

Fil-Am Community Church  
Pastor David Bennett  
1 February 2015

## JESUS IS THE IMAGE OF GOD

Today we want to look at Jesus as the “Image of God.” What does it mean to give Him a title like that? We want to discover the answer to that by looking at what “image” means in two different ways.

Many people still seem to have a hard time understanding who Jesus is, was, or who he can be, if we allow him.

Many still think of him as...

- ✓ A baby in the **Manger**,
- ✓ Or hanging on a **Cross**
- ✓ Or even laid to rest in a **Tomb**.

This morning we continuing with the “**Jesus is**” series and will look at Jesus as the Image of God...

So with that said let’s get into the word of as we say let’s get the word into you.

I know you may have heard this or versions of this many times, so just bear with me as I think it is very relevant for the message today.

At a Theological College in the south a well know published author and PhD, was invited to speak at their annual conference, as their guest lecturer.

He spoke for two and a half hours establishing proofs that the **Resurrection** of Jesus never took place.

The professor quoted scholars after scholar and book after book trying to prove his point.

He concluded that since there was no such thing as the “Historical Resurrection of Jesus”, the religious traditions of the church was **groundless**.

It was all emotional “**Mumbo Jumbo**” because it was based on a relationship with a risen Jesus, who in fact, never rose from the dead in any literal sense.

After this verbal dissertation he moved back from the podium and defiantly asked was there any questions.

After about 30 seconds of complete silence, an elderly white headed Pastor stood up in the back of the auditorium.

He said, Doctor Professor, I have one question for you, as all eyes in the auditorium turned toward him.

He reached into his sack lunch, and pulled out an apple and began eating it. **CRUNCH**, my question is a simple question, **CRUNCH**, Now I have never read all them books you’ve read, **CRUNCH**, and I can’t recite all them scriptures in the original Greek, **CRUNCH**, I know nothing about Nietzsche, or them other individuals you mentioned, **CRUNCH**, he finished his apple!

All I want to know is... this apple I just ate was it **Bitter or was it Sweet?**

The professor paused for a moment and answered in a scholarly fashion, I cannot possibly answer that question, for I have not tasted your apple!

The elderly Pastor dropped the apple into his paper bag looked up at the professor and said calmly.... “**Neither have you tasted of my Jesus!**”

The 1,000 plus attendees could not contain themselves; the auditorium erupted with applause and cheers.

The professor swiftly walked off the stage and departed the building.

## WHAT “IMAGE” MEANS THEOLOGICALLY

The first word is the Greek word “**eikon**” and we find it in two verses describing Jesus.

The first is Colossians 1:15, “Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before God made anything at all and is supreme over all creation

The second is 1 Corinthians 4:4, “Satan, the god of this evil world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe, so they are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News that is shining upon them. They don't understand the message we preach about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.”

These words “**image**” and “**exact likeness**” are both translated from the Greek word “**eikon**.” Now that word should sound familiar to you if you use a computer, because every time you take your mouse and click on one of those little pictures on your computer what happens? Well, if everything is working right the program opens up that the icon is representative of.

In New Testament times this word was used to describe a **portrait** of a person. When you looked at the portrait it was an exact **symbol** of the person it represented.

Another word is the Greek word “**charakter**” which is used in Hebrews 1:3, and the word from which we get our English word which sounds just like it.

Hebrews 1:3, “The Son reflects God's own glory, and everything about him represents God exactly. He sustains the universe by the mighty power of his command. After he died to cleanse us from the stain of sin, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God of heaven.”

Now this term was used in New Testament times to describing the stamping out of coins or other steel objects on a press.

Every single item that was **stamped** was an exact copy of the one that went before. I hope you get the idea that I am trying to show you.

That Jesus is portrayed as both the portrait of God the Father as well as an exact stamped image of Him!

This means two **very important** things to us theologically speaking.

## 1. JESUS IS GOD'S REPRESENTATIVE

John 14:9, *"Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father!"*

John 3:16-18, *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."*

Colossians 1:15 Amplified Bible, *"[Now] he is the exact likeness of the unseen God [the visible representation of the invisible] he is the firstborn of all creation."*

Paul doesn't mince any words here, when he says Jesus is the image of the invisible God!

Images convey meanings way beyond what words can describe. For example,

- ✓ The **wedding band** on my left hand is more than a piece of Gold it says to the world, that I am off the market, off limits, married.
- ✓ Another well-known symbol is the **Statue of Liberty**, which stands in New York's harbor. It represents more than just a statue, it represents a land of the free, and it represents freedom, liberty.

- ✓ The **American Flag** is another symbol that brings many emotions to many. It also stands for freedom and liberty. To a military man on patrol or moving from one camp to the next in Iraq or Afghanistan it is the most beautiful site in the world, to see that flag waving in the breeze over a small barb-wired compound. It is freedom it is safety, it is **HOME!**

As powerful as these symbols are, they are simple representations of a far deeper realities. For example...

- ✓ My ring doesn't make me married; rather it is a symbol that I am married.
- ✓ The Statue of Liberty doesn't grant freedom it simply represents it.
- ✓ The same can be said for the American flag, it is not freedom or power in and of itself, and it just represents what our country is all about.

This is where **Jesus is different**; he is not just a symbol of God, because he is God himself. He represents him here on the earth.

## 2. JESUS IS GOD'S MANIFESTATION

*Colossians 2:9, "For in Christ the fullness of God lives in a human body."*

*John 1:14, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the father, full of grace and truth."*

The Fullness of God lives within Jesus, as he was the word, (**Logos**) that became flesh and dwelt among us.

The word Fullness means exactly that, in every sense of the word, that Jesus was God incarnate.

