

Jesus, the Image of God (Scripture Reading: Colossians 1:15-20)

Review: Idolatry is (due to lack of trust) trying to make something else into God or trying to make God into something else. Must worship/trust someone; if not God's purposes and ways, we are serving an idol. Asked questions to test ourselves. Need to cleanse the temples of trust in anything other than God, trace the idol worship back to initial desire, and go to God to get it His way. Every good thing and perfect gift is from God. Jesus is the way to God.

We Wear What We Worship

Psalm 115:1-8

- God's glory \implies lovingkindness and truth
- "Those who make them **will** become like them, everyone who trusts in them."
- Worship = trust, dependence, acknowledgement, praise, sacrifice, obedience

God With Us

John 1:1-3, 14, 18

- Jesus IS God
 - He caused all things to exist
 - He became a man and was God's presence among man, through acts of grace and teachings of truth showing the very glory of God to those around Him
 - Related the invisible God in a tangible way
 - Uniquely able to flood our senses with God's glory, physically interacting with us as we would with each other
 - He deserves our worship

We Become What We Behold

Exodus 33:17-23; 34:29-35

- No one can see God's face and live
- God's glory = grace and compassion, not some sort of awesome physical form
- Moses coming in contact with God's glory made his face shine; beholding the glory of the LORD changed how Moses looked to those around him
- Moses spoke God's words to people, most of whom never really understood God as He had revealed Himself, evident in how their hearts were hardened and they refused to change
- The people never "saw God" the way Moses did, but God's true glory—His grace and compassion—had been experienced by all, so they were without excuse

2 Corinthians 3:18-4:6

- We have never "seen God" in some awesome form, no different than Israel, and even the people of Jesus' day (Isaiah 53:2 - "He has no stately form or majesty, that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.")
- We too, however, have "received mercy" and it has changed us
- Those who remain unchanged are those blinded by "the god of this world... so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

Recreated in the Image of God, by the Image of God

Genesis 1:26-27

- God created man in His image, from the beginning
- Man's corrupting of that image began when he ceased to trust God, looking at what he saw rather than heeding what God had said (idolatry)
- The only way to "be like God" (the concept Satan twisted in his deceiving of Eve) is to worship Him, as He created us to do

Romans 8:29-30

- God had purposed from the beginning to remake us in His image, whenever we fell from glory
- Our glory is to reflect God's own nature
- We can regain that in Christ

An Example of Transformation

Hebrews 1:1-3

- "Radiance of His glory"
- "Exact representation of His nature"

Ephesians 4:32-5:2, 8-10

- "Imitators of God"
- "Beloved children...trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord"
- "You are light in the Lord"
- Forgiveness, love, goodness, righteousness, truth

Conforming to the Image of Christ

Philippians 3:17-21

- "Join in following my example" ("Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ." - 1 Corinthians 11:1)
- "Observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us"
- Do not follow the pattern of those who are "enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction":
 - "whose god is their appetite"
 - "whose glory is in their shame"
 - "who set their minds on earthly things"
- Jesus will transform us now and perfect us in the end, transforming us then "into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself."