

MANKIND

Who Am I?

What does the Bible say about man and what God created him to be?



The Crowning Jewel
of Creation?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BEAR GOD'S IMAGE?

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...Genesis 1:26

Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam...Genesis 2:2

All people, are a special creation of God. Mankind is not like the rest of creation. The Bible says that man was created in the image and likeness of God. Regardless of whether a person is lost or saved, they were created in the image of God. But, what exactly does that mean?

God created all the animals and plants, but He gave man something that no other creature on earth has. He gave us personhood. Personhood is the "self." It is who you are at the very core of your being. Our personhood allows us to be self-aware. It gives us a conscious individuality, a responsible morality, and an eternal existence. Of all God's creatures, man is the only one that shows an understanding of right and wrong, as

well as the ability to understand his own existence. It is not all together clear exactly what the difference between man's personhood, soul, and spirit is, but the Bible is clear that man possesses an immaterial part that God gave to no other creature.

The image of God in mankind is given expressly so man will be God's representative on earth, rule and care for the creation, and have a personal relationship with God. This is the goal of our salvation.

Because of this image, all mankind has an intrinsic value and worth. All are created in the image of God. The image was tarnished by sin and the fall of man, but it was not erased. It is still there. You are created in God's image.



God's
Image
BEARERS

Where does our Worth come from?

Our value comes from the image of God in us. Murder and rape are wrong because every person is created in God's image.

THE WORTH OF MANKIND



IMAGE
OF
GOD

MALE FEMALE



Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

*"Whoso sheddeth man's blood,
by man shall his blood be
shed: for in the image of God
made he man." Genesis 9:6*

*"But the tongue can no man
tame; it is an unruly evil,
full of deadly poison. 9
Therewith bless we God, even
the Father; and therewith
curse we men, which are made
after the similitude of God."
James 3:9*

The image of God in man means that man can have a relationship with the Creator

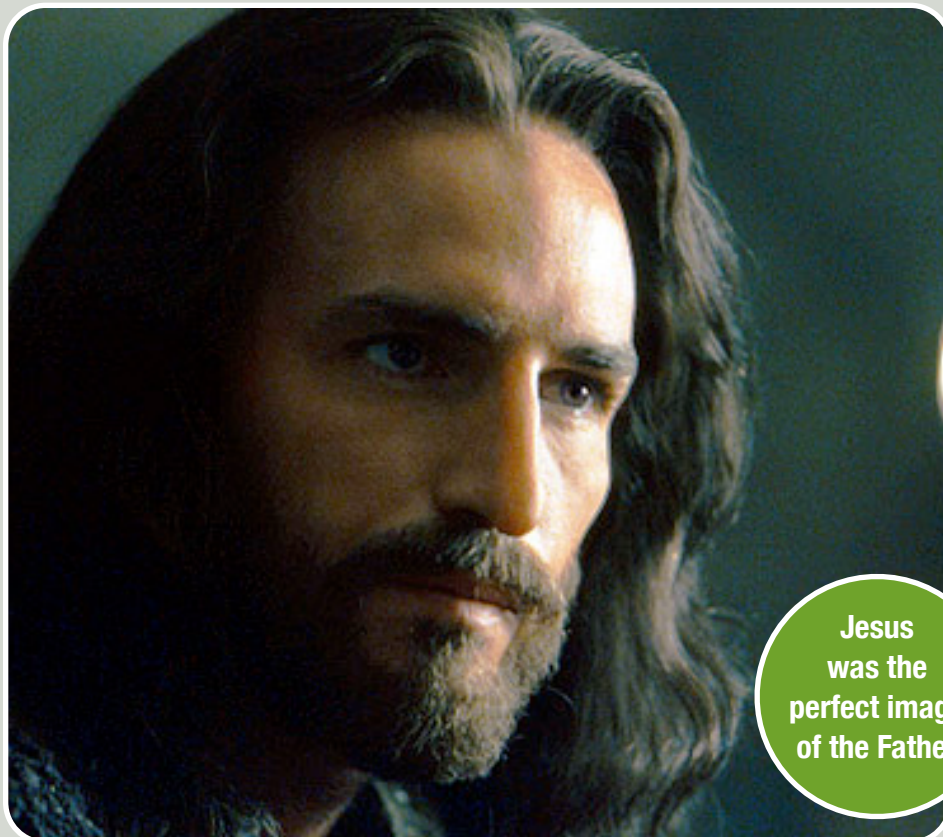
Because man is created in God's image, he can have a personal relationship with God. No other creature has the privilege of knowing and understanding the Creator the way we can. Adam and Eve enjoyed a perfect relationship with God. They were created to live forever, never to get sick, and never to die. After He created, God looked and saw that everything (including man) was good (Gen. 1:31). God's definition of good is far more meaningful than ours. "Good" in God's eyes is perfection. The creation and man were made perfect, sinless, and without fault.

