

The Imprint of God

Key Verse: *“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 on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”*
—Hebrews 1:3

Selected Scripture:
Hebrews 1:1-9

PRIOR TO JESUS’ FIRST

Advent, God “spake . . . unto the fathers by the prophets,” but now “in these last days” he has “spoken unto us by his Son,” Jesus, who is described in our Key Verse as being the “brightness” of God’s glory and the “express image of his person.” (Heb. 1:1-3) The phrase “express image” is a translation from the Greek word *charakter*, which is defined as “an exact copy.” Indeed, during Jesus’ First Advent, he fully and perfectly represented the Father.

On the third day after Jesus died on the cross, God resurrected him from death and, referencing again our Key Verse, gave him a glorious position “on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” The Apostle Paul describes this in another place, saying that when God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he “set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” (Eph. 1:20,21) Jesus was worthy to be exalted above every other being, because he “loved righteousness, and hated iniquity.” (Heb. 1:9) He “purged” or

“made a purification” [*Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott*] of sins, not only those of his followers who were waiting in the upper room at Pentecost, “but also for the sins of the whole world.”—Heb. 1:3, I John 2:2

During his earthly ministry, Jesus was delighted and faithful in doing the Heavenly Father’s will at all times, even unto death. In so doing, he demonstrated qualities which were in all ways an exact reflection of his Father’s character. The Scriptures plainly tell us that “no man hath seen God at any time.” (John 1:18; I John 4:12) Yet, on another occasion, Jesus said to Philip, “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” (John 14:9) Jesus’ followers could “see” God in a representative sense. That is to say, Jesus fully represented God—in mind, purpose, and character—completely submitting his will to that of the Heavenly Father. Thus, in this sense Jesus could say, “I and my Father are one.”—John 10:30

Jesus prayed that his followers would also develop this same oneness with the Father, as recorded in one of his prayers, “that they may be one, as we are.” (John 17:11) Jesus also desired that all his followers throughout the Gospel Age would develop this same oneness. He continued his prayer, saying: “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”—vss. 20,21

Each consecrated believer, in proportion to their faithfulness in obeying the instructions given in the Scriptures, gradually develops a character which becomes more and more in the image and likeness of God’s dear Son. Hence, they also grow to be copies of our Heavenly Father’s character. The Apostle Paul confirms this, saying: “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose . . . to be conformed to the image of his Son.”—Rom. 8:28,29 ■