

# The Beauties of Christ 02 His Cheeks and Lips

by John W. Bramhall

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*The sermon highlights the beauty of Christ's face, the glory of God shining in it, and the indignities faced by Jesus, yet His submission to those indignities reveals His purity and gentleness.*

**Duration:** 47:20

**Topics:** "Christ's Character", "Godly Living"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by reminiscing about fables from their school days that had moral lessons. They then share a specific fable about a girl with a wicked stepmother who encounters a fairy disguised as an old woman at a well. The fable teaches that one's true character is reflected in their actions and appearance. The speaker then connects this idea to the glory of God shining through Jesus' face, emphasizing the importance of living a selfless life close to God.

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## Transcript

Shall we turn in our Bibles to the Song of Solomon again? Chapter five in the Song of Solomon, reading once more the section beginning at verse nine to the end of the chapter, and to consider somewhat more the beauty of the Beloved Son of God. What is thy beloved more than another beloved? O thou fairest among women, what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us? My beloved is white and ruddy, the cheapest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy and black as a raven.

His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk and thickly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers. His lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

His hands are as gold rings set with a bow. His belly is as dried ivory overlaid with sapphires. His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold.

His countenance is as lebanon, excellent in the seeding. His mouth is most sweet, yea he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

How precious it is for the soul that knows the Lord Jesus, and has some measure of appreciation for him, to be able to say this is my beloved, and this is my friend. May I read the 13th verse for our meditation today, where we have the description of his cheeks, and of his lips. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers.

His lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. His cheeks, shall we consider, as being a bed of spices, or a raised bed of sweet plants with their aroma and their fragrance. First, let us consider the significance of the cheeks, for it is the seat of beauty, of natural beauty.

In fact, the Hebrew word cheeks signifies the seat of beauty, and usually we look upon the face to see the beauty of the person. It's usually, physically speaking, that the beauty of a person is reflected in their face. Not only can we see the beauty, the physical beauty of a person, reflected in the face, but it is possible to see the spiritual and the moral beauty that may be there.

And how significant it is to realize that when we consider the cheeks, or the face of the Lord Jesus, we may see not only what may be to us the physical beauty of those blessed cheeks, but also that spiritual and the moral beauty which is greater. It is one of the customs of the ancient and biblical times, which you may read in Psalm 104 and verse 15, that they put oil upon the face, oil to make the face to shine, so that the beauty of the face was indicated by the shining countenance of the oil as it reflected itself upon the appearance of the person. Then, when we consider the face of our Lord Jesus, what shall we say concerning his face? Would you first turn with me to the second epistle of 2nd Corinthians, chapter 4 and verse 6? For I believe the first reference that we should properly give to the beauty of his face are found in the words of the Spirit, as Paul wrote them in 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 6, where the apostle is written, for God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

The first proper statement we can make concerning the beauty of his face is to declare his face shines with the glory of God, and how precious to recognize as a believer that God has shined into the hearts of his dear people with the light of the glorious gospel, and revealed to us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, and we see it in the face of Jesus Christ. Oh what beauty to recognize the shining force of the glory of God! We revel in the words of John when he wrote, as we saw Sunday evening, we beheld his glory, the glorious of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and to recognize the shining force of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Do you remember Moses in the 33rd chapter of the book of Exodus, pleaded with God, show me thy glory.

Oh the joy of knowing when the beloved Son came to the earth, the glory of God was fully revealed. Then, not only do we see the glory of God shining in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ, but because we see that glory of God in his face, as we have already noted in some of our studies of the evening messages, we see also the beauty, the shining beauty of his Father. And I think of the words that Jesus said to Philip, and when I think of how he must have spoken them, we remember what Philip said after the Savior had declared, no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

Philip said, Lord, show us the Father, and it will satisfy us. And with what pathos Jesus must have answered Philip, have I been so long time with you? Sayest thou to me, show us the Father? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and what joy to know not only the glory of God is seen in the face of the Lord Jesus, but the beauty of his Father too. We never may realize as we ought to do, but may be reflected in the face, humanly speaking.

One wrote a little poem that I value, God shows in your faith. You do not have to tell how you live each day, you do not have to say whether you work or play. A tried, true barometer serves in the plate.

However you live, it shows in your faith. The false, the deceit that you have in your heart will not stay inside where it first got a start, for sinew and blood are a thin veil of light. What you bear in your heart, you

wear in your faith.