Man was created altogether innocent. The Bible says they were naked and not ashamed.

Unfortunately, Adam and Eve did not stay that way. Genesis chapter 3 tells us that Adam and Eve sinned against God and lost their innocence. Consequently, all of mankind was plunged into the curse of sin. This is a subject we will address in the next lesson.

According to Genesis 9:6 (lower left corner), God says that a man who commits murder is accountable to God because man is still created in His image. In fact, James 3:8-9 says that, because man is created in God's image, he is accountable to God if he uses his tongue to curse men.

The image of God in mankind is very serious indeed. Humanity finds its worth in nothing else. Regardless of a person's station, wealth, occupation, or behavior, he still has worth and value because he is created in God's image.



Jesus
was the
perfect image
of the Father

YOU ARE GIVEN DOMINION

Man is made in the image of God to be God's representative on earth

How does man accomplish this function of dominion? What does it entail? It does not just mean that man is the boss over animals. According to Genesis 1:28 it involves “filling” the earth by means of *procreation*, and it entails “subduing” the earth by means of *vocation*. The word translated “subdue” signifies *to bring under one's control and into one's service*. This is what Adam did by tending the Garden of Eden. This is what Abel did by shepherding sheep. This would include mining, metallurgy, medicine, art, music, literature, science, and other technological advancements. By these pursuits men bring the resources of creation under their control and into their service. This has sometimes been called man's “cultural mandate.”

According to Genesis 2:5-25, God assigns mankind two distinct roles for carrying out this mandate. Although the man and the woman possess equal worth and dignity as the image of God, yet God created them distinct in order to function in distinct roles—the man is to function in the role of a leader, and the woman is to function in the role of a helper. There are several features of the Genesis creation account that support this distinction of roles between the man and the woman. First, God created the man and the woman in a different

manner and for a different though complementary purpose. God took the man from the ground in order to cultivate the ground (vv. 5-17). On the other hand, God took the woman from the man in order to help the man (vv. 20-23).

The woman is to be man's “helper comparable [‘corresponding’] to him” (v. 20). Second, the man and woman were not created simultaneously. God created the man *first*, and gave him instructions concerning the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. *Then*, God created the woman and brought her to the man.

So on the one hand, men and women are of *equal value and worth* since they are both created as the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:2). On the other hand, men and woman as the image of God have *distinct roles* through which they each resemble a complementary role of God himself. Man is to resemble God the Father primarily in the capacity of a *head*. Woman is to resemble God the Son in that she is equal to man but voluntarily submits to his authority.



Man and Woman together are designed to be God's image

God created mankind to be his visible replica and representative in the totality of his being, relations, and function upon the earth. That is what it means to be *the image of God*.

The biblical doctrine of man as the image of God does four important things:

1. It establishes the true dignity of the human race.
2. It establishes the true dignity of every individual human being.
3. It upholds the dignity of the marriage relationship and the complementary roles of men and women.
4. Identifies the goal of salvation in Christ.

Psalm 8:4-8

What is man, that thou art mindful of him and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of they hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.

Man and Woman were both created in the image of God. They are equally worthy in that respect. Yet, in order to represent God, man and woman are given different roles to fulfill. These roles represent the roles that the persons of the Trinity fulfill.

Matthew 19:4-6

Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.

You Have a Purpose

...To Glorify God

As a bearer of God's image, you have a specific job. You are here to represent God to a lost and dying world. Your actions, your relationships, your dress, and your demeanor is a direct reflection on the person and nature of God. ...No pressure!

