

Seeing God Through Photography

with Donna Cooper

Donna Cooper has a gift for seeing life through the camera's lens. With a keen eye for both everyday moments and once-in-a-lifetime shots, she discovers humour, delight, and faith-inspiring pictures of life with her camera.

Grasp God-honouring moments and awe-inspiring beauty in the photography of Donna Cooper.



Children, scenery, and animals: over the years, these three topics seem to be most prevalent in any photography I engage in. Oh, yes: there have also been the family reunions, the graduations, weddings, birthdays ... many of the wonderful captures of memories with family and friends. Such events are indeed important to help us remember in photos along life's way.



There have been a few gems where the countenance of love between two individuals is frozen in time.

John 15:12 says, "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." When there is a time of trouble or darkness (and there will be), bringing forward these photos focuses us on God's purpose and could help bring us back to this foundational love we have for each other.

“And he said: ‘Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven’ ” (Matthew 18:3).

The innocence and joy of children is such a powerful reminder in our faith, reminding us of our need to be able to walk with God with trust, excitement, and energy such as young, pure hearts show every day. I certainly am prone to whipping out the camera when little ones are around, especially to capture the unconditional love shown by young hearts. I have many photos of children walking away from me, hand in hand; this is such a beautiful reminder of how we should walk through life with God.



But I must say that my favourite photos rising to the top are those images that reflect our Earth and its inhabitants. By far, the majority of my photos are of God’s creations, of the beauty of our majestic Earth, and of the mountains and seas. Psalm 36:6a reminds us, “Your righteousness is like the highest mountains, your justice like the great deep.” Peace and calm is so evident when we absorb the magnificence of our surroundings, and we can dwell in this beauty to reflect on God’s power and righteousness.

God has populated our Earth with fascinating creatures for our enjoyment. Psalm 8:6b-9 says, “... you put everything under their feet: all flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild, the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!”



I particularly enjoy stumbling on a situation where there is an animal in the distance. Then, I work on focusing in, moving closer and using the camera lens to get as good a shot as I can. Sometimes, it takes patience and many tries, not unlike our life of focusing on God.



**“Look, the Lamb of God,
who takes away
the sin of the world!”**

John 1:29b

Oh, the sweet lambs represent such purity, and I am drawn to photograph them every time.



The seasons and the beauty of nature also cause the camera to appear in my hand.

As much as I have been heard to “complain” about winter’s results on our roads, I need to be reminded of the beauty of the seasons and to appreciate what God has provided for us. Snow is very beautiful as it blankets our earth and it seems so rejuvenating in its freshness.



God also has blessed us with a sense of humour and that cannot be lost. Who hasn’t had a day such as represented by this poor little kitty I caught on camera somehow? When I chuckle over shots such as these, I remind myself to be able to laugh at my situation, if I can, and show perseverance.



Galatians 5:22–23a is one of my favourite Bible passages: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” I have found that I am drawn to photograph what represents many of these qualities.

Though by far not a professional— and sometimes I snap a particularly nice photo just by a godsend—yet I am thankful to grasp moments and beauty in pictures.

Seeing God and reflecting on him through photography is a true blessing.

Women of faith ... making a difference where you are

Donna Cooper is married to Don, and they have two adult sons and three grandchildren. Recently retired, Donna’s hobbies include serving on the worship team at First United Baptist Church in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. She also enjoys travelling, curling, and picking up the camera, now and then.