**Changed Into His Image**

***Lesson Six: Getting in Touch with Reality – Heb. 11:3, 6***

**Introduction**: The world says, and sadly many Christians say, that Bible solutions will not work in the “real” world. The irony of their complaint is that the Bible alone gives the only true picture of the “real” world. What is the reality we need? “Reality is that there is a God in heaven. Reality is that He made us and we are accountable to Him. Reality is that this God has spoken and what He says matters–eternally. Reality is that without His salvation, we are doomed to eternal torment. Reality is that God’s Son, Jesus Christ, has died for the sins of the world, that He has risen again, and that whoever believes on Him is given eternal life. This is the real world, and only a believer walking in fellowship with His Creator and Redeemer can understand it” (Berg 113-114).

Illustration: On page 114, Berg gives an illustration of a tribesman from the Amazon trying to make his way in Times Square. He will obviously experience fear, frustration, confusion, and depression. He may become violent as he attempts to solve his New York City problems in his own way. He desperately needs someone who can bring sense to his new world.

Application: When man tries to make sense of life apart from God he will experience fear, frustration, confusion and depression. Man’s ways of dealing with life will not work in the world God created. God has not left us without the help we need. Through His Word, He brings us into touch with reality.

By the end of this lesson you should be able to:

* Recognize why, without God, it is impossible to understand the world and your place in it.
* Understand the dynamics of building a relationship with God Himself.

1. **More Than Relief from Problems**
   1. Problems such as despondency, anger, worry, fear, and lust indicate a need for a relationship with God.
   2. Christianity is primarily a relationship with the Creator.
      1. It is not primarily about escape from everlasting torment.
      2. It is not primarily deliverance from life-dominating sins.
      3. It is not primarily about achieving creature comfort.
      4. It *is* primarily about a relationship with the Creator.
   3. God created man to be most satisfied, most joyful, and most useful when there is a personal relationship with his Creator.

Illustration: In Luke 10:38-42, Martha was preoccupied with doing things for the Lord. Mary was preoccupied with the Lord.

Application: It is easy for us to become preoccupied with much busyness in serving the Lord. We need to be focused on the Lord Himself.

1. **More Than Being on Speaking Terms**
   1. There must be much going on between my soul and the Savior.
      1. Fellowship with God is more than just having all known sin confessed.
      2. Fellowship with God involves also that we have an active relationship with God; abiding in the vine. (John 15:4)

Illustration: Marriage is more than sharing mutual goals and interests. It is not enough just to live in the same house. God intended for marriage to be a mutual interest in each other. (Berg 117)

Application: The same is true in your relationship with God. It is not just that you share mutual interests and goals. It is not just that He helps you through life. It is that there is a growing relationship between you and God.

* 1. Your relationship should be characterized by continual personal interaction.

No relationship thrives, grows, progresses, or develops without healthy communication. This is true in marital relationships, parent/child relationships, friendships, and so on. It must also be true in your relationship with God.

Illustration: You can tell when a young couple is growing in love. See Jim Berg’s description on page 118. You can tell when something is developing. The same is true in a person’s relationship with the Lord.

Transition: There are two key elements in having a growing relationship with God.

1. **We Must Have a Desire for God**
   1. “Our greatest need is for God, yet because of our sinful bent, we often resort to going our own way” (Berg 119).
   2. The people of Jeremiah’s day forsook their greatest source of life (a relationship with God) and turned to sources of life that could not satisfy. (Jer. 2:13)
   3. God places within those of us who are His children a desire for a relationship with Him.

“Of late God has been pleased to keep my soul hungry almost continually, so that I have been filled with a kind of pleasing pain. When I really enjoy God, I feel my desires of Him the more insatiable and my thirstings after holiness more unquenchable.” – David Brainerd

* 1. God is glorified when man takes his place of joyful, grateful dependence.
  2. “Any attempt to solve the problems of life apart from a dependent relationship with God is both arrogant and, in the long run, ineffective” (Berg 122).

Illustration: The woman at the well was living in an immoral situation. Her greatest problem was not her immorality. Her immorality was fruit of a deeper issue. “Her greatest problem was that she sought to fulfill the longing in her soul with something temporal – relationships with mere men. Jesus offered her a relationship with her Creator that would have permanent impact on her thirst for intimacy with another person” (Berg 122).

Transition: A desire for God will translate into seeking God.

1. **We Must Seek God**
   1. It must be a passionate search.
      1. Everyone is passionate about something! Many are passionate about sports, entertainment, leisure, adventure, fashion, wealth, and achievement.
      2. He either loves himself (thus the passion for those things which please himself), or he loves God and his neighbor.
      3. “Apathy toward God is the result of being passionate toward something or someone else” (Berg 123).
      4. God desires to bring us to a place of having a single, undivided heart. Consider the following verses: Matt.5:8; 6:24; 16:23-25; James 4:4, 8, 10).
   2. It must be a search for a person.
      1. Seeking God is not just an exercise in exploring Bible content or studying systematic theology.
      2. God is delighted when we delight in Him.
      3. When considering the biblical principles that guide our lives,

we must be careful to consider the Person who gave us those principles. We do not simply need to know the Bible. We need to know the God of the Bible.

1. **Allow Your Relationship with God to Shape Your View of Reality.**
   1. He is your Creator and you are His creation. Understanding His *greatness* in this relationship will produce humility.
   2. He is the Father you are His child. Understanding His *goodness* in this relationship will foster security.
   3. He is the Master and you are His servant. Understanding His *grace* in this relationship will result in productivity.
2. **Application for Life Change**
   1. Recognize the desire for God that He has placed within you if you are His child.
   2. Seek God whole-heartedly and personally.
   3. Spend time interacting with God to develop that relationship.