

The Oak Grove Oracle

(Family News & Views of the Oak Grove Church of Christ)

Meeting Weekly At Our Building Located At:

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Pictures of God

Our Bibles are filled with beautiful pictures of God. No, I'm not talking about artist's conceptions of what God might look like if He were to take on human form by means of "anthropomorphism" (the attribution of human traits to deity). I'm talking about word pictures that beautifully describe for us what God is like, showing us His character, personality and emotions.

Perhaps when you were a youngster, you had like me a "*Picture Story Bible*." My favorite story and picture was of David slaying Goliath (1 Samuel 17). Before bedtime each night, my two brothers and I would get into our PJs. Our dad would then read us a Bible story and show us the artist's rendering of many of the great historical events of the Bible. I still have that book in my library. If you stand it on its spine and let it fall open, you will immediately see the picture of David and the Giant, but I digress.

Not all of the stories had pictures with them, but I remember two stories in particular that tried to capture the image of God, the Father. The first was of Abraham meeting with the three heavenly visitors (Genesis 18). The second depiction was of God, the great "I AM," speaking to Moses out of the burning bush (Exodus 3). My memory of the first picture is that the face of God depicted a kind and benevolent persona. My own earthly father was kind and benevolent, with a face to match, so I grew up thinking my Heavenly Father must be extremely compassionate and kind. The other picture of God, in the burning bush, is the essence of power and holiness. Again, my dad was a powerful man, whose very nature commanded respect. For a long time, when I was a little shaver, in my mind's eye he was "Superman." I can tell you this, I was never afraid as long as Dad was nearby!

Think of the beautiful portraits of God scattered throughout the Scriptures. In my opinion the story of the Prodigal Son, in Luke 15:11-32 would be the Renaissance masterpiece. We serve a running God! We have a spiritual Father Who literally runs to meet us to welcome us home. He's a Father Who longs for the wayward child to repent, so He can forgive our sins and forget our flaws.

My second personal favorite is the picture of God as the loving and protective Shepherd of Psalms 23. Finally, I would select the picture of God, as the sacrificial Father (John 3:16). As the old song by L.O. Sanderson says, "He loves me! He loves me! He loves me this I KNOW! He gave Himself to die for me, because He loves me so!" I'm sure there are many other pictures in the Bible, which describe additional traits of our awesome God. What's your personal favorite?

David A. McCain