "To us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things--and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things."

When Philippians 2:6 uses the phrase "who, being in the form of God," this is as much, Basil said, as to exist in the essence of God.

1 Timothy 3:16: "God was manifest in the flesh."

1 John 5:20: "We are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God."

Besides these testimonies of Scripture which expressly assert the Godhead of Christ, it may be clearly demonstrated by those incommunicable attributes belonging to the Deity which are ascribed to Christ--and are the flowers of His crown: omnipotence (Hebrews 1:3); omniscience (Mark 2:8); omnipresence (Matthew 28:20); a power to seal pardons (Matthew 9:6); the giving of the Holy Spirit (John 16:7); co-equality with God the Father (Philippians 2:6) in both power (John 5:19, 21) and dignity (John 5:23).

Thus we see His Godhead proved; and as He is God-man, He is altogether lovely. He is the very picture of His Father's glory; therefore He is called the express image and character of His person in Hebrews 1:3. The very effigies and print of God's face are seen in Christ; the glory of God's wisdom, holiness, and mercy most transparently shine forth in Him--thus His person is lovely.

3. Christ is lovely in His DISPOSITION. A good nature is able to render deformity itself lovely. Christ is lovely not only in his complexion--but in His disposition. He is of a loving and merciful disposition, and in this sense may he called the delight of mankind. It is reported of Marcus Aurelius, the emperor, that he was of a most affable winning temper, given to clemency--and every day would set one hour apart to hear the causes of the poor. Thus Jesus Christ is of a most sweet disposition. He will not always chide (Psalm 103:9). He is inclined to show mercy to the penitent. He delights in mercy (Micah 7:18). He invites sinners to come to Him (Matthew 11:28). He begs them to be saved (2 Corinthians 5:20). He knocks at their hearts by His Spirit, until His head is filled with dew and His locks with the drops of the night (Revelation 3:20). If any poor soul accepts His offer, and arises and goes to Him--how Christ welcomes him. Christ makes the feast (Luke 15:23) and the angels make the music (verse 7). But if men will not receive the offers of grace, Christ grieves (Mark 3:5). He is like a judge who passes the sentence with tears in his eyes. Luke 19:41: "And when He was come near the city, He beheld it and wept." You can hear Christ saying, "Ah, sinners, I come to save you--but you put away salvation from you. I come with healing under My wings--but you bolt from your Physician. I would have you but open your hearts to receive Me and I will open heaven to receive you; but you will rather stay with your sins and die--than come to Me and live." Psalm 81:11: "My people would not listen to me; Israel would not submit to Me." "Well, sinners, I will weep at your funerals." Oh, how lovely Christ is, in His disposition! He comes with His suppling oil to pour into sinners' wounds. He would gladly break their hearts with His mercies. He labors to overcome their evil with His good.

4. Christ is lovely in His SUFFERINGS when He makes expiation for our sins. But how can He be lovely in His sufferings? Lovely when He was buffeted, spat upon, and smeared with blood? Oh, yes! He was most lovely upon the cross--because then He showed most love to us. He bled love from every vein! His drops of blood were love-drops. The more bloody--the more lovely. The more Christ endured for us--the more dear He ought to be to us. Osorius, writing of the sufferings of Christ, said that the crown of thorns bored His head with seventy-two wounds; and Tully, when he speaks of the death of the cross, shows his rhetoric best by a silence: "What shall I say of His death?" Though he was a great orator, he lacked words

to express it.

Nor did Christ only endure pain in His body--but agony in His soul. He conflicted with the wrath of God, which He could never have done if He had not been more than a man. We read that the altar of wood was overlaid with brass so that the fire on the altar might not consume the wood (Exodus 27:1-2). This altar was a type of Jesus Christ. The human nature of Christ, which was the wood, was covered with the divine nature, which was like brass, else the fire of God's wrath would have consumed it.

All that Christ suffered was in our stead (Isaiah 53:5). We ate the sour grapes---and His teeth were set on edge. We climbed the tree, we stole the forbidden fruit--and Christ goes up the ladder of the cross and dies! Oh, how lovely ought a bleeding Savior to be in our eyes! Let us wear this blessed crucifix always in our heart. "The cross of Christ," said Damascen, "is the golden key that opens paradise to us."

