

***In His Image:
A Study of the Image of
God in Man***

By
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Introduction

My two older boys enjoy building Legos. The oldest one I would call a “Lego maniac.” One thing I have learned from them is that you cannot build a creation without first dumping out the pieces on the floor. That which seems disconnected through carefully placed precision becomes a beautiful, inspiring creation.

The process of Lego building is the background for how I arranged each lesson. You will find that there are three divisions within the lessons: *Gathering the Pieces, Building our Understanding, and Looking at the Implications*. As I was considering the question of how to write a theological study that anyone could use, the boy’s favorite pastime seemed like a helpful format.

Within the category of “Gathering the Pieces” I used Richard Pratt’s triangle Exegesis (Bible Study), Community (Present and Past), and Private/Personal Judgment to frame out the pieces that were included to make the study. Private or personal judgment actually falls in the category of “Looking at the Implications.”

So, when you begin Lesson One you will see elements of Bible study alongside readings gathered from creeds and quotes from theologians. Creeds are documents that have been written in an effort to summarize what the Bible teaches regarding various topics or questions. They have proven helpful to me in knowing what the church fathers throughout history have said about man being created in the image of God. They are part of understanding our past community. The theologians I selected represent more of our present community of believers who are thinking these issues through in our day.

The categories introduced in Lesson One by John Frame that are credited to Meredith Cline’s work are used primarily because they brought a simplicity and fluidity to the study as a whole and are only offered as one way of looking at the Doctrine of the Image of Man. If they prove helpful to you then use them if not, then feel free to look at the topic from another angle. I had considered looking at Lessons 1, and 3-5 with the categories “relationship with God, the world, and others.” It seemed that it might be interesting to study what happens with the image of God in man from creation to the return of Christ through those topics. I offer that idea to you.

Please know that the purpose of this study is not to provide something written from an inductive method. This is a theological study not an inductive Bible study. The process is different. We are taking our concept of the doctrine of the image of God in man to the Scriptures to see where it needs to be reformed so that in the end we hope to have our thoughts more closely reflecting what the Lord has revealed to us. We want to live out of the fullness that He has provided for us as believers in Christ. That is the direction that this five-lesson study is headed.

May this be useful in filling the earth with His image-bearers.

Angel Richard, December 4, 2006

Lesson One

Images Created, *Part 1*

“Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness...”
Genesis 1:26 (NIV)

The fact that man is in the image of God means that man is like
God and represents God.

Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 442.

We are clay images—a powerful lesson in humility—but we are also images of God—creatures of wondrous value and dignity. Richard Pratt, *Designed for Dignity*, pg. 13.

Goal of this Lesson: To better understand what it means that mankind is created in the image of God.

Gathering the Pieces

- Why did God create man?
 - *From the Bible*

Before looking at what it means to be created in the image of God, we need to answer ‘why’ God created man.

1. Read Isaiah 43:7 and Ephesians 1:1-12 (see v. 12) to formulate an answer to this statement, God created us for...

2. Look up Psalms 16:11, 27:4, 73:25-26, and I Peter 1:8 to see how Scripture points us toward the second part of answering “why” we were created. Write down your insights.

- *From Community*

Westminster Larger Catechism

Question 1: What is the chief and highest end of man?

Answer: Man’s chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy Him forever.

- What does it mean that man is created in the image of God?
 - *From the Bible*

Read Genesis 1-2 and Genesis 5:1-2 to answer the following questions. (The Hebrew word “*Adam*” can indicate the first man but is also used in a generic way for humankind.)

3. What did God say about creating man? Who is He talking to?

4. Who was created in the image of God and who was not created in the image of God?

5. Describe the relationship between Adam and God.

6. Describe the relationship between Adam and the world.

7. Describe the relationship between Adam and Eve.

8. What did God say at the end of the day in Genesis 1:31?

9. Read Psalm 8. How does it help us to understand the dignity God gave man as His image-bearers?

- *From Community*

Westminster Larger Catechism

Question 17: How did God create man?

Answer: After God had made all other creatures, He created man male and female; formed the body of the man of the dust of the ground, and the woman of the rib of the man, endued them with living, reasonable, and immortal souls; made them after His own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it, and dominion over the creatures; yet subject to fall.

Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, pgs. 442-443

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" (tselem) and the Hebrew word for "likeness" (demut) 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 for something that represents something else.

Theologians have spent much time attempting to specify one characteristic of man, or a very few, in which the image of God is primarily seen...

