

# The Image of God

Genesis 1:26-27

What does it mean to be a person? What does it mean to be human?

We are people who mirror God's image. Every person is made in God's image.

We are significant!

How would the world answer this question?

- A machine – perhaps a better machine could do the same job as a human. Therefore, human life is expendable. In Fort Worth Texas there is a McDonald's run completely by robots.
- Someone who is useful. In marriage, can we look for an upgrade when our spouse is no longer pleasing?
- An animal – but there is a difference between humans and animals. Think about the value of animals. Although we may love our pet, the death of a pet does not affect us as much as the death of a human. Science has no basis that humans are different from animals, but the Bible does.
- Life has no value. Therefore, slavery and war (killing) are acceptable.
- The current belief is that a person has value according to what they can do. (author – Singer)

Therefore, newborn babies have no value. Therefore, abortion is acceptable. The killing of the elderly, those who are disabled or have dementia, is acceptable, (euthanasia)

Many governments approve of abortion. In Australia it is legal up to full-term.

To believe that we are made in the image of God, we have to LOVE all – look after the hurting and the sick.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Wilberforce saw God's value in every person. He fought to abolish the slave trade, but it took decades.

During WW2, Bonhoeffer knew that the killing of Jews was devaluing the image of God. He fought against Hitler, but it cost him his life. He was sent to prison and executed.

Martin Luther King Junior said, "all men have something within them that God has injected. There are no gradations in the image of God – black through to white all have the same value. Speaking up cost him his life. He was assassinated.

Genesis 1:21 tells us that we are different from the animals. The animals were created according to their kinds. But humanity was created according to God's likeness.

We are like God, but not God. Made in the image of God, we are all valuable. God doesn't make mistakes. But the reality is, we treat each other poorly. Non-Christians either lean towards a belief that 'we are God' (pride) OR 'we are animals'.

But our role is to care for the creation and for people.

What is the meaning of 'image' and 'likeness'?

There are ways we are like Him and ways we are not like Him. We are NOT all-knowing, all-present, all-powerful, immutable, eternal. (We live forever but we are born, which means we had a beginning whereas God did not.)

Think of a child that is the image of his father. There is a likeness, but they are not identical.

We are made like God, and like a mirror, we represent Him. When people see us, they see the image of God in us.

We are like God in that we can reason, understand, create, have dominion over the earth, and can show His character attributes such as love, kindness, goodness etc.

Adam and Eve were created in the image of God but sin distorted their perfection when they said "We can be like God."

If we try to find value and worth in anything other than God, it will crush you, as it crushed Adam and Eve. Things that people put above God are: beauty, work and even family. What happens if these things fall apart? A person has no anchor.

Colossians 1:15 – Jesus is the image of the invisible God.

Seeing Jesus lifts our eyes off our own image.

2 Cor 3:18 – When you behold something you become like it – behold the glory of God. We are forgiven.

Summary: Image of God issues

- Abortion
- Not treating people properly – slavery
- Gossip
- Putting people down
- Not caring for people

Ephesians 2:10 – We are God's workmanship.