

Beauty is Unbearable

"Beauty is unbearable, drives us to despair, offering us for a minute the glimpse of an eternity that we should like to stretch out over the whole of time" (Albert Camus).

Why would Albert Camus say that *beauty* is unbearable? Had he said, "Pain or hatred or injustice are unbearable," we would readily understand. But paradoxically he despairs in the face of beauty.

Experience teaches us this painful reality. The splendour of a rose is but for a moment. Soon it withers away. Mercilessly, time changes the lovely face of a young lady until it's wrinkled and old. Even the most precious in God's creation - the relationships with our parents, friends and spouses that give us so much pleasure and joy - these too come to an end.

But we don't want them to end! We want to hold them in our hearts forever. This is our great dilemma. Everything seems meaningless and painfully absurd.

Thanks be to God, there is hope in the Gospel of Christ. Though we live in a decaying world, we can still enjoy His good gifts, albeit for a short time. "He hath made every thing beautiful in his time... that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God" (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

As a Christian I don't hold the temporal in a clenched fist. I am willing to let go that which I cannot keep. Yet I will not despair. The most beautiful is yet to come. The Bible assures us who believe in Jesus Christ: "This is the promise that he hath promised us, even **eternal** life" (1 John 2:25). The fading beauties of the world are only a foretaste of Him who is altogether Lovely, the Lord Jesus Christ. One day I shall see Him in his splendour and the joy of the moment will be "stretched over the length of time."

I sincerely wish you the very best for the new year...and forever. The very best is Jesus!