

The Human Face of God (Part 2)
(Rev. Dr. John Bartol)

“Jesus Christ is the most remarkable and fascinating person in history. He has inspired more hope, taught more compassion, and shown more love than any person who has ever lived.” Bill Bright

Christ has received the highest respect from men and women of all cultures in all generations. As the human face of God, He made it possible for us to see what God was like in everyday human circumstances.

As Christ faced sin, suffering and death he responded with words of forgiveness, compassion and hope. He loved people of all races and backgrounds. He quickly defended the weak and helpless and yet received personal injuries and insults with forgiving love.

The supreme miracle of Christianity lies in the staggering claim that in Jesus of Nazareth, God became man! Let us not object that this concept staggers the mind. It ought to! As Calvin Miller affirms, “If we try to take away Christianity’s miraculous heart, we destroy it.”

Christ knew that the heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart. He exposed sin and hypocrisy, but he came not to condemn but to forgive and to grant new chances and reasons for living.

His teaching: It has touched the deepest needs of men and women of every generation and remains as relevant today as in the first century. Even his enemies said, “No one ever spoke the way this man does” (John 7:46). Historian W.H. Lecky, commented, “Jesus in three short years of ministry did more to soften and regenerate mankind than all the disquisitions of all the philosophers and all the exhortations of all the moralists, since the world began”

His character and integrity: No other life has been so carefully and critically examined as his. And yet neither his closest friends, nor his enemies could find any sin in him. His judge said, “I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty” (Luke 23:22b). His betrayer said, “I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood” (Matthew 27:4a). His executioner said, “Truly this man was the son of God” (Mark 15:39b).

God lived with us, no doubt about it! And He wrote his greatest message of love, not with words, but with drops of blood shed in agony and death. Oh, I know this account does not make sense. Why should He show such love and grace to a thankless, heartless humanity? But that only proves that this salvation is not man-made. Only God could demonstrate a love like that.

Something about Christ, then and now, demands a decision. Some hated him and wanted to kill him because he threatened their preconceived ideas about God and life. Others loved him and left all to follow him. One overcame doubt with faith and declared, my Lord and my God (John 20:27).

“No one has ever seen God, but God’s only son, He who is nearest to the father’s heart, He has made him known.

(John 1:18 NEB).