

PART FIVE: No *Atheists* in Art Galleries

I hope the title got your attention. This short article was presented in *The Catholic Telegraph* by Dr. Kenneth Craycraft under the section called "A Closer Look." Don't let this short article fool you, since there is a lot to unpack that concerns our present series *GOD IS BEAUTIFUL, BEAUTY IS GOD*.

Towards the end of the article, Dr. Craycraft writes, "...the search for beauty, like the moral quest, is the *search for the God* in whom beauty and morality are perfectly obtained." Part way into the article Dr. Kenneth writes that beauty and morality cannot be separated from each other, in fact, they not only exist together but participate in the mind of God.

Elsewhere in series that I have presented, I use the phrase: Attributes of God. By this I mean that God has many attributes that even the Greeks knew about and wrote about, which included Truth, Goodness, Justice and Beauty. John the Evangelist would add that God is *Love*. To participate in these attributes is to participate in God and who God is. This is certainly true of beauty, and that is why Dr. Kenneth connects the two, beauty and morality, and even goes so far as to write, "If one rejects the reality of beauty, one necessarily rejects the reality of morality."

Dr. Craycraft also points out that beauty leads us to God, who is its source! Since beauty is all around us in all we see in art and in all we hear in music, we have all of creation leading us to God and we need only to open our eyes and ears. Dr. Kenneth also points out that it was St. Augustine who first came to understand that "...*the quest for beauty is the quest for God, and that the later cannot exist separately from the former.*" Dr. Kenneth then leads us to the conclusion that "To seek beauty is to seek God; to acknowledge beauty is to praise the God from whom it comes." That sounds like ***prayer*** to me.

If seeking beauty is like prayer, then participating in beauty is another form of prayer. We pray when we visit a museum, looking and reveling in the beauty, in all its created forms by humans who are praising God through their works.

And yet...the beginning of the articles addresses the simplistic statement that "...**beauty is in the eye of the beholder!**" Dr. Craycraft writes that such a statement is the same as saying "...there is no such thing as beauty...(nor) no such thing as truth...(and) is incompatible with belief in God...(nor) objective good." One can readily see where the falling dominos will lead - ***There is no God.***

Don't worry, in the end it is just a matter of semantics. The confusion of many may be that they are confusing 'artistic tastes' with believing that beauty is merely the subjective opinion of the person observing the art, music, sculpture, reading a book, etc. Beauty goes beyond just "...the emotive preference of the observer."

If beauty, truth, goodness, justice and love are truly the divine attributes of God, then participation in these attributes not only bring us closer to God but they are also other acts of praying, or communicating with God, or the term I like, "Dancing with God!"

Dr. Kenneth writes, "Beauty is not an abstract concept, but, rather, the name we give to human creative endeavors that, we believe, conform to standards of order and purpose – that reveal the beauty of the mind of God." This last statement – ***reveal the beauty of the mind of God*** – encourages us to pray in the form of beauty with the talents that have been given us, and, to even explore our hidden talents that we may not even be aware of.

In the following sections we will be exploring artist of different mediums and how they got started and how they have used their talents to not only profess their faith but used it as part of their faith.