

# Restoring the Image of God



Dear

God made man in His own image. A masterpiece to crown the whole week of creation, all recorded in Genesis 1 and 2. This beautiful being was perfect in beauty, in looks, in symmetry, in function, in compassion, all just as God intended and made. Not only did He make that man, he also made a beautiful woman – just for man. She was also perfect in beauty, in looks, in symmetry, in function – all just as God intended and made.

Even though they were two distinct people, two distinct entities, they were attracted to each other, perfect for each other. Different, but strongly attracted. Together they were the perfect blend to be able to reproduce another of themselves. Beautiful to say the least.

But sadly we have Genesis 3. If only we had Genesis 1 and 2 as written, and then the whole of chapter 3 consisted of the words, "And they lived happily ever after." But it doesn't. The record stands as it is. There was a terribly wrong decision made in the garden, which has resulted in trauma and tragedy to this day.

Not only was there a fall of humanity, but it had devastating effects on the image of our God in whom we were made, in our morals, in our physical build, in our standard of physical, mental and spiritual health as well.

At the very point humanity sinned, there was absolutely no help for them. It was instantly a hopeless case. Humanity was totally and absolutely lost, but even beyond our control, all was not lost. "As soon as there was sin, there was a Saviour. Christ knew that He would have to suffer, yet He became man's substitute. As soon as Adam sinned, the Son of God presented Himself as surety for the human race, with just as much power to avert the doom pronounced upon the guilty as when He died upon the cross of Calvary." —Bible Commentary, vol.1, p. 1084

While we must be so grateful for the gift of Jesus to take our place, we must not lose sight of the fact that our ruin was catastrophic. "Though the moral image of God was almost obliterated by the sin of Adam, through the merits and power of Jesus it may be renewed. Man may stand with the moral image of God in his character; for Jesus will give it to him. Unless the moral image of God is seen in man, he can never enter the city of God as a conqueror." —Review & Herald, June 10, 1890

*"And God said,  
Let us make man  
in our image,  
after our  
likeness... So God  
created man in  
his own image,  
in the image of  
God created he  
him; male and  
female created  
he them."*

—Genesis 1:26,27





*"And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon him... And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."*

—Luke 2:40,52



The whole plan of salvation has been – and still is – to restore that perfect image of God back into humanity. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." —Matthew 5:48

So the best advice for any one of us, is to follow the example set before us – to study the life of Jesus, who was perfect and lived a perfect life, fully accepted of His heavenly Father and our heavenly Father.

## Jesus Mirrored His Father's Image

Firstly, Jesus spoke very clearly that He and His Father were the same. The emphasis was not so much in replicating the physical form, but in the divine character. "I and my Father are one." —John 10:30

"If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." —John 14:7

These two quoted texts in John are very clear, but we support this further. "Christ... presented the love of the Father in its exhaustless fullness... He was revealing the image of God mirrored in Himself." —Review and Herald, March 5, 1901

So lets look at some practical aspects of Jesus life that are tangible to us and within our reach that we may develop the same traits of character.

## His Younger Years

There is plenty recorded about Jesus' miraculous conception and birth, but very little about His childhood years from when Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem until His experience at Jerusalem at the age of 12. For those young years, we have a little recorded in Luke 2:40 and 52. "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him... And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

There is more from inspiration on this. "As a child... He manifested a peculiar loveliness of disposition. His willing hands were ever ready to serve others. He manifested a... truthfulness that would never sacrifice integrity. In principle firm as a rock, His life revealed the grace of unselfish courtesy." —Desire of Ages, p.68,69.

