

IMAGE OF GOD

I. Representative Biblical references

Gen. 1:26,27 - "God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness... And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him'"

Gen. 9:6 - "in the image of God He made man"

Rom. 8:29 - "He predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son"

I Cor. 11:7 - "man...is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man"

II Cor. 3:18 - "transformed into the same image from glory to glory"

II Cor. 4:4 - "Christ, who is the image of God"

Col. 1:15 - "He is the image of the invisible God"

Col. 3:10 - "you have put on the new man, who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him..."

James 3:9 - "men, who have been made in the likeness of God"

II. The word for "image" in the original Biblical languages

A. Hebrew word *tselem* - "image"

B. Greek word *eikon* - "image" - from which we get English word "icon"

III. Theological interpretations of the "image of God"

A. Suggested explanations of the "image" of God

1. Upright physical posture
2. Trichotomous constitution of man
3. Spiritual capacity of man
4. Creativity
5. Reproduction
6. Limitless potentiality
7. Social organization
8. Sociability, relational
9. Productivity, work
10. Dominion over others
11. Nobility and dignity of man
12. Rationality
13. Self-consciousness
14. Communicability
15. Conscience
16. Emotive ability to love
17. Self-determination, volition
18. Moral being
19. Responsibility
20. Personality
21. Appreciation of beauty
22. Immortality
23. Masculinity
24. Inherent divinity

- B. The inadequacy of these explanations
 1. They explain the humanness or creatureliness of man
 2. They seek resemblances of man to God
 3. They are humanistic explanations of the likeness of man to God

IV. Defining and illustrating the "image of God"

- A. The "image of God" is not
 1. resemblances of man to God - a "splitten image"
 2. representations of God in man - a constructed image
 3. reflections of God in man - a mirror image
- B. The "image of God" is
 1. ontological - requiring the "Being" of the Person of God
 2. real image - requiring the reality of God's presence
 3. visible expression of the invisible character of God
 4. manifested by the life of Jesus Christ
II Cor 4:4 - "Christ, who is the image of God"
Col. 1:15 - "He is the image of the invisible God"
 5. derived from God in Christ; not inherent to man
 6. dynamic expression; not static construction

V. Historical consideration of the "image of God" in man

- A. Man was created with the "image of God" - Gen. 1:26,27
- B. When man fell into sin - Gen. 3
 1. The "image of God" was no longer viable for man
Eph. 2:12 - "without God"
Eph. 2:12 - "separate from Christ"
 2. The "image" was not just marred, distorted, or subdued
 3. Must explain these verses:
Gen. 9:6 - "in the image of God He made man"
James 3:9 - "men, who have been made in the likeness of God"
- C. By the redemptive and regenerative work of Jesus Christ the "image" can be restored to man
 1. Christ, the "image of God" dwells in our spirit
 2. The presence of God in Christ in us allows for the reactivation of His "image"
Col. 3:10 - "you have put on the new man who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him" cf. Eph. 4:24
- D. The visible expression of God's character can be manifested in Christian behavior by the indwelling of Christ.
Rom. 8:29 - "predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son"
II Cor. 3:18 - "transformed into the same image from glory to glory"