

May 6th – RIGHTEOUSNESS IS BEAUTIFUL

"If you wish to be beautiful, then work diligently at human excellence..."
— *Epictetus, Discourses, 3.1.6b–9*

Contemporary notions of beauty are ridiculous. Our standards for what's attractive are incredibly *un-Stoic* in that we *prize* and *extol* things people have almost no control over—high cheekbones, complexion, height, piercing eyes.

Is it really beautiful to win the genetic lottery? Or should beauty be *contingent* on the choices, actions, and attributes we develop? An *even-tempered* sense of justice, a *commitment* to duty. These are beautiful traits—and they go much deeper than appearances.

Today, you can choose to be without *prejudice*, to act with justice, to keep an even keel, to be in control of yourself—even when that means dedication and sacrifice. If that's not beautiful, what is?

Key Vocabulary:

1. **Righteousness** – Moral integrity.
2. **Contemporary** – Belonging to or occurring in the present time.
3. **To prize** – To value or regard highly.
4. **Extol** – To praise highly.
5. **Genetic lottery** – Random physical traits one is born with.
6. **Even keel** – Stable and calm personality.
7. **Commitment** – A dedication to a cause or activity.
8. **Prejudice** – Preconceived opinion not based on reason or experience.
9. **Even-tempered** – Calm, composed, and not easily angered or excited.