"He was constantly ministering to others, improving every opportunity offered Him. Even in His childhood, He spoke words of comfort and tenderness to young and old." —Bible Commentary, vol.5, p.1119

## Jesus as Youth

There is little in the Bible itself, but from here on, we will lean on the Spirit of Prophecy for our support to His life. Brief, but significant is this one quote in His life of youth. "He was a perfect pattern for all youth... He manifested deference and respect for age. The religion of Jesus will never lead any child to be rude or uncourteous." —Bible Commentary, vol.5, p.1119

## Home Life

Likewise in the home life, very little. We turn again for these two pertinent quotes. "Never did He by disrespect cause His parents pain or anxiety. He delighted to honor and obey them. Although He was not ignorant of His great mission, He consulted their wishes and submitted to their authority..." "In His home life, He was cheerful, but never boisterous. He ever maintained the attitude of a learner." —Bible Commentary, vol.5, p.1117

## Jesus a Labourer

"Christ had been Commander of the heavenly host; but... He learned a trade and faithfully discharged His daily duties, contributing to the support of the family." —Bible Commentary, vol.5, p.1118



"He took His share of the burden, together with His father, mother and brethren. He toiled to sustain the family, and shared in the work that would meet the expenses of the household." —Bible Commentary, vol.5, p.1117

## Humility And Gentle Kindness

Five short and to the point quotes highlight Jesus' conduct.

"He exercised the greatest tact, and thoughtful, kind attention." —Desire of Ages, p.352

"Every glance of the eye, every feature of the countenance, was marked with humility, and expressive of unutterable love." —Desire of Ages, p.137

"Jesus emptied Himself, and in all He did, self did not appear." —Mount of Blessing, p.14

"Our Saviour's... gentleness, and His plain unassuming manners... made Him a conqueror of hearts." —Testimonies for the Church, vol.3, p.477

"There is about this new Teacher a power that holds them spellbound. The sweetness of divine love flows from His very presence as the fragrance from a flower." —Mount of Blessing, p.6

While our Saviour was the greatest example of humility and gentleness, He would not overlook sin in the life of a soul, but would firmly rebuke it.

## His Outward Display Of Dress and Life

"He shunned all outward display... Jesus purposed that no attraction of an earthly nature should call men to His side. Only the beauty of heavenly truth must draw those who would follow Him." —Desire of Ages, p.43

"Greatness and rank were nothing to Him... No trace of luxury, ease, selfish gratification, or indulgence was brought in to His life, which was a continual round of self-denial and self-sacrifice." —Fundamentals of Christian Education, p.401

"What was this Christ? With awe and wonder the people looked upon the One just declared to be the Son of God. They had been deeply moved by the words of John. He had spoken to them in the name of God. They had listened to Him day after day as He reproved their sins, and daily the conviction that He was sent of Heaven had strengthened. But who was this One greater than John the Baptist? In His dress and bearing there was nothing that betokened rank. He was apparently a simple personage, clad like themselves in the humble garments of the poor." —Desire of Ages, p.137

"He was never elated by applause, nor dejected by censure or disappointment." —Desire of Ages, p.330

"The Sun of Righteousness did not burst upon the world in splendour, to dazzle the senses with His glory. It is written of Christ, 'His going forth is prepared as the morning.' Quietly and gently the daylight breaks upon the earth, dispelling the darkness and waking the world to life. So did the Sun of Righteousness arise, 'with healing in His wings.'" —Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p.32

## Prayer And Study Life

"After His work was finished for the day, He went forth, evening after evening, away from the confusion of the city, and His form was bowed in some retired grove in supplication to His Father. At times the bright beams of the moon shone upon His bowed form. And then again the clouds and darkness shut away all light. The dew and frost of night rested upon His head and beard while in the attitude of a suppliant. He frequently continued His petitions through the entire night. He is our example. If we could remember this, and imitate Him, we would be much stronger in God." —Testimonies for the Church, vol.2, p.202

"He was faithful in the discharge of His home duties, and the early morning hours, instead of being wasted in bed, often found Him in a retired place, meditating and searching the Scriptures and in prayer." —Fundamentals of Christian Education, p.402

*"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; But made himself of no reputation... And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."*

*Philippians 2:6-8*





*"Christ also suffered for us... Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously."*

—I Peter 2:21-23



## In Nature

"With the voice of singing, He welcomed the morning light. He listened to the lark calling to its God, and joined His voice of praise and thanksgiving." —Bible Commentary, vol.5, p.1117