In this discussion it would be best to focus attention primarily on the meanings of the words "image" and "likeness." As we have seen, these terms had quite clear meanings to the original readers. 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."

Dr. John Frame, *Doctrine of the Christian Life* – Chapter 33, pgs. 579-581

Christian thinking on human dignity, including our dignity specifically as men and as women, begins with the teaching of Gen. 1:27: "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." The idea that we are made in the image of God has given comfort and moral stimulus to many...this doctrine defines our fundamental ethical responsibility as the imitation of God. But what does it mean to be in God's image?

Theological interpretations of the image have often been complicated and technical. But whatever value there may be in these theological developments, the basic idea is a simple one. The writer of Genesis did not consider the terms "image" and "likeness" to be problematic; he made no attempt to explain them. Evidently he was using a concept familiar to his readers.

The ancient world was full of “images.” Images were simply statues or pictures, intended to represent someone, often a god or a king. As we saw in our discussion of the second commandment, God forbids worship of images. Yet there is an image of the true God, ourselves. Scripture also calls us to honor one another in a way analogously to the way we honor God.

Meredith G. Kline has shown us that the Bible presents three aspects of the image...First, the image of God is *physical*, bodily. The human eye is an image of God’s power to see, as the Psalmist says, “He who made the eye, shall he not see?” (Ps. 94:9). God doesn’t have literal eyes; but our eyes reflect His power of sight. Similarly, Scripture speaks of God’s “arm” and “hand,” indicating His power to act, and showing that our arms and hand are also images of Him. People sometimes object to saying that the image of God is physical, because God doesn’t have a body. But that is short-sighted. God doesn’t have a body, but our bodies certainly reflect His power.

A second aspect of the image is what Kline calls the *official*. As God holds the office of King, so He makes us His assistant kings, His vicegerents or regents, to have dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:26, 28).

The third element is the *ethical* element. The New Testament especially tells us that we reflect God in our knowledge, righteousness, and holiness (Eph. 4:24, Col. 3:10). And throughout Scripture, God tells us to “be holy, as I the Lord your God am holy” (Lev. 19:2) or, as Jesus said in Matt. 5:48, to “be perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect.” So the image of God extends to our inmost character.

In none of these respects is there any difference between men and women. Both sexes image God physically. God charges men and women together to have dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:28), so they share the official aspect of God’s image. And He calls both to obedience, implying their equality in the ethical dimension of the image. In the fall, both the man and the woman disobey God, and God brings curses, mingled with blessing, upon them equally (Gen. 3:14-19). It is significant that the curse applies somewhat differently to the man and the woman. The woman will have pain in childbearing; the man will have pain and toil as he works the ground. But both are cursed and equally fallen. Although Scripture mentions that the woman was first deceived (1 Tim. 2:14), it never suggests that women are more or less sinful than men. Christ’s redemption, therefore, applies equally to both. Scripture never suggests that women are more or less sanctified than men by the grace of Christ.

10. How do these three readings help to fill out our picture of what it means to be created in the image of God?

Building our Understanding

11. Put all the above pieces together by writing a few sentences that describe why we were created and how it looked to live as the created images of God at this point in the Genesis story.

Looking at the Implications

12. Given all the Scriptures say about mankind, what are the implications for how we are to view and treat individuals in every other ethnic group, social group, nation, and gender?
13. How are we to view the unborn, those with disabilities, those guilty of sin, and those with life-ending illness?
14. What is the church like when it fails to believe and embody the truth that we've studied in this lesson?
15. To bring this down to a personal level, describe how you treat God, yourself, and others when you fail to believe this truth.
 - God
 - Myself
 - Others (why not specifically name the person(s) that you disregard and don't value the way that God values them)

16. How is Jesus the ultimate picture of someone who lived out the truth of this lesson?

“When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place, what is man that You are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.” Psalm 8:3-5

Take a few minutes to worship Jesus and to thank God for creating you in His image. Why not repent of the ways you treat others as if they are not the image-bearers of God. Then thank the Father for how Jesus took on that sin of yours.

- *From Community*

Westminster Larger Catechism

Question 20: What was the providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created?

Answer: The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was the placing him in paradise, appointing him to dress it, giving him liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth; putting the creatures under his dominion, and ordaining marriage for his help; affording him communion with himself; instituting the Sabbath; entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge; and forbidding to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.

Richard L. Pratt, Jr., *Designed for Dignity*, pgs. 20-21

In the broadest sense, Adam and Eve were like God in every way possible for finite creatures to be like Him. They were limited by time and space, but their minds, wills, and emotions were patterned after their Creator. Even their physical characteristics and abilities reflected the spiritual characteristics and powers of God.

