

## Who are you, Lord? – Part 5

**Opening Scripture: John 17:1-3** <sup>3</sup> *And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*

As we have been saying in this series, knowing God is absolutely crucial: even eternal life depends on it. In our last message, we saw 4 specific factors that distort our view of God and that can so easily keep us from knowing Him as He really is.

How do you view God? The thing is, your view of God will ultimately determine your relationship with Him.

**So, how do we know the True God? Is there a sure way of accurately finding Him beyond the distortions of the devil, our upbringing, bad theology or our human reasoning?**

### True God

**1 John 5:20** - <sup>20</sup> *And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.*

When we see Jesus, we see the true God without distortion, we see the Father. He is the express image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15). He is the ultimate revelation of God and the most accurate view of Him, this side of eternity.

The Bible emphatically says that the true picture of God is in Jesus. Jesus is the truth that dispels the lies about God that the serpent used to deceive Adam and Eve. Jesus is *the way, the truth and the life* (John 14:6).

The word **truth** in the Greek means '**not covered**' – Since the fall of man, the devil has tried to cover the true image of God with lies, but Jesus uncovers God for us. Jesus came to uncover, to reveal, the true God:

**John 1:18** - <sup>18</sup> *No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.*

**AMPC (Amplified Bible)** : <sup>18</sup> *No man has ever seen God at any time; the only unique Son, or the only begotten God, Who is in the bosom [in the intimate presence] of the Father, He has declared Him [He has revealed Him and brought Him out where He can be seen; He has interpreted Him and He has made Him known].*

### God is made visible in Jesus

**John 14:7-9** - <sup>7</sup> *"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."* <sup>8</sup> *Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."* <sup>9</sup> *Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not*

*known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?*

**Hebrews 1:1-3** - *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,<sup>2</sup> has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;<sup>3</sup> who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*

**Colossians 2:9** - *For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;*

All that makes God *God* – the whole fulness of His deity – took on bodily form in Jesus. All previous revelations of God were *partial* but in Christ, God is revealed *fully!*

Therefore, to see God's Son is to see God Himself perfectly reflected, exactly imprinted and fully disclosed.

When our picture of God is built on any other foundation apart from the bible and Jesus (whether a foundation of experience, personal opinion or philosophy) then we remain vulnerable to believing a lie about God. We will embrace a god that is consistent with a fallible expectation.

### **The image of God**

**Colossians 1:15-20** <sup>15</sup>*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.* <sup>16</sup>*For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.* <sup>17</sup>*And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.* <sup>18</sup>*And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence.* <sup>19</sup>*For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell,* <sup>20</sup>*and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.*

The scriptures emphasize over and over again that in order to find the accurate image of God, we have to look at Jesus. We cannot bypass Jesus.

### **He is God's icon**

This passage in Colossians agrees with the others in John and Hebrews, that Jesus is the image of an otherwise, invisible God.

The word translated from the Greek text as "*image*" is the word *eikon*.

In the Greek way of thinking (which is the cultural context of when the NT was written), an *icon* was a representation of a god –imagined and fashioned by man and worshiped as god. That is called idolatry. Jesus is not that kind of an icon. Jesus is the absolute, most accurate, unaltered, precise image you will ever see of God.

*“Idolatry takes place when we don’t allow God to define Himself for us in Christ but rather embrace a picture of God based on our life experiences, philosophical speculations or non-Christ centred interpretations of scripture”*

- Dr Gregory A. Boyd

### **God defines himself in Jesus**

What about the Old Testament? - The Old Testament is very important. We should never disregard the Old Testament. In fact, the Old Testament is quoted **855** times in the New Testament. Also, the Old Testament gives context to the New Testament. However, we see God clearly defined and revealed when we look at Jesus.

**2 Corinthians 3:12-16** - *<sup>12</sup> Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech— <sup>13</sup> unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. <sup>14</sup> But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. <sup>15</sup> But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. <sup>16</sup> Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.*

The revelation of God to people in the Old Testament was “veiled” – obstructed, hindered, concealed or incomplete. The veil is taken away in Jesus: our eyes are open with clarity and we have an unobstructed view of God.

To many of the Jews who still do not know the Messiah, when they read the Old Testament they only see in part, their understanding is somewhat blinded to the true shape and character of God. We need to value and read the Old Testament – however, not from behind Moses’ veil but from this side of the cross – from Jesus, with unveiled faces!

**Verse 18:** *<sup>18</sup> But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

The true image of God transforms us! When we have a revelation of who He is, we are never the same again. That is good news! That is the gospel.

**2 Corinthians 4:3-6** - *<sup>3</sup> But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, <sup>4</sup> whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. <sup>5</sup> For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake. <sup>6</sup> For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

Let us fix our eyes on the face of Jesus – God is there, His glory is there, His character and attributes are all there, in fulness. We are no longer in bondage to the lies of satan.

### **Concluding thoughts**

On the Road to Damascus Saul saw this same glorious light and asked, *who are you, Lord?*  
A voice said, *I am Jesus whom you are persecuting* (Acts 9:5)

From that point onwards, Saul was never the same again: the veil was removed from his life, and he spent all of his days sharing the revelation of Jesus and the grace of God.