

WHAT TOLSTOY LEARNED

A Russian boy, plagued by feelings of ugliness, gazed into a mirror and studied his reflection – wide nose, thick lips, tiny gray eyes, and over-large hands and feet.

The boy was so distraught about his appearance that he begged God to work a miracle and turn him into a handsome man. He vowed that if God would transform him, he would give his Creator all that he now possessed and all that he would earn in the future.

That Russian boy was Count Tolstoy, who grew up to become one of the world's most revered authors. He is best known for his epic, *War and Peace*. In one of those books, Tolstoy reveals that through the years he discovered that the physical beauty he once craved is not the only beauty in life. Nor is it the best kind of beauty. Ultimately, Tolstoy came to regard the beauty of a strong character as being most pleasing to God's eyes.

Many people today spend vast sums on their physical appearance. Expensive business suits. Tanning sessions at the spa. Gold watches. Cosmetic surgery.

Character, in contrast, can't be bought or applied or worn. It is a matter of doing what's right, of standing up for what's right.

It's developing the qualities that you can't see by looking into the mirror.

The integrity of the upright shall guide them. Proverbs 11:3

--Beecher Hunter