

Morning Worship - April 23, 2017

“Created and Renewed in God’s Image”

Genesis 1:26-28; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10

I. *Being Created in God’s image distinguishes us from the rest of creation and means we are superior, above; and in a position of authority over the animals -*

1. *The heavens declare God’s glory, but they do NOT bear God’s image - ...The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. (Psalm 19:1 NKJ)*

A. *The Heavens are glorious, huge in size, vastness, and the heavenly bodies: the sun, moon and stars are beautiful, however we are NOT to bow down to them –*

"You shall have no other gods before Me. ⁴"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of *anything* that *is* in heaven above, ... ⁵you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. ... (Exodus 20:3-5 NKJ)

B. *They are not God, nor are they created in God’s image – When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, ⁴What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? ⁵For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. ⁶You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all *things* under his feet, ⁷All sheep and oxen-- Even the beasts of the field, ⁸The birds of the air, And the fish of the sea That pass through the paths of the seas. (Psalm 8:3-8 NKJ)*

2. *Our being created in God’s means we are separate from and superior to the animals and the rest of creation on earth, we are even commanded to have dominion over it -*

A. *In the Genesis 1 creation account only about mankind is it said, ²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Genesis 1:26 NKJ)*

B. *Dominion over the creatures is part of our being distinguish from them –*

So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸ Then God blessed them, and

God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:27-28 NKJ)

C. *This militates against the ideas of evolutionists, nature-worshippers and radical environmentalists who claim we must worship, become one with or not disturb nature. Even as sinners we still retain God’s image and are honored above the animals, even to the point we are given permission by God to eat them –*

So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. ²"And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move *on* the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. ³"Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. ⁴"But you shall not eat flesh with its life, *that is*, its blood. ⁵"Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a *reckoning*; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man’s brother I will require the life of man. ⁶"Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man. ⁷ And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it." (Genesis 9:1-7 NKJ)

See in Genesis 9 –

(1) *We can eat animals – Genesis 9:3*

(2) *They are not allowed to kill us – Genesis 9:5*

(3) *A death penalty is established for murdering a man – **Genesis 9:6, why? For in the image of God He made man.***

Review:

(1) *We are distinguished from animals by virtue of being created in God’s image, and in authority over them!*

(2) *We are distinguished from animals by our God given right to kill and eat them!*

(3) *We are distinguished from animals by Protections given us, death penalty for both man and beasts that kill a man!*

(4) *It is a great sin to bow down and worship creatures –*

"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of *anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth; ⁵you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me, (Exodus 20:4-5 NKJ) *This is the great sin of evolutionists, radical environmentalists and nature worshippers!*

II. Sin does not erase God's image in man but it does terribly distort it –

A man *who is* in honor, yet does not understand, is like the beasts *that* perish. (Psalm 49:20 NKJ)

"And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. ⁴ "The first *was* like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. ⁵ "And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and *had* three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!' ⁶ "After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. ⁷ "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It *was* different from all the beasts that *were* before it, and it had ten horns. (Daniel 7:3-7 NKJ)

'Those great beasts, which are four, *are* four kings *which* arise out of the earth. (Daniel 7:17 NKJ)

1. *Men, even kingdoms of men, who do not serve and honor God, become like beasts. The four horns mentioned by Zechariah represent beasts and are fearful and contrasted with the craftsmen –*

Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there *were* four horns. ¹⁹ And I said to the angel who talked with me, "What *are* these?" So he answered me, "These *are* the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem." ²⁰ Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen. ²¹ And I said, "What are these coming to do?" So he said, "These *are* the horns that scattered Judah, so that no one could lift up his head; but the craftsmen are coming to terrify them, to cast out the horns of the nations that lifted up *their* horn against the land of Judah to scatter it." (Zechariah 1:18-21 NKJ)

2. *We name many of our sports teams after beasts and more and more animals are used to make arguments for immorality!*

III. In order not to be dragged down to beastliness by an ungodly society, we must have a true understanding of what the image of God in man is

1. *Study the Gospels; study the New Testament: Jesus is the image of the invisible God –*

He is the image of the invisible God, ... (Colossians 1:15 NKJ)

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; ³ who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, (Hebrews 1:1-3 NKJ)

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14 NKJ)

No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*. (John 1:18 NKJ)

Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? (John 14:9 NKJ)

2. *How is Christ the image of the invisible God?*

- A. *God is a Spirit, He does not have a body, Christ's physical features do not tell us about God -*

"God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:24 NKJ)

- B. *Christ came to restore the image of God in us which has been distorted by sin –*

and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians 4:24 NKJ)

and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, (Colossians 3:10 NKJ)

Notice three things these verses tell us about the image of God, we are renewed in:

- (1) *Knowledge – Colossians 3:10*
- (2) *True Righteousness – Ephesians 4:24*
- (3) *Holiness – Ephesians 4:24*

The Word Christ means Anointed One, Christ or the Messiah is a title that signifies that Jesus was anointed with God's Spirit, like no other man! However, in the Old Testament there were anointed offices: Prophets, Priests and Kings: Prophets gave the people knowledge of God, Priests would offer up sacrifices to atone for sin and satisfy the righteousness of God and Kings were defined as good kings in Israel when they removed the false God's from the nation, promoting the holiness of the people, their separation and devotion to the One True God!

