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## Made in His Image: Introduction

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*“So God created man in his own image...in the image of God he created him”*

For us to better understand our true identity, we must look to the origin of humanity. The very first thing Scripture says about human beings is that we are made in God’s image.

### Key Text:

Gen. 1:26 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

27 So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”  
29 And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. 31 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Gen. 2:5 When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, 6 and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— 7 then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

Gen. 2:18 Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”  
20...But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. 21 So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”

- 1) In the rhythmic retelling of the Creation story in Genesis 1, for five days, God says, “Let there be...” and whatever he declares instantly is created and is considered good. On the sixth day of creation, what noticeable substitution is made in the “Let there” narrative in 1:26-27? What significance might this place on the sixth day of creation?
- 2) What does it mean that mankind was created in the *image* of God? How is the word *image* used in the OT (cf. Num. 33:52; 2 Kings 11:18; Amos 5:26)? In today's world? Note: *image* in the Septuagint is translated *eikon*, or a likeness. Literally, a statue, or figuratively, a representation, resemblance.
- 3) If mankind was *created in the image of God*, what might that suggest as man's purpose as his creation?

- 4) What was man's calling after they were created in the image of God (cf. Gen. 1:28)? Did man succeed?
- 5) Though we still bear his image, albeit imperfectly, the amazing thing about God is that he didn't leave us as shattered, broken, and ruined vessels. He redeems his image bearers by sending his Son as the perfect image bearer and restoring us to our created calling. Jesus reconstructs us back to our original purposes. Read the following verses and consider the questions: "Who should I be?" or "What is God's will for your life?" or "What is my identity"?
- a) Heb. 1:3
  - b) Rom. 8:29
  - c) Col. 1:15
  - d) 1 Pt. 2:21
  - e) 1 Jn. 2:6
- 6) Read Col. 2:9-10. Consider the following questions:
- a) What dwells in Jesus? What does this mean? What does this imply about God's characteristics and attributes?
  - b) Who are we filled in, according to verse 10? What does this imply about God's characteristics and attributes in our lives today? In Christ, we are being filled with what we were always supposed to be, each day becoming image bearers of God.
- 7) How does God restore us back to our created calling (cf. Col. 3:10)? Our identity is found in our older brother, Christ, who in his humanity, displayed to the whole world a perfect image of God. We are called to follow his example as he serves as our model and guide to our true identity. "Yes, the will of God is the narrow path for those who walk it. But we need not wander aimlessly, as those with no sense of where his will would have us place our next step, in danger of straying off a cliff. We simply walk in the steps of our Savior, Jesus Christ" (Wilkin, "In His Image").
- 8) It's important to make the distinction between what divine attributes we can aspire to reflect versus those that belong to God alone.
- a) Incommunicable attributes: Traits that are true of God alone (infinite, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, sovereign, etc.). We become his rival when we strive for these types of characteristics.
  - b) Communicable attributes: Traits that can become true of us but also are of God (holy, loving, just, good, merciful, gracious, faithful, etc.). We become "conformed to the image of Christ" when we reflect these attributes.

God's will in our lives is for us to conform ourselves to the image of Christ, who perfectly showed us in his incarnation how to be fully human as God intended. If the Biblical answer to "Who should I be?" is "Be like the very image of God", we must ask: "Who is God?" How should the knowledge that God is (*fill in the blank*) change the way I live?