

IN HIS IMAGE

Nearly six thousand years ago (not billions and billions of years like some scientists want us to believe), God created mankind. This is recorded for us in the first chapter of the Bible. We are told, *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* (Gen. 1:27) Of course this does not mean we were made to look physically like God because God does not possess a material body. He is a spirit being (John 4:24). What it does mean is that we were created as representatives of God or figuratively speaking, as an "illusion" or image of God. We were made with some of the same qualities or characteristics of our Creator, "like" God, a model of him, after his fashion! With this thought in mind, let us now consider some traits about God which should also be found in each one of us.

God is merciful. *"For the Lord thy God is a merciful God; he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them."*(Deut. 4:31) Being full of mercy is one quality that God wants us to display at all times. Do we? If someone does us wrong, are we eager to get revenge? *"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."*(Luke 6:36)

God is righteous (Psa. 111:3). Likewise we must strive to be virtuous – not with our own righteousness, but with God's righteousness! Paul, in speaking of the Israelites who denied Jesus as the Messiah, said, *"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."*(Rom. 10:3) Thus, we are admonished to *"seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*(Matt. 6:33)

Another characteristic of God which should prevail in us is that he is slow to anger. *"The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."*(Psa. 103:8) Are we hot-headed? How many times have we quickly lost our temper or become very angry at the slightest provocation? That is not how God created us. *"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."*(Jas. 1:19,20)

God is good to all. The Bible tells us that the world is full of his goodness (Psa. 33:5). "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."(Psa. 107:8,9) Since we are created in his image, we are instruments of God, designed to be good to all men so that through such goodness and kindness, people will glorify God himself (Matt. 5:16).

God is impartial. "For the Lord God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not person, nor taketh reward."(Deut. 10:17) He is fair and honest and treats all people the same. Therefore, we must have the same respect toward all others, dealing with them in a fair manner. "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors."(Jas. 2:9)

God is forgiving. "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee."(Psa. 86:5) Likewise, we should be forgiving toward our fellow man. Yet, this is one of the rarest qualities about God that we find within ourselves. Paul tells us why we need to have such a forgiving nature. "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."(Eph. 4:32)

Finally, and perhaps, the most important aspect of God is that he is love. By sending his Son to die on the cross for our sins, God wants us to be creatures abounding in love – love for God and love for our fellow man. "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."(1 John 4:7-11)

Although God has many other characteristics which we were not able to discuss in this article, the Bible tells us that God is: merciful, righteous, slow to anger, good, impartial, forgiving and love. Since we were created "in his image", then these same traits ought to be an integral part of our lives? Are they?

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THE VISITOR

One day a man went to visit a church. He arrived early, parked his car and got out. Another car pulled up near him and the driver told him, "I always park there. You took my place!"

The visitor went inside, found an empty seat and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him and stated, "That's my seat! You took my place!" The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome but said nothing.

Then the visitor looked around and sat down at another empty seat. Another member walked up to him and said, "That's where I always sit. You took my place!" The visitor was even more troubled by this treatment, but still said nothing.

Later, as the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood and his appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on his hands and on his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed him and called out, "What happened to you?"

The visitor replied, "I took your place."

—Adapted—

FORBIDDEN FRUIT CREATES MANY JAMS!

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>DATES</u>	<u>PLACE & TIME</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>
June 1-6	Taylor's Crossroads Roanoke, AL	Tony Whiddon (Brooklet, GA)
June 1-6	Temple Hill Church Smithdale, MS	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
June 6-8	New Bethel Church Cullman, AL	Gerald Carter (Eubank, KY)

June 8-13	Mt. Carmel Church Woodland, AL	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
June 9-13	Standing Stone St. Park Livingston, TN (camp meeting)	Various Speakers
June 15-20	Ephesus, GA	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
June 20-22	Pleasant Ridge Church Woodbury, TN	Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY)
June 22-26	Hokes Bluff Church near Gadsden, AL	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
June 23-27	Mt. Zion Church Brookhaven, MS	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
June 27-29	Chapel Hill Church Pell City, AL	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
June 27-29	Willows Oak Church Russell Springs, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Who took three spears and struck down Absalom while he hung from a tree by his head?
2. How long did the Feast of the Unleavened Bread last?
3. Which disciple was the one that "Jesus loved"?
4. When Paul went to the apostles to present the gospel he was preaching to the Gentiles, who accompanied him?
5. According to Isaiah 25, what will God do to the tears from all the faces?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. What type of people did God raise up to deliver the Israelites from those that spoiled them? JUDGES (Jud. 2:16)
2. What did Moses do with the tablets of the testimony when he saw the golden calf? HE THREW THEM AND BROKE THEM (Exo. 32:19)
3. Who filled the jars with water that Jesus would turn to wine? SERVANTS (Jn. 2:7)
4. According to James 5, the prayer of faith accomplishes what? SAVES THE SICK (Jas. 5:15)
5. If you come across a bird's nest beside the road, in a tree, or on the ground, with the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, what are you NOT to do? TAKE THE MOTHER (Deut. 22:6)