

The Image of God

By Boyd Yahn

Hello everyone, it is March the sixth, 2023 and the title of today's study is called "The Image of God". While listening to Terry's (Swaggerty) last message where he dealt with, "Is Christ going to marry the church?", I couldn't help but to consider how that was going to be received in the Christian world generally; and in the Church of God spinoffs, more specifically.

0:00:22

There are various fragments that, in the Church of God Community, that make that make that the very foundation of their theology. If any of them happen to come across Terry's message and check their Bibles, they will certainly realize they are at a fork in the road, or dismiss Terry's message entirely as pure heresy.

0:00:42

At the bottom of the page what is really happening is a refusal to believe Christ, who cannot and does not lie, that in the resurrection, they do not marry. And Christ specifically stated that, there is really no way you can wiggle around it. It says:

³⁰For in the resurrection (Matthew 22:30) they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of (the) God in heaven.

0:02:21

And it's the same thing exactly that I mentioned in the previous series, it says:

³¹But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by (the) God,

Christ affirming that it was God the Father that spoke, and people don't believe that either. And it's quite amazing when you really stop to think about it.

0:01:46

One can really get themselves in trouble when we start believing what God or Christ say, and take them at their word. At the same time, you and I can become a lot smarter and understand God and His Christ better. And there are powers and forces cleverly disguised to prevent us from doing so.

0:02:05

I really love Terry's asking, "Is Christ's word reliable, or not?" and admit to breaking out in a grin when he said it and openly wondered what else would

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come along, for you see I'd been preparing and pondering the same thing for about two weeks.

0:02:25

One just never knows what God and Christ will stir up in our spirits to consider and possibly come to understand more fully. Given the fact that neither of Them lie, it behooves us to begin to sit up and pay attention to what They reveal to us; something that has been sorely lacking in the past. Cherished teachings of the past seem to be blowing up with regularity by taking God and Christ at their word. When that happens, Satan's lies become readily apparent.

0:03:07

Well, what about this Christ? He sure seems to be causing a lot of trouble of late. What about Him, what does God tell us about Him? Well, if we go to Hebrews 1 we can find out a couple things about Him.

¹ God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

0:03:30

So, it's God the Father who spoke through the prophets, mostly.

² 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;

Okay, so He has, it's already been done, He's appointed heir of all things and God is here telling us, through whom He made the worlds, so, Christ had to have been in existence in order for Him to make the worlds through Him.

0:04:08

Then he goes on to describe.

³who being the brightness of His glory

That's the glory of the Father.

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,

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0:04:30

So, are God the Father and Jesus Christ the same being? No, they are not, Christ is a separate being, and one of the beliefs in the Church of God is that they believe that God and Christ are one being at the same that they believe that there are two.

Ah, they are going to have to make a small adjustment and actually fix that.

0:04:54

But it's interesting when you look at the way that's worded in verse 3, if you look up "express image", it comes from the word "character"; an exact expression or image, a marked likeness, a precise reproduction in every respect, a facsimile, an exact copy.

0:05:23

You can look up the word G5481 from which exact expression is brought, and it reflects inner character, the same nature. So, if you have a being that's identical to the Father; same nature, same existence, same everything, well, he would be a twin, maybe we would use the term identical twin. He's the same in existence, He's the same in character and nature.

0:06:00

Identical twins in nature, they happen by a process we call mitosis and who might have been the designer of the process of mitosis, where one being produces the exact copy of the other one? Well, I don't think we have to think too hard or too long to figure that out.

0:06:28

And it's interesting, so, here we have a twin, an exact copy in every way of the Father, and it's interesting to ask, well, when did that twinning actually occur? Because in the Church of God world they both have always existed, and at some point, along the way there was a coin toss and one of them decided to be the Father and one of them decided to be the servant and that's just the way it played out.

0:06:57

Well, is there any truth to that? Well, we are not left completely blind in this area. If we go to the book of Micah, Micah 5, verse 2 and we find something there that will help us along. I've said it the past, it's always a good idea to figure out who's talking. We read in Hebrews on that it is the Father who speaks through the prophets. So, if we go to Micah 5:2 and understand that it

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is the Father Himself here speaking, so you would think that would carry a fair bit of weight, since He doesn't lie.

0:07:42

It says: (Berean Study Bible)

²“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are small among the clans of Judah, out of you one will go forth to Me one to be ruler over Israel, One who's origins are of old, from the days of eternity.

0:08:06

Well, isn't that interesting? Now I'm going to read another one thing, that's out of the Berean Study Bible and there it specifically says, “whose origins are of old”. Well, God the Father had no origin, He always existed, God the Father here is telling us that Christ had an origin. Oh, no, that's no good, that's going to blow up our thinking, blow up our theology.