How beautiful Christ is upon the cross! The ruddiness of His blood--took away the redness of our guilt. How lovely are those wounds which wounded the red dragon! When this blessed Rock was smitten, water came out of it to cleanse us and blood to cheer us (1 John 5:6). "When Christ was on the cross," said Bernard, "then the vine was cut--and salvation came to us in the blood of the vine." Oh, how lovely is this bleeding Vine! Christ's crucifixion--is our coronation!

5. Christ is lovely in His GRACES which, as a divine embroidery, bespangled and set Him off in the eyes of the world. Grace was not in Christ as a quality--but as an essence, as light is intrinsic to the sun and is of the essence of it. Christ opened a box of precious perfume and, because of the fragrance of His ointments, the virgins love Him (Song of Solomon 1:3). In Christ there was a constellation of all the graces; how He shone in wisdom, humility, zeal, heavenly-mindedness, and, which did not adorn Him only a little little, meekness. How lovely was Christ in His graces!

He came into the world meek. Matthew 21:5: "Behold your King comes meek." He came not with a sword or scepter in His hand--but with an olive branch of peace in His mouth. He preached tidings of peace (Matthew 11:29). Though He was the Lion of Judah--yet He was the Lamb of God.

When He was in the world, He was a pattern of meekness. 1 Peter 2:23: "When He was reviled, He reviled not again." He left His Father's bosom, that hive of sweetness, to come and live here; and truly, He exchanged His palace for a dunghill. How often He was called a friend of sinners; nay, He was charged to have a devil. But, see how mildly He answered (this dove had no gall) in John 8:49: "I have no devil--but I honor My Father." All His words were steeped in honey.

When He was going out of the world, He showed unparalleled meekness. He prayed for His enemies, "Father forgive them" (Luke 23:34). When the soldiers came to take Him by force, one would have thought that He would have called for fire from heaven, as the man of God did in 2 Kings 1:10. But, behold, grace was poured into His lips (Psalm 45:2). See what a mild answer He gave, enough to have made the hardest heart relent. Matthew 26:55: "Am I some dangerous criminal, that you have come armed with swords and clubs to arrest Me?" It is as if He had said, "What wrong, I ask, have I done to you? What have I stolen from the world--but their sins? What have I robbed them of--but the wrath of God?" Oh, the mildness of this Savior! Surely, had not the soldiers' hearts been very hard (for in the whole story of Christ's passion I do not read of one soldier converted; there was a thief indeed converted--but no soldier), Christ's meekness would have melted them into tears of repentance.

When He was led away to be crucified--He went as a lamb to the slaughter. "He opened not His mouth" (Isaiah 53:7). He opened His side--but not His mouth in repining. And was not Christ lovely in His meekness? No wonder the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the likeness of a Dove; not a lion or eagle--but a Dove, which is the emblem of meekness.

6. Christ is lovely in His CONDUCT. What was said of Saul and Jonathan in 2 Samuel 1:23 ("they were lovely in their lives") is much more true of Christ. "His life," said Chrysostom, "was purer than the sunbeams." All the ethics of Aristotle and all the wisdom of Greece, could never describe virtue as it was lively portrayed out in Christ's holy example. He is called "a Lamb without spot" (1 Peter 1:19). His lips never spoke a word amiss. Luke 4:22: "All bore Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth." Thus were His lips like lilies, dripping pure myrrh (Song of Solomon 5:13). His foot never tread a step awry. He who was a way to others--never went out of the way Himself. He was so pure, that no temptation could fasten upon Him. Temptation to Christ was like throwing a burr upon a crystal glass, which will not stick--but glides off. "The prince of this world comes and has no power over Me" (John 14:30). There was no powder for the devil's fire to take. What was Christ's whole life--but a pattern of good works? "He went about doing good" (Acts 10:38). He was either anointing the blind, healing the sick, raising the dead, preaching, or working miracles. Thus He was altogether lovely.

B. And then Christ is lovely in the account of OTHERS. He is lovely to God His Father, lovely to the saints--and lovely to the angels.

1. He is lovely to God His Father. God is infinitely delighted with Him. Christ is called "the Rose of Sharon," and how God delights to smell this rose! Isaiah 42:1: "My Chosen One in whom My soul delights." Surely if there is loveliness enough in Christ to delight the heart of God, there may well be enough in Him to delight us. Christ is the center, where all the lines of His Father's love do meet.

