

## Equipped to fix our eyes on Jesus

A couple of weeks before Christmas, my daughter and I treated ourselves to a weekend in Munich, Germany. We visited the various market stalls set up in the heart of the city and enjoyed warm, caramelized almonds from hand-held paper cones. Scrumptious! In addition to doing a little shopping, we took some photographs of various interesting buildings. One of the most magnificent is the Frauenkirche, Munich's imposing cathedral. Its twin towers, with their round green spires or "bonnets", are worth a second look. As we fixed our eyes - and our cameras - on this soaring duo, I was struck by three things... their **height**, their **beauty**, and the fact that they had been amazingly **reconstructed** following severe bomb damage during the Second World War. Although it might not be immediately obvious, I could see a connection with our Lord Jesus Christ on all three counts. Let's go...

**Height:** We don't know how tall (or short) Jesus was because the Bible doesn't tell us. There's no point, therefore, in speculating about this. However, there is a sense in which we can link Jesus and height. When he was predicting his death, one of the things he said was, "... *when I am lifted up on the cross, I will draw everyone to myself*".<sup>1</sup> When Jesus died, his cross wasn't laid out flat on the ground. It was erected in an upright position and would have been clearly visible to all onlookers. As a result of being "*lifted up on the cross*", Jesus became the sin-bearer for everyone who believes in him. Since that time, all kinds of people have been drawn to Jesus, the perfect Son of God, and have found complete forgiveness from every kind of wrongdoing.

**Beauty:** Ever wondered what Jesus looked like? His eyes, his mouth, his hair? Again, the Bible gives us no specific details about his appearance. At one point, though, we read that "*there was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him*".<sup>2</sup> In other words, there was nothing physically outstanding about him. But the psalmist talks about gazing upon "*the beauty of the LORD*".<sup>3</sup> Some versions translate this as his "splendour" or "perfections". This goes beyond mere physical appearance. In the completeness of his character, our God is indeed beautiful. How long has it been since you spent time just focusing on His beauty?

**Reconstruction:** The religious leaders of Jesus' day were horrified when He said, "*Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days*".<sup>4</sup> Jesus was referring, not to the temple in Jerusalem, but to his own body. For three days following his crucifixion, Jesus' body lay in the tomb. Then he was raised to life, never to die again. Physical resurrection had taken place and Jesus' body was reconstructed! In some ways, it was the same body but, in other ways, it was different. And because Jesus' body was reconstructed, we have the sure hope that, one day, ours will be too. Tired of your present body? Don't despair - you'll soon have a new one!

If you ever get the chance of seeing Munich's Frauenkirche, let its height, beauty and reconstruction remind you to fix your eyes on Jesus...

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<sup>1</sup> John 12:32 (NIV)

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 53:2b (NLT)

<sup>3</sup> Psalm 27:4 (NIV)

<sup>4</sup> John 2:19 (NIV)