If your life is unselfish, if for others you live, for not what you can get, but what you can give, if you live close to God by his infinite grace, you don't have to tell it, it shows in your faith. And beloved, if humanly speaking that is true, what shall you and I say about the faith of the Lord Jesus? The glory of God, and the glory of his Father shone in its face, and we rejoice that the divine beauty of the Father reflected itself, and shone through the humanity of Jesus. Did you know one of the condemnations that hits our heart? It's to remember there was a time in our lives when we saw no beauty in him.

We found no beauty in him until the Spirit of God opened our blinded eyes, and awakened our guilty souls to turn to the Savior. Before then, we have to say with the There is no beauty that we should desire him. I think one of the solemn and the most sad conditions that existed amongst God-earthly people, when the Savior was here, and they will confess it someday, when the godly remnant of Israel will be restored, they will make their great penitential confession in the language of Isaiah 53, and they will confess that then in that day they had acknowledged there is no beauty that we should desire him.

We did esteem him, stricken, missing of God, and afflicted. They don't want a revelation it will be when they see him whom they have feared. Now, may I point out some things regarding the faith of the Lord Jesus? In relation to the human insults, the human insults that were perpetrated and poured upon the faith of Jesus, perhaps there's no greater insult that could ever be given, and manifested, to a part of the human body after the faith of that blessed person.

And we may say that never has there been greater insult heaped upon the faith of any person as upon the person of the beloved Son of God, the Lord Jesus. First of all, let me mention in regard to his betrayal, his sufferings, and his death, let me first mention the kiss of the betrayer when Jesus came into the garden and said, hail master, and kissed him on the face. Oh beloved, I wonder what the Lord Jesus could have felt within his soul as he recognized the character of that kiss.

The kiss of a betrayer, for that face was worthy of the homage, the love, the adoration. Nay, there was a woman who fell at his feet, and washed them with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, and she ardently kissed his feet. Judas kissed his face.

One of the most amazing facts regarding that betrayal kiss, as described by Matthew in chapter 26, is the answer of the Lord Jesus. Do you recall what Jesus said to Judas as he kissed him with that betrayal token? Friend, wherefore art thou come? He called him friend. I remember as a young lad in my teenage reading some of the sermons of Alexander McFerrin, and I recall one special sermon which he called the last pleading of love, from the text of Matthew 26, when Jesus answered the betrayer with these words, friend, wherefore art thou come? And, though the kiss of betrayal had been implanted upon his blessed cheek, the last pleading of his heart to this one who had betrayed him, and sold him for thirty pieces of silver, was in the language, friend, wherefore art thou come? How can you betray me? The last pleading of his heart of love with Judas.

But then, as we know, there was not only the betrayer's kiss, but he was smitten upon the cheek. Remember the prophecy of Micah? Would you turn with me to it, please? Micah, the minor prophet of Micah, chapter 5 and verse 1. There is a tremendous prophecy here, in chapter 5 of Micah, and verse 1, and the prophet writes, Now gather thyself in truth, O daughter of truth, he hath laid siege against us, and closes with these words, this particular verse, they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the chief. They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the chief.

One of the greatest of human indignities prophesied by Micah was this, and when we recognize who we want, the judge of Israel, the king of Israel, the governor of Israel, the messiah of Israel, but the indignity, they smote the judge of Israel with a rod upon his cheek. Job said, in chapter 16 and verse 10 of his great book, they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully. Oh, none of us shall ever know the reproach that the Lord Jesus felt from the hands of his own people when they smote him with a rod upon the cheek.

Then we read in Luke 22 and verse 64, they blindfolded him, they struck him in the face, and asked, saying, prophesy, who is it that smote me? Beloved, think for just a moment very seriously and solemnly of that blessed face of our wonderful Lord, as they led him as a lamb to the slaughter, and they blindfolded that blessed face, and then while his face was blindfolded, they smote him in the face, and challenged him to prophesy, who is it that smote me? But others also smote him on the face with the palms of their hands. Oh, beloved, we cannot fathom the human indignities that were held upon the blessed face of the Lord Jesus by human hands. No other person ever suffered such reproach and indignity as did the Lord Jesus.

But let's go a little further. Will you go with me to Matthew chapter 26? Read with me these words that are so precious, and yet so revealing of the indignity of the human heart, and the human mind, and the human spirit against the Lord Jesus. Matthew 26 verse 67, and note these words.

Oh, they are solemn! When we know who he is, they did spit in his face, and profited him, and others smote him with the palms of their hands. The servants of the high priests, as well as the Roman soldiers, you read in chapter 27 and verse 30, that even the soldiers spit in his face. And, beloved, he submitted himself to those human indignities to fulfill the scripture of Isaiah chapter 50, where the Lord Jesus prophetically uttered through the prophet those words, I hid not my face from shame and spit in it.