2. Christ is lovely in the account and esteem of His saints. 2 Thessalonians 1:10: "He shall be admired by all those who have believed." He is admired now--and He shall be more admired by them. Well may the saints admire to see Christ sitting in the bright robe of their flesh above the angels in glory. Well may they admire to see their nature united with the Deity. Oh, how lovely and beautiful is this sight! Well may Christ be admired by His saints.

3. Christ is lovely in the esteem of the angels. They adore Him. Hebrews 1:6: "And let all the angels of God worship Him." The cherubim are painted with their faces looking upwards, to show that the angels in heaven all are still looking upward, admiring and being ravished with the amazing beauties of Jesus Christ.

APPLICATION

A. Information. There are three branches:

Branch 1. Behold here, as in a Scripture glass--the transcendent excellencies of the Lord Jesus! "He is altogether lovely." He is a lovely prospect set before us. I do not wonder that Paul, that seraphic saint, desired to know nothing, but Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 2:2). What else would He want to know? He is altogether lovely; no wonder then that the apostles left all--and followed Him (Matthew 19:27). Had I the tongues of angels, I could never set forth Christ in all His lively and lovely colors. Besides what has been said, take a further view of Christ's lovely excellencies in three particulars:

1. Christ is our LIGHT. Light is a glorious creation (Ecclesiastes 11:7). Truly the light is sweet; the light pulls off the veil and draws aside the dark curtains of the night, making everything appear in its fresh colors. Thus Jesus Christ is lovely. He is called that true light (John 1:9) and the bright and morning star (Revelation 22:16). When the soul is darkened with ignorance, Christ is the morning star that enlightens it. He is the Sun of Righteousness (Malachi 4:2).

This Sun of Righteousness is more glorious than the sun in the sky. The sun in the firmament rises and sets--but the Sun of Righteousness, once it rises upon the soul in conversion, never sets finally upon him. It may pull in its beams when the clouds of our sin come between--but it comes out of the cloud again (as it did to David) and never sets finally. The sun in the sky only shines upon us--but the Sun of Righteousness shines within us. Galatians 1:16: "But when it pleased God to reveal His Son in me." The sun in the sky shines only upon our faces--but the Sun of Righteousness shines in our hearts. 2 Corinthians 4:6: "God has shined in our hearts." And how sweet are these beams! The sun in the sky shines only in the daytime--but the Sun of Righteousness shines in the night; in the night of spiritual desertion and affliction, this Sun shines. Psalm 112:4: "Unto the upright there arises light in darkness." Oh, how lovely in this Sun of Righteousness! By the bright beams of this Sun, we see God.

2. Christ is our FOOD. He is not only lovely to the eye--but to the taste. John 6:55: "My flesh is food indeed." This is princely fare; it was never prepared for the angels--but for us. It is lovely feeding here; all the rarities of heaven are served in this dish!

"And My blood is drink indeed." This blood is better than wine. Wine may be taken in excess. Noah took too much of the wine of the grape--but it is otherwise with the wine of Christ's blood; there is no fear of excess here. Though a drop is sweet--yet the more we drink, the better; the deeper, the sweeter! Drink, yes, drink abundantly, O beloved. Excess here makes us sober!

Wine, though it cheers the heart--yet at some times, if it is taken, it may be harmful. Give wine in a fever--and it is as bad as poison. But this wine of Christ's blood is best in a fever. When the heart burns as hot as hell in the sense of God's wrath, and, as it were, in a spiritual agony and fever--then a drop of Christ's blood allays the inflammation--and sweetly refreshes the soul. It is lovely drinking at this Fountain!

3. Christ is our LIFE. Colossians 3:4: "When Christ who is our life shall appear." Life is sweet; life makes everything comfortable. In this the devil said truly, "skin for skin, yes, all that a man has will he give for his life" (Job 2:4). A man will cast his jewels overboard to save his life; he will lose a leg or an arm to preserve the vital parts. Is life lovely--and is not Christ, who is our life, lovely?