0:08:34

Let's read it out of the New King James.

²“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”

0:08:54

Well, how on earth would the Father know that? Can you see where we are starting to have a problem? As we find something in the scripture that cross threads with our traditional understanding and comprehension; and who are you going to believe?

0:09:11

Well, let's take a look at Revelation 3:14 and see if we can find something else here to help us along the way. It says: (*Revelation 3:14*)

¹⁴“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of (the) God:

Look in the Greek, the word “the” is there. So clearly, it's Christ speaking. Amen means truly, faithful is reliable, and witness is just simply witness. So

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this is Christ assigning things about Himself so we can understand what He's all about.

0:10:06

And He calls Himself "the beginning of the creation of God." And if you look up the word "beginning" it means origin. Oh, what a surprise based on Micah 5:2 and if you look up the word for "creation" it means the act or the product.

0:10:31

Oh, oh! Christ is saying, He is created and the first being that God created. That can't possibly be true. Because that would blow up the two eternally existent God Beings who flipped the coin to decide who was going to be the servant and who was going to be the Supreme theory. We can't have that.

0:11:00

Scripture does not usually stand alone; there is corroboration in the record; there always is. The scriptures are consistent. So, Christ described Himself as the beginning of the creation of the God; showing then when God started the creation, the first things He made was Him, His twin, His identical person.

0:11:30

But if another Being is born, is that being born or coming into existence? Yup, sure is. Well, this Being, this Christ, also spoke, and we don't talk about this often, I haven't actually heard it talked about in ages and it's probably a good idea we look at it again. For you see, Christ, this being that God brought into existence, if we want to believe what the scriptures actually say on God's authority, not mine. How would I know?

0:12:11

Galatians 1, Paul speaking, he says:

¹¹But I make known to you, (verse 11) brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. ¹²For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

0:12:32

Christ taught Paul directly. And if we go down to verses 15 – 18 it says:

¹⁵But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, ¹⁶to reveal His Son in me, that I might

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preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood,¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. ¹⁸Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days.

0:13:06

Paul was taught by Christ personally for three years. Well, now that's interesting. Do you suppose it's possible that Christ let him in on the secret that He was, in fact, created. Well, let's go to Colossians 1:15 and take a look at that. In Colossians 1:15. And we are going to go through these passages actually taking the license to actually believe what it is telling us. Paul speaking, he said:

¹⁵*He*

The one he spoke with for three years.

is the image

We'll get into the meaning of "image" shortly.

of the invisible God,

And He, this image, is.

the firstborn

Came into existence.

over all creation.

0:14:08

Oops, that's exactly the same as Revelation 3:14. He must have brought him up to speed. And in II Corinthians 4:4, we'll just turn there. That's a reference that you can use. II Corinthians 4:4. We'll just pick a piece out of there. Where:

⁴ *... Christ, who is the image of God ...*

0:14:34

It's consistent, Paul taught the same thing in both places. The word image is "eikon" e-i-k-o-n, and if you look that up it exactly reflects its source, assumes

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a prototype of which it not merely resembles, but from which it is drawn. Eikon is more than a shadow, rather, it is a replication

0:15:10

Oh, really! Type and character, life giving spirit, perfect character; just like God. The first thing He created was His companion who was an exact copy of Himself. If you look up the word “firstborn” it’s prototokos. It means, first in time. The creation was to follow. The only way God could make the creation through Christ is if Christ actually existed.

0:15:51

And he brought Him into being, the Father tells us He had an origin, and I guess if you were living in eternity and you wanted a companion, that’s not such a bad idea. Might be kind of lonely. It tells us it goes back a long way when He did it.

0:16:07

Reading verse 15 again (Colossians 1:15):

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

¹⁶For by Him (Christ) all things were created

The angelic realm, the physical creation; all of it.

that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible,

And all the spirit things.

whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him

Through this created image of God, this twin.

and for Him

0:16:47

The whole creation was made for Him; this Being that God produced.

¹⁷And He is before all things, and in Him (Christ) all things consist.

Well, we have to wonder, if God did that and He made a Being that was the exact replica of Himself, as the scriptures actually plainly state, is that even

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possible for God, because I remember somebody saying, well, God can't do that?

0:17:34

Well, ah, Genesis 18:14, when God was talking to Abraham and Sarah and He asked the question:

¹⁴Is anything too hard for Yehovah? ...

The same thing is mentioned in Jeremiah; in Jeremiah 32, Jeremiah 32:17 where the same subject happened to come up.

