

August 2019 Newsletter



Sundays At 6:30 AM on



GOD'S SPECIAL CREATION

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What matters most to God? Perhaps a better question is, *WHO* matters most to God? The answer, of course, is *YOU*! When God created the heavens and the earth, the most important part of His expansive, miraculous, artistic creation was you—that is, people.

To think the God of the universe miraculously created human life is really mind-blowing. The same hands that made the sun,



moon, and stars also made you and me. And even more amazing is that He created us in His own image. And we are the only part of creation about which this statement is made. In **Genesis 1:27**, the Bible says, “*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*”

Later, as directed by God’s Holy Spirit, David declares about himself as representative of the creation of man, “*I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made*” (**Psalms 139:14**).

The creation story in Genesis goes into more detail about the creation of mankind than it does about all the rest of God’s creation, showing the delicate care God took to make us and showing that we are special to Him. “*And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being*” (**Genesis 2:7**).

Why is mankind so special to God? Even King David poses the same question:

“*What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the*

angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor” (**Psalms 8:4-5**).

Human beings are the only part of God’s creation created in His own image! How, then, were we created in His image?

Our Minds

First, mankind resembles God because He gave us a mind with which we can reason and make decisions. Animals have brains but not to reason or make choices—they are led by their instincts and actually just carry out the instructions God has wired into their brains.

That human beings can reason and choose is a reflection of God’s own ability to do the same. An animal cannot invent anything, write a book, or paint a masterpiece? Yet, anytime we invent, write a book, paint a landscape, enjoy a symphony, or calculate a sum, we proclaim we humans are made in God’s image!

The intention here is not to suggest that the rest of the creation is insignificant. Jesus observes, “*Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will.*” Yet, He concludes, “*you are of more value than many sparrows*” (**Matthew 10:29, 31**).

Our Morals

Second, God created Adam and Eve in His own image by making them pure, sinless, and perfectly moral. **Genesis 2:25**: “*And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*”

When God created them as righteous and innocent, He made them a reflection of His own holiness and declared His creation

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The Kingship of Jesus

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"Few... Were Saved by Water"

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Priority of Prayer

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"By Faith, Noah..."

“very good” (**Genesis 1:31**). But by Genesis 3, Adam and Eve’s natural curiosity, mixed with the devil’s deception, resulted in disobedience, sin, and separation from God (**Genesis 3:23-24**). As a result, God presented a moral standard by which His creation was to live.

It is the same for us today. We are born pure and innocent, having no sin because we have not experienced Satan’s temptations and have not become aware of the difference between right and wrong. Once we are aware of this difference, we sin when we violate the standard; sin, then, separates us from God (**Isaiah 59:1-2**). To maintain our relationship with Him, we must submit to Him and live by His standard of morality.

The Messiah

Yet perhaps the ultimate expression of God’s image is revealed through Jesus. *“Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: ‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me’ ”* (**Hebrews 10:5**).

Jesus brought glory to God’s most valued creation. *“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**). The Hebrew writer agrees:

“who [The Messiah] 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, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they” (**Hebrews 1:3-4**).

As cited in **Psalms 8:5**, Christ was made a little lower than the angels. Yet He was crowned with “glory and honor.” Though lower in authority and rank of creation, mankind is elevated because of the Messiah. The Hebrew writer continues:

“For to which of the angels did He ever say: ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You’? And again: ‘I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son’?” (**Hebrews 1:5**)

Relationship with God

Therefore, as the zenith of God’s creation, mankind has great responsibility placed upon him: to glorify God. Since sin entered after the creation, mankind has continued to fall short of God’s glory, creating division in the relationship between mankind and his Creator (**Romans 3:23**).

But Jesus provided a way to mend our damaged relationship with God! He says, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me”* (**John 14:6**). Jesus glorified the Father in His life, death, and resurrection. Shortly before His crucifixion, He exclaimed, *“I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do”* (**John 17:6**). It is irresponsible for us as God’s special creation to be disobedient to His will.

To be obedient to the will of God, we must be born again. Jesus tells Nicodemus in **John 3:5**, *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”* Simply put, we must be baptized into Christ’s spiritual body. Paul adds, *“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body”* (**1 Corinthians 12:13a**).

Still, our responsibility as God’s special creation includes both our spiritual birth and our spiritual life. As Jesus committed His life to the Father’s will, we too must “be about” our “Father’s business.” Even long ago, Solomon pointed out, *“Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established”* (**Proverbs 16:3**).

So, in every choice, word, or task, we should ask ourselves—what would Jesus do? What would Jesus say? Do others see Jesus’ reflected in my words, deeds, and life? Am I reflecting His glory?

Think about the implications of this idea in our workplaces. How would Jesus go about doing our job? What level of effort would He bring to it? What would the finished product look like? When we finish a job, are we quick to assume the praise and glory? Rather we should simply say, “Thank you Lord, for using me to accomplish Your work.”

In instructing Christians who lived as common servants, Paul says, *“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ”* (**Colossians 3:23-24**).

Failing to take seriously our relationship with God is a willful rejection of our designed purpose. May we embrace our role as His *great creation* without circumventing our responsibility to His *great commission* (**Matthew 28:19-20**).