He was typified by the tree of life in the garden (Genesis 2:9). That tree was symbolic, as Augustine said; it was a pledge and sign of life--if man had continued in obedience. It was certainly a lovely tree--but it was only a type of Christ, who is called "the tree of life" in Revelation 2:7. This tree of life, the Lord Jesus, is a better tree than that which grew in paradise. Adam's tree in paradise might preserve life--but it could not prevent death; there was dying for all that. But this tree of life, Jesus Christ, prevents death. John 11:26: "Whoever believes in Me shall never die," that is--not die the second death spoken of in Revelation 20:14. This blessed tree is an antidote against death. If there were a tree to be found in the world that could preserve men from dying, how far would they go on pilgrimage to reach it? What vast sums of money would they give for one leaf of that tree? Such a tree is Christ--He will keep you from dying! And is not this tree very lovely?

In particular, there is a threefold life flowing from Jesus Christ:

There is a life of GRACE. John 1:16: "We have all received grace after grace from His fullness." This life of grace, is a bud of eternity; it is a life purchased for us by Christ's death.

There is a life of COMFORT, which is the cream of life. John 16:22: "Your heart shall rejoice." This is a holy jubilation of spirit; so sweet and ravishing is this joy that if David, when he had lost his joy had lost also his crown, and God had put the question to him which of these two he would have restored, David would have said, "Lord, restore unto me the joy of Your salvation" (Psalm 51:12).

There is also a life of GLORY. (John 17:22). This is the most noble life; this is to live the life of angels, nay, to live the life of God! It is the highest elevation and perfection of the reasonable creature. And may we not cry out with Chrysostom, "What is more lovely than Christ, from whom these golden streams of life flow!" Oh, that all this might make Him amiable in our eyes!

What else should we admire? What should we rejoice in, but Christ? Christ's beauty, like His coat, is without seam. We read of Absalom (2 Samuel 14:25) that in all Israel there was none to be so praised as Absalom for his beauty; from the sole of his foot, even to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him. This may be far more truly applied to Christ. He is the mirror of beauty, the map of perfection, the paradise of delight! He is the crown of the gospel. If the gospel is the field--Christ is the pearl hidden in the field. If the gospel is the ring--Christ is the diamond in this ring. He is the glory of heaven. Revelation 21:23: "The Lamb is the light thereof." Well might Paul account all things dross and dung, for Christ (Philippians 3:8).

Branch 2. If Christ is altogether lovely, it shows us the true reason why men do not embrace Christ, namely, because they are ignorant of His beauty. A blind man does not admire the colors in a rainbow; and when the god of this world has blinded men's eyes--they do not see any excellency in Christ. Therefore they cry out, as the watchmen did, "What is your Beloved more than another beloved?" Men do not admire the sun--because the cloud of their ignorance comes between. Christ is a treasure--but a hidden treasure. He is more lovely than the children of men--but to a natural person He is like Moses, with a veil upon His face. The men of the world do not see the stupendous beauty of Christ. He does not lack worth--but they lack eyes! "O unhappy man," said Augustine, "who knows all things--but Christ! Your knowledge will but serve to light you to hell."

QUESTION. But you will say to me, "What, not know Christ? I hope we are better bred than that! Has Christ been preached so long in our streets--and we not know Him?"

ANSWER 1. I wish there were not many people grossly ignorant of Christ, who understand nothing of His person, offices, or privileges. A minister told me that not long since, he went to visit a neighbor of his parish lying on his deathbed, a man eighty years of age, one who came frequently to church. This minister questioned him about what sin was--and the man said he did not know; he asked him who Christ was--and he told him he did not know. So the minister said to him, "If you do not know Christ, how do you think to go to heaven?" His answer was this, "If I cannot get to heaven, I will just stay here." Oh, gross ignorance! Balaam's donkey spoke better sense to the prophet.

That people have been very ignorant of Jesus Christ appears by this, because they have been so inclined to error, so greedy to drink in every new opinion as soon as the devil has set it abroad!

ANSWER 2. Whereas you say, "Can we be ignorant of Christ in this broad daylight of the gospel?" I say, a man may have excellent head notions of Christ--and may be able to make an elegant discourse of

Him--and yet not know Him savingly. Though he is not rationally ignorant of Christ--yet he may be spiritually ignorant. There is a threefold defect in the knowledge of most. It is a speculation without conviction, affection, or operation.