"His early years were given to the study of God's word. And spread out before Him was the great library of God's created works. He who had made all things studied the lessons which His own hand had written in earth and sea and sky. Apart from the unholy ways of the world, He gathered stores of scientific knowledge from nature. He studied the life of plants and animals, and the life of man." —Desire of Ages, p.70

## His Love For Birds And Animals

"The little creatures of the groves, the patient beasts of burden, — all were happier for His presence. He whose word of power upheld the worlds would stoop to relieve a wounded bird. There was nothing beneath His notice, nothing to which He disdained to minister." —Desire of Ages, p.74

"He could not be persuaded to change His habits of contemplating the works of God and seeking to alleviate the suffering of men or even of dumb animals." —Desire Of Ages, p.90

## Tender Sympathy for Young and Old

"Through all those secluded years at Nazareth, His life flowed out in currents of sympathy and tenderness. The aged, the sorrowing, and the sin-burdened, the children at play in their innocent joy, the little creatures of the groves, the patient beasts of burden, — all were happier for His presence." —Desire of Ages, p.74

## Jesus Did Not Retaliate Or Demand Rights

"He did not retaliate when roughly used, but bore insult patiently." —Desire of Ages, p.89

"Christ... resented no personal injuries, but met with meek submission the insults, the false accusations, and the cruel scourging of those who hated Him and condemned Him to death." —Testimonies, vol.4, p.139

"Jesus did not contend for His rights. Often His work was made unnecessarily severe because He was willing and uncomplaining. Yet He did not fail or become discouraged." —Desire of Ages, p.89

## Model Character To Imitate

"True religion is the imitation of Christ... Christ is the model. To copy Jesus, full of tenderness and compassion, will require that we draw from Him daily." —Bible Commentary, vol.7, p.949

"All eyes should turn to our Redeemer, all characters should become like His. He is the model to copy." —Testimonies for the Church, vol.5, p.421

"Gather up the divine rays of light from Jesus and reflect them to others, leaving a bright path heavenward in the world." —Review & Herald, Oct. 8, 1889

From this it is evident that a 'way back' to God's image has been made. Perfection must be attainable, but are there any requirements to help us attain this perfection? Yes, we have three direct quotes to verify this. "As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him... God is my strength and power: And he maketh my way perfect." —II Samuel 22:31,33 "Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day." —I Kings 8:61 "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." —II Corinthians 13:11

Firstly, we are to embrace God and make Him our strength and power. It is He who will make our way perfect, because He is perfect.





Secondly, we walk in His statutes and commandments to be perfect before our God.

Thirdly, we are to be of one mind and live in the peace of heaven. This will bring perfection—and that can only be in Christ Jesus.

## How We Can Do It

We firstly must be aware that change is needed. There must be change from the natural fleshly heart of man, to the supernatural, divine heart of God. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. —Romans 12:2

The results are "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." —1John 3:2

As we partake of that divine nature more and more, we will become like Jesus more and more. Here are a few quotes to support this. "Those who receive the seal of God must reflect the image of Jesus fully." —Early Writings, p.71

"Study Christ. Study His character feature by feature. He is our pattern that we are to copy in our lives and our characters, else we fail to represent Jesus, but present to the world a spurious copy." —Selected Messages vol.3, p.170

As the end comes upon us, and as that image of Jesus is restored in each one of us, our last message to the world will be to reflect that restored image – Christ's Perfect Character. "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." —1John 2:5,6

It won't be great intelligence, eloquent preaching needed in the very last, but "the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love to the world." —Christ's Object Lessons, p.415

## Talk More About Jesus

The two quotes following need no further explanation. "If we thought and talked more of Jesus, and less of ourselves, we should have much more of His presence. If we abide in Him, we shall be so filled with peace, faith, and courage, and shall have so victorious an experience to relate when we come to meeting, that others will be refreshed by our clear, strong testimony for God." —God's Amazing Grace, p.184

"If we are Christ's, our sweetest thoughts will be of Him. We shall love to talk of Him, as we speak to one another, our hearts will be softened by divine influences. Beholding the beauty of His character, we shall be changed into the same image from glory to glory." —Desire of Ages, p.83

