

“Show me the coin. Whose image is this and whose inscription?”

I'd venture to say that today, if someone asked if you had some change in your pocket or purse you'd be able to produce some coins of various sizes and with various individual images pressed into them. Pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, and maybe even a half-dollar or dollar coin. Lincoln, Jefferson, Roosevelt, Washington, Kennedy, and Sacajawea would be imaged on our more recent coins, with Indian heads and Lady Liberty on much older coinage. All those images were struck in various metals to honor those in our American heritage.

These coins, as well as our folding money, the greenbacks in our billfolds, are printed by our government as legal tender, to be used by our employers to pay our wages, and then by us to purchase items from others for our use, and ultimately to be returned to the government to operate the business of running, protecting, and building our nation.

Over time these coins and greenbacks start to lose their image, get cracked and bent, wrinkled, faded, and torn, and just overall worn out, worn out to the point where they are pulled out of circulation and destroyed, to be replaced by new legal tender.

I wonder if that's not what also happens to us, that we get worn out, or maybe worn **DOWN** by our society, when it comes to having God in our lives. You see, we **TOO** are struck, made, formed in the image and likeness of **GOD**. You might even say we are each of us born a **PROOF SET**, double struck, a shining sharp image of God, inscribed with His love in us and upon us.

You see, mankind is God's legal tender, the bearers of His love, a love to be given to others for **others'** benefit, a love that God Himself spent on all of us to buy us back from sin thru the death of His only begotten Son, who purchased for us our eternal salvation. Jesus Christ, the most **PERFECT** of proof sets, the most sharp and shiniest example of love, even as he hung upon the cross, torn, wrinkled, dirty, bloody, and just worn out, remains a shining example of the love we are to be to others.

For us, it's not what's on the outside that makes us who we are, but what's on the **INSIDE**. And for many of us what's happened on the inside is that we've gotten worn out, scratched, bent, torn, and wrinkled to the point we no longer **FEEL** like the inscription of the perfect image is recognizable within us. Yet, it can only be by **FAITH** that we can know that it **IS** still there. It is in **PRAYER** that we dust it off. It is by the **SACRAMENTS** of Reconciliation and Holy Communion that we put the shine and sharpness back on the image. And it is by the love of God that we are strengthened to share ourselves with others.

If Jesus were to come to us today and ask, “Whose image and whose inscription is this in your heart?”, what would we say? Am I ready and willing to give to God what belongs to God?