

GLOBAL GRACE NEWS

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Global Grace Newsletter has a new face!

- Graceworld Ministries will publish 4-6 Global Grace Newsletters per year.
- Newsletter is a free teaching resource for ministers and for everyone, who is interested in knowing more about the Gospel.
- Newsletter advocates the Gospel of Jesus Christ—He alone, grace alone, faith alone.

In this issue:

Who do you see in the mirror?	1
God, deliver me from my 'god'!	2
Study Corner & Contact Info	5

Who do you see in the mirror?

A funny question, isn't it? You may think, "It's obvious... I see myself!"

What does Apostle Paul mean when he says,

"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." (2 Cor 3:18).

Yes, you see yourself, but do you know who you really are?

This is a more troublesome question, which easily leads into philosophical discussions

and meditations.

Many of us would probably answer what we do; what's our occupation, instead of

who we are. "I'm a pastor" or "I'm a worship leader."

No, that's not who you are, but what you do.

Jesus Christ came to show us, who the Father is, but not only that. He also came to show us, who we are.

God put each one of us in the person of Christ, in order to rec-

oncile the world (us) with Himself. When He looks at you and me, He sees the reflection of His Son.

Only because His Son's image is engraved in us, we are also continually being transformed into His image—without our

own merits.

Welcome to study renewed Global Grace Newsletter! I hope you enjoy Peter's mind-blowing teaching article, "God, deliver me from my 'god'!"



Do you see the reflection of Christ in you? In your neighbor?

"Jesus Christ came to show us, who the Father is, but not only that. He also came to show us, who we are."

God, deliver me from my 'god'!

By Peter Youngren

How we see God influences how we see ourselves and the world around us. The spiritual awakening that many Christians long for, is possible when we discover that God is exactly like Jesus.



Who is God? All people

have a propensity to believe in a God that is quite like us, a God in our own image. This is true also for us Christians. There are many views of God, among those who confess Christianity, and everyone seems to be able to find a chapter and verse from the Bible to support their view.

Some emphasize that

God is through and through good and loving, while others focus on the importance of judgment over sin and godlessness. Many view God as the Prince of Peace, while others want a more militaristic God, who conquers the enemy, one much like what we read of in the Old Testament. Some want a God that is very particular concerning liturgy or prayer formulas, while others suggest that God's love covers a multitude of sins and

failures.

The view of God varies

from country to country. In some nations you hear a lot about a war-like God, the God who is definitely on the side of that nation's military, and helps its soldiers to kill its enemies, while in other nations you find a more peaceful God.

After the terror attacks

in the United States on Sept. 11, 2001, some high profile Christian voices suggested that God was behind the attack, because of the many abortions in United States and because of homosexuality in the nation.

When Ariel Sharon, Is-

rael's former Prime Minister, suffered a stroke that resulted in a coma, some preachers said that God gave the stroke, because Sharon had surrendered Jewish settlements, within the Gaza strip, to the Palestinians. In other words, Sharon's actions didn't line up with their view of end time prophecy.

The 2010 earthquake in

Haiti, which killed more than 200,000, was also part of a divine plan, according to some

'Christian prophets', who suggested that God was displeased with one of the world's poorest nations. Others cited that Haiti had made a pact with the devil a couple hundred years earlier and that this was the cause. A Gospel person sees right through that line of argument—Jesus has already negotiated for every nation, so the devil is not in a position to make any pact.

The issue of mass migration, which is front and center in the news, also conjures up various pictures of God. For example, in the United States surveys show that the majority of evangelicals believe that no Muslims should be allowed into the country, whether asylum seekers or others, and that a wall should be built to stop Mexicans from coming across the Southern border. Arguably, evangelicals in the United States are more anti-immigration than other groups. In other parts of the world this line of thinking is unfathomable for Christians. In my country of birth, Swe-

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den, many Christian leaders are actively propagating that any and all should be let inside the country.

No, I am not advocating one political opinion above the other. I am merely noticing a strange phenomena; Bible believing Christians can have completely opposing opinions, and no matter what side they find themselves on, all have a chapter and verse in the Bible to support their stand.

It's a free-for-all; choose whatever God you want.

The well-known American Calvinist, *John Piper*, suggests that not only does God *allow* natural disasters—He *plans* them and He *actively carries out* disasters that killed thousands, even millions. According to this reasoning, the terror of 9/11 was not only allowed by God, but God planned and carried it out.

How can we know who God really is? Who has the right to view of God? Why should you believe Peter Youngren? What is the standard?

The New Testament gives us a very precise definition – God is exactly like Jesus

Christ.

- Jesus is the exact image of God's person, (Hebrews 1:3).
- It pleased God that in Jesus Christ would the fullness of God live bodily, (Colossians 2:19).
- Jesus said that if you had seen HIM, you have seen God, the Father, (John 14:9).
- Jesus is Emmanuel—God with us.

God is not a mixture of Old Testament prophets, the Law of Moses, and Jesus. No, God is identical with Jesus. The further we read along in the Bible, from the Book of Genesis and onward, the light of God shines stronger and stronger until it reaches its full brightness in the New Testament revelation of Jesus Christ. All pictures and views of God that differ from the one in Jesus Christ must bow, surrender, to Jesus Christ.

Jesus is right about who God is, and everyone who disagrees is wrong.

