

Observing the Creation of Man

1. Examine Genesis 1:24-31. What is the image of God in man?

Based on the apostle Paul's letters to the Ephesians (Eph 4:24-32) and Colossians (Col 3:8-10), the "image of God" appears to refer to the spiritual, rational, emotional, and moral qualities of God. In this context, man finds his identity by looking *up* at the righteous character of God.

This was God's original created intended "image" for man which changed after the Fall. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, a comparison of Jesus to Adam (1 Cor 15:45-49) is made with the terms "first" and "last" Adam. The significance is apparent, because both Adam and Jesus determine the character of human beings following them; one image is defined after the Fall and the other is redefined by grace.

There is possibly a more literal meaning to this verse. More recent views, based on Hebrew grammar, translate Gen 1:26 as "... Let Us make man *as* our image..." The kings of Ancient Near East cultures used images of themselves to symbolize their power and rule over an area. In this context, God made human beings as living symbols of His power and reign over earth.

This perspective would add a new dimension to the prohibition of making any image of God (Ex 20:4-6), because God had already done so in the divine creation of man; no human effort can make an image of God. This divine creation of man, in the image of God, is why God values human beings so much.

In the context of male-female equality, each individual created by God bears His image, male and female alike, and together would rule the earth as God's representatives and stewards of His creation.

2. Review the 6th day of Creation in Genesis 1:24-31 and Genesis 2:1-25. Examine the events that led to the creation of woman. Was Adam and Woman created equal? What do you make of this partnership?

The creation of man (human beings) was unique and distinct. Mankind's creation was described distinctly from God's other creative acts.

In the creation of man, Adam was created first at some period of time earlier in the day before Woman.

Created from dust, some commentators believe that "dust" is symbolic of some pre-human life form; however, Genesis 3:19 provides ample basis for the literal non-symbolic meaning of "dust." Lexical studies of the Hebrew term "man" indicates a likely association with the Hebrew term for "red earth."

Adam is placed in the Garden of Eden to cultivate and protect it, and God gave him two commands: 1) what he can eat, and 2) what he cannot eat.

In the first negative assessment of Creation, God determines that "man should not be alone." Yet God did not immediately make a helper, and instead brought the animals before Adam, who exercises his own judgment, for naming. In this process, Adam discovered his unique superiority over animals and his need for a suitable helper.

A woman is created from a sleeping Adam, who upon awakening is overjoyed, and instantly recognizes her as his equal and the one who meets his need for a companion. Adam names her Woman in recognition of her cellular similarity and origination from man.

Observing the Creation of Man (page 2)

So were they created equal? Note the paradox: equal but unequal.

1. There is a difference in organic source, purpose, and sequence.
2. Woman was created from man, but created for man.
3. Adam welcomes the woman, but names her Woman.
4. Woman was created as an individual, but she learns about herself from Adam.

And when joined as “one flesh,” it is the man who leaves his parents to form a new household with his wife at his side; the wife does not leave her family to initiate the new household. Forming the new household appears to be the responsibility of the man.

3. What does Paul see about the significance of the component source, purpose and sequence of Creation (1 Cor 11:7-9)?

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. For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. (1 Cor 11:7-9)

Paul indicates that head coverings on faithful men, during prayer or prophesy, obscure the glory of God. To understand this, when Jesus says, "it is finished" on the cross (John 19:30), He is completing His purpose of coming to earth and His earthly role in God's plan of fulfilling the Abrahamic Covenant. For His extraordinary sacrifice in atoning for mankind's sins, Jesus is glorified; for His lovingkindness to the Abrahamic Covenant, God is glorified.

The existence of Believers is the result of God's ongoing fulfillment of His promises to Abraham; this ongoing evidence of God's lovingkindness glorifies Him. And male Believers have the unique status of God's only physical image bearers.

In the context of all Christians:

Everyone who is called by My name,
And whom **I have created for My glory**,
Whom I have formed, even whom I have made.” (Isa 43:7)

I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. In that day **you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you**. He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.” (John 14:16-21)

4. What is Paul saying about the implications of the sequence of Creation (1 Tim 2:12-14)?

But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. (1 Tim 2:12-14)

As the first human being created, Adam receives instructions regarding the Garden of Eden with the expectation of a desire to serve God and accurately communicate His word to others. This distinction is important to notice; while Eve was deceived, Adam disobeyed.

Observing the Creation of Man (page 3)

Throughout the Bible, God communicates His word to select male Believers, heirs to the Abrahamic Covenant, and authors of the Bible. In the context of God's written word, God instructs both the king and priests to know and observe the Law so as to teach others as well (Deut 17:18-20; 31:9-13).

However, the majority of Christian men, since the beginning of human history, have failed in this responsibility of having a primary desire to serve God, know His word, and ably teach their families and church.

It is this failure that caused the original sin and fuels the skepticism of Paul's imperative.

In Ephesians 5:22-24, Paul indicates that husbands have a broad authority over their wives; however, the verses that follow, verses 25-30, instruct husbands to agapē love their wives just as Christ loved the church. In other words, husbands are to esteem their wives for the sake of their salvation without personal consideration or benefit.

Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. (Eph 5:22-24)

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. **He who loves his wife loves himself.** After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church - for we are members of his body. (Eph 5:25-30)

When Paul speaks of "He who loves his wife loves himself," he is referring to Jesus' two greatest commandments:

And He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Matt 22:37-39)

Jesus taught the disciples that leadership is not lording; it is serving for the sake of the salvation of others without personal consideration. And to care for the salvation of others, whether initial or ongoing, requires the knowledge of God's word.

If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. (John 13:14-16)

But it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant. For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves. (Luke 22:26-27)

In the partnership of two spiritually equal human beings, man and woman, the man bears the primary responsibility to lead the partnership in a God glorifying direction. It is important to understand this basis for understanding the doctrine of man, because it is emphasized by the apostle Paul.

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