

His Name Shall Be Called Wonderful (14)

Image of the Invisible God

Of all the names and divine titles of the Lord Jesus Christ, perhaps none present His absolute deity as clearly as the title, *“Image of the Invisible God”* (Col. 1:15). In Colossians chapter 1, as well as in John chapter 1 and Hebrews chapter 1, the Lord Jesus Christ is presented as the Creator of all things.

John began his Gospel record with the statement, in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God”*. Then he added, *“all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made”* (Jn. 1:1-3). John’s Gospel presents the Son in equality with the Father.

The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews said concerning the Son, *“By whom he made the worlds”* (Heb. 1:2). The epistle to the Hebrews presents the Lord Jesus in His supremacy, superiority and sufficiency.

In the book of Colossians the preeminence of the Lord Jesus is demonstrated in every chapter. In the divine title, *“Image of the invisible God”*, the word, *“image”*, expresses the very nature and essence of the character of God.

The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews states that the Lord Jesus is the brightness of God’s glory and the express image of His person (Heb. 1:3). In the phrase, *“the brightness of his glory”*, the word, *“brightness”*, means, *“effulgence”*, or very simply, *“outshining”*. John wrote concerning Him, *“we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”* (Jn. 1:14).

In the term, *“the express image of his person”*, the word, *“express”*, indicates the exact representation and manifestation of God. Paul wrote in the book of Colossians, *“in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily”* (Col. 2:9). Matthew quoted from the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the birth of the Lord Jesus, *“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us”* (Matt. 1:23).

Paul wrote in the book of Philippians, that the Lord Jesus was in the form of God, but He took upon Himself the form of a servant and was made in the in the likeness of men (Phil. 2:6-7). We often express that the wonder of incarnation, is that in taking upon Himself human likeness, the Lord Jesus became what He never was before, yet, He never ceased to be all that He ever was, the mighty God, the creator of the universe.

It is interesting and instructive to note that this divine title of the Lord Jesus says that He is the image of the *invisible* God. In his description of the Lord Jesus, in his letter to Timothy, Paul wrote of Him, *“who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see”* (1st Tim. 6:16).

When Moses requested of the Lord to see His glory, the Lord responded, *“thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live”* (Ex. 33:18-20). When the people of Israel saw the thunder and lightning surrounding Mount Sinai, they were afraid to even hear God speaking to them. They said to Moses, *“Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die”* (Ex. 20:19).

The Lord smote the men of Beth-shemesh, because they looked into the ark of the Lord. They said, *“Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?”* (1st Sam. 6:20).

Then, in the Gospel of John, we read this tremendous statement, “*No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him*” (Jn. 1:18). In this statement, the word, “*declared*”, tells us that the Son has made God known, or unfolded the majesty of His person to us.

The Lord Jesus Christ not only revealed God, while He was here, but also displayed God. His words and His works demonstrated that He was and is indeed, God manifest in flesh. When Moses questioned the Lord regarding His name, the Lord replied, “*I AM that I AM*”; meaning, the ever existing One, He that is and was and ever will be (Ex. 3:14). The Lord Jesus referred to Himself using this title, saying to the Jewish leaders, “*before Abraham was, I AM*” (Jn. 8:58).

In the book of the Revelation, John wrote, “*I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending*”, *saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty*” (Rev. 1:8). All that God is in essential nature and being is seen in the Lord Jesus Christ, God’s Son. The Lord Jesus said to Philip, “*He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father*” (Jn. 14:9).

*Before He earth’s foundation laid,
Or angel wing had stirred;
Before man in God’s likeness made,
Dwelt the eternal Word.*

*Image of invisible God
In ages past concealed;
Now in the path the Son hast trod,
To mortal man revealed.*

*The face of God by man unseen,
His character unshared;
Yet the Son, who has ever been,
The Father has declared.*

*Fulness of Godhead bodily,
Revealed in every sign;
The blessed Christ of God, is He,
Eternally divine.*

Bernie Payne