

Genesis 1:26, 27

Made Like God to be With God

Proposition: *You are created like God so that you can be with God.*

I. **Man is created unique.** (verse 26)

- a. *No other creature is made in God's image.*
 - i. Until God created man, creation as we see it enjoyed no immediate fellowship with God.
 - ii. It is the *image of God* by which God ultimately unites us, and indeed all creation, to himself.
- b. *Man is made in God's image.*
 - i. It is the distinct connection of God with man wherein our uniqueness as human beings resides.
 - ii. It is the *image of God* which gives us grounds for fellowship with God.
- c. *Man is not made in the image of any other creature.*
 - i. It is because of the uniqueness of this image that we enjoy, astonishingly, a share in God's dignity.
 - ii. Not only are we made in God's image in that we are *like God*; we're made in God's image in that we are, at the core of our created nature, *unlike creation*.
 1. This dignity, this otherworldliness, does not belong to us. It is borrowed dignity. The basis of our dignity is the eternal dignity of God.

II. **Man is created personal.** (verse 26)

- a. *Man is personal because God himself is personal.*
 - i. "Let us make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness." This does not refer to angels. God is taking counsel in the triune godhead here.
- b. The tri-personal God created personal image bearers because he desires to relate to us and for us to be *with* him. [cf. Jn. 1:24]

III. **Man is created male and female.** (verse 27)

- a. *Man created as male and female reveals distinction in the Godhead.*
 - i. The image of God in man consists, in part, in the distinction of male and female. If we lose this, we lose all distinction within the Godhead.
- b. *Man created as male and female reveals our compatibility with God.*
 - i. Being made in God's image *hinges* upon this final, ultimate hope—the possibility and expectation of union with God!
 - ii. God's design for male and female makes their fellowship not only possible, but it also expects union. This hope of union is exactly what creation is all about.

1. The beauty, celebration, joy, and even the disappointment, pain, and shock we feel in these momentary, earthly unions is *proof* of God's image upon us. We're hoping for a union that lasts.
- c. This is the big idea, the one thing to remember this morning: *We were made like God, brothers and sisters, so that we can be with God.*

IV. **Our Response**

- a. *Does it amaze and humble you that the image of the invisible, triune God is upon you?*
 - i. His knowledge, his holiness, his righteousness, his beauty: These are revealed in you as his image bearer. We are "created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." (Ep. 4:24)
- b. *Do you realize you have a problem as his image bearer?*
 - i. We're sinners. God's image is fractured in us, smeared with sin, shame, guilt. We need a new, perfect image, one without stain or the possibility of future sin. Christ is the key Adam could never be. This is the hope of creation, fellowship in the image of God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" (Co. 1:15).
- c. *Are you living like you're made in his image?*
 - i. Sin dehumanizes you. It smears the image of God and cuts off the fellowship you have with him. "Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you." (Ps. 32:9) Rather, live according to the image of him who made you—in the dignity of your Creator God.
- d. *Do you sometimes feel like this is too good to be true?*
 - i. Remember the heart of Christ as he hung upon the cross to secure that hope for you: "I am a *worm* and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people..." (Ps. 22:6). Jesus laid aside his dignity, humbled himself, smearing his perfect image with our sin and shame to restore God's fractured image in you. In his person and work, you are reconciled to God.
- e. *Do you yearn for fellowship with God as his image bearer?*
 - i. Keep that hope burning; don't sacrifice it for lesser loves. The best, the longest, the most intimate relationship you can have on this earth cannot compare to the union you can have with the God who made you. This hope alone will not disappoint you. This is the comfort of being made in God's image: We are created to dwell with him in glory—satisfied forever in him.