Their supposed knowledge is merely a speculation, without conviction. Men are not thoroughly convinced of the excellencies of Christ. John 16:8: "And when He (that is the Holy Spirit) comes, He shall convince the world of sin." Strange! Was not Christ in the world? Had He not made many sermons about sin? It is true, He had; but the Jews were not yet convinced of it. Therefore He shall send His Spirit to convince them. "And of righteousness." Why? Had not Christ told them that there was no righteousness to be found, but in Him--that they could graft their hopes of salvation upon no other stock besides? Yes, they had heard Christ say so--but they were not yet convinced; therefore the Spirit shall come and convince them. Hence I gather that men may have a speculative knowledge of Christ--yet be ignorant of Him, that is, not know Him convincingly. And that they do not have a convincing knowledge is clear; for were they convinced in their consciences of the lovely excellencies of Christ, would they value a lust or trifle? Would they, with Judas, prefer thirty pieces of

silver before Him?

Their "knowledge" is a speculation, without affection. Men have notions of Christ--but are not warmed with love for Christ. Their knowledge is like the moon: it has light in it--but no heat. True knowledge of Christ is like fire to the ice--it melts it into water. So this saving knowledge melts the sinner into tears of love. I do the hypocrite no wrong--to tell him that he bears no true affection to Jesus Christ. There is a great deal of difference between the knowledge that the prisoner has of the judge--and the knowledge the child has of the parent. The prisoner knows the judge--but has no affection for him; his knowledge is joined with fear and hatred. But the child's knowledge of his parent is joined with affection; he loves to be in his presence. The hypocrite knows Christ as the prisoner does the judge, or as the devils knew Him (Mark 1:24), with a knowledge of horror and amazement; whereas true knowledge is filial. The affections are drawn forth in an inflamed manner after Him. The apostle has an elegant expression to set forth the nature of true knowledge; he calls it "the savor of the knowledge of Him" (2 Corinthians 2:14). A man tastes a savory sweetness in his meat--but hypocrites have no taste for Christ.

Their "knowledge" is a speculation, without operation. The knowledge that hypocrites have of Christ, has no saving influence upon them; it does not make them more holy. It is one thing to have a notion of Christ--another thing to fetch virtue from Christ. The knowledge of hypocrites is a dead, barren knowledge; it does not bring forth the child of obedience. There is a great deal of difference between a scholar who studies medicine for the theory and notion--and one who studies medicine to practice it. Hypocrites are not practitioners; they are all head and no feet; they do not walk in Christ (Colossians 2:6). Their knowledge is informing--but not transforming; it does not make them one jot the better; it does not leave a spiritual tincture of holiness behind. Such knowledge is no better than ignorance.

1 John 2:4: "He who says, 'I know Him,' and keeps not His commandments, is a liar--and the truth is not in him." A man may have a speculative knowledge--and be no better than a devil. This is the reason why men do not embrace Christ, who is infinitely lovely, because they do not know His worth. Though they are not intellectually ignorant of Christ--yet they are spiritually ignorant. To this day the veil is upon their hearts.

Branch 3. If Jesus Christ is so lovely--it shows us the misery of a man who lives and dies without Christ.

Behold his misery who lives without Christ. He is very deformed and unlovely; for all loveliness flows from Christ. A sinner in the state of nature is like an infant tumbling in its blood. Ezekiel 16:6: "You were in your blood." In Leviticus 13, the leper in the law was but the sad emblem of a sinner. The leper was to live alone, as being unworthy to come into the congregation of the holy. The leper wore three marks to be known by: his garments torn, his head bare, his mouth covered. He was to cry, "Unclean, unclean." This spiritual leprosy is upon every Christless sinner.

Therefore a man in a state of unregeneracy is in Scripture compared to most vile things most: to a dog (Revelation 22:15); to a swine (2 Peter 2:22); to a viper (Matthew 3:7); and to a devil (John 6:70). A sinner's heart is a poisoned spring; it is like a piece of muddy ground which defiles the purest water that runs through it. The heathen had this kind of notion engrafted into them for, as authors report, they had their stone pots of water set at the doors of their temple, where they used to wash before they went to sacrifice.

A sinner is blind (Revelation 3:17)--and the more blind because he thinks he sees. He is dead; and although he may be decked with some moral virtues, this is but like strewing flowers upon a dead corpse (Ephesians 2:1). Dead things have no beauty in them. A sinner out of Christ is a filthy, vile creature; he is nothing but dregs; he is hell epitomized. There is no part of him sound. The man who had his running sore in his flesh (Leviticus 15:2) was but a type of a sinner who has the plague-sores of sin running upon him (1 Kings 8:38). Oh, how ghastly and deformed is every Christless soul! God loathes him. Zechariah 11:8: "My soul loathed them!" So abominable and detestable is a sinner, that God stands afar off (Psalm 138:6). He will not come near the stench of him.

