

What Does Your Hair Weigh?

Joe Slater

You say you don't weigh your hair? Neither do I, but I know of someone who did! Once each year Absalom, one of King David's sons, shaved the hair from his head, *"because it was heavy on him – when he cut it, he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels according to the king's standard"* (2 Samuel 14:26). That's well over six pounds as we weigh things!

Absalom allowed his good looks to go to his head (pardon the pun). His vanity knew no bounds! *"Now in all Israel there was no one who was praised as much as Absalom for his good looks. From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him"* (14:25). Even his daughter *"was a woman of beautiful appearance"* (14:27).

Absalom knew exactly how to exploit his physical attractiveness for his personal advantage. With words of flattery and feigned affection, he *"stole the hearts of the men of Israel"* (15:6). When he finally made his move to seize the throne from his father, even some of David's trusted advisors joined the rebellion.

Ironically, that spectacular head of hair may have come back to bite Absalom. 2 Samuel 18:9 says he was caught by his head in the boughs of a tree when his mule went out from under him, leaving him exposed to his enemies. Might that hair of which he was so proud have foiled his efforts to free himself from that predicament?

We find a final indication of Absalom's vanity in 2 Samuel 18:18 – *"Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up a pillar for himself, which is in the King's Valley. For he said, 'I have no son to keep my name in remembrance.'"* 14:27 tells us he had three sons, but they may have died. At any rate, Absalom's Monument became a sad reminder of the self-destructive nature of vanity.

Where Are You, O God?

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork" (Psalm 19:1, ESV).

Many have gone out of their way to make a vast number of people believe that science and God are in conflict. That cannot be further from the truth. Colossians 1:16 states, *"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers."*

As a practicing scientist, along with many others, I spent most of my life thinking, meditating, postulating and analyzing things that I cannot see. Most of the time, I don't have the complete picture. Yet, I believe in the scientific method very strongly, and I practice it. The scientific method becomes essential in our daily lives.

Scientists don't often see and yet believe in their pursuit with a pragmatic passion. Why will that not be applicable to seeking God Almighty that we in a similar manner cannot see? Why don't I seek Him much more than a scientist would do? Am I doing God a favor by reading His word or attending church service? The opposite has to be true. He has granted us so many blessings by providing means for us to get to Him in every millisecond of our lives. If I am paying close attention to what surrounds me, I will see God.

We need to study God's word to understand Him. *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success"* (Joshua 1:8).

--Robert Kargbo (Wisconsin)

On Becoming A Saint

Michael J. McGivney, founder of the Catholic benevolent organization The Knights of Columbus, recently moved one step closer to sainthood with Pope Francis' official recognition of a posthumous miracle. McGivney died August 14, 1890, while caring for others during a pandemic not unlike the one we are currently experiencing.

According to the Catholic Church, there are five steps to sainthood, the first of which is death. One must be dead for at least five years to become a saint. After passing an initial investigation, the candidate for sainthood is called a "Servant of God." The third step has to do with the possession of heroic virtues. If possessed, he or she is given the title, "Venerable." The fourth step, beatification, requires an officially recognized miracle through the intercession of the candidate for sainthood. He or she is then called "Blessed." Finally, after a second miracle following beatification, the Pope declares the person to be a "Saint."

The traditions of men differ from the word of God. In the Bible, every Christian is recognized as a "saint." The apostle Paul addressed his first letter to the church at Corinth, describing them as "saints by calling" (1 Corinthians 1:2). "Saint" means "holy one." Every Christian is called to live a holy life and is, therefore, a "saint by calling" (1 Peter 1:15).

The steps to sainthood are the same as the steps we take to come into Christ. Hearing the gospel, we must believe that Jesus is who He claimed to be—the Son of God (John 8:24). Believing in Jesus as the Son of God, we must turn away from sin in repentance (Acts 17:30-31). Then, the penitent believer must be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). Baptism's inherent union with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ produces "newness of life" (Romans 6:3-4). Subsequently, as we walk in the light of His word we enjoy continual cleansing through His blood (1 John 1:7). We are holy. We are saints.

Furthermore, there is no other access to the Father other than that which has been provided through Christ. "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

--Glen Elliott (Greenbriar, AR)