

# Why You Should Quit Making Beauty Judgments, Even Positive Ones

A while back, I spent some time as a volunteer, helping take care of a bunch of kids in a nursery-type setting. As I played with these sweet little babies and toddlers (they were all delightful), I noticed a few children that I thought were especially adorable.

One day, another volunteer struck up a conversation with me. "Look at little Liza!" she said. "I cannot get over how cute she is!" I turned my gaze to Liza. Honestly, I was at a loss for words. This was not a child I had noticed as being one of the outstanding "cute ones." She had not made my list, and I didn't have an enthusiastic agreement on my tongue because I had failed to notice her.

I wasn't going to contradict a statement like this, because, *of course*, all children are cute. So instead, I slowly nodded in agreement and began watching the little girl with new eyes. I tried to see her as this volunteer did.

With this renewed vision, I soon recognized her unique beauty and was quite struck by it.

Knowing that someone else thought she was special changed my perception of her (or perhaps lack of perception, in this case). Then it hit me. *God views each person as special and beautiful. Their features are His handiwork. Their image is a reflection of His.*

The way the volunteer admired Liza, which caused me to see her differently, is the same way God admires each of His creations.

As I scanned the room, a sense of instant conviction washed over me for the “beauty judgments” I had made among these precious little people. I saw the pride in my own heart that lead me to think this was my determination to make.

I realized, in sorrow, that with each “have” I had identified in my own mind (regardless of whether or not I commented), I was inadvertently categorizing many other children as “have not’s.”

At the heart level, a positive judgment was not much better than a negative one.

Although this potentially forgettable experience happened a long time ago, the resulting reflection and effects it brought into my life still lingers.

Now, when I look at children, or anyone, I enjoy and appreciate their unique features. I choose to see that God has made them beautiful and valuable, not “better” or “worse” than one another (as society or culture would influence us to believe).

I will still comment that a child is cute, but I no longer do this in a way that singles him or her out from a crowd, insinuating that the others are not so much. Rather, I take a heart position of praise to God for how He made a child (or adult) as an individual, with equal readiness to do the same for every other one. I appreciate his or her unique features and looks.

And celebrities on TV? I’ve decided not to make beauty judgments about them either. Because while they may never know or be directly affected by my opinion of them, it does affect those around me—not to mention my own heart.

Beauty is culturally determined. But there is a deeper truth.

Each person is God’s workmanship, an overflow of His loving,

creative, relational nature—an overflow of His goodness and a perfect fit to His eternal plans and purposes.

So what would it mean for us to loosen our grip on our own beauty judgments? What would it mean for us to consider that we might not be the best judge and to choose to see people as God does?

How would it change our view of others? Of ourselves? How would it change our children's view of themselves, as they watch us recognize and celebrate the goodness of what God has made, rather than judge and rank it?

Let's resolve to choose to see the beauty in each person—not in comparison to someone else, but rather in light of God's glory displayed in them. {eoa}

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