*John 10:30 "The Father and I are One!"*

Jesus was not just some great man that did great things, he was not just some good teacher, He was God in the flesh and now he is seated at the right hand of the father in heaven.

## WHAT “IMAGE” MEANS PRACTICALLY

### 1. JESUS REMINDS US

John 16:33 (NASB)

<sup>33</sup> These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

His image burned upon our hearts reminds us that God loves us with a love that was so great he deemed it worthy of subjecting himself to death on a cross.

It reminds us that he hung on a cross for me; he paid the price, so we wouldn't have to.

It reminds me of a story I heard about a youth pastor going through seminary.

The student arrived to the class a little early and saw that everyone was doing the same thing, as they were all studying very intently for their final exam.

The teacher arrived and saw the students studying and said that he would go over a quick review before the test was given in hopes that it might jog their memory.

We went through the review and most of it was right out of the review we were studying, however there were a few questions that we had never heard of.

The teacher was asked about the new questions and responded that the material was in the book and that because it was in the book we were responsible for it.

Finally it was time to take the test. The professor passed out the test with these instructions; the test is a timed test so leave your paper face down until told to turn them over, when I tell you to start.

When he gave the order we turned them over, every answer on the test was filled in!

At the bottom of the page it said;

This is the end of the Final Exam, all the answers on your test are correct; you will receive an “A” on the final exam.

The reason you passed the test is because someone took the test for you, all the work you did to prepare for the test did not help you get the grade you just received.

You my students have just received “**Grace.**”

As each student was told to come up and turn their papers in the professor would ask them, what was their final grade, do you deserve the grade, and how much of your final studying helped you achieve the grade.

Obviously there were numerous answers but the theme of them all and the lesson the professor was trying to teach them was that Jesus already paid the price, took the test did it all for us all we have to do is humbly and gratefully accept it.

1 Peter 5:7 Amplified Bible

<sup>7</sup>Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately *and* cares about you watchfully.

John 10:27-28 (NASB)

<sup>27</sup> My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; <sup>28</sup> and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.

## 2. JESUS MODELS FOR US

Matthew 16:24-25, *"If any of you wants to be **my follower**, you must put aside your selfish ambition, shoulder your cross, and **follow me**. If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for me, you will **find true life**."*

Respirators are machines that do the breathing for you. If you are laid down in a hospital bed and there is a problem with your breathing, they put you on a respirator. If you insist on breathing on your own, the respirator does you no good. There is only one thing you can do with the respirator that is to cooperate.

You are involved, because it is your lungs that are going up and down. It is your mouth and nose that are taking in and expelling oxygen. The two of you are working together, but the respirator is doing all the work, you are just cooperating with it, rather than resisting it.

Christ wants to express his life through you and be your respirator. He does not want you being on your own. He doesn't want to do it apart from you, so you must cooperate. You must yield yourself to the person of Christ.

Sad to say we have too many Christians that are hyperventilating in their spiritual life because they are resisting or fighting against Christ rather than yielding to him and his will.

Jesus proved that it was possible for us to live as humans and yet still do so under the will of God.

He resisted all the temptations we will ever be tempted with. His resistance of temptation, his ability to love the unlovable, his conscience efforts and

success at worshipping with the heart, soul and strength all serves as **MODELS** for us in the way that we should operate in this world.

When we look at the relationship between Jesus and his Father, we see how he models the perfect relationship that we are to strive for.

We see in his relationship with his father, he showed total commitment, total dependence, total obedience, and constant communication. All of this was models for our benefit; this is the same way we need to model our relationship with God our father!

John 14:9, *“He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.”*

### 3. **JESUS IS ALWAYS WITH US**

On the day that you came to faith in Christ, you entered into a spiritual union with him. You may ask, what exactly is a spiritual union?

Many people **drink coffee** with creamer. When cream or creamer is added to coffee, a union occurs. The blackness of the coffee and the whiteness of the creamer are now integrated and become one.

The black coffee becomes brown because of the **union**.

The coffee is not considered black & white coffee; it is just a cup of coffee. When you drink it you now have to drink the black and the white as they have become one.

If someone were to try and **separate** the cream from the coffee, there would be **chaos in the cup**. Once the union of cream with coffee has occurred, no separation is possible.

The Bible says that when we came to Jesus Christ for salvation, we entered into an in **dissolvable union with him** so that what happened to him happened to us.

When Christ died, we died, when Christ arose, we arose with him. When he ascended, we ascended with him.

Hebrews 13:5 “...For he hath said, I will **never leave** thee, nor **forsake thee.**”

So I want you to know that Christ is always there for you if you are one of His.

He will never leave you nor forsake you. He'll never slumber or sleep.

There will never be a time when we call upon God that he's not available for us. The Bible says He's there even before we call upon his name.

### **You can always count of Jesus!**

You may not be able to count on those around you, because there is the chance that they can and usually will let you down.

I know at many times though my life, which I've had friends or even family members that I thought for sure, would stick with me through thick and thin?

### **Does anybody else have that same testimony?**

You know how the story goes, they left me, let me down, turned their back on me.

Paul said that in my flesh dwelled **no good thing**, the Bible says that the spirit indeed is willing but the **flesh is weak.**

We need to remember that Jesus said in Matthew 28:20, “*And be sure of this; I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*”

We need to remember that...

- ✓ In our moments of both **victory** and **defeat**,
- ✓ In our times of **sorrow** as well as **Joy**,
- ✓ And at all the **junctions** in our roads,
- ✓ The **highways** and **back roads**,
- ✓ As well as the **detours**,
- ✓ And times when we feel as if we **can't go another step**,

Jesus is **ALWAYS** right there right beside us.

He is there ready to help us, support us, and at times carry us, in order to provide the security we so desperately need.