

A Reflection
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Immersed in the colors of fall, I was stopped in my tracks with the flamboyant reflection in our nearby watering hole. The barns at our family farm shimmered in the sun-kissed water; oddly beautiful in rich shades of autumn. The leaves turning from green to gold, perfectly framed the red and white barns against a stark blue sky.



I suddenly wondered if God made the water reflective so he could see himself. This thought led me to recall that we are each made in His image.

When I was a little girl, each day was filled with some aspect of learning about God. Those messages were subtle, but they were impactful. The farm provided the rhythms of nature all around. I was blessed to have doting grandparents and great-grandparents that lived nearby. They were invested in me; gently teaching me their faith by showing me their ways.

From bedtimes stories read aloud by my daddy each night to Sunday School lessons taught at church every Sunday, the words of God were part of my daily routine. Even at school, our teacher led us in prayer before lunch each day. I learned to count on the Lord, to trust in Him, to believe that He was and should always be the center of my life.

As I matured there were many things that distracted me from those teachings. Even so, they'd become such a part of my daily routine, it was unimaginable for me to stray very far from the lessons I'd learned. My comfort and sense of security were rooted in those ways; those beliefs.

Now that I've reached that milestone birthday and begun to consider the last quarter of life, I am humbled once again by God's grace. I don't have to "do" anything for God to love me. He loved me when he made me, and his love is eternal. He loves every single person He created, even those with whom I disagree.

This strange year of living through the Coronavirus Pandemic has changed most of us. It has disrupted our habits, the pace of our lives. We've had to distance ourselves from those we love. We've had to withdraw into our inner circles. We've had to alter the way we do things and I don't think most of us humans really like change so very much. We like our daily rituals to be comfortable and the routines to be somewhat uneventful.

As calendar pages have flipped from spring through summer and now into fall, we've grown tired of being patient with one another. We want to go back to what was once our normal day. We want to be with our families, our friends and loved ones and not be fearful of making each other sick. Instead, we are mindful of the ongoing risk of spreading the disease.

We find ourselves less patient with others because we can't go about our lives as we'd prefer to do. We're frustrated that we must manage our children's schooling while we juggle our own work as well as all the other tasks demanding our attention. We're discouraged by the injustice's others have been made to feel. We're frightened by those who are being destructive in their anger against our world.

I wonder what God thinks of me and everyone else right now? If we are made in His image, how appalled might He be?

Thankfully, God came to earth in the form of Jesus who died for our sins. His mercy far extends beyond any outrageous behaviors, narcissistic attitudes, belligerent or ugly acts we may commit, if we seek His face, to be like Him, to believe in His word.

Paul writes in Ephesians I that before God made the world, He chose you and me. He wanted a place for his family to live because he loves us. He sent his son to take away any sin we might commit because His love is unbounded, it is eternal.

Romans 8:38 tells us that nothing can separate us from God because of his unconditional love for us. No matter what we "do," how good or bad we are, His love has nothing to do with our behaviors, it has everything to do with His character.

Today's image reflected in the water reminds me that I am made in the image of God. I am to reflect His Glory in my actions, words and deeds. As these days of discomfort, confusion and strife continue, let us remember to be the feet and hands of the one who died so we might live with our father in heaven forever.

Let us bring comfort where we are able, spread words of hope when we can, and have an attitude of forgiveness for others – for we are made in his image and created to be like Him.

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For more of Bobbie's essays, visit her website at bobbiesmithbryant.com