

that attitude can be. Mother Teresa of Calcutta is one revered for the wonderful way in which God used her; but, when asked about her worldwide ministry, she said, “I just do what I can where I am with what I have.”

God wants to touch the lives of people for good. We Christians are His hands and feet in that process. Someone once said that God will not judge us by what other people thought of us, but by what we thought of other people. God isn’t calling many of us to earth-shattering ministries. He just wants us to do what we can where we are with what we have.

Genesis 6:1-8; Psalms 16, 17; Hebrews 3:12-19

### **Saturday, January 17**

John 2:13-22 “*How dare you turn my Father’s house into a market!*” (v.16)

With Jesus as our model, trying to be images of God may cause some people to think we are always to be “sweetness and light.” Jesus, however, gives us a different picture of himself in this passage. Being a Christian is not simply being a floormat or a “Yes” person. It certainly doesn’t mean being “politically correct” or “going along with the crowd.”

The love that Christians are to emulate is tough love. God has given us guidelines for living. We are to stand up for Gospel truth even when that is not popular. We are to call people to a higher standard rather than going along with the ways of the world.

Specifically, as we see in this passage, we are not to let our Father’s house become a marketplace. If what we “market” in our churches is anything less than the whole Gospel, we are betraying our God. Living in the image of God means living as zealots tempered with grace. The opposite of love is not hate, but apathy. May God never be able to say that we cared too little to stand up for our belief in Him.

Genesis 6:9-22; Psalms 20, 21; Hebrews 4:1-13

*by Harry C. Griffith*

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## ***Good News Daily***

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### **Sunday, January 11**

Genesis 1:1—2:3 *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.* (v.27 NIV)

In what sense are we human beings created in the image of God? Clearly, we are not just like God! We have characteristics that differentiate us from other animals: the ability to reason, creativity, sophisticated communication skills and self-determination. God has those features, but many more that are beyond our ability. What we are to do is make the most of what we have to the glory of God.

Two things are especially important to remember about being in the image of God. The first is realizing that we are we truly are “fearfully and wonderfully made.” When we start getting disappointed about the way we look or some other aspect of the way we were made, it is time to remind ourselves that we are God-created God-images; and, as the saying goes, “God don’t make no junk.”

The second thing is to see in what ways we are (or are not) reflecting God’s character as best we can in our own lives. We reflect God’s character by manifesting love, patience, forgiveness, understanding, faithfulness, gentleness, and kindness. And we need to remember that both men and women are made in the image of God, and neither is “more” in the image of God than the other.

Psalms 146, 147; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:29-34

### **Monday, January 12**

John 1:1-18 *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.* (v.14a)

John’s use of “the Word” would have had particular meaning to the people of his day. To the Hebrews, “the Word” would have meant an agent of creation (Psalm 33:6), the source of God’s message through the prophets (Hosea 1:2), and God’s measure of holiness (Psalm 119:11). To the Greeks, “the Word” was the principle of reason that governs the universe. John, in speaking of Jesus as “the Word,” is conveying the thought that the person he knew and loved was, at the same time, the creator of the world and the complete revelation of the holy God. That would have been blasphemy to the Jews. The Greeks, on the other hand, would have found John’s statement quoted above impossible because, in their thinking, a principle could not become a person.

The reality of Jesus Christ as “the Word” that fulfills all these criteria was the Good News that John was trying to convey.

Jesus was fully human and fully God. Jesus was both a part of creation and a part of God's plan for the world. Although he came to earth and lived as a human being, he never ceased being the eternal God who had always existed. This week we will be considering how we may reflect the image of God. Looking at Jesus, as God in the flesh, will help us do so.

Genesis 2:4-25; Psalms 1, 2, 3; Hebrews 1:1-14

## **Tuesday, January 13**

John 1:19-28 *"Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not."* (v.21)

In the passage for today, John the Baptist flatly denies that he is Elijah. According to Malachi 4:5, God was going to send Elijah back to earth in advance of the Messiah. And, in Matthew 17:10-13, Jesus makes it clear that the prophecy meant that someone who would symbolically be Elijah would come, and had already come: John the Baptist.

How little we know "who we are" in God's plan. Even John the Baptist did not understand his role in God's plan. He simply did what he believed God was telling him to do. He was obedient, and he served a great purpose in the salvation story.

As people created in the image of God, we are in the same position today. We cannot fully know God's purposes for us. If we look at the life of John the Baptist, we would quickly conclude that we would never measure up to his obedience to God or the results his ministry achieved. But Jesus said, "I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" (Luke 7:28). What this means is that Christians have a greater spiritual heritage than John because we have a clearer understanding of Jesus' death and resurrection, and the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide our way. How we use the grace that has been bestowed on us as a result is up to us.

Genesis 3:1-24; Psalms 5, 6; Hebrews 2:1-10

## **Wednesday, January 14**

John 1:29-42 *Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).* (v.42b)

Jesus knew not only who Simon was, but who he would become. That is why he gave him a new name: Cephas (in Aramaic) or Peter (in Greek). The name means "a rock."

As we look at Peter of the Gospels, we see a character who didn't always seem rock-solid. He was impetuous, and even cowardly (in denying Jesus at the time of Jesus' arrest). But Peter became a solid rock in the days of the early church, as we clearly see in the Acts of the Apostles. By giving Simon a new name, Jesus foresaw the change in character that would occur in the life of Peter.

What's in a name? Names were very important to the Jews of Scripture. Names were given to commemorate the nature of the birth, the appearance of the child, or the expectations the parents had for him or her. Today we don't name our children in this manner. More likely, we name them after someone in the family. But, in any event, our last name is a family name. What we do and how we live reflects on our family. And, as members of the Christian family, it is even more important that we honor our name. We are created in the image of God, to live in the image of Jesus.

Genesis 4:1-16; Psalm 119:1-24; Hebrews 2:11-18

## **Thursday, January 15**

John 1:43-51 *"How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.* (v.48a)

If we are to live as people created in the image of God, guided by the image of Jesus, we might want to reverse Nathanael's question. What is important is how we know God rather than how He knows us. God is all-knowing. Psalm 139 is a wonderful picture of just how well God knows each of us!

But, how do we know God? If we are going to live as He would have us live, we should want to know as much about Him, His character, His expectations of us, etc. as we possibly can. Knowing Scripture is certainly one of the ways we know God. The Bible is His story. As we see how God has dealt with people in the Bible, we can more easily discern His expectations of us. And, certainly as we look at the life and teachings of Jesus, and well as Paul and Peter, we can better understand what God expects of us.

Through a prayer relationship with God, we also get to know Him better. God desires to be in relationship with His people, and prayer is the best way to have that relationship.

Interaction with other people is also a way in which we come to know God better. Being a part of a spiritually vital small group or having a prayer partner can help us be accountable for our lives as Christians. And, God can speak to us through our children.

Genesis 4:17-26; Psalm 18:1-20; Hebrews 3:1-11

## **Friday, January 16**

John 2:1-12 *Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.* (v.7)

Jesus cared about the simple things as well as the monumental. He was not only willing to die on a cross for the sins of the world; he was willing to prevent the embarrassment of his host at a wedding banquet by miraculously supplying wine that was better than the best.

As we think about what God would have us do to reflect His image to the world, we may come up with some grandiose ideas. We may think we would not be doing God's will unless it is something really big. How wrong