

Monday 1st June 2020

Beauty

Pentecost Sunday is a day for celebration in our Christian calendar. It is traditional for us to put on our finery when we take part in any celebration, but we need to pay heed to passages in the Bible which remind us of its level of importance or unimportance.

'Your beauty does not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewellery or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your quiet spirit, which is of greater worth in God's sight.' Peter 3: 3-4

We live in a society which makes demands on some people daily when they go to work in terms of how they look – what clothes they wear, which shoes etc. Some of us place high demands on ourselves about how we look and spend a lot of time in front of a mirror, trying to create what might be deemed as the right look.

There is no need for us to be obsessed by fashion or the way we look, but neither should we be so unconcerned that we do not take care of ourselves. Hygiene, neatness and grooming are important, not least because they indicate that we have respect for ourselves and others whose company we may be in including God's. These behaviours often make us feel better about ourselves and form part of our wellbeing. However, far more important are a person's attitude and spirit. Other people are won over permanently by love, but rarely by looks.

Living a Christian life quietly and faithfully will let our families, friends and colleagues see a special, warm beauty in us that comes from the core of our being. They will see that Christ lives within us. If we are not beautifying ourselves for everyone else's benefit as well as our own, and we step back from creating an image which is not natural, God's light and love will have the opportunity to shine through and spread to others. In the same way that our love of God grows in our hearts and shines like a light from us, others will wish it to shine from them. *God does not look at our physical appearance, but at the heart in all people and things.* (Peter 3: 3-4)

Beauty is fleeting and often costly. God's light and love are there for ever. They do not come free however for, in loving God, many of us have to make adjustments and sacrifices. In giving up certain behaviours we are taken out of our comfort zone. In a way, we are being remodelled, but not by elaborate hairstyles, gold jewellery or fine clothes. We are being remodelled by God's love for us and it is because of His love for us that He changes us spiritually.