

THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE

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Editorial

THANKSGIVING is something that is frequently urged upon us in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul, for instance, says, "In every thing give thanks" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). We should recognise the blessings we receive and acknowledge them before God.

We frequently find that our Lord Jesus Christ expressed gratitude. At the feeding of the five thousand we note that "he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks". On another occasion, after sharing important teaching with the disciples, He prayed and said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth . . ." (Matthew 11:25).

The Psalmist too knew what it was to be thankful; we find him saying, "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation" (Psalm 68:19). Many people feel weighed down with burdens – the psalmist felt weighed down with benefits. These daily benefits include such things as life and health, home and loved ones, protection and preservation.

Thanksgiving is one of the ways by which we advance in the Christian life. In hard times and good times there is always something to thank God for – see Habakkuk 3:17-19.

Thanksgiving should be the spontaneous overflow of a grateful heart. May we never cease to be grateful for all the Lord's grace and favour towards us.

“In the Image of God”

A Sermon by the Editor

Genesis 1:27

THE BIBLE DOCTRINE of the origin, nature and destiny of man is both fascinating and wonderful. Here we have the real truth about man; who was created in the image of God and, furthermore, is the crowning act of God's creation. The Bible record of creation reaches its climax with the making of man, the noblest and greatest of all God's handiwork. Man is God's creation; man was not self-created, he did not evolve, he came from the Maker's hand. God created him in the beginning.

Let us look, then, at this great text: “God created man in his own image.”

1. THE ORIGINAL IMAGE

The first great truth the Bible teaches is that man was *made* in the image of God, and this at once makes him different from all other creatures and all other beings in the universe. If we pause to reflect upon the power, the wisdom and the holiness of God, we begin to realise what a tremendous thing it is to say that man was made in the image of God, and yet this is what the Bible clearly teaches.

Now you will find that this phrase, “made in the image of God”, is not used of any other being, not even of the angels. There is a dignity and glory about man as originally made which is at once unique.

Look on into the next chapter (verse 7) and there is another wonderful statement: “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” We see here in this verse at once the littleness and also the loftiness of man. He is of the dust of the ground and therein lies his littleness – yet he is inbreathed by the Spirit of God and therein lies his loftiness.

Now in what sense was man made in the image of God? It obviously cannot be in his physical nature that man is in the likeness of His Maker, because God is Spirit. If you are familiar with the *Thirty-nine Articles* (and it would do us all good to read them) you will find that the first one says: “There is One true living God, everlasting, without body, parts or passions.” That is the definition of God. He is Spirit. So man cannot be in God's image in his physical sense. It is in man's spiritual endowments and capacities, in his intelligence, in his emotional, intellectual and volitional powers that the likeness lies. So man is lifted immeasurably above every other order of creation; man is capable of fellowship with God; man has powers of thought and feeling and will, all that makes up our personal life as distinct from a merely animal existence. Man, furthermore, is