

The Creation of Man (Part 2)

Rocky Wyatt | November 5, 2017

Made In The Image of God

Understanding mankind involves grasping the fact that man is God's "image" and "likeness." As Beck and Demarest state, "The implications of human persons created in the image of God are immense for theology, psychology, ministry, and Christian living. Ramifications of the *imago* embrace issues of human dignity and value, personal and social ethics, relations between the sexes, the solidarity of the human family ... and racial justice."



MacArthur/Mayhue

The Image of God - Scripture

Genesis 1:26-27

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.



The Image of God - Scripture

Genesis 5:1–2

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created.



The Image of God - Scripture

Genesis 9:6

“Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man.

1 Corinthians 11:7

For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man.



The Image of God - Scripture

James 3:9

With it we bless our Lord and Father, and
with it we curse men, who have been made
in the likeness of God;



The Image of God

The Latin phrase *imago Dei* (**e maw go day**) means “image of God” and is sometimes used in theological discussions in place of the English phrase “image of God.”

Out of all the creatures God made, only one creature, man, is said to be made “in the image of God.”



Grudem

The Image of God - Definition

When God says, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Gen. 1:26), the meaning is that God plans to make a creature similar to himself. Both the Hebrew word for “image” ... and the Hebrew word for “likeness” ... refer to something that is *similar* but not identical to the thing it represents or is an “image” of. The word *image* can also be used of something that *represents* something else.



Grudem

The Image of God - Definition

When we realize that the Hebrew words for “image” and “likeness” simply informed the original readers that man was *like* God, and would in many ways *represent* God, much of the controversy over the meaning of “image of God” is seen to be a search for too narrow and too specific a meaning. When Scripture reports that God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Gen. 1:26), it simply would have meant to the original readers, “Let us make man to be *like* us and to *represent* us.”

Grudem



The Image of God – Three Views

1. The Substantive View

...the image of God is inherently structural to man. It is a characteristic within the makeup of man. The image is part of man, not just something he does. Some have asserted that the image is the physical body of man or some physical characteristic like walking upright. Some say that the image is a psychological or spiritual quality, such as reason, memory, will, or moral capacity.

MacArthur/Mayhue



The Image of God – Three Views

2. The Functional View

...the image of God is something humans do. Since Genesis 1:26–28 links the image with ruling and subduing the earth, some believe that the image is man's dominion over creation. German Protestant theologian Hans Walter Wolff (1911–1993) stated, “It is precisely in his function as ruler that he [man] is God's image.”



MacArthur/Mayhue

The Image of God – Three Views

3. The Relational View

...relationship is the image of God. Summarizing this view, Millard Erickson writes, “Humans can be said to be in the image or to display the image [of God] when standing in a particular relationship, which indeed is the image.” This perspective was popular with neoorthodox and existential theologians. Support for the relational view is found in the way that the image of God is closely connected with man being created male and female (Gen. 1:27). Since the concept of relationship is central to man’s connection with God and people, the image is viewed as man being in relationship.

MacArthur/Mayhue, (Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006), 524.)



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Though we have argued above that it would be difficult to define all the ways in which we are like God, we can nevertheless mention several aspects of our existence that show us to be more like God than all the rest of creation.



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Moral Aspects:

We are creatures who are morally accountable before God for our actions. Corresponding to that accountability, we have an inner sense of right and wrong that sets us apart from animals (who have little if any innate sense of morality or justice but simply respond from fear of punishment or hope of reward). When we act according to God's moral standards, our likeness to God is reflected in behavior that is holy and righteous before him, but, by contrast, our *unlikeness* to God is reflected whenever we sin.



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Spiritual Aspects:

We have not only physical bodies but also immaterial spirits, and we can therefore act in ways that are significant in the immaterial, spiritual realm of existence. This means that we have a spiritual life that enables us to relate to God as persons, to pray and praise him, and to hear him speaking his words to us. No animal will ever spend an hour in intercessory prayer for the salvation of a relative or a friend!



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Spiritual Aspects:

Connected with this spiritual life is the fact that we have immortality; we will not cease to exist but will live forever. Although it is not a separate aspect of our likeness to God, the fact that we have been redeemed by Christ sets us apart in an absolute way from every other creature God has made. This is a consequence of our being in God's image, and of God's love for us, rather than one part of what it means to be in his image.