All of creation glorifies its God exactly as He has commanded. The heavens declare the glory of God (Ps. 19:1). God did not create the universe, or us, because He was lonely or lacked anything. He created everything to show off His glory. Everything that exists is a manifestation of God's love, justice, wrath, righteousness, or goodness. Our most important job in this world is to show forth the glory of God.

How Do We Do This?

One of my favorite Christian author / preachers loves to say, "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him." It may seem like God is a big megalomaniac because He seeks His own glory above everything else. But, we must remember that God is the only truly perfect thing in the universe. What could a loving God do for the world, or the individual, to prove He is a loving God? Of course, He would give the best thing in the universe...Himself! If He were to withhold Himself from the world, no matter what else He gives, He would be unloving.

That is why His glory is so important. He intends to display Himself for the world (and us) to see.

He displays Himself for us to enjoy! Therefore, the greatest way we can demonstrate God's glory is to find our satisfaction and enjoyment in Him. It is a win / win proposition. God gets the greatest glory for Himself and we get the greatest source of enjoyment and satisfaction.

God is the one Being in all the universe for whom seeking His own praise is the ultimately loving act. For Him, self-exaltation is the highest virtue. When He does all things "for the praise of His glory," He preserves for us and offers to us the only thing in all the world that can satisfy our longings. God is for us! And the foundation of this love is that God has been, is now, and always will be for Himself.

We Are Called To Enjoy...

In a wonderful book called, "Desiring God," the author presents five convictions about glorifying God by being satisfied in Him.

1. The longing to be happy is a universal human experience, and it is good, not sinful.

2. We should never try to deny or resist our longing to be happy, as though it were a bad impulse. Instead, we should seek to intensify this longing and nourish it with whatever will provide the deepest and most enduring satisfaction.

3. The deepest and most enduring happiness is found only in God. NOT FROM God, but in God.

4. The happiness we find in God reaches its consummation when it is shared with others in the manifold ways of love.

5. To the extent that we try to abandon the pursuit of our own pleasure, we fail to honor God and love people. Or, to put it positively: The pursuit of pleasure is a necessary part of all worship and virtue. That is, the chief end of man is to glorify God by enjoying Him forever.

God is the ultimate source of perfect satisfaction and fulfillment. He has displayed Himself in creation and through His Word so that we might know and love Him. He has given us the perfect gift of Himself so that we might find the greatest pleasure in the universe.

God commands us to pursue our joy. "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Ps. 37:4). Also, God threatens terrible things if we will not be happy.

"Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee" (Deut. 28:47-48).

Eternity is in the heart of man, filling him with longing. But we know not what we long for until we see the breathtaking God. This is the cause of universal restlessness.

Therefore, glorify God by enjoying Him forever.

Study Questions

1. Why is it a sin against God to kill another human being? (Gen. 9:6)

2. The word “dominion”(radah) in Gen. 1:28 means to tread, or to rule. In your opinion, what does it mean for man to “rule” the earth?

5. According to 1 Timothy 6:17, why has God given us all the things in creation?

6. Where is man’s most inexpressible joy to be found? (Ps. 16:11)

7. When we find our life’s enjoyment in anything other than God Himself, we not only shortchange ourselves, but the Bible calls this practice _____ (Isa. 44:9)

8. The Bible doesn’t tell us exactly what the “image of God” is, but it definitely makes us different from the rest of creation. What are some things that differentiate man from animals, plants, and other created things?

9. Regardless of what your shortcomings are, you are made to show God’s glory and enjoy Him forever. How does this truth make you feel about your value and worth to God?

10. On the 3rd, 4th, and 5th day of creation, God said what He had made was “good.” What did He say about His work on the 6th day (when He created man)? (Gen 1:31)



Mankind was originally created in the image of God. However, Adam and Eve chose to sin by disobeying God. The image of God in man was tarnished and marred by sin, but it was not destroyed.

Sin has placed a wall of separation between mankind and God. His holiness will not allow unclean things to reside in His presence. However, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came in flesh to restore mankind into a full relationship with the Father.

Through the work of Christ on the cross, the image of God in man is perfectly restored to its original glory. Man possesses the ability to reason, relate to others, and commune with God in the perfection of Christ’s righteousness.

As believers, we are “in Christ” and the Father only sees His perfect Son. Jesus is the “expressed image” of the person of the Father (Heb. 1:3)

“...seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is ***renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him***” (Col. 3:9-10)