Abraham, Solomon, David and the prophets had a certain limited insight about God, but much was a secret to them. Jesus said that no one knows

God except He, who was in the bosom of the Father, before the foundation of the world, namely the only begotten Son, (John 1:18).

When we see a statement about God that doesn't completely agree with the picture that Jesus gave us, we must understand that this statement was made by someone with a limited understanding.

We must tell the world—God is just like Jesus. When we, who are Christians, see this, then we also see God's true attitude towards the world around us.

“ GOD IS
EXACTLY
LIKE JESUS
CHRIST. ”

GOD IS THE GREAT PURSUER.

For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost, (Luke 19:10).

Jesus came to defeat sin, death and hell, but also to show us who God is. In His encounter with Zacchaeus, a well-known sinner, Jesus referred to him as a “son of Abraham”. Because of his

sinful lifestyle Zacchaeus was no longer welcome among those who considered themselves 'righteous'. Jesus corrected this. He did not exclude Zacchaeus, but included him—God pursued Zacchaeus.

The world of religion has always turned its back on Zacchaeus and his likes, but God never turns His back on anyone.

When God says that hu- mankind is lost it is not a derogatory word of rebuke. Imagine a bride, who on her wedding day, loses her ring—it is lost. Or maybe you have a phone where everything that's important to you is saved—bank account numbers, passwords—lost. Even worse, imagine that you've gone camping and suddenly you notice that your 3-year-old son or daughter is missing—lost. You go looking, calling, but you can't find the missing child.

That's how God sees peo- ple. He's not angry with the world. No, God sees the world lost, something important from God's point of view has gone missing. He seeks after and wishes for fellowship with every person, because He loves each one

individually.

GOD IS THE GREAT RE- DEEMER. To redeem is to make everything good, to make everything just like it was meant to be. God doesn't want revenge on the world, because of sin; He wants to make everything good for every person.

Redemption was very im- portant in the history of Israel. During the year of Jubilee, every 50th year, everything was made right again. If you had lost property, or your personal liberty, it would be returned to you. But that was just every 50th year. Even better, as we see in the story of Ruth and Boaz, you could be redeemed whenever through the mediation of a close relative, who was willing and able to pay for you—redeem you.

The redemption for the people of Israel was expanded in Jesus Christ to become a reality for the entire world. All are reconciled with God—redeemed—through the blood of Jesus Christ, (Ephesians 1:7).

Through His death on the cross Jesus gained entrance into Hades [hell] in order to, once for all, de-

feat sin, the devil and hell. The last Adam, Jesus, cancelled the destruction and alienation caused by the first Adam. That's why Jesus is able to say that He has the keys to death and to hell, (Revelation 1:8).

The fact that the world is now reconciled to God, has made salvation possible for all, who receive the life from Jesus Christ, (Romans 5:10). The reconciliation is already an accomplished reality, and salvation becomes a reality when we receive the life from God.

GOD IS THE GREAT PHYSI- CIAN. It is not those, who are well that need a physician, but those that are sick, (Mark 2:17).

In this depiction we see humanity's true state, not as a legal matter, where we are the criminals—the sinners—and God is the judge. Instead, we see sin as a sickness and we are the patients. Sin—the broken relationship between God and people—is a disease and God, the

“The fact that the world is now reconciled to God, has made salvation possible for all, who receive the life from Jesus Christ.”

great physician, in contrast to a medical doctor, who treats the patient, takes the disease upon Himself.

Sometimes we think in a very human way about this. God is not like a regular doctor. No one believes that we are cured from a sickness, merely by meeting a doctor. No, it is the treatment or the medication from the drugstore that we are waiting on, and through it we believe that we will feel better.

God is completely different. He doesn't give us a little bit of medication—scripture verses, spiritual principles, etc.—to take in order for us to be saved. Instead, God took our disease upon Himself. I'm not speaking primarily about physical diseases, or about healing for your body, but about the sickness of the soul—the broken relationship with God.

God, through Jesus Christ, allowed sin with all its

symptoms to exhaust itself in Him—until death. When Jesus died, sin had done all it could do—kill. When sin had finished its destructive work—that's when Jesus defeated it.

Imagine a person, who is about to drown in the middle of a lake. Someone stands on the shore, waving a book entitled "How to swim!" He throws the book to the drowning person, but that doesn't help, the person will still drown. The Gospel is not shouting Bible verses at the world. The Gospel is that God in Christ comes to the drowning person, puts His arms lovingly around the one who cannot yet swim, carries him to the shore, rescues him, and identifies Himself with that person.

My dream is that the world will truly discover who God is. Away with the grotesque view of God, that all too often is portrayed by modern Christians, who

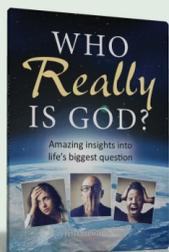
in their arrogance believe that they are faithful to the Bible, but in fact they have missed the very important truth that all theology can only be understood in Christ. It is not as a mixture, not a little bit of Jewish religion and a little bit of Christ's Gospel—it's all Christ's Gospel.

The well-known monk from medieval times, *Meister Eckhart*, famously prayed, *God deliver me from my 'god'!* Many need to be delivered from the view of God, as a petty, condemning judge, who continually points out our faults and failures, and instead see that God is exactly like Jesus.

Jesus came not to condemn, but to save, (John 3:17). That's the God that the whole world is ready to receive. That's the true God.



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