

# REFLECTING HIS IMAGE

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If I took the time to write, I would have many, many stories to tell you about my life at home and on the mission field. In fact, from my perspective, my life's - journeys are a series of stories; much like a patchwork quilt, each piece of material is a story, but placed and fitted together they paint a grand or overall story that is more completely useful. Although I have many great stories of individuals being saved, filled with the Holy Ghost, Healed, etc., yet God is using the seemingly mundane and difficult circumstances of my life to create a story or a testimony of how and what He is teaching me. He is teaching me about myself and in so doing I am learning that I, apart from Him, am nothing like Him and therefore, in His mercy, He is also teaching me about who He really is and what He is really like: as I behold Him, I am changed into the same image.

Each and every testimony of "*what the Lord has done in me*" (*not, through me*) is helping to create an overall story. The story of who I am in Christ cannot merely be told in words, but the story of who I have *become* will be reflected and told through a life that is lived out after the reality of Christ.

God is after the overall story or the big-picture. The big-picture is what others see when they look at me and more importantly, it is what the Lord sees in me! The overall story that my life should reflect is that of *the manifold wisdom of God* (Eph. 3:10). Just like a patchwork quilt, there are many dimensions to God's character. The word "manifold" used above means, "various in character". God wants His Holy, righteous character woven into my life and thus, seen in my life; There are nine fruits of the Spirit, 7 Spirits of God, numerous and varying gifts and callings of the Spirit; each one projecting some side, some aspect of who HE is.

Some believers tend to focus on their outward appearance, while others focus on one particular doctrine or on one or several gifts or callings and therefore, project a lop-sided view or image of Jesus. Jesus said that we would testify of Him; this is far more than just speaking words. When we don't allow God work in our lives, changing us, we project a lop-sided view of who He is and the testimony of Jesus is not seen clearly in our lives.

This "patchwork quilt" can be seen as a reflection or picture of how God is working in my own life *personally*. Have you ever seen an unfinished quilt? It may be beautiful, but as yet, is incomplete. You wonder, "Why did that person stop making this quilt?" Many of us are like that. God is the quilt maker. We simply refuse to let God work on us. Our patches are misshapen and many have frayed edges that need to be trimmed by a sharp shear. Our unforgiveness must be removed if we are to properly reflect the various character of God. Perhaps we have never encountered the love of God and all we can do is project Him as a vengeful, angry God. This view is without integrity or balance. We will need the healing hand of God to correct and balance this image of Him.

God is intensely concerned that we know Him and reflect Him as he truly is and therefore, He will often use the tedious, mundane, everyday circumstances of our lives to bring us understanding of His true nature. Many miss it, because they are not looking for Him in this way nor are they looking for Him to change them; they go about their life with all its duties and difficulties and see life as something you have to endure. Others view life as an opportunity to gain pleasures of all sorts. In life, we will have both pain

and pleasure; it is a fact and surety. Whatever circumstances may be affecting us, let us always be looking to God that He might teach and change us through it all. A circumstance of joblessness, for example, will create an intense pressure in my life that will reveal many things about my heart. Perhaps I will see that I am not really the man or woman of faith that I supposed myself to be or, perhaps the Lord will show me that I am self-sufficient and unable to truly depend on and trust Him for my needs.

If we are looking for God to teach us, He will not only reveal these “frayed edges” to us, but will offer an exchange with us. The choice is ours. *If* we acknowledge our sin and *allow* him to trim the jagged edges of our hearts, *then* He will come into those areas of our lives and bring an effective change. This change or exchange is supernatural and divine and cannot be produced by our own efforts, but rather, what is needed on our part is a willing and repentant heart; God will do the changing and we will then reflect His true nature as the reality of His truth (true image of God) becomes part of us. Then, in times of testing, we will not run about trying to make things happen (control), but rather, we will lean on our beloved who told us to “take no thought for your life”, what you will eat, put on, etc.

God has provided a Lamb and that Lamb lives within every born-again believer. He lives within us by His Spirit to produce in our hearts His righteous character or the Kingdom of God. The formation of this character does not automatically appear in us when we get saved, but God’s nature or character is produced (formed) in us by a process (sanctification) that comes through God speaking to us and changing us through the many, diverse circumstances of our lives.

The Lamb has taken our sins upon Himself and if we accept this free gift, in exchange, He will place upon us His righteousness, which we receive by faith. God dealt with our sin on the cross. He dealt with sin through the sacrificial offering of Jesus as payment for our sin and thus, he purchased for us justification with God. “*if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins*”. Now through the Spirit of Christ in us, God desires to go deeper in our lives and deal with our character and the marred image that we are projecting. Adam and Eve were created in the *image and likeness* of God but that image and likeness was lost or marred.

**“...Many were astonished (stunned) at thee; his visage (appearance) was so marred (corrupted) more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men. –Isa. 52:14**

“*His visage was so marred*”, Isaiah said as he prophetically spoke of the physical damage done to Christ’s flesh when He was beaten with shards of glass. Another layer of prophetic truth, however, is found in the words of Isaiah; The original creation man (Adam) was a true reflection of God and yet this image and likeness was marred by sin and death. But thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ and His Spirit in us, that image and likeness is being restored in the lives of those who are looking for Him! The Lamb is the substitute and He has provided His very own character (new creation man) in exchange for the frayed and misshapen edges of our lives. However, we must be open to the exchange process!

This spotless, beautiful Lamb, Jesus Christ, died to obtain the victory for us and He is ever living for us, interceding for us that we might fully apprehend and walk out the victory of the fully exchanged life! If I give Him my frayed edges of offence (or any other obstacle in my heart), He will give me a heart - healed and able to forgive even as He has forgiven me. As God affects changes in my own life, I am then able to do more than tell the “story” or testimony of this to others, but I am also able to demonstrate or walk this

truth out before others, thus affecting the life “patchwork” of others. This is when our “words” become Spirit and Life!

“Behold the lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world”. He has done that. Now the Lamb is standing in the midst of the seven churches. This is the same Lamb that has taken the sins of the world upon Himself, but now the Apostle John sees Him as one who has eyes as a flame of fire and feet like unto brass that have been tried in fire, and out of His mouth goes a sharp two edged sword. This poetic, prophetic imagery found in Revelation 1:12-15 is revealing a Lamb who, Himself, was tested, tried and overcame. He is standing in the midst of His people, His called; the church. He is in us and among us to change us and bring us to the place where we once again, reflect His image and likeness.

When we look into His eyes of love or truth, a flaming fire will burn away the dross (lies and heart-deception) in my life. His feet are covered with burnished (tried) brass and thus, wherever we allow Him to walk in our lives (have authority), His judgments are at work to remove hindrances so that our life-walk will reflect His. He is among us and in us as one with a sharp sword, circumcising and cutting away, with His Word, the fleshly ways in us, causing us to see the difference between the soul and the Spirit.

As we attend services this Easter season, may we be ever mindful of all that Christ did on the cross and also what He did when He was raised from the dead! He not only died to take away our sin and to justify us, making us righteous by faith, but He ROSE AGAIN to restore the lost beauty of His image and likeness to His new creation! *“He will beautify the meek with Salvation” – Psm. 149:4.* May we offer ourselves afresh to Christ as a living sacrifice and invite His resurrection power to remove and cut away the jagged and frayed edges of our hearts, so that we might more perfectly be adorned with and thus reflect His lovely image and likeness!

***And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and  
establish thou the work of our hands. –Psm. 90:17***