You know, beloved, I've only heard of one person, there may have been others, we know not, but there could have been others, who suffered the indignity and shame of being for the reproach of Christ. Never will I forget the story told of dear old brother Robert C. Chapman. On one occasion, this dear saintly brother had a visitation from one of his nephews, who was a captain in the British navy, and this man, as he visited his uncle Robert Chapman, decided to pay his board while with his uncle, and his uncle said, no, you're my guest, and you're not to pay anything.

And then, when he was about to leave, he said, uncle, will you please let me do something for you? Well, brother Chapman replied, I'll let you do one thing, on one condition. Well, he said, what's that? If you'll go down to the grocery store and buy some groceries from this particular place, I'll accept it. And he said, well that's fine.

He said, I don't mind going anywhere, and if you want that special grocery store, I'll go to that store. So, he went down to the store nearby, and he ordered many groceries to be delivered to his uncle, and as he chose them and picked them out, and selected them, they were laid on the counter, and when he was finished completing his purchase, the storekeeper said, now where would you want me to deliver these for you? He said, I would like you to deliver them to my uncle. Yes sir, what's his name and address? He said, his name is Robert Chapman, and as soon as he mentioned the name, the man froze, and said, no not that man.

And he asked, why not? Oh, he said, the other night I heard him preaching on the open, in the open air, the gospel, and he said, I spat in his face. Well, that was quite a blow to his conscience, to have the reproach returned, and to realize the act of a godly slave willing to contribute to purchasing the supply from his store. Oh my beloved, how did you and I treat such? We think of our Lord Jesus.

I turn not away my faith from shame and spitting. One of our summer conferences many years ago, in an open conversation of bible reading, which is along the lines of submission, and how far a believer should go in relation to indignity, one young man, fine looking young fellow, strong and husky, said, I'd like to ask a question. He said, not long ago, he said, a man came along without any provocation, and he hit me in the face.

So, he said, I turned the other side, and he hit me there. Then he said, I beat him up. Was I right? There was quite a heavy silence, until some brother spoke instead.

When he was reviled, he reviled not again, and when he suffered, he threatened not. Oh beloved, our hearts are convicted when we see the submission of our beloved Saviour to shame and spitting, when they so ill-treated his blessed faith. May God help you and me to be more like him.

But do you know what the text says in our song of Solomon? To the believer, those cheeks have become a fragrant, rainy bed. That's the meaning of it, as though it was a bed of aromatic flowers and spices, and there is a fragment found by the raptured believer in the faith of the blessed Lord in his smitten cheeks. Oh beloved, we who know that it was our own sin that pierced him, we who know that the sins of all have pierced him, we even know that our own insult has been heaped upon him, and we sadly confess it.

But since we have found him, and the forgiveness of our sins, we gladly say and acknowledge there is an increased beauty to the faith of our Saviour. And even what we have done to him now comes back to us with the sweetest of fragrance from those blessed lips, and from those blessed cheeks that we once smoked. And we can say we love him because he first loved us.

When I was a young child, I'll never forget my first big story book, and in that book there was a story I have never forgotten. It was the story of a young child, a young girl, who had an aunt that was very badly scarred. Her hands and her arms were terribly scarred, and her face bore the scars from some terrible burning.

This little child felt the aunt's condition and physical appearance was repugnant, and she drew away from her, and she could not feel led to go near to her because of the ugly scars that she bore. One day, her mother took the little youngster aside, and she said, darling, I want to tell you how your auntie received those scars. One day, your daddy and mother, daddy and I, went away out of town, and we left you at home in the care of auntie, and while you were with her alone in the home, the house caught fire.

And when the house was on fire, you would have burned to death, but auntie rescued you from the fire, and carried you out safely, and their hands and arms were burnt, and their face and their body to save your life. And when the little girl heard the story, and realizing that in a young heart how it all had happened, and why, for her sake, she went over to the aunt, and she took the hands of that aunt, and she stroked them, and she said, oh auntie, your hands are so pretty. And she stroked her face, and she said, your face is so lovely.

And beloved, the bride of the Lord Jesus may look at that face which was marred in scar and more than the sons of men, and she finds in that face a beauty that is eternal, and a fragrance that is unequal in any other. Blessed be his name! Oh what a face! But thank God that face is now in glory, and like Paul has written to the Hebrews in chapter 2 verse 9, thank God we see Jesus crowned with honor and glory. Someday that face will shine in kingdom glory.

As Peter, James and John saw it on the mount of transfiguration, Matthew 17 verse 2, his face did shine as the sun. Someday we shall see his face in eternal glory. Blessed be his name! Oh how precious are the words of the poet, I've seen the face of Jesus, he smiled in love on me, it filled my heart with rapture, with sweetest ecstasy.

