

Is God Beautiful?

Is God even interested in beauty? Is God expressive? Ridiculous questions, to be sure, but if the answer is yes - what are the implications for us? This preliminary session deals with the foundations of a Christian aesthetic, from the beauty and creativity of God in creation and His Word to how we can apprehend its depth and breadth through the contemplation of works of art. Let's explore how we are to wisely and properly think of artistic expression.

Delta David Gier has been called a dynamic voice on the music scene, recognized widely for his penetrating interpretations of the standard symphonic repertoire, passionate commitment to new music, and significant community engagement. Orchestras Mr. Gier has conducted include the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony, the St. Louis Symphony, and the Minnesota Orchestra. In Europe, his engagements include the Bergen Philharmonic, the Polish National Radio Symphony, and the Bucharest Philharmonic, along with many other orchestras in Italy, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Turkey. He studied at the University of Michigan under the renowned conducting teacher Gustav Meier, along with studies at the Tanglewood Music Center and Aspen Music Festival. He was a Fulbright scholar in eastern Europe from 1988-90. He has chaired the music jury of the Pulitzer Prize and is a frequent panelist for the League of American orchestras. The Lakota Music Project was developed under Gier's direction to address racial tensions between Native Americans and whites in the region the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra serves. Other engagement projects with the SDSO have included Arab, Chinese and Sudanese/Somali refugees.

I. Creation

A. Is Creation beautiful?

B. "And it was good." What does that mean?

II. Does God have a standard for Beauty?

A. Schaeffer's writing on art in the Bible

B. Telling the Truth (or, Does art always appear as beautiful?)

III. Jesus and Beauty

A. Art in the Gospels?

B. Practicality/Utility: Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs

IV. “Using” Beauty

A. Worship

B. Evangelism