

FOCUS ON FAITH

UNIQUE

Yesterday I did something which probably hundreds, thousands or possibly millions of other men did yesterday too – I cut myself shaving. "There's nothing remarkable in that," I hear you thinking, and yes you're right, it happens all the time but it did get me thinking.

Don't you think it's funny but often the reason you nick yourself is because the blade isn't sharp enough? It must be a Murphy's Law or something – the severity of the cut is inversely proportional to the bluntness of the razor! And don't you look a fool trying to stem the flow of blood with pieces of toilet paper on your face?

So what was it that I began to think about? Our similarities but also our uniqueness. Most of us men cut ourselves shaving every so often but no matter our race and colour, creed, age, background or where we live, we all bleed red blood. I've heard it reported that women also cut themselves when shaving (presumably their legs) and that their blood is red too!

But no one of us is alike though. We have different shapes, sizes, hair colours (natural or otherwise). We have unique capabilities, personalities and characters. Some of us are talented in say sporting pursuits whilst others of us are more creative, artistic or perhaps the academic is our forte. Others of us are thinkers and some just like to get on with it – the do-ers amongst us. Whilst some are extraverts others are less outgoing, prefer solitude and are quite happy with their own company. None of these is right or wrong – we're all different.

On another level our backgrounds and experiences also play a part in our uniqueness. Good and bad experiences in our upbringing and our relationships with other people, traumas or losses, all play a part in way our characters and attitudes are formed. And that has a knock-on effect in relation to the decisions and choices we make culminating in the way we think and act.

Does that mean I can be like God? Well actually, yes!

The Bible tells us that God created us in His own image but because of our many differences, the word 'image' in this context can't mean absolute likeness. And yet I believe it has to do with the types of people we are and the capabilities we have.

Does that mean I can be like God? Well actually, yes! I can demonstrate the same kind of commitment, love and care that God does for us. The writer of the book to the Hebrews in the Bible tells us that Jesus is the exact representation of God and the Apostle John in his

first letter to Christians says that whilst no-one has ever seen God, Jesus has made Him known (1 John 1: 18). When writing to the Philippian church, the Apostle Paul told them they should have the same attitude Jesus had. So if Jesus represents God and we are to imitate Him, it must be possible for us to be God-like in both character and action.

Thankfully you are not like me in every respect and frankly I'm glad that I'm not like you – it would be a boring old world if we were identical in every aspect. Even identical twins aren't exactly the same as each of us has an individual heartbeat as well as unique fingerprint profiles. God has created an infinite variety in His creation. But we do have the capability of reflecting Him in the way we live our lives.

Even if you can't quite swallow the idea that there is a God and that He created us, I hope you can admit that if we were to all to take on board and live out the values that Jesus demonstrated – tolerance, care, kindness, real love and compassion – then our world would be a better place. Which kinds of standards and lifestyles would you rather conform to?

- Those that exact revenge on people who have hurt us rather than reconciliation and harmony.
- Fighting for our rights over other peoples or slandering them and putting them down through malicious gossip, rather than trying to find ways of encouraging and building people up.
- Unfaithfulness and breaking promises made as opposed to integrity of thought and action.

Hey, I know this sound like utopia and of course we fail from time to time. Thankfully I know that God knows that too and He still wants us to keep trying it His way. We are unique but in our uniqueness we can make an impact for good around us.

Go on try it – after all what have we got to lose from what we have now?

If you'd like to find out where and when Church Services are being held, log on to www.lifting-jesus-higher.org.uk which has details of local Christian Churches and contact details. And if you think there's something we can help you with or you have a question on faith issues, drop me an email using the link on the website. I'd love to hear from you.



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