## Meditate On Christ's Life And Death

"If we would enter the city of God, and look upon Jesus and His glory, we must become accustomed to beholding Him with the eye of faith here. The words and character of Christ should be often the subject of our thoughts and of our conversation, and each day some time should be especially devoted to prayerful meditation on those sacred themes." —Messages to Young People, p.114

"It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones." —Desire of Ages, p.83

Obviously, the list could go on, but for the space we have, may the words shared encourage each of you to follow Jesus and restore His image in your hearts and lives. Let's make it through together dear friends. It will be worth it all.

*Doug Whitley*

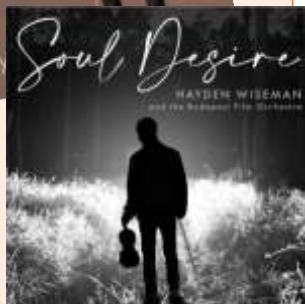
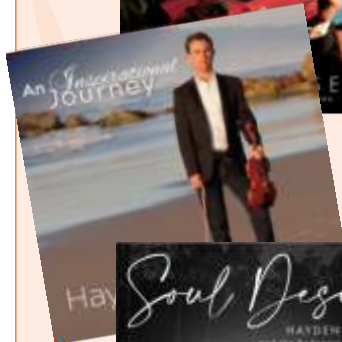
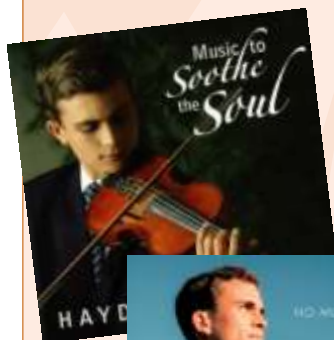
*"For it is God  
which worketh  
in you both to  
will and to do of  
his good  
pleasure. Do all  
things without  
murmurings and  
disputings: That  
ye may be  
blameless and  
harmless, the  
sons of God  
without rebuke."*

—Philippians 2:13-15





## Music by Hayden Wiseman



Hayden is an accomplished violinist performing to the glory of God in churches and concerts throughout Australia and New Zealand. He has recently toured through New Zealand releasing his latest album.

- Music to Soothe the Soul
- No More Night
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### In the Office

**Order increases:** We have recently had a large increase of orders both domestically and internationally. The popular products are health related books and the main increase has been from new contacts through our webshop. March was up 50%, April over 130% and May has followed a similar pattern. Pray that the material that goes out may bless many people.



The extra work involved has driven us to look at ways to automate more of the order process to give us better efficiency and accuracy.

**Staff changes:** As of the end of May, Michelle who has been in our video editing and studio work, is leaving our team to further her career. We are grateful for her four years of learning and accomplishment she has put into our video and media ministry. We are also thankful to have Vincent Zhang joining us part time to contribute his graphic design experience and helping with video production work.

### Projects

**Tell of His Power:** We have just finished releasing the 6-part video series presented by Doug in our studio on the topic of God's power and the impacts it can have on our lives now and for eternity. It is now available on our YouTube Channel [www.youtube.com/autumnleavesnz](http://www.youtube.com/autumnleavesnz) and will also be broadcast weekly on Firstlight TV from May 29. We have also produced the entire series on DVD for you to own, watch and share for \$45.00.



**Studio Equipment:** Our Friday Night Live event in April presented us with some challenges with the audio feed. With frantic resetting and rebooting of our equipment, we got it up and running and it lasted through until we were about to close off for the evening. For those watching and participating, we apologise for the glitches, but in saying that, we thoroughly enjoyed being with you through the airways and being able to sing your favourites. It was also a blessing to have Australian violinist Hayden Wiseman join us for this event.



We have been aiming to improve the audio system for the studio recording and live feeds and have now purchased a new sound desk to improve and streamline the system. We look forward to getting it installed and tested. We are very grateful that this key piece of equipment has already been funded to enhance the media side of the ministry. Thank you, it is greatly appreciated!

