



The Beauty, The Tragedy, The Beauty & The Mystery

How great is our God?

By Bob Short

Background

When Dad received his cancer diagnosis, God placed this message on his heart; a message illustrating his unique journey. Coming from an educated and scientific background, Dad was initially closed off to the idea of God and religion. For years, he believed the barrier was intellectual, that his mind could not reconcile faith with reason. But through divine wisdom, he discovered the real issue was not in the mind, it was in the heart. Pride had kept his heart turned away from God.

While he credited Mom for ultimately leading him to Christ, this realization transformed his life. It led him to acceptance, faith, and a deeper appreciation for the beauty and order of God's creation. Dad had hoped to share this sermon himself, but God had different plans. Today, we share it on his behalf, praying that it reaches someone who, like him, wrestles with questions of faith and reason. May this message help you see what God allowed Dad to see; that the cure is not earned but freely given through grace.

- Melissa, Elyssa, Dunham and Nathan

A Little Personal History

The Early Years

- Grew up in a Christian heritage home, not a believing home.
- Celebrated Christmas and Easter at home, did not go to Church.
- God was not a subject for discussion.
- My mother's father was the only person I knew who knew God personally.

High school years

- Contemplated God, but did not pursue Him, minimal reading of the Bible
- Met Diana senior year

College Years – VA Tech

- Refused to discuss God with Christian students - would not go there, I could not deny Him either.
- Majored in Electrical Engineering, but fell in love with Mathematics (yes, it is possible)
- When God created our universe, He also created the mathematics that governs its behavior.
 - Some say that God is a Mathematician – see the Irony? (While avoiding God, I fell in love with his creation language.)
 - This leads us to **The First Beauty**

God's Creation - The First Beauty

God Completes His Creation

Gen 1:31 God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

God is a creator of order, simplicity and elegance.

- All electrical phenomenon can be described by 4 equations that govern the interaction of electrical charge, electrical fields, and magnetic fields
 - This includes electrical distribution to your home, operation of your phones, your computer, your gaming console, your microwave, and the cell communications
- God uses the same mathematical language and principles to define His laws that control how His creation is to behave, whether it is in Physics, Chemistry, or Biology
 - As an example, DNA is a highly efficient and elegant storage mechanism for the code that governs both cellular, as well as body form and behavior.
- Is it any wonder when God completed His creation, He found it to be “very good”?

Now for the Tragedy...

The Fall, Which Leads to the Tragedy

Gen 3:1-7 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'"

The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

Gen 3:22-24 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"— therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

Separation from God – The Tragedy

Why is this separation necessary?

- With eternal life, mankind would live in a state of eternal sin, with no personal relationship with God.
- Sinful man can not have relationship with a Holy God.

Psa 5:4 For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You.

- Man can not cure his sinful nature.

Rom 8:7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so,

- Mosaic Covenant (The Ten Commandments) – How did that work out?

The Mercy Seat of God in the Tabernacle and the Temple

- Blocked by the veil, for man's protection
- Ultimately God leaves the Temple

Ezk 10:18-19 Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. When the cherubim departed, they lifted their wings and rose up from the earth in my sight with the wheels beside them; and they stood still at the entrance of the east gate of the LORD'S house, and the glory of the God of Israel hovered over them.

The Second Beauty

Sinless Perfection Re-enters Creation

- Testified by the Father

Mat 3:16-17 After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

- Jesus is fully man and fully God

Heb 2:17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Heb 1:3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.

- Jesus fully submits to the Father

Jhn 5:30 "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

- Jesus is without sin.

Heb 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

The Second Beauty (Cont'd)

Jesus Provides the Cure

- Jesus is in creation but not from creation – His divinity gives Him infinite value
- Jesus uses His obedience to the Father, His infinite value and death on the cross to redeem His creation

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Evidence – The Resurrection

- The empty tomb – without any reasonable explanation
- Jesus returned to over 500 witnesses
- The death and resurrection is the best documented historical event from all of antiquity.

The Rest of the Story

At the age of 30 God put me where he wanted me.

- Diana gave her life to Christ.
- We had 3 young children.
- I could not avoid God any longer.

Like most rationally minded people, I had convinced myself that the problem of belief was intellectual.

God took me on a journey to discover the real issue...

- It laid in the pride of the heart.
- The heart (soul/spirit) controls the mind.
- This explains why so many secular arguments against God and His Creation are ultimately irrational.
- I have seen brilliant physicists in my career make a flawed rational analysis based on pre-conceived ideas and intuitions.
- So, what I discovered led me to what I coin as **The Mystery**

The Mystery ...

How does one obtain the cure?

- It is a free gift.
- It is not earned.
- It requires repentance, leading to faith

Where does the gift come from?

- It is offered by Jesus from His death on the cross.
- Again, it cannot be earned.

Where does the faith come from?

- God provides the faith.

Eph 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

What is our role?

- Repentance or an opening of the heart toward God
- The pride of the heart keeps us from God and the Holy Spirit convicts us to open our heart to God and humble our pride toward God
- When we do this, God provides the basis for our faith through His Word, His Holy Spirit and at times through His people

What Do We Do With These Truths?

For The Unbeliever

- Recognize that your issue with God is ultimately the pride of the heart, not rationality of the mind. That is what I thought (a lie from Satan), but I was wrong.
- If you are in internal conflict, this is likely the conviction of Holy Spirit trying to open your heart.
- Be willing to open your heart toward God and set aside your pride, you will be amazed at how God will do the rest.

For The Believer

- We as believers often do not open all of our heart to God, we hold back.
- Holy Spirit will not enter where He is not invited.
- This can lead to incomplete healing, hurts, resentments and guilt over past experiences remain. Leaving us with not forgiving ourselves or others.
- God wants to heal us completely – let Him.



I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses,
And the voice I hear falling on my ear
The Son of God discloses.

Refrain:

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own;
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.

He speaks, and the sound of His voice
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing,
And the melody that He gave to me
Within my heart is ringing.

I'd stay in the garden with Him,
Though the night around me be falling,
But He bids me go; through the voice of woe
His voice to me is calling.