

# “YE SHALL BE AS GODS”

*Al Brown*

When the serpent tempted Eve, he struck a responsive chord when he said, “**Ye shall be as gods**” (Gen. 3:5). Man has always aspired to be as deity, but such longings usually come from ulterior motives (as was true with Eve). Men want very much to declare their independence of God. Then they can indulge any fleshly desire without feeling they have to account for it. Men also revel in the fantasy that their wisdom is as good, or even superior, to God’s.

Many people may be surprised to learn that God wants His creature to be like Him. Our heavenly Father wants us to “**become partakers of the divine nature**” (2 Pet. 1:4). Paul informs us “**we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory**” (2 Cor. 3:18).

Of course, the way men would “be as God” when guided by their own wisdom is strikingly different from the way God would have us do it. We only have to observe the sorry state of society today to see how incompetent, foolish, and inferior man’s wisdom is compared to God’s. If anyone needed convincing that men are not as God, just a quick look around should do it.

The wisdom of men (the wisdom of the world) would have people practicing the “**works of the flesh**” (Gal. 5:19-21). This always results in indescribable misery, chaos, heartache, physical and mental suffering, as well as alienation from one another and from God. Such folly only emphasizes how finite and imperfect man’s wisdom is.

One who yearns to “be as God” according to the divine guidelines quickly learns that basic to achieving such a goal is his willingness to “**put on Christ**” (Gal. 3:27). This means he is born again (John 3:3-5; 1 Pet. 1:23; Tit. 3:4-6) by baptism into Christ’s death (Rom. 6:3-5). The old man is killed out, and he becomes a new man in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 3:1-15). He no longer thinks and acts as worldly people do. He has been transformed by the renewing of his mind (Rom. 12:2).

Now, his primary goal is to put on those qualities (traits) which characterized Christ as He walked among men (Eph. 4:13). He receives, with meekness, the Word of God in his heart (Jam. 1:21). This Word, which is given by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13; 1 The. 2:13; 1 Cor. 2:6-14), informs him of things to avoid, the way God wants him to go, and the qualities to include in his life (2 Tim. 3:16ff). The Holy Spirit teaches him to display the “**fruit of the Spirit**” (Gal. 5:22ff) in his life. A glance at the “**fruit of the Spirit**” Paul describes is nothing less than the traits of Christ’s character.

The more successful he is in following God’s directions (given in His Word), the more like his Lord he becomes. Some of those Christ-like qualities are love, joy, peace with God and his fellow man, contentment, purpose, zest for living, and a hope for something far better than this life can offer. He really does “become as God.” He has the same mind Christ does (Phi. 2:5), so he is humble and meek as

Jesus was (Mat. 11:28-30). He is guided by God's wisdom revealed in the Word of God.

We are all very much involved in the affairs of this life. Some seem so necessary—even worthy of taking precedence over other things that also need to be done. But are these things, which may seem so vital at the moment, on the same level of importance as the nourishment of our immortal souls? At the final judgment, which of these will seem more important—the trifling things of this world or our spiritual development into the image of the One who created us (Col. 3:10)?

Surely, if we are guided by the wisdom of God (revealed in the Scriptures), it is not difficult to see what should be of first priority in our lives. We should be adamant that nothing will be allowed to interfere with our growth into the likeness of our Master.~

*Deceased*