

THE INSEPARABLE BOND BETWEEN TRUTH AND BEAUTY

Introduction

“A thing of beauty is a joy forever, its loneliness increased, it will never pass into nothingness”, says John Keats in one of his famous works, a thing of beauty. A much inherent quality found in a rational being such as man is his ability to appreciate, admire and possess beauty. The transcendental property of beauty has been valued, viewed, analysed and criticized from various angles. It is significant to note that definitions and arguments regarding the notion of beauty dates back to the year of ancient Greek philosophers from the western point of view and to the Vedas from the eyes of an Indian milieu. Over years and centuries, the aspects of beauty adopted various theories and postulates. An independent discipline of science called Aesthetics employ the duty of making a scientific evaluation of beauty. Focussing on the topic, we need to look at the connection between beauty and Truth.

1. The inseparable reality of Truth

The famous Greek philosopher Aristotle defined Truth as, “To say of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not, is true”. The Mahabharata speaks in a similar tone, “The way it was heard, the way it was done, to represent it through speech without distortion is truth.”

Truth is a term that is often encountered in our daily life. But, seldom do we contemplate on the very aspect of truth. What is truth? Truth can be simply defined as the correspondence of a proposition to that of reality. Taking it in a stricter sense, we would be able to witness very few truths in our life. Why is that mind often tends to make mistakes even when it always wishes to be one with the reality? Often rash judgements, inadequate conditions of perceptions and failure of reconciliation between passion and reasons lead a normal being to make errors. These become the roots of misunderstandings. The most important fact is that, **‘all beings are true’** i.e. all beings can be known. Besides a philosophical dimension, in practical life, truth in speech becomes credible with truth in life. Quoting Hui Neng from ‘the sutra of Hui Neng,

“Truth is to be lived, it is not merely pronounced with the mouth... there is really nothing to argue about”.

This may be the reason why great thinkers remained usually silent. Khalil Gibran says, “Truth chooses silence to convey her meaning to a loving soul”. Truth is not fully communicable in words or through medium of any language. Pythagoras proclaimed the significance of this silence when he said, “Be silent or let your words be worth more than silence.” Truth is an active performance rather than mere recitation of words.

2. Seeking Beauty

There is a natural inclination found in every common man to move towards anything that seems beautiful. Plato seems to find a mystical realm in beauty when he says, “The contemplation of beauty causes the soul to grow wings.” He also says, “The beauty of style and harmony and grace and good rhythm depends on simplicity”.

A commentary on Atharvasira Upanishad perceives beauty in a divine dimension. Whatever is striking in nature, whatever feeling or being is charming and joy-giving; in short, whatever object is beautiful, all are so many manifestations of God himself.” Beauty is being manifested in various forms and manner. But there are stark differences in its appreciation by the multitude of human beings. Some find things beautiful; few others feel apathetic and yet many feel indifferent. However, there is a real connection between beauty and love. Ralph Waldo Emerson says, “Love of beauty is taste. The creation of beauty is art.” The fact to be remembered is that, **‘all beings are beautiful.’** There is a metaphysical beauty hidden in every differently abled person that equates them with those who hold great pride in their physical appearance. Within each individual, the reality is brought to a single unity. The innate attraction to beauty is what leads a person to the Ultimate Beauty that I call God.

3. Truth manifests Beauty

A blurred photograph is rejected by viewers; a dubious statement is a torture for the mind; an unclear vision renders nothing appreciable. All these point to the essence of clarity. Beauty is only valid when there is clarity and clarity is attained when truth comes into play. The noble laureate from India, Rabindranath Tagore quotes, “Beauty is

truth's smile when she beholds her face in a perfect mirror." Truth since it corresponds to reality and reality is beautiful, it is evident that truth manifests beauty. And in return, beauty glorifies truth. Khalil Gibran gives immense value to both as he says, "Of life two chief prizes, beauty and truth, I found the first in a loving heart and second in a labourer's hand. It is pathetic that we rarely do lift our eyes to enjoy the beauty around us; the beauty of our lives; the beauty of our pain and the beauty of love. George W. Russel truly said, "Our hearts are drunk with the beauty our eyes could never see."

Conclusion

Our lives are often wasted in activities we never intend to do. The lush green trees wait for you; the flowing rivers need you. All you have to do is to admire them, and let this be the sign of freedom. The freedom that we all craved for ever since we took our existence. Jesus Christ had once said, "the truth shall set you free". With this desire I conclude,

"Oh Light! Fall upon us

We all need light

The light that transcends

The darkness of ignorance and arrogance

Come light and show us the path."