¹⁷'Ah, Lord God! (Jeremiah speaking) Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You.

0:18:10

Well, we seem to have a confirmation that God does have big enough muscles to do whatever He wants. (Verse 27)

²⁷"Behold, I am Yehovah, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?"

Nope! God is the designer of mitosis. He is the designer of identical twins. Somehow, He wouldn't be able to make a duplicate of Himself to dwell with in eternity?

0:18:46

Does the even make any sense? We've already read Colossians 1:16, but in order for God to make all things through Christ; Christ had to exist as a separate being before He began the process. It is a simple before and after situation.

0:19:14

Do we see this exact same thing mentioned in scripture that we read in Colossians 1:16? Is this a repeatable thing; I mean do we see it in other places? Well, let's just take a look here and see if we can find exactly the same thing showing up in other places. Well how about Hebrews 2:10? Hebrews 2:10.

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¹⁰For it was fitting for Him, (Christ) for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

0:20:00

So, we have a direct confirmation of the efficacy of God's word in Colossians 1:16. Paul was taught by Christ directly; is he lying or is the record of God consistent? Well, let's see if it's repeatable again? How about I Corinthians 8:6? I Corinthians 8:6.

⁶yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through (which) whom we live. (All have our existence)

0:20:40

And you know it's interesting to consider, Christ said it's the Father who does the work and if you go to the example of the woman who had the issue of blood, Christ is walking through a crowd, somebody touches Him; all He feels is power leaving Him. Who healed that woman? Who analyzed what the problem was, who analyzed exactly what to do, and who analyzed whether They were going to heal her or not? It was God the Father.

0:21:20

Of God through Christ, there's an example of how that can work and when we spend some time thinking about that, what does "through Christ" actually mean? Because that's how the creation itself actually came into existence and God made it all for this Being that He brought forth.

0:21:41

John 1:3 It says the same thing.

³All things were made through Him, (Christ) and without Him nothing was made that was made.

The biblical record is indeed consistent and we read exactly the same thing in Hebrews one.

0:22:04

We can go, because when you start to believe what the Bible says, pieces of the puzzle just start to fall into place naturally, and of course we are free to

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believe them or not to believe them, but if you go to Revelation 4:11; I'll just use this as an example, it says:

¹¹"You are worthy, O Lord, (The Father) to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things,

Except Jesus Christ, uhm, no, no it says, "You created all things"

and by Your will they exist and were created."

0:22:50

Was it God's will to create an exact duplicate of Himself to dwell with Him in eternity and to work through Him and to build all creation for? Yeah, yeah actually it was. So, this fits. God the Father has always existed, Christ has not. And that's a bit revolutionary for the Church of God mind.

0:23:30

You created all things, including the twin of Himself, and by Your will they exist and were created. He willed that would happen and were created. So, this also tells us that God can unwill anything He wants, whenever He wants to because all things exist, all beings exist because He wills it to be.

0:23:56

Wow! It's consistent. The angelic realm, the physical creation, all things on the earth; all of it, created through and for Him. So, God brought into existence from Himself. And you know it's, it's just putting this together and thinking about that, we perhaps don't take the time to consider just how much God is actually involved in the whole process. You know, you can go to, and this is a bit of a side bar, if go to Job 34 and verses 14 and 15 I think you will see what I mean here. It says:

¹⁴If He (That's God the Father) should set His heart on it, if He should gather to Himself His Spirit and His breath, ¹⁵all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust.

0:25:05

Is there a bit of the Father in us? Sure sounds like it to me. Could God choose to put a lot of the Father into another Being, so much so that He would be an identical Being to the Father? Sure could.

0:25:29

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We need to think about some of these things a little more. If what we are proposing or what the scriptures actually state, then the angelic realm was created through and for Christ. And can we see anything that would support that in the scriptures? Well, turns out if you go to Matthew 25, Matthew 25 and verse 31, Matthew 25 and 31.

³¹“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

0:26:16

Well, all of a sudden that starts to take on a more significant more meaning than we considered in the past. In Matthew 24:31.

³¹And He (Christ) will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

0:26:37

Well, all of a sudden this begins to take deeper meaning because Christ was there when the angelic realm was formed. Well, that lead to a logical question, well, did the fallen angels, the demons, know who this guy was? Well, turns out again, Luke 4. Let's go to Luke 4 and we'll look at verses 33 – 35. Luke 4, verses 33 – 35.

³³Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, ³⁴saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!” ³⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!”

Did He have authority over them? Sure did! And the demon knew it. Verse 41

⁴¹And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, “You are the Christ, the Son of God!” ...