Christ was all three offices Prophet, Priest and King roled into ONE; and these offices had and have the purpose of restoring us to the image of God in knowledge, true righteousness and holiness. The Holy Spirit helps us with these things! The name Christian, symbolizes not only that we are followers of Jesus the Christ (The Anointed One) but His same Holy Spirit dwells in us –

*Christ as the Prophet declares the knowledge of God – John 1:18 to us! As Priest, He offered up the perfect once and for all sacrifice for us – **Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.***²⁶ *For such a High Priest was fitting for us, **who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;***²⁷ *who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.*²⁸ *For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, **appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.*** (Hebrews 7:25-28 NKJ)

As King, He leads us to Holiness, separation and devotion to our one true God –

In all these things of course we are to be superior to the animals – What concerned Sasha was the attitude of who cares (about table manners). She thought it was the worst idea anyone could plant in the head of a little boy destined to be king.

So Sasha instructed Peter carefully, and she observed him carefully on the night of the banquet. And later, as he lay sleepy in his bed, she talked to him.

Because she was a good mother, she first complimented him lovingly on his behavior and manners – and this was right, because for the most part they had been exemplary. But she knew no one would correct him where he went wrong unless she did it herself, and she knew she must do it now, in these few years when he idolized her. So when she finished complimenting him, she said:

“You did one thing wrong, Pete, and I never want to see you do it again.”

Peter laying his bed, his dark blue eyes looking at her solemnly. “What was it mother?”

“You didn’t use your napkin,” said she. “You left it folded by your plate, and it made me sorry to see it. You ate the roast chicken with your fingers, and that was fine, because that is how men do it. But when you put the chicken down again you wiped your fingers on your shirt, and that is not right.”

“But father... And Flagg... and the other nobles...”

“Bother Flagg, and bother all the nobles in Delain!” she cried with such force that Peter cringed back in his bed a little. He was afraid and ashamed for having made those roses bloom in her cheeks. “What you father does is right, for he is king, and what you do when you are king will always be right. But Flagg is not king, no matter how much he would like to be, and the nobles are not kings, and you are not king yet, but only a little boy who forgot his manners.”

She saw he was afraid, and smiled. She put her hand on his brow. “Be calm, Peter,” she said. “It is a small thing, but still important- because you’ll be king in your own time. Now run and fetch your slate.”

Peter ran for his slate.

Sasha took the chalk tied to the side and carefully printed three letters. “Can you read this word, Peter?”

Peter nodded. There were only a few words that Peter could read, although he knew most of the Great Letters. This happened to be one of those words. "It says GOD."

"Yes, that is right." Now write it backward and see what you find."

"Backward?" Peter said doubtfully.

"Yes, that is right."

Peter did so, his letters staggering childishly across the slate below his mother's neat printing. He was astounded to find another of the few words he could read. "DOG, Mamma, It says DOG!"

"Yes, it says dog." The sadness in her voice quenched Peter's excitement at once. His mother pointed from GOD to DOG. "These are the two natures of man," she said. "Never forget them, because someday you will be king and kings grow to be great and tall- as great and as tall as dragons in their ninth moltings."

"Father isn't great and tall," objected Peter, Roland was, in fact, short and rather bowlegged. Also he carried a great belly in front of him from all the beer and mead he consumed.

Sasha smiled.

"He is, though. Kings grow invisibly, Peter, and it happens all at once, as soon as they grasp the scepter and the crown is put on their heads in the Plaza of the Needle!"

"They do?" Peter's eyes grew large and round. He thought the subject had wandered far from his failure to use his napkin at the banquet, but he was not sorry to see such an embarrassing topic lost in favor of this tremendously interesting one. Besides, he had already resolved that he would never forget to use his napkin again – if it was important to his mother, then it was important to him.

"Oh yes they do. Kings grow most awfully big, and that is why they have to be ... careful, for a big person could crush smaller ones..."

"I don't think I understand –"

"Then listen a moment longer." She tapped the slate... "Our preachers say that our natures are partly of God and partly of Old man Splitfoot. Do you know who Old man Splitfoot is, Peter?"

"He is the Devil." ... "Yes, Peter... but there are few Devils ... most people are more like dogs than devils. Dogs are friendly but stupid, and that's the way most men and women are when drunk. ... Dogs are great pets because they are loyal, but if a pet is all a man is he is a bad man.... Dogs are just as eager to lick the hand of a bad master as he is to lick the hand of a good one, because dogs don't know the difference between good and bad...."

"Do you understand these things, Peter?" Peter nodded. "Fine! Now, tell me." She leaned toward him. "Does a dog use a napkin?"
Stephen King - *The Eyes of the Dragon*

Adam was a king, his disobedience distorted the image of God, knowledge became ignorance, righteousness was replaced by sin, holiness was replaced by idolatry and men are called in Scripture "dogs" - **For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; (Psalm 22:16 NKJ)**

However, in Christ we are called to something Higher, better - **And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. (Romans 8:28-29 NKJ)**

We were redeemed from sin to be kings and priests and the reign on the earth, let us live with the dignity of kings and priests, the dignity connected to the name "Christian" - **And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." (Revelation 5:9-10 NKJ)**

Arnold Brevick