

Capturing the Perfect Picture

I enjoy photography, often taking pictures at family and community events. For many of the photos I like to use a long zoom lens so I can capture close-up pictures without being in the face of people. The lens allows me to take pictures that reveal the emotions of the person in the photo. If the photo is scenic or an action picture the zoom lens allows me to focus on the most interesting part of the scene and crop out the rest. Either type of picture reveals the essence of the subject matter.



We have all heard the expression that we are created in the image of God. From the biblical account of creation we read, *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" ... (Genesis 1:26).* I have often wondered what that meant. No one has ever seen God the Father, so how do we know if we look like God?

The truth is, the image of God doesn't imply a physical similarity with mankind. There is no portrait of God that shows what God looks like. God is invisible, but Jesus and inspired biblical writers have told us about His character. That is all we need to know. *No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known (John 1:18).*



The image of God is the character that God desires for us to live. If we want to be like God we should strive to emulate His characteristics. He is wonderful, pure and holy – something beyond our human reach, but the characteristics of God represent the life He planned for us. The most important of these is Love: God is love, and He wants us to love others. If we want to be like God we must sincerely love others. Simply said, *We love because he first loved us (1 John 4:19.)* God shows love in many ways. In Exodus 34:6 God described himself to Moses: *And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.* This verse reveals more of what God wants us to be.

Our choir's anthem today, "Speak, O Lord," had these lyrics: "Take your Truth, plant it deep in us; shape and fashion us in Your likeness; that the light of Christ might be seen today in our acts of love and our deeds of faith." We are created in His likeness. The likeness of God includes "the ability to reason and think, self-reflect and emote, communicate and love in ways that none of God's other creatures can. We are designed for relationships in families, communities, friendships, and marriages; we can display an endless array of God's multifaceted image."

We may identify with earthly role models who lead as righteous of a life as a human being can. Take a picture of them and they appear as humans who inspire us by living a life that reflects the image of God. God hopes we will seek to live our lives as righteously as possible. It is great to derive inspiration from other people but only God is the perfect example for us.

As an amateur photographer I want to take the best picture possible. He wants you to reflect the image of God. That is why He created you.

Question: What are the characteristics of God you hope are reflected through you? How are you trying to show more of His character?

Prayer: Most gracious Heavenly Father. No human can lead a perfect life but we can do our best to live according to your principles. Help us to direct our efforts to be more like You. Amen.