

GENESIS

Lesson 8

"Let us make mankind in our image"

"Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'" (Genesis 1:26)

There is much we can garner from studying this one verse. We see from this passage that we were created by a triune God, "Let **us** make mankind in our image..." (emphasis mine), and that we were made in His image. Knowing from our previous study that God is in three persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, means that God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit were all present at creation and that they intentionally made mankind in their image. This lesson examines what that means and what we can apply from this knowledge to our lives.

Have you ever considered what it means to be created in God's image? For instance, how can we be made in His image if, "God is **spirit** and His worshipers must worship in the spirit and in truth?" (John 4:24) (emphasis mine)

How then can we be made in the image of a spirit being, when we are physical—flesh and bone? This is compounded by the fact that when we say someone is the spitting image of his or her father or mother, we are typically referring to their physical appearance (but not always).

Consider and respond to the following questions:

1. Aside from their physical appearance, what are some other ways we can identify that a person is like one or both parents?

2. Based on your observations above, can you start to see how we are created in God's image even though God is a spirit and we are physical beings? Understand that we were not created to be gods or to be God himself, but we were created in His image. In a perfect world, mankind should—and would— be reflecting that image, as God intended in the beginning. As followers of Christ, let's list some of the characteristics that we have as a human creation made by God in His image and the ways in which someone will see the image of our heavenly father in us. Read the following verses and note what they tell us about God and His image:
 - a. 1 John 4:8 and Romans 5:8
 - b. 2 Peter 3:9
 - c. 2 Thessalonians 1:6
 - d. Numbers 14:18 and Colossians 3:13
 - e. 1 Peter 5:10 and Ephesians 2:8-9
 - f. 1 Corinthians 10:13
 - g. Acts 10:34-35 and Ephesians 6:8
 - h. Galatians 5:22
3. When we look back at the list we created above, can we see God in us? Do others see God in us? Are we reflecting the image of God, or of mankind? The truth is that we can only do this through the shed blood of Christ, as forgiven sinners. A lost mankind is unable to reflect God's image, since they are instead reflecting the image of this lost world. Note the key takeaways of the following verses:
 - a. 1 John 1:7
 - b. John 18:36 and 8:23, 2 Corinthians 10:2, Ephesians 6:12
4. While mankind cannot reflect God's image as the Bible reveals it without the shed blood of Christ, there are attributes of all mankind that do reflect the image of God. List some these attributes, as referenced in the following verses:
 - a. Joshua 24:15, Psalm 25:12, and Proverbs 1:29, 3:31, 8:10, and 12:26
 - b. Ecclesiastes 3:11
 - c. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-17
 - d. Romans 2:15

As evidenced in our study on this topic, all of mankind does reflect some aspects of God, and those who follow Jesus reflect even more. Although God is a spirit, we are a physical creation of His, made in his image. He gave us the breath of life, and in so doing created us as human beings that are both physical and spirit in nature (see Hebrews 4:12). We are unique among everything that God created, and prior to the sin of Adam and Eve—referred to as "the fall"—we were perfect. In the next lesson, we will explore how mankind, though made in God's image, failed and used free will to sin against the very God who had created it.

As we conclude this lesson, we need to ask ourselves whether others see God's image in us. Are we being faithful children of God? How can we better serve Him until His only son Jesus returns?

I am praying you will have a blessing-filled week as you study with us. I also pray that others will see Jesus reflected in you.

In Christ,

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