

Created in the Image of God the Son (Part 3)
(Rev. Dr. John Bartol)

“Christ is the true image into which man was formed at creation and into which by the reconciling grace of recreation, fallen man is being transformed.”

Dr. Philip E. Hughes

I believe we have biblical evidence showing that we are created in the Image of God the Son. As theologian John Champion clarifies, “This could not be in the likeness of God the Father, for then men would be godfathers instead of sons of God. Nor could this creation be in the image of the Holy Spirit, for then men would be inhabiting spirits instead of sons inhabited by the Spirit.”

The Incarnation of Christ becomes even more meaningful in the light of this amazing Biblical truth. Dr. F.F. Bruce clarifies further: “It is because man bears the image of His Creator that it was possible for the son of God to become incarnate as man, and in his humanity display the glory of the invisible God.”

The original image of God within us has been distorted and darkened by sin. Our first parents believed Satan’s lie, “You will be like God” (Genesis 3:5). Their attempt to reach divinity in one proud leap only ended in miserable failure. Every generation since Adam has experienced sins consequences, along with homesickness for Paradise and fellowship with God the Father.

Yes, we lost our true humanity through disobedience. God became man to enable us to discover it again. In the person of Christ, we see the first man who truly fulfilled God’s ideal design for humanity. In Christ everything that a human being is supposed to be was fully realized. The Son of God became the Son of man in order that the sons of men might become the sons of God.

The recovery of the image The New Testament makes it clear that salvation by grace through faith includes more than an eternal home in heaven. God’s ultimate goal for us is “to be conformed to the likeness of his son” (Romans 8:29b Jordan). As we become more like Christ, we discover our true selves, the persons we were created to be. Becoming like Christ leads to the transformation of character and not the losing of personality.

A new creative act of God restores the image. This goal of humanity – to be fully human – can only come through an intimate relationship with Christ. Sin that separated mankind from God can be forgiven. Through the miracle of the new birth we are being re-created into the image of Christ, our Model. The closer we come to Christ, the more we realize how much we fall short of His perfection. Yet, the more we see Him as He is, the more like Him we want to become (1st John 3:2). This is what we have been created and redeemed for; let this what we live for. Christ’s earthly life revealed the path to follow. His Spirit in the hearts of believers gives the power to show forth His image in daily living.

God, Who said, “Let us make man in our own image,” remakes man through Christ, “He is the image of the invisible God”(Colossians 1:15).