The sinner is so deformed and diseased that, when he comes to be converted, the first thing he does is to loathe himself. Ezekiel 36:31: "You shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities." Thus unlovely is every person out of Christ. If he brags of his goodness, it is because he never yet looked at his face in the looking-glass of God's Word so that would discover his spots and blemishes.

Behold his misery who dies without Christ. Though Jesus Christ is so infinitely beautiful, the sinner shall see none of His beauty. Christ will put a veil upon his face, as Moses did when his face shone (Exodus 34:33). Nay, that is not all; though Christ is so lovely in Himself--yet to an ungodly sinner He will be dreadful to behold. A wicked man shall see nothing in Christ that is lovely. The Sun of Righteousness will be eclipsed to him. His beauty will be changed into fury. The Lamb will be turned to a Lion. Christ's visage will strike the heart of a sinner with horror and dread. King Ahasuerus was pleasant to Queen Esther to behold when he held forth the golden scepter; but how dreadful was his visage to Haman, when he arose from the banquet of wine in his wrath! His look carried death in its face. So, though Christ is so lovely in Himself--and full of smiling beauty to His saints--yet to those who reject Him and die in their sins, oh, how ghastly and frightening will His looks be! His eyes will be as a flame of fire! (Revelation 1:14).

Christ is represented with a bow and a crown (Revelation 6:2). He will appear to the saints with a crown--very lovely and glorious to behold; but to the wicked He will appear with His bow--to shoot at them with the arrows of His indignation. We read in Psalm 97:2 that "clouds and darkness are round about Him." To believers Christ will shine forth with His rays of majesty and beauty; but to the wicked He will cover Himself with a cloud of displeasure. This will be the hell of hell to the damned--they shall be shut out from a sight of Christ's glory--and shall behold only a sight of His wrath! "And they cried to the mountains and the rocks--Fall on us and hide us from the face of the One who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!" (Revelation 6:16). "Christ," said Jerome, "will be as dreadful to a sinner, as the sight of

hell-fire!"

B. Exhortation.

Branch 1. If Christ is so infinitely lovely--then let us labor to get a part in Christ so that the cursed deformity of our nature may be taken away--and the bespangled beauties of holiness may shine in us! It is little comfort for the soul to say, "Christ is altogether lovely," unless it can also say, "My Beloved is mine!" (Song of Solomon 2:16). Ignatius did not care what befell him--as long as he had Christ. Clear your interest in Christ; the ground of salvation is union with Christ. "There are," said Bernard, "many professors who have nothing of Christ in them." Oh, labor to be made one with Christ, to have Christ not only in your Bible--but in your heart; renounce your own

beauty, all your abilities, moralities, and duties. These are a rotten bough to hold on to. Philippians 3:9: "That I may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness."

When Augustus Caesar desired the senate of Rome to join with him in the consulship, the senate answered that they held it a great disparagement to him to join any consul with him. So Jesus Christ takes it as a great disparagement to Him--to join our duties, with His merits. O sinner, cast away your beggars' rags--so that you may put on Christ's lovely robes. I would not take you off from your duty--but from confidence in your duty. Noah's dove might make use of her wings to fly--but she did not trust her wings--but the ark. A man makes use of his feet to go over a bridge--but he trusts the bridge for safety. Christians, while they walk with the feet of obedience, must trust Christ as the bridge to lead them over the devouring sea of hell. In short, if you should get a saving interest in Christ, rely on Christ by faith--and resign yourself up to Christ by service.

A believer with one hand receives Christ--and with the other hand gives himself up to Christ. Christ says to a believer, "With My body, yes, with My blood, I endow you." And a believer says to Christ, "With my soul I worship You." O Christian, part with all--for a part in this lovely Savior!