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Mental Aspects:

We have an ability to reason and think logically and learn that sets us apart from the animal world. Animals sometimes exhibit remarkable behavior in solving mazes or working out problems in the physical world, but they certainly do not engage in abstract reasoning—there is no such thing as the “history of canine philosophy,” for example, nor have any animals since creation developed at all in their understanding of ethical problems or use of philosophical concepts, etc.



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Mental Aspects:

Our use of complex, abstract language sets us far apart from the animals. I could tell my son, when he was four years old, to go and get the big, red screwdriver from my workbench in the basement. Even if he had never seen it before, he could easily perform the task because he knew meanings of “go,” “get,” “big,” “red,” “screwdriver,” “workbench,” and “basement.” He could have done the same for a small, brown hammer or a black bucket beside the workbench or any of dozens of other items that he perhaps had never seen before but could visualize when I described them in a few brief words.



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Mental Aspects:

Another mental difference between humans and animals is that we have an awareness of the distant future, even an inward sense that we will live beyond the time of our physical death, a sense that gives many people a desire to attempt to be right with God before they die (God “has put eternity into man’s mind,” Eccl. 3:11).



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Mental Aspects:

Our likeness to God is also seen in our human creativity in areas such as art, music, and literature, and in scientific and technological inventiveness. We should not think of such creativity as restricted to world-famous musicians or artists—it is also reflected in a delightful way in the play acting or skits put on by children, in the skill reflected in the cooking of a meal or the decorating of a home or the planting of a garden, and in the inventiveness shown by every human being who “fixes” something that just wasn’t working correctly.



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Mental Aspects:

In the area of emotions, our likeness to God is seen in a large difference in degree and complexity of emotions. Of course, animals do show some emotions (anyone who has owned a dog can remember evident expressions of joy, sadness, fear of punishment when it has done wrong, anger if another animal invades its “turf,” contentment, and affection, for example). But in the complexity of emotions that we experience, once again we are far different than the rest of creation.



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Relational Aspects:

Although animals no doubt have some sense of community with each other, the depth of interpersonal harmony experienced in human marriage, in a human family when it functions according to God's principles, and in a church when a community of believers is walking in fellowship with the Lord and with each other, is much greater than the interpersonal harmony experienced by any animals. In our family relationships and in the church, we are also superior to angels, who do not marry or bear children or live in the company of God's redeemed sons and daughters.



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Relational Aspects:

In marriage itself we reflect the nature of God in the fact that as men and women we have equality in importance but difference in roles from the time that God created us.



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Relational Aspects:

Man is like God also in his relationship to the rest of creation. Specifically, man has been given the right to rule over the creation and when Christ returns will even be given authority to sit in judgment over angels (1 Cor. 6:3; Gen. 1:26, 28; Ps. 8:6–8).



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Physical Aspects:

Is there any sense in which our human bodies are also a part of what it means to be made in the image of God? Certainly we should not think that our physical bodies imply that God himself has a body, for “God is spirit” (John 4:24), and it is sin to think of him or to portray him in any way that would imply that he has a material or a physical body (see Ex. 20:4; Ps. 115:3–8; Rom. 1:23).



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Physical Aspects:

But even though our physical bodies should in no way be taken to imply that God has a physical body, are there still some ways in which our bodies reflect something of God's own character and thereby constitute part of what it means to be created in the image of God? Certainly this is true in some respects.



The Image of God – Specific Aspects (Grudem)

Physical Aspects:

For example, our physical bodies give us the ability to see with our eyes. This is a Godlike quality because God himself sees, and sees far more than we will ever see, although he does not do it with physical eyes like we have. Our ears give us the ability to hear, and this is a Godlike ability, even though God does not have physical ears. Our mouths give us the ability to speak, reflecting the fact that God is a God who speaks. Our senses of taste and touch and smell give us the ability to understand and enjoy God's creation, reflecting the fact that God himself understands and enjoys his creation, though in a far greater sense than we do.



