

Exploring Spiritual Beauty

What is beauty? External beauty is based on physical appearance, but inner beauty depends on what a person loves. People who love what is true and good have an inner beauty that will never fade. But people who care only for themselves have a superficial beauty. It is truly only skin-deep. In the other world, their beauty disappears and their true nature appears. Is it possible for someone to have both natural and spiritual beauty? Definitely. It is also possible to be ugly, both inside and out. But spiritual beauty is what matters most, and that depends on what you love!

Here are several activities that might help you nurture spiritual beauty in yourself:

Readings from the Word about “What Is Beautiful” (*see attached*)
Collage of Beauty
What Does Spiritual Beauty Look Like? (*see attached chart for listing attributes*)
Nurturing Spiritual Beauty

Readings from the Word

Read the quotations from the Word about beauty (on the following page). Do they give you a picture of spiritual beauty? How might you define spiritual beauty?

Collage of Beauty

Look through magazines and photographs to find pictures of beauty. These pictures might show beautiful people, activities that seem to illustrate spiritual beauty (such as helping someone), the beauty of nature, *etc.* Arrange these on poster board to make your “Collage of Beauty.”

What Does Spiritual Beauty Look Like? (*a chart of attributes*)

Can you think of qualities or activities that are beautiful? Is it easier to think of qualities or behaviors that are ugly? If you want inspiration, read stories such as *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*, *Snow White*, and *Cinderella*. Use the attribute chart to list beautiful and ugly characteristics. Feel free to color the beautiful and ugly women.

Nurturing Spiritual Beauty

How could you nurture it in yourself? Make a commitment each day to do something that portrays the inner beauty that really counts. You could write these down in a journal. Or glue a picture of a beautiful woman on a piece of paper and write your daily commitments around her.

Tips from Women on Nurturing Spiritual Beauty

1. Look to the Lord to discover the special loves that He has given you to be of use to others.
2. One woman suggests thinking about it this way: “All beauty is from the Lord. The closer we are to Him, the more beautiful we are and become.”
3. Cultivate spiritual beauty and the person you wish to become by reading the Word, thinking about it, and trying to live it.

Readings from the Word about
What Is Beautiful

“Now the young woman [Rebekah] was very **beautiful** to behold” (Genesis 24:16).
That Rebekah was very good looking “means the **beauty** of the affection for truth”
(*Arcana Coelestia* 3075).

"A likeness and image of God is clearly apparent in angels, for love shines from within in their faces, and wisdom in their **beauty**, **beauty** being the outward expression of their love" (*Divine Love and Wisdom* 358).

“In the heavens the angels are **beautiful** according to the quality of conjugal love with them.... In a word, the angels of heaven have life in their faces, in the movements of their body, and in their speech, according to their conjugal love...” (*Apocalypse Explained* 986:2).

In a discussion of beauty, men in the world of spirits agreed that “women have a twofold **beauty**, one a natural **beauty** having to do with their face and figure, and the other a spiritual **beauty** having to do with their love and demeanor.... These two kinds of **beauty** are very often separated in the natural world, but...are always united in the spiritual world; for outward **beauty** in the spiritual world is an expression of a person's love and demeanor. It frequently happens after death therefore that homely women become **beautiful**, and **beautiful** women homely....” Their wives said "A woman's **beauty** lies in her gentle tenderness and in her consequent keen sensitivity of feeling” (*Conjugal Love* 330:1,2).

"In respect to his spirit a person appears, when seen by angels, in a like way; if good as a person, **beautiful** in accord with his good; if evil as a monster, ugly in accord with his evil" (*Heaven and Hell* 131).

“When genuine marriage love is represented in the other life, it is done by the most **beautiful** things ever seen by the eyes, or apprehended by the mind. It is represented by a maiden of inexpressible **beauty**, encompassed by a bright cloud, so lovely, that she may be said to be **beauty** itself in essence and form.... All **beauty**, in the other life, is from marriage love” (*Arcana Coelestia* 2735).

“In general, the faces of married partners possess an inner **beauty**, the husband receiving from his wife the lovely blush of her love, and the wife receiving from her husband the shining splendor of his wisdom. For a married couple [in heaven] is united in respect to their souls; and one also sees in the two a full expression of what it is to be human” (*Conjugal Love* 192).

WHAT DOES SPIRITUAL BEAUTY LOOK LIKE?

Beautiful BEAUTIFUL ATTRIBUTES AND ACTIONS	Ugly UGLY ATTRIBUTES AND ACTIONS
	