As important as these perspectives may be, Moses explained the image of God by emphasizing the job God gave us to perform in this world. Immediately after making the man and the women, God gave them a special commission...this verse commands us to be fruitful, increase, fill, subdue, and rule. These five commands reveal our most basic human responsibilities.

We often call these tasks for humanity the cultural mandate. It was God's design that people build an earthly culture for His glory. This cultural mandate involves two basic responsibilities: multiplication and dominion...their job was to produce enough images of God to cover the earth. ...Adam and Eve were to exercise authority over creation, managing its vast resources on God's behalf.

5. How is the "cultural mandate" appropriate for those created in the image of God?

Building our Understanding

Taking what you looked at in Lesson One and combining it with this lesson, write a few sentences that gives a picture to what it means and looks like to have been made in the image of God and to live as Moses described it in Genesis 1 & 2.

6. How does what you wrote differ from what you believed prior to this study?

7. How has your concept of being an image-bearer been confirmed?

Looking at the Implications

As we connect the dots between Moses' world and our world it remains clear that the commands God gave to Adam and Eve is the commission that He gives to the human race. There are numerous questions one could ask to unpack the outworking of the cultural mandate but here are a few for us to consider.

- How are we to multiply image-bearers?
 - *Through families*
8. One question to consider is does the act of **birthing** children fulfill the commission to multiply image-bearers? Why did you answer the way you did?

 9. What is the difference between multiplying an image-bearer and raising a good citizen?

 10. How does Deuteronomy 6:4-9 inform our thoughts about raising image-bearers?

 11. Richard Pratt states that, "We fulfill our calling only as we raise our children to serve their Creator." *Designed for Dignity*, p. 27. What do you think about this comment?

12. What is the vision you have for your own children?
13. What is the vision your church has regarding children? Does it see it's calling to multiply images of God? In what ways can you contribute to fulfilling that calling?

One thing becomes clear as we read the Old and the New Testament, multiplying image-bearers includes everyone. This great privilege was not given only to those who could bear children for even Jesus never bore a child. Let's look at what he says to see what else is included when we speak of raising up image-bearers.

- *Through evangelism and discipleship*

14. Describe how the "Great Commission" in Matthew 28:18-20 is similar to the cultural mandate.

15. What tasks are included in this commission?

16. How are you filling the earth with God's images? What are the obstacles that keep you from fulfilling this high calling?

➤ **How are we to have dominion over the earth?**

17. Describe your view of work. By that we mean, why do you work? What's the purpose of your work? What's the value of your work?

18. Read Colossians 3:23-24. How does this portion of Scripture differ from your concept of work?

19. Where does your concept need to be reformed by what God says about work?

20. When are the times you are tempted to forget God's view of work?

21. Describe the way you act when you forget this truth.

22. How is Jesus the ultimate example of someone who lived out the truth of the cultural mandate? (Think about how He multiplied image-bearers and exercised dominion over the earth.)

23. How would I be different if this truth were powerfully real to me? (Ask God for it!)

After Jesus said this, He looked toward heaven and prayed... "I have brought You glory on earth by completing the work You gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me in Your presence with the glory I had with You before the world began." John 17:4-5

Lesson Three

Images Distorted

“There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.” Romans 3:10b-12

Every single human being, no matter how much the image of God is marred by sin, or illness, or weakness, or age, or any other disability, still has the status of being in God’s image and therefore must be treated with the dignity and respect that is due to God’s image-bearer.

Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 450

Goal of this Lesson: To understand how the Fall of Adam distorted mankind as image-bearers.

Gathering the Pieces

➤ What has sin done that distorts the human race?

- *From the Bible*

1. To answer this question we will look at it from two directions. First, read through Genesis 3 noting how things have changed between:

Adam and Eve’s relationship with God:

Adam and Eve’s relationship with the world

Adam’s work:

Eve’s childbearing:

Their relationship with the garden of Eden:

Adam and Eve’s relationship with each other:

3. What significance does it have that God gave the same job to Noah and his family after the flood and the fall of mankind, that He had given to Adam and Eve at creation?
4. Read James 3:9-10 to see what Jesus' brother James believed about "fallen men" (mankind).