Branch 2. If Christ is thus full of sparkling beauties, then fall in love with this lovely object. With the spouse; be love-sick for Christ. Beauty draws love. Ministers are friends of the bridegroom. This day I come a wooing for your love. Love Him who is so lovely. Let Christ lie as a bundle of myrrh always between your breasts. "If anyone does not love the Lord, that person is cursed!" (1 Corinthians 16:22). "Love," said Chrysostom, "is the diamond that only the queen wears," that is, the gracious soul. Oh, that all these surpassing beauties of Christ might kindle a flame of divine love in our hearts. Christ is the very extract and quintessence of beauty. He is a whole paradise of delight. He is the rose of Sharon, enriched with orient colors and perfumed with the sweetest fragrance. Oh, wear this flower not in your bosom--but in your heart--and be always smelling it.

Show your love to this lovely Savior by the strength and effects of it. Love Him above all other things; let Him carry away the crown and the glory from the creature. Love Him more than your relations. Matthew 10:37: "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." Nay, our love to relations must be hatred in comparison with our love to Christ (Luke 14:26). Great is our love to relations. The creatures void of reason have natural affection; the young stork feeds the aged mother stork--and helps to carry her when she is old and cannot fly. Children should exceed and outfly the stork in affection.

Christ must be dearer to us than all. He must weigh heavier than relations in the balance of our affections, for He is altogether lovely. If parents lie as a stumbling block in our way to Christ, if they either come in

competition with Christ or stand in opposition against Christ--we must either leap over them or tread upon them!

Love Christ more than your estate. Gold is but shining dust; though it may be lovely--yet it is not altogether lovely. Gold is worse than yourself; it is of an earthly extract. If you love anything, love something better than yourself; and that alone is Christ, who is altogether lovely. Riches avail nothing in the day of wrath (Proverbs 11:4). Riches are no lifeguard to defend us from divine fury; but how lovely is Christ who can screen off the fire of God's wrath from us! Oh, then love Him more than these perishable things. Christ's gleanings--are better than the world's vintage. Do not be like Noah's raven which, when it had found a carrion to feed on, did not care to return home to the ark. He who loses all for Christ--shall find all in Christ.

Love Christ more than your life. Revelation 12:11: "They loved not their lives to the death." They carried their sufferings as signs of their glory. They had pangs of love--stronger than the pangs of death. Did the Curtii die for the Romans, the Codri for the Athenians--and shall not we be willing to lay down our lives for Christ, who is so infinitely lovely?

Show your love to this lovely Savior by the effects of love. The first fruit of love, is desire for COMMUNION. Love is a transporting of the affections; lovers desire to be often talking and conversing together before the marriage day. Christ converses with the soul by His Word and Spirit--and the soul converses with Him by prayer and meditation. The soul that loves Christ, desires to be much in His presence. He loves the ordinances; he thinks it is good lying in the way where Christ passes by. Ordinances are the chariots of salvation. Christ rides into the believer's heart in these chariots. Ordinances are the feast of fat things. The soul feasts with Christ here. Song of Solomon 2:4: "He brought me to the banqueting house." In the Hebrew it is, "He brought me to the house of wine." The Word, prayer and the sacraments are to a Christian, the house of wine. Here, often Christ turns the water of tears into wine! How lovely is this house of wine! The ordinances are the lattice where Christ looks forth and shows His smiling face to His saints. Christ's parents found Him in the temple (Luke 2:46). The soul that loves Christ desires conference with Him in the temple.

Where there is love to Christ, there is SYMPATHY. Friends who love, grieve and rejoice together; they have sympathizing spirits. Lovers grieve together. Thus, if we love Christ, we shall grieve for those things which grieve Him. Psalm 119:158: "I beheld the transgressors--and was grieved." We shall grieve to see truth bleeding, and heretics increasing. We shall grieve to see heresy setting up its mast and topsail--and multitudes sailing in this ship to hell. It was a charge drawn up against the church of Pergamos "You have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam" (Revelation 2:14). By toleration of heresy, we adopt other men's sins and make them our own. I pray God, that this does not hasten England's funeral. He who loves Christ, will lay these things to heart.

He who loves Christ will endeavor to preserve His MEMORY. Friends will preserve the memory of those people they love, by keeping their pictures, letters, love-tokens, sometimes by preserving their monuments. Herein Artemisia, Queen of Caria, showed an act of singular love to her husband Mausolus; for he being dead, she caused his body to be reduced to ashes and to be mingled in her drink every day, so making her body a living tomb to hold her dead husband. Thus the soul that loves Christ will be often eating His body and drinking His blood in the sacrament, that he may remember Christ's death until He comes. They who live without sacraments show plainly that they have no love to Christ, because they do not desire to preserve His memory among them.

