

MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE

God said, 'Let us make man in our image and in our likeness, let them rule over the fish, the birds, the animals and over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'
- Genesis 1:26

Man is different from the animals in that they do not bear God's image. Theologian Louis Berkhof writes in his Systematic Theology page 206{

The doctrine of the image of God in man is of the greatest importance in theology, for that image is the expression of that which is most distinctive in man and in his relation to God. The fact that man is the image of God distinguishes him from the animal and every other creature.

What is God's image and how does it relate uniquely to man? First of all, we must realize that what we see in man today is often a distortion of God's original intent for man, which was to display his character and attributes. We get a clue from the New Testament, which gives reference to **the new image** that God gives to those who are in Christ.

To put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness
- Ephesians 4:24

.... put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its creator, therefore as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive.....over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. - Ephesians 3:10-14

God is righteous and holy - Man is a moral creature with a conscience and instinctively has a sense of right and wrong. The previous scriptures show that when man demonstrates moral attributes, he is reflecting God's image.

God is a multi-faceted creator - Man is also creative in many varied ways. Birds build their homes (nests) in fairly uniform ways, whereas man can build homes with a variety of materials, shapes, sizes and colors. Birds can make limited melodic sounds but man has created a vast variety of musical sounds and instruments.

God speaks and communicates in various ways - Animals communicate with each other but in limited ways. Over 7000 different languages are spoken by mankind around the world..

God is Love (Love triangle of Father, Son, Holy Spirit)

Be imitators of God as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God -Ephesians 5:1-2

God is Light - He is totally pure, holy, transparent and in Him is no darkness.

We are to live in total honesty, openness and purity as there is no room for darkness or hate - 1 John 1:5-10, 2:8-11

God is Life - His presence is energizing, abundant, awesome and overwhelming
Death cannot survive God's presence. Jesus is the ultimate example.

- John 11:25-26, 10:10

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