The scars of deepest anguish were lost in glory bright, I've seen the face of Jesus, it was a wondrous sight. Oh glorious face of beauty, oh gentle touch of care, if here it is so blessed, what will it be up there? His lips, note what she says, like lilies dropping sweet smelling myrrh, his lips dropping liquid fragrant myrrh. A great fragrance that was greatly esteemed by the ancients, and highly prized by them, because of the fragrance of that spite.

The lips of Jesus, beloved, the lips of Jesus were pure lips. Isaiah says in chapter 53 verse 9, there was no guile found in his mouth. I think one of the greatest commendations Jesus ever spoke of any man, was when he spoke to Nathaniel, and Orvin said, behold an Israelite in whom is no guile.

For Jesus saw in the character of that man, something that was very rare in men. But, oh when we see the Lord Jesus, there was no guile at all in his mouth, not any. There was no deceit in his tongue.

The lip of truth was always his. Now, when you think of the pure lips of Jesus, will you take the contract with me to meditate upon the lips of Adam? When God created Adam, his lips were pure, but the moment he ate the forbidden fruit, they became impure. They were filled with guile, they became filled with bitterness, and you recall when God came into the garden and said, Adam where art thou? And when God asked, hast thou taken of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and of evil, what did Adam say? The woman thou gavest me.

She gave me the wheat, and the moment the disobedience of sin came into his soul, his lips became impure, and guile was found in his mouth, as he cast the responsibility in his bitterness and in his guile upon his wife. Oh beloved, your lips and mine have inherited the same leprosy. Hold the responsibility, let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, wrote the apostle to the Ephesians in chapter four.

And the preciousness of singing, though our lips have manifested guile, bitterness, the lips of Jesus were pure, pure as lily. When you look at the lily, he's not only pure, he's gentle. One of the most gentle looking flowers, and the lips of Jesus were gentle.

From his birth to his grave, the softness of the lily was upon his lips. Again, let me repeat the words that I quote in relation to the story of the young man. When he was reviled, he reviled not again.

When he suffered, he threatened not. First Peter 2 verse 23. For the lips of the Lord Jesus were gentle.

In contrast to those gentle lips, even his disciples they had burning lips. You may recall on one occasion, has the Lord Jesus with his disciples worth going through a village? The attitude of the villagers was, we don't want him here. Tell him to go on.

And when his disciples saw the rejection of their master, John says, master, shall we command fire to come down from heaven and destroy them? The Lord Jesus said, you do not want spirit to your arms. Now, it's a strange thing that, though the Lord Jesus would not command fire to destroy anyone, his disciples were willing to. Beloved brother and sister, God deliver us from burning lips against others.

The lips of his enemies. You read Psalm 22, as he speaks of the enemy having put him to shame. James says in his epistle that the tongue can be set on fire of hell, and the very fires of hell can be expressed with the tongue, and come out of the lips.

Oh beloved, what comes out of the lips? Even what the Lord Jesus said, it's not what goes into a man that defiles it, but what comes out. And when you see what came out of the lips of his enemies, and as you read of his death upon the cross, and in Psalm 22, the graphic description of that blessed event when he was crucified, they lash me to scorn. They shoot out the lips, and in the very midst, when his enemies were shooting out the lips, deriding him, defying God himself he cannot say, and they hit upon him openly, their disdain content, and openly spoke against him with their lips.

His lips were still gentle, for Luke says in 23 and chapter 23 and verse 24, the first uttered words of the Savior were these, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do. What gentle lips! And yet those lips, as the bride declares in this song of Solomon, they also drop sweet smelling myrrh, that liquid fragrant, healing, soothing, comforting myrrh. Do you ever read the first sermon of the Lord Jesus in Luke 4, verse 16 through 22? His very first time did he preach, though they took him on the brow of the hill, and would have cast him over.

Nevertheless, when he announced his text from the prophecy of Isaiah, and read the scripture, and then said, this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears, and then began to give an exposition, and it is recorded, they wondered, they marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. I wish I could have heard that sermon. Nay, I wish I could preach like him.

They marveled at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth. The lips poured out words of grace, words of truth. I don't know if some of you may remember in your early school days, I recall I do, we had oftentimes, which you may never get today, what were called Eastock's fables.

They always had a moral. They were fables, yes, but they had a moral. There was a moral lesson to the fable, and there was a fable told, I recall, of a little girl that had a wicked stepmother, and the stepmother had a daughter of her own.

