

## REFLECTIONS

Thoughts on nature and the Christian faith - 10/21/19

"For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world."



Magee Marsh in northern Ohio on the shores of Lake Erie is a renowned spot for bird photography. Jo and I made a quick visit there recently and came upon this white egret as we were driving along the road that bisects the marsh. And what a beautiful bird he is! However, its beauty almost became its downfall. In the 1800's the fashion of the day for ladies was to adorn their hats with feathers from the white egret. As a result, these birds were driven to the brink of extinction.

What a loss that would have been. And all to feed the human ego. Pride, it seems, is one vice of which no person is free. And Christians are not exempt. C. S. Lewis proposes a test for Christians. Whenever we find our religious life is making us feel superior to someone else, we may be sure that we are being acted on, not by God, but by the devil himself. We are called to humility, and the first step to humility is to admit we are proud. If we think we are not proud, that only means we are very proud indeed. Lewis goes so far as to say that a proud person cannot know God, simply because a proud person is always looking down on things and people, and as long as we are looking down we cannot see the One who is above. White egret feathers no longer stroke our egos, but many other things have taken their place. What are the default thoughts of your mind when your mind is free to relax? What dominates your dreams and your aspirations? Where our treasure is, there our heart will be also. Scripture is right, the desires of the flesh, the desires of our eyes, and the pride of life is not from the Father but from the world. – John