Oh, they knew who He was.

And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.

A lot of people didn't and don't.

0:28:03

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Matthew 8; Matthew 8, let's go look at verses 28 – 32.

²⁸When He (Christ) had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. ²⁹And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

Oh, they recognized Him alright.

³⁰Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. ³¹So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine." ³²And He said to them, "Go."

Well, they had a bit of respect, they knew who He was, they had seen Him before.

0:28:58

Mark 1, verses 23 – 27.

²³Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, ²⁴saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!" ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" ²⁶And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him. ²⁷.. (and everyone was amazed; who is this) "What is this? ... For with authority, He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

They knew who He was.

0:29:40

Does Colossians 1:17 now, Colossians 1:17 start to make a little more sense perhaps, a deeper understanding for us than we had in the past. Let's just read that again. Colossians 1:17.

¹⁷And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

Ah, the demons knew alright. Verse 18 of Colossians 1.

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¹⁸And He is the head of the body,

Your head and mine.

the church (The ecclesia), who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead,

This pre-existent spirit being who all things were created for, came down here, died and was resurrected, so that he would be the firstborn from the dead, so that He would be the firstborn of everything. Just as we saw, everything was for Him and through Him. It's all consistent. Let me read that again. He's going to be

the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

Unmero-uno. Now isn't that interesting?

0:31:05

He's the head of all the rest of the things, at a position He is going to maintain, and He's going to be, or is the firstborn of the dead as well. A whole new part of the creation, done through Him, of God, through Christ.

0:31:28

If we go to Ephesians; if we go to Ephesians 1 and let's take a look at verses 15 – 23.

¹⁵Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: ¹⁷that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,

Well, is God not starting to supply that to us?

¹⁸the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe,

0:32:23

Do we believe what we just read?

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according to the working of His mighty power²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

They're not one Being.

²¹far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. ²²And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

0:32:59

Doesn't that sound like a recap of Christ's prayer to God being fulfilled by the Father? Well, what prayer, you ask? Well, we know the prayer; maybe we haven't just joined the dots before. John 17, verses 3 – 5.

³And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, The one who created Christ.

The one who created Christ.

and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. ⁴I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. ⁵And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

And we read of that in Ephesians, He had tremendous glory. And oh, boy, do we now have a window to begin to understand Revelation 1, verse 17? I think so. Revelation 1, verse 17.

¹⁷And when I saw Him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not (Do not be afraid); I am the first and the last:

Really?

0:34:23

Christ applied the title, "The First, or the characteristics of the First and the Last" to Himself. He was the first to be brought into existence the way He was,

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before the creation of anything else, and He is the last to be created that way. All others after will be by a resurrection of the dead. He will always be preeminent in that way. He is the first and the last.

0:35:02

Can we now, perhaps, begin to see deeper meaning in Christ's statement, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father?" If the Father made an identical twin; the demons recognize Them.

0:35:18

Can we see any further testimony from Himself about what He said when He said He was the beginning of the creation? Did He actually mean that? Yeah got to be kidding me!

0:35:35

Because this kind of blows up Church of God theology. Jesus Christ did not always exist. God the Father said He had an origin, a beginning. Do read anything that would corroborate that? Well, let's take a look at John 8 and verse 42. Christ was speaking to the locals and He said:

⁴²... "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God"

And it's "the God" and I proceeded forth and came from "the God", I came from the Father and I preceded forth from Him. Oh, proceeded forth is from the Greek word G1831, and it's ex-er'-khom'ahee, Sorry for any of you Greek scholars, look it up yourself, have a look. That's what it says, to come out of.

0:36:59

For I came out of and (from God) I came from God. Oh, is Christ's testimony reliable? Well, let's look at John 16, verse 27. John 16 and verse 27.

²⁷for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth (Came out of) from God.

0:37:35

Verse 28

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²⁸I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father.” ²⁹His disciples said to Him, “See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech!

Hey, we've got this. The Church of God does not get this.

³⁰Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God.”

Same word. Exactly the same word.

³¹Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe?

When did He come forth? Back in eternity. Did Christ have recall of what and who He was before? We've touched on that before.

0:38:34

Let's take a look at John 13:13. John 13, ah sorry, verse 3.

³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands,

Well, He knew for a long time.

and that He had come from God and was going to God,

Come from, same Greek word, G1831. He knew where He was from and God making an exact copy of Himself before the creation ever began.

0:39:21

Let's take a look at John 17:8; John 17:8.

⁸For I have given (Christ speaking) For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth

Same Greek word.

from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

0:39:50

Do we believe Christ's testimony and the Father's for that matter, or not?