The Pattern of Jesus (Grudem)

Beyond this matter of what the image of God consists of, we must ask why the human is made in God's image. What in actual application does it mean for one to be in the image of God? What is God's intention for one within life? ... Jesus' character and actions will be a particularly helpful guide in this matter since he was the perfect example of what human nature is intended to be:



Jesus and the Image of God

Colossians 1:15

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

John 14:9

Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"



Jesus and the Image of God

Hebrews 1:3

And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,



Jesus and the Image of God (Grudem)

Jesus had perfect fellowship with the Father

While on earth he communed with and frequently spoke to the Father. Their fellowship is most clearly seen in the high priestly prayer in John 17. Jesus spoke of how he and the Father are one (vv. 21–22). He had glorified and would glorify the Father (vv. 1, 4), and the Father had glorified and would glorify him (vv. 1, 5, 22, 24).



Jesus and the Image of God (Grudem)

Jesus obeyed the Father's will perfectly.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42). Indeed, throughout his ministry his own will was subordinate: "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work" (John 4:34); "I seek not to please myself but him who sent me" (John 5:30); "For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me" (John 6:38).



Jesus and the Image of God (Grudem)

Jesus always displayed a strong love for humans.

Note, for example, his concern for the lost sheep of Israel (Matt. 9:36; 10:6), his compassion for the sick (Mark 1:41) and the sorrowing (Luke 7:13), his patience with and forgiveness for those who failed.



The Command to Imitate

Ephesians 5:1

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;

1 Peter 1:16

because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

1 John 2:6

the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.



The Fall: God's Image Is Distorted but Not Lost (Grudem)

We might wonder whether man could still be thought to be *like God* after he sinned.

Genesis 9:6

⁶ “Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man.

James 3:9

⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God;



The Fall: God's Image Is Distorted but Not Lost

The Fall diminished God's image not only in Adam and Eve but in all their descendants, that is, the whole human race. We retain the image structurally, in the sense that our humanity is intact, but not functionally, for we are now sin's slaves and unable to use our powers to mirror God's holiness. Regeneration begins the process of restoring God's moral image in our lives, but not till we are fully sanctified and glorified shall we reflect God perfectly in thought and action as mankind was made to do and as the incarnate Son of God in his humanity did and does (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29, 46; Rom. 6:4, 5, 10; 8:11) Packer



Redemption in Christ

Nonetheless, it is encouraging to turn to the New Testament and see that our redemption in Christ means that we can, even in this life, progressively grow into more and more likeness to God.

Grudem



Redemption in Christ

Colossians 3:10

and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him—

2 Corinthians 3:18

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.



Complete Restoration of God's Image

The amazing promise of the New Testament is that just as we have been like Adam (subject to death and sin), we shall also be like Christ (morally pure, never subject to death again)...

Grudem



Complete Restoration of God's Image

1 Corinthians 15:49

Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.

Romans 8:29

For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;



Complete Restoration of God's Image

1 John 3:2

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.



Conclusions from Grudem

Our moral behavior can reflect more and more the holiness of God

Our spiritual life can be enriched and deepened.

Our use of reason and language can become more accurate and truthful and more honoring to God.



Conclusions from Grudem

Our sense of the future can become intensified as we grow in our hope of living with God forever.

Our future existence can be enriched as we lay up treasures in heaven and seek for increased heavenly reward



Our ability to rule over the creation can be extended by faithful use of the gifts God has given us;

Conclusions from Grudem

Our faithfulness to the God-given purposes for our creation as men and women can be increased as we follow biblical principles in our families;

Our creativity can be employed in ways that are more and more pleasing to God;

Our emotions can be more and more conformed to the pattern of Scripture so that we become more like David, a man after God's own heart



Conclusions from Grudem

Our interpersonal harmony in our families and in the church can reflect more and more the unity that exists among the persons in the Trinity.



Conclusions from Grudem

It would be good for us to reflect on our likeness to God more often. It will probably amaze us to realize that when the Creator of the universe wanted to create something “in his image,” something *more like himself* than all the rest of creation, he made us. This realization will give us a profound sense of dignity and significance as we reflect on the excellence of all the rest of God’s creation: the starry universe, the abundant earth, the world of plants and animals, and the angelic kingdoms are remarkable, even magnificent.



Conclusions from Grudem

But we are more like our Creator than any of these things. We are the culmination of God's infinitely wise and skillful work of creation. Even though sin has greatly marred that likeness, we nonetheless now reflect much of it and shall even more as we grow in likeness to Christ.



Practical Application

Ephesians 4:22–24

...that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