- *From Community*

The Second Helvetic Confession

Chapter 8 - Of Man's Fall, Sin and the Cause of Sin

The Fall of Man. In the beginning, man was made according to the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, good and upright. But when at the instigation of the serpent and by his own fault he abandoned goodness and righteousness, he became subject to sin, death and various calamities. And what he became by the fall, that is, subject to sin, death and various calamities, so are all those who have descended from him.

Canons of Dordt

Article 1: The Effect of the Fall on Human Nature

Man was originally created in the image of God and was furnished in his mind with a true and salutary knowledge of his Creator and things spiritual, in his will and heart with righteousness, and in all his emotions with purity; indeed, the whole man was holy. However, rebelling against God at the devil's instigation and by his own free will, he deprived himself of these outstanding gifts. Rather, in their place he brought upon himself blindness, terrible darkness, futility, and distortion of judgment in his mind; perversity, defiance, and hardness in his heart and will; and finally impurity in all his emotions.

Article 3: Total Inability

Therefore, all people are conceived in sin and are born children of wrath, unfit for any saving good, inclined to evil, dead in their sins, and slaves to sin; without the grace of the regenerating Holy Spirit they are neither willing nor able to return to God, to reform their distorted nature, or even to dispose themselves to such reform.

Article 4: The Inadequacy of the Light of Nature

There is, to be sure, a certain light of nature remaining in man after the fall, by virtue of which he retains some notions about God, natural things, and the difference between what is moral and immoral, and demonstrates certain eagerness for virtue and for good outward behavior. But this light of nature is far from enabling man to come to a saving knowledge of God and conversion to Him—so far, in fact, that man does not use it rightly even in matters of nature and society. Instead, in various ways he completely distorts this light, whatever its precise character, and suppresses it in unrighteousness. In doing so he renders himself without excuse before God.

Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 444.

Since man has sinned, he is certainly not as fully like God as he was before. His moral purity has been lost and his sinful character certainly does not reflect God's holiness. His intellect is corrupted by falsehood and misunderstanding; his speech no longer continually glorifies God; his relationships are often governed by selfishness rather than love, and so forth...After the fall, then, we are still in God's image—we are still like God and we still represent God—but the image of God in us is distorted; we are less fully like God than we were before the entrance of sin.

Dr. John Frame, *Salvation Belongs To The Lord*, pgs. 89-90

Even the worst sinners image God's power and authority, but ethically they have marred and distorted the image, as Calvin put it. In a strange way, nevertheless, their very sin reflects God. For sin is trying to be God, trying to put oneself on the throne. So, even the distortion of the image reflects God in an ironic way. Only a very special kind of creature can sin. That is the great tragedy of the fall. But even as fallen creatures we continue to bear God's image. We can never escape the image in which God made us, for we cannot escape our own skin.

7. What from these readings are helpful for understanding what was distorted because of Adam's sin?

Building our Understanding

8. In order to bring our thoughts together, write a paragraph or two explaining what was lost or distorted in mankind when Adam and Eve sinned.

Looking at the Implications

There is an important element to consider when discussing the distortion of mankind via sin. In paradoxical ways the image of God is evident even in fallen, unregenerate people. Referring back to the categories of physical, functional, and ethical, one can see it more clearly. Our physical gifts of thinking, speaking, and creating things, lift us above the animal world and reflect how we are like God but with the distortion we use these gifts for evil purposes (see Genesis 4, 6, or 11). One need only read or listen to the world news to see examples. Or for that matter, we need only to consider how we build “kingdoms” unto ourselves.

Second, as human beings we are still multiplying, filling the earth, and subduing it. But either we try to escape those tasks (see Genesis 11) or do not do them to the glory of God.

Finally, even sin reflects God in a way. Eve heard Satan say that when she ate the tree she would be “like God.” The sinner is one who, like Satan, wants to replace God on the throne. No individual could desire that unless they were in the image of God.

9. In what ways can this lesson help us understand what we see and experience worldwide?

10. What does the church act like when it does not understand the distortion that sin has on humanity?

11. Describe how the church acts when it fails to believe that fallen, unregenerate people still show evidence of the image of God?

12. Since Scripture tells us that God continues to view fallen man as His image bearers, how does that effect how we ought to view others? Ourselves?

13. Describe how we should treat every individual? Ourselves?

14. How is Jesus the ultimate example of someone who lived out the truth in this lesson?
Write down a specific situation you remember about the way He treated someone during His life.

Take a few minutes to enjoy the beauty of how Jesus treats fallen, unregenerate people. How He treats you. Express your thanks to Him, your love of Him, your need for Him. Ask Him to change you into His image with regard to how you treat people. Enjoy His forgiveness, enjoy His love for you, and enjoy that He has given you His Spirit so that you can reflect Him as you interact with others.