**Building Project:** We have now been operating from this new building for over two and half years and continue to appreciate the amazing resource it is. We have had a boost in funds since we last reported and at the current rate estimate to be completing the funding in about 3 years. As this happens it releases finance borrowed from other funds to allow us to continue and expand the work of Autumn Leaves. Thank you for the continued support this project and, in turn, the entire ministry.

### Funding Progress

\$125k to raise

Raised so far  
\$1,464,595.10



Events

**25th Anniversary:** On the evening of May 20 we had a small gathering at the ministry base to commemorate 25 years since Autumn Leaves was established. This time gave opportunity for reflection and worship of what God has done and of the work of those who have been a part of Autumn Leaves and the work it has accomplished. We praise God for His leading in the past, to this time and trust His guidance for the unknown future before us.



**Australian Camps:** From the beginning of June Doug and Angela will be attending and speaking at camps in Australia.

- June 1-4, Natural Bridge, Queensland
- June 8-11, Karuah, New South Wales
- June 15-18, Neville, New South Wales



**North Island trip:** In early July Doug and Angela will be travelling in the North Island. They will first be in Auckland for a special weekend holding meetings on family and running cooking classes. The following weekend they will be in the Manawatu. Between and around these dates they will be travelling and visiting. Be in touch if you would like to connect with them.

- June 30 to July 2, Waitac Church fellowship
  - Friday evening: First family meeting
  - Sabbath morning: Two family meetings
  - Sabbath afternoon: Question and answer time
  - Sunday morning: Plant-based cooking demonstration
- July 8, Sabbath 11.00am, Woodville



**Winter Virtual Convocation, 28-29 July from 7:00pm NZST**

This midyear weekend is streamed live from our studio to help connect with you where ever you may be. We have our live singing and will also have a series of messages. Join us for this weekend of spiritual uplift in message and song. See back page for details.

**Cooking Classes:** In mid August we will be starting another plant-based cooking class series in the nearby town of Kaiapoi. We ran a series last year in conjunction with a church fellowship and there have been many enquiries for another. These are an excellent way to share the many advantages of plant-based diet while also connecting with the community. See [www.whatscooking.co.nz](http://www.whatscooking.co.nz) for details.



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*"There is a definite life plan, divinely shaped, for every human being."*

—Carlyle B Haynes



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Categories include: Bibles, Study Aids, Bible Teachings, Stories, Nature and Science, Spirit of Prophecy, Family, Homeschooling, Children, Health, Media, Outreach, Foreign Languages, Donations and Second Hand items.

This newsletter is also available electronically and online.

[www.autumnleaves.co.nz/shop](http://www.autumnleaves.co.nz/shop)

## WINTER CONVOCATION

**Friday Night Live, July 28**  
**All day Sabbath, July 29**  
**Saturday Night Live, July 29**



Join us for weekend of spiritual uplift in message and song.

This weekend will comprise a Friday Night Live, July 28, with a devotional and singing of favourite hymns.

It will then be followed on July 29 with a morning and afternoon of messages, to be followed by a Saturday Night Live with closing of Sabbath, a time of devotion and singing your favourites again.

We will host this in our studio, with a team of singers and small live audience but for most of you, it will be in your homes and you can join in and enjoy via YouTube and Facebook.

### Guest Speaker

For this winter convocation, we have the privilege of having Tony & Paula Rykers with us. Tony will share the evening devotionals and Sabbath meetings.

We pray this weekend will be a blessing and of benefit to you all as we go live on Friday night 7.00pm New Zealand Standard Time.



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**Autumn Leaves NZ Ltd**  
 PO Box 654  
 Rangiora 7440  
 New Zealand

28 Southbrook Road, Rangiora 7440

[office@autumnleaves.co.nz](mailto:office@autumnleaves.co.nz)

**Phone** 03 313 7762  
 (from overseas) +64 3 313 7762

[www.autumnleaves.co.nz](http://www.autumnleaves.co.nz)

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