

## Images

by Mike Tucker \*

Malcolm Muggeridge is remembered as one of the most notable figures of the twentieth century. The wit and style of the self-dubbed “fatally fluent” journalist was endearing and, yet, controversial. His was present in print, over the radio, and on television. With over fifty years in the public eye, Muggeridge knew well the effect of publicity on the human ego. He once confessed, “There is something very terrible in becoming an image... You see yourself on a screen, walking, talking, moving about, posturing, and it is not you. Or is it you, and the you looking at you, someone else? ...Once, sleeping before a television screen, I woke up to find myself on it. The experience was quite terrifying—like some awful nightmare to which only someone like Edgar Allan Poe or Dostoevsky could do justice.”

It's not just those in the public eye who are in danger of becoming an “image”. We are all in danger of wearing masks and presenting ourselves as something or someone other than what we truly are.

Of course, some of the images we have of ourselves simply come with the territory. A new mom learns to see herself as a mom; a journalist sees himself as a journalist. But Muggeridge was speaking of images beyond this—namely, a journalist who starts to see himself as an icon, or perhaps, a mom who starts to see herself as an image of success, or grief, helpfulness, or humility.

God once asked the prophet Habakkuk, “Of what value is an idol, since a man has carved it? Or an image that teaches lies? For he who makes it trusts in his own creation; he makes idols that cannot speak” (Habakkuk 2:18).

The dangerous thing about becoming an image is that we start to believe that we created that image: “I am the maker of my success in this company.” “I am the one who has molded myself to be this flourishing employee, parent, or Christian.”

The images we create, even our images of God, must be crushed by the God who moves and speaks, the One who spoke the universe into existence. They must be replaced with a “new creation,” a being molded and formed into the image of Jesus Himself.

We are not the images we think we are. That's why God is continually at work shattering the images we fashion of ourselves. By His grace, we can be molded into the image of the God who lives.

With love,  
Mike

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