BIBLE TALK

This week the question is: ***Has anyone ever seen God?***

Many people clam they have seen God with their own eyes. Many years ago, in about 1830, Joseph Smith claimed that he saw God the Father and Jesus Christ standing in the woods and speaking with him face to face. Others have made similar claims.

Our question this week is simply this: ***Are these claims true? Has anyone ever seen God and if not, why not?***

Let’s begin with two basic passages of scripture:

Exodus 33:19-23

19 Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

20 But He said, "**You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.**"

21 And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock.

22 So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by.

23 Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but **My face shall not be seen**."

There are two things to notice from this passage:

* **This is speaking about God the Father**. Jesus is God according to Jn 1:1. Men have seen Jesus face to face when He came to the earth. But no one has seen God the Father. He is greater than Jesus according to Jn 14:28. Therefore, Joseph Smith was lying when he said he saw God the Father and Jesus Christ standing together speaking to him in the woods.
* **This explains why no one can see God the Father**. If anyone should see God the Father face to face they would die. The human constitution and frame could not endure the awesome sight.

Now … observe these next two passages:

John 1:18

18 **No one has seen God at any time**. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

1 John 4:12

12 **No one has seen God at any time**. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.

This is plain enough. These passages are speaking about God the Father. No one has seen Him nor can see Him. Jn 1:18 teaches that Jesus, the Son of God, has declared to men the Father. In other words, men can know what God the Father is like by looking at Jesus, the Son of God.

Jesus lived during a time before there was photography and film. He lived such an obscure life that no one ever painted a picture of Him. No one ever made a statute of Him so we could see what He looked like. Have you ever wondered why? The answer is: ***If men knew what Jesus looked like, they would make icons and statutes of Him and then begin worshipping the statute and the icon rather than Jesus Himself***. This would be idolatry. This would be worshipping created things rather than the Creator Himself.

When Israel received the 10 commandments from God, listen to what was said:

Deuteronomy 4

12 And the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of the words, **but saw no form**; you only heard a voice.

13 So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone.

14 And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might observe them in the land which you cross over to possess.

15 "Take careful heed to yourselves, for **you saw no form** when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire,

16 lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of any figure: the likeness of male or female,

17 the likeness of any animal that is on the earth or the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air,

18 the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground or the likeness of any fish that is in the water beneath the earth.

23 Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of anything which the LORD your God has forbidden you.

24 For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

This is a long chapter, but the point being emphasized here is that no one was allowed to make an image which represents God. The reason for this is that men would begin worshipping the image rather than God Himself. Therefore, Jesus Himself came and lived on the earth at just the right time in history – a time before there was film and cameras. He lived such an obscure and lowly life in poverty so that no one would bother to paint a picture of Him.

Please realize that all the paintings we have of Jesus are merely the drawings of artists who have used their imaginations. We have no idea what Jesus looked like.

One thing we do know for a fact: ***Jesus did not have long hair***. We know this because the NT condemns men with long hair in 1 Cor 11:14.

What have we learned from these passages and from this study? We have learned:

* Neither Joseph Smith nor any other man has ever seen God the Father. Anyone who claims they have seen God is a liar.
* We know why God has never allowed anyone to see Him: Because the human constitution would not be able to endure the sight. No one would be able to see God and live thru the experience.
* Furthermore, God never wanted anyone to know what He looked like so as to create an icon or image and begin worshipping the image or icon. Idolatry is wrong because men are worshipping created things rather than the Creator.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Well … thanks for listening to our message this week. We invite you to visit our website [**www.WillOfTheLord.com**](http://www.WillOfTheLord.com). There you may download the notes and the audio file of the message you just listened to.

Call again next week when we consider a new subject on ***Bible Talk***.