

WEEK 4 - SEEING THE IMAGE OF GOD IN OTHERS

OVERVIEW

One of the greatest tragedies in human history is that we as a species have lost sight of God's image in one another. We demean, belittle, judge, exploit, and hate others because we do not recognize that they were each lovingly created as embodiments of God's love on the earth. Thanks to the model and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, however, we can change this pattern of hate into one of love. If we learn to cherish the inherent dignity and value of every person we encounter as our savior does, we can show our broken world that there is another way to live. "A person's a person, no matter how small!"

If someone says, "I love God," but hates a fellow believer, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see?
1 John 4:20

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe what it would be like to see every person you pass as made in the image of God.
2. Read 1 John 4:7-8.
   a. What are some similarities between the concepts of being an *"image of God"* and a *"child of God"*?
   b. If you are a *"child of God"*, what would it mean to "live up to the family name"?
3. How are we supposed to live up to our calling to love as God's images? How can God's love be made complete (*teleioō*, brought to full expression) in us? (See 1 John 4:9-12, 16-17.)
4. Explain how someone is unable to love God if they don't love the person right in front of them. (See 1 John 4:18-20.)
5. Read Romans 5:20. Why should we love someone who is evil and has rejected God?
6. Barry mentioned three simple concepts to start practicing this week, to help us see the image of God in others. Which one do you feel led to try first?
   a. Remember your own story. (See 1 John 4:19.)
   b. Look for the image of God in unexpected places. (See Matthew 25:40.)
   c. See your enemies through God's eyes. (See Luke 6:35-36 and 1 John 4:7.)