He who bears love to Christ, this lovely object, will not entertain any other lovers; "What more have I to do with idols?" (Hosea 14:8) The Hebrew word is "with sorrows." Indeed, sin raises a tempest of sorrow in the soul; and he who is espoused to Christ has now changed his judgment. Those sins he before looked upon as lovers--he now looks upon as sorrows. He who loves Christ can look a temptation in the face--and turn his back upon it. When Cyrus would have tempted the chaste wife of Tygranes, she took no notice of him, though he was a king; for she had a husband at home. When sin, like Mercury's rod with a snake about it, would wind itself subtly into the soul, he who loves Christ, dares not give it entertainment. He will say, "All the rooms are taken up already for Christ--and a better guest cannot come; for He is altogether lovely!"

Branch 3. If Christ is so lovely in Himself, then you who profess Christ, labor to render Him lovely in the eyes of others.

Commend Him and tell others of His beauty--so that they may admire Him. So the spouse in this chapter labors to portray and set Him forth in His glory: "My Beloved is white and ruddy--the chief among ten thousand!" Tell others that Christ is all marrow, all sweetness. Christ is the richest jewel in the cabinet of heaven! Set up the trophies of His honor and triumph in His praises so that you may entice others to fall in love with Him! The tongue is the organ of praise; it is a pity the organs are so often out of tune in murmuring and complaining. Oh, let these organs be still going; let our tongues sing forth the praises of Him who is altogether lovely! Daughters of the royal blood have the pictures of kings brought to them--and by seeing the pictures they fall in love with their persons and are married to them; by our commendations of Christ, we should so paint out Christ to others and draw His picture that, when they see His picture, they may fall in love with Him--and the match may be presently struck up.

Render Christ lovely in the eyes of others by adorning His gospel and walking worthy of Him (Colossians 1:10). It is an honor to a master to have good servants--and how it proclaims Christ to be lovely and glorious--when they who profess Him are eminent for piety! Christ appears lovely in the holy lives of His people.

Brethren, there are some people among us whose scandalous impieties, masked over with religion, have made Christ appear unlovely in the eyes of others; it is enough to make them afraid to have anything to do with Christ, as if He abetted men in their sin, or at least connived with them. The blood of some will not make reparation for the injury which their sins have done to Christ. I have read of certain images which on the outside were covered with gold and pearl, resembling Jupiter and Neptune--but within nothing but spiders and cobwebs. And have not we many who have been covered with the gold and pearl of profession, resembling the saints of the Most High God--but within, as Christ said, are full of uncleanness (Matthew 23:27), insomuch that we may see the spiders creeping out of them! Oh, that all who profess the name of Christ might depart from iniquity (2 Timothy 2:19), so that they might set a crown of honor upon the head of Christ--and make Him appear lovely in the eyes of others!

C. Consolation. Here is comfort to those who are by faith, married to Christ. This is their glorious privilege: Christ's beauty and loveliness shall be put upon them; they shall shine by His beams. This is the apex and crown of honor: the saints shall not only behold Christ's glory--but be transformed into it. 1 John 3:2, "We shall be like Him, for we will see Him as He really is!" That is, we shall be irradiated and enameled with His glory. Christ is compared to the beautiful lily in Song of Solomon 2:1. His lily-whiteness shall be put upon His saints. A glorified soul shall be a perfect mirror or crystal, where the beauty of Christ shall be transparent. Moses married a black woman--but he could not make her complexion white; but whoever Christ marries, He alters their complexion. He makes them altogether lovely. Other beauty causes pride;

but no such worm breeds in heaven. The saints in glory shall admire their own beauty--but not grow proud of it. Other beauty is soon lost. The eye weeps to see its furrowed brows, and the cheeks blush at their own paleness; but this is a never-fading beauty. Age cannot wither it; it retains its glossiness, the white and vermillion mixed together to all eternity!

Think of this, O you saints, who mourn now for your sins and bewail your spiritual deformities! Remember, by virtue of your union with Christ, you shall be glorious creatures; then shall your clothing be of wrought gold; then shall you be brought unto the King in glorious raiment--and you shall hear Christ pronounce that blessed word from Song of Solomon 4:7: "You are all beautiful, My love--there is no spot in you!"

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