Lesson Four

Images Redeemed

For God knew His people in advance, and He chose them to become like His Son,
so that His Son would be the firstborn, with many brothers and sisters.

Romans 8:29 (NLT)

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 of God. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 445.

Goal of this Lesson: To understand how God recovered His image-bearers through the redemption in Christ and to consider the ways that redemption is lived out in those who believe in Christ.

Gathering the Pieces

- What is recovered for God's image-bearers in Christ?
 - *From the Bible*
1. Take the chart from the Appendix again and continue filling in the truths that Scripture tells us regarding the recovery process that Christ initiates through His life, death, and resurrection. The categories are only being used for fluidity and simplicity and are not strict in any sense. Look up the various passages to note what changes in each.

Physical:

Romans 6:13 (example: our bodies can be instruments of righteousness)

Romans 12:1-2

I Corinthians 3:16

I Corinthians 12:12-19, 27

Functional:

Matthew 28:18-20 (example: make disciples)

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Colossians 1:13-14

Ethical:

Romans 5:17; 8:29 (example: gift of righteousness)

Galatians 5:22-23

Ephesians 4:22-24

Colossians 3:9-10

- *From Community*

Canons of Dordt

Article 11: The Holy Spirit's Work in Conversion

Moreover, when God carries out this good pleasure in His chosen ones, or works true conversion in them, He not only sees to it that the gospel is proclaimed to them outwardly, and enlightens their minds powerfully by the Holy Spirit so that they may rightly understand and discern the things of the Spirit of God, but, by the effective operation of the same regenerating Spirit, He also penetrates into the inmost being of man, opens the closed heart, softens the hard heart, and circumcises the heart that is uncircumcised. He infuses new qualities into the will, making the dead will alive, the evil one good, the unwilling one willing, and the stubborn one compliant; He activates and strengthens the will so that, like a good tree, it may be enabled to produce the fruits of good deeds.

Article 16: Regeneration's Effect

However, just as by the fall man did not cease to be man, endowed with intellect and will, and just as sin, which has spread through the whole human race, did not abolish the nature of the human race but distorted and spiritually killed it, so also this divine grace of regeneration does not act in people as if they were blocks and stones; nor does it abolish the will and its properties or coerce a reluctant will by force, but spiritually revives, heals, reforms, and—in a manner at once pleasing and powerful—bends it back. As a result, a ready and sincere obedience of the Spirit now begins to prevail where before the rebellion and resistance of the flesh were completely dominant. It is in this that the true and spiritual restoration and freedom of our will consists. Thus, if the marvelous Maker of every good thing were not dealing with us, man would have no hope of getting up from his fall by his free choice, by which he plunged himself into ruin when still standing upright.

Westminster Confession of Faith

Chapter 13 – Of Sanctification

I. They who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by His Word and Spirit dwelling in them; the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified, and they more and more quickened and strengthened, in all saving graces, to the practice of true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

II. This sanctification is throughout in the whole man, yet imperfect in this life: there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part, whence ariseth a continual and irreconcilable war, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.

III. In which war, although the remaining corruption for a time may much prevail, yet, through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome: and so the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Richard L. Pratt, Jr., *Designed for Dignity*, pg. 157

As Adam's superior, Christ reversed the effects of humanity's fall. Where Adam brought death, Christ brought life. Where Adam caused the curse of ignobility and judgment, Christ produced dignity and salvation.

When did Christ accomplish this restoration? He did not do it all at once. It began during His first appearance on earth, and it will be completed only when He returns.

2. In what ways have these readings been helpful in understanding what Christ has recovered for God's image-bearers?

Building our Understanding

3. Pull your thoughts together in a few sentences to summarize what is restored to the images of those who know Christ.

Looking at the Implications

4. In order to not miss the significance of Christ's life and work, think back about the way relationships were prior to the fall, then after the fall, and now. Describe what has been made possible for those who follow Christ. You can refer to the chart to help think about this.
 - Their relationship with God
 - Their relationship with the world

- Their relationship with one another
5. What is the church like when it forgets the truths of this lesson?
 6. What am I like when I forget this truth? (What do I feel? How do I act? How do I treat God and others?)
 7. How do these truths show me what I can be?
 8. How would I be different if this truth were powerfully real to me? (Ask God for it!)
“For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:17

Spend a few minutes talking to God about what He has shown you and spoken to you through His Word. Enjoy the beauty of what Christ has done for us. Be amazed! Be thrilled! Be encouraged! Be humbled! Ache to live it out day to day!

