

Express Image of God

Hebrews 1:3 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 at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Scholars have identified as many as 700 titles and names for Jesus in the Bible.

Jesus said of Himself that He was the Alpha and the Omega. Those are the first letter and the last letter of the Greek alphabet. We would say that Jesus is A-to-Z. He's the entire alphabet. He is everything God wants to say to you – the entire language of God.

Just for fun, we've been using our alphabet to identify some of the 700 titles and names. We're going, as it were, from A-to-Z. So far we've looked at these biblical names:

1. The Last **A**dam
2. The **B**ridegroom
3. The **C**omforter
4. The **D**oor

Tonight we've arrived at 'E.' Some of the names for Jesus starting with 'E' are:

1. **Everlasting Father** (from Isaiah 9:6). The reference to Jesus as **Father** throws us because we understand God as a trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Son, *not* the Father. True enough! The word Father applied to Jesus in this context means *founder*. He is the **Everlasting Founder**, the One Who establishes eternity at His Second Coming. We use the word father in this same way when we say, for example, that George Washington was the *father* of our country.
2. **End of the Law** (from Romans 10:4). God's Law must be fulfilled. Jesus perfectly fulfilled it. He did it as our representative – keeping it for you and I. Then, even though He did not deserve it,

He took upon Himself the penalty for breaking God's Law – death. Because of all that – He can offer us His right standing before God when we receive His death on the Cross for our law-breaking. He has thus become the **End of the Law** for us, in that we are no longer obligated to keep it, nor will we ever be condemned by it.

3. The **Elect** (from Isaiah 42:1). In all the discussion about divine election, we tend to forget that Jesus was Himself called God's **Elect**. He was and is the chosen One – the One Who fulfills all of God's purposes.
4. The **Ensign** (from Isaiah 11:10). An **Ensign** was a figure, like an eagle, a lion, or a man, fixed atop a pole. It was lifted high so that you might behold it and find, for example, your encampment. Jesus is our **Ensign** – the One Who is high and lifted up, Who rallies us to Himself.

In Hebrews 1:3, we see Jesus called **the express image of Him**. The word **Him** refers back to **God**; Jesus is the **express image of God**.

Express image is the English translation of a single Greek word that originally denoted an *engraving tool*. It came to mean the *stamp* or the *impression* left by the engraving tool – such as the impression on a coin. Take sealing wax as an example. The image on the engraving tool is transferred to the wax and is an exact representation – an **express image**.

We would pronounce the Greek word as *character*. We use the word to describe the good or bad traits of a person. The English use of the word character is not accurate when thinking of Jesus – because we think of character as something we may or may not live-up to. A few years ago, many of the local schools introduced a program called, "Character Counts." They identified several desirable character traits that they hoped the students would aspire to – indicating many were falling short.

When Jesus is called **the express image of God**, or the *character* of God, it means He was and is an **exact representation** of God.

Keep in mind the idea of an engraver pressed in to the wax to form the exact image. We're told in the Bible that Jesus was God come in human flesh:

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Human flesh was the wax; God was the Engraver. Jesus Christ is the exact image of God pressed into human flesh.

I know what you're thinking: Gene, **I already know that!** Yes, you already know that Jesus is God in human flesh. What this particular name emphasizes is that when you see Jesus, you are **seeing God in human flesh. You see Him act, and react, in many situations, towards many people; and in each of them you see exactly how God thinks and feels.**

The question, *What is God like?*, has been asked by more people than any other.

1. Children are only a few years old when they come in their innocent simplicity and inquire of us, *What is God like?*
2. Philip the apostle asked it for himself and for all mankind: [Show us the Father and that will be enough for us](#) (John 14:8).
3. Philosophers repeatedly have asked the question. Religions have wrestled with it for centuries.

Listen to this, a quote from A.W. Tozer:

God made mankind in His own image. He "set eternity in the hearts of men" (Ecclesiastes 3:11). What a graphic picture! How much it explains ourselves to us! We are creatures of time - time in our hands, our feet, our bodies - that causes us to grow old and to die. Yet all the while we have eternity in our hearts! One of our great woes as fallen people living in a fallen world is the constant warfare between the eternity in our hearts and the time in our bodies. This is why we can never be satisfied without God. This is why the question "What is God like?" continues to spring from every one of us. God has set the values of eternity in the hearts of every person made in His image. As human beings, we have ever tried to satisfy ourselves by maintaining a quest, a search. **We have not forgotten that God was. We have only forgotten what God is like.**

Philosophy has tried to give us answers. But the philosophical concepts concerning God have always been contradictory. The philosopher is like a blind person trying to paint someone's portrait. The blind person can feel the face of his subject and try to put some

brush strokes on canvas. But the project is doomed before it is begun.

The religions of the world have always endeavored to give answers concerning God. Yet many, if not most, of the greatest atrocities in the human race can be attributed to religions. In none of them has mankind found satisfaction.

God Himself has given us a final, complete answer. Jesus said, **Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father** (John 14:9).

For those of us who have put our faith in Jesus Christ, the quest is over. Jesus Christ, the eternal Son, came to dwell among us, **being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person.**

What Jesus is, the Father is. Whoever looks on the Lord Jesus Christ looks upon all of God.

1. Jesus is God thinking God's thoughts.
2. Jesus is God feeling the way God feels.
3. Jesus is God doing what God does.

Jesus is God. He has translated God into terms we can understand.

1. We know how He feels toward a fallen woman: **'Neither do I condemn you,' Jesus declared. Go now and leave your life of sin'** (John 8:11).
2. We know how He feels toward fishermen and workmen and common people: **"Come, follow me,' Jesus said, and I will make you fishers of men"** (Mark 1:17).
3. We know what God thinks of babies and little children: **"Jesus said, Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these"**(Matthew 19:14).

The only people Jesus had harsh words for were proud, self-righteous religious men who heaped burdens upon people. He told everyone else that He had come to un-burden them, to bear their burdens for them.

What are you going through? Whatever it is, you can know exactly how God thinks and feels about it – and about you - by looking at Jesus as He is revealed in the Bible. Unless you are a proud, self-righteous religious legalist... He wants to un-burden you; He wants to bear your burden for you.