She favored her own daughter, and ill-treated the stepdaughter, and as the story is told, the mother sent the stepdaughter to go to the spring and get water, and hurry back, for if she failed to come back quickly, she was punished. And when she came to the well, there supposedly was a fairy, an old woman, a fairy in the disguise of an old woman sitting by the well, and as the little girl came with her pitcher to fill the pitcher with water, the old lady said, give me a drink, and the kind-hearted youngster, which she was, immediately said yes, and she gave her a drink. And then, of course, in the in the fable, the old fairy declared, because you are so kind, when you speak, jewels will come out of your mouth.

And then she vanished, and the little girl filled the pitcher again, and hurried back home. And to the consternation of the stepmother, who demanded an explanation for the delay, when she spoke, out came jewels, a pot of jewels, as she spoke and told the story. Immediately, the stepmother, gets her own daughter, sends her down to the well, and to see if she can have the same experience.

And sure enough, though she cares not about going, she went and found the old lady, who said again, give me a drink, and received the impudent answer, get it yourself. Because you are so cruel, when you speak, snakes and toads and frogs will come out of your mouth. She ran back in haste to her mother, and the mother was waiting anxiously, you know, to see the result, and hoped it would be the same result, and

as she hoped, these terrible creatures came out.

It's a fable, but it has a moral lesson. Oh beloved, thank God for the lips of Jesus. Gracious words proceeded out of his mouth.

The officers were sent to bring him, and to apprehend him in John 7, verse 45 and verse 46, and those officers of the chief priests, and of the elders, they came back without the Lord Jesus, and they asked, why have you not brought him? What was their answer? Never man spake like this man. Those words that flowed from those lips, dropping sweet smelling mirth, they could not apprehend the one whose lips gave out the sweetest and the purest mirth. And oh, read Matthew 22 sometime.

In the whole chapter of Matthew, you find the enemies of the Lord Jesus combined, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Herodians. The three great enemies in the land combined to trap the snare to Lord Jesus, they ask in question. And at the end of the chapter, though they attested the fountain of wisdom beneath that psalm, every drop that passed his lips was of the purest, sweetest mirth, and when they heard his words, they marveled, and they went away, and no man does ask him any more questions.

My, I wish I could have listened to his lips, but beloved, listen. The lips of Jesus still speak, they still are speaking. He's in heaven, he's not on the earth, but though he was on the earth, and from his lips came out the sweet smelling mirth, still from heaven above, a liquid fragrance, the sweet smelling mirth comes forth from his lips for the blessing of his own.

Let me give you three facts. In Hebrews chapter 7 and verse 25, the apostle wrote, wherefore he is able to say to the uttermost, then that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Oh beloved, the lips of the Lord Jesus, they're constantly praying for you and me.

If you would know the contents of his petition, read John 17, I pray not to the world, I pray to them that thou hast given me, I pray that thou shouldst keep them, I pray father that they'll be with me where I am. And the lips of Jesus, they still speak on the behalf of his own. Remember the great statement in Hebrews 4, 14 through 16, where we're encouraged to know that we have a great high priest, and we are told to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need.

For we have one who is touched with the feeling of our infirmity, and from heaven above, he pours out the sweet smelling liquid fragrance healing mirth. His lips are still like lilies, as from the throne of grace he comforts and gives help to his own. Let me give you one more that I appreciate, perhaps more.

1st John chapter 2 verse 1 and 2. John says, my little children, I write unto you that you sin not, but if any man sin, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the whole world. Beloved, your great enemy and my great enemy the devil, the accuser of the brethren may accuse at the throne of God his beloved children, but standing there at the right hand of the father, he nudges me, he's our great advocate, and his lips still please the efficacy of his propitiatory sacrifice upon the behalf of the sins of his soul.

Hallelujah! What an attorney we have in heaven, whose lips, eternal and enduring, with their truthfulness, and the value of his person, and the value of his work, maintain the relationship that can never be broken between the father and his children. Hang on, the lips of Jesus still speak. And then may I say, in closing, how truly it is blessed to realize, as we come to the precious word, we still hear his voice, and in the language of the poet can say, oh I love to hear his voice saying, you belong to me, you are not your own,

with a price you're bought, you are mine eternally.

And what a joy to know his lips still speak. Oh beloved, may we truly appreciate his cheeks, and his lips, for his namesake. Shall we pray? Father, we thank thee for the precious person of our adorable, loving Lord.

We thank thee for his beauty. We pray that no other beauty will distract us from him, and no other attraction will ever take us away from looking unto Jesus constantly, day by day, and moment by moment. We say with a songwriter in the song of Solomon, this is my beloved, this is my friend.

Lord Jesus, we love thee, because thou hast first loved us. Receive our thanks, in thine own worthy name. Amen.

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