Lesson Five

Images Restored

Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust,
we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.
I Corinthians 15:49 (RSV)

The full measure of the excellence of our humanity will not be seen again in life
on earth until Christ returns and we have obtained all the benefits of the salvation He earned for us.
Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 444

Goal for this Lesson: To understand how a believer in Christ's design as God's image is restored at His return.

Gathering the Pieces

- How will the image of redeemed man be completely restored when Christ returns?
 - *From the Bible*
1. To finish out this study we will answer our question by looking at the three categories one last time. Find the chart and use the passage of Scripture in the lesson to see what God and Christ will do upon their return to fully restore their people.

Physical:

John 3:16 (example: eternal life)
Romans 8:19-21
I Corinthians 15:42-44
I Thessalonians 4:16-17
Revelation 21:4

Functional:

Luke 19:11-27 (example: ruling cities)
I Corinthians 6:3 & Matthew 19:28
Revelation 20:4
Revelation 22:5

Ethical:

I Corinthians 15:49 (example: bear the likeness of Christ)
I John 3:2

Revelation 20:6
 Revelation 21:27

- *From Community*

Westminster Larger Catechism

Question 86: What is the communion in glory with Christ, which the members of the invisible church enjoy immediately after death?

Answer: The communion in glory with Christ, which the members of the invisible church enjoy immediately after death, is, in that their souls are then made perfect in holiness, and received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies, which even in death continue united to Christ, and rest in their graves as in their beds, till at the last day they be again united to their souls. Whereas the souls of the wicked are at their death cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, and their bodies kept in their graves, as in their prisons, till the resurrection and judgment of the great day.

Question 87: What are we to believe concerning the resurrection?

Answer: We are to believe, that at the last day there shall be a general resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust: when they that are then found alive shall in a moment be changed; and the selfsame bodies of the dead which were laid in the grave, being then again united to their souls forever, shall be raised up by the power of Christ. The bodies of the just, by the Spirit of Christ, and by virtue of His resurrection as their head, shall be raised in power, spiritual, incorruptible, and made like to His glorious body; and the bodies of the wicked shall be raised up in dishonor by him, as an offended judge.

Question 90: What shall be done to the righteous at the Day of Judgment?

Answer: At the Day of Judgment, the righteous, being caught up to Christ in the clouds, shall be set on His right hand, and there openly acknowledged and acquitted, shall join with Him in the judging of reprobate angels and men, and shall be received into heaven, where they shall be fully and forever freed from all sin and misery; filled with inconceivable joys, made perfectly holy and happy both in body and soul, in the company of innumerable saints and holy angels, but especially in the immediate vision and fruition of God the Father, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, to all eternity. And this is the perfect and full communion, which the members of the invisible church shall enjoy with Christ in glory, at the resurrection and Day of Judgment.

Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 445

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)...The full measure of our creation in the image of God is not seen in the life of Adam who sinned, nor is it seen in our lives now, for we are imperfect. But the N. T. emphasizes that God's purpose in creating man in His image was completely realized in the person of

Jesus Christ...In Jesus we see human likeness to God as it was intended to be, and it should cause us to rejoice that God has predestined us “to be conformed to the image of His Son” (Rom. 8:29): “When He appears we shall be like Him” (1 John 3:2).

Richard L. Pratt, Jr., *Designed for Dignity*, pg. 196

The Creator took such special interest in you and me that He actually settled ahead of time the direction our lives would take. Our future is not subject to the winds of change. We cannot veer off course. We are sovereignly “predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers” (Romans 8:29). Through His resurrection, Christ became the glorious image of God, but God did not intend for Christ to be His only honored image. On the contrary, the Father determined to have Christ be the first of many brothers and sisters who would be made like Him. Men and women in Christ had their futures absolutely determined before the world even existed. They were designed for the dignity of conformity to Christ.

Dr. John Frame, *Salvation Belongs to the Lord*, pg. 295

What is the inheritance? Well, chiefly it is God Himself! We keep coming back to that. God was the inheritance of Israel (Ps. 16:5), as they were His. But we can be more specific. One thing God gives as an inheritance to His people is authority (Rev. 20:4; 22:5). We are to reign with Christ. That includes judging angels (1 Cor. 6:3), judging Israel (Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30), ruling cities (Luke 19:11-27). God gave to Adam and Even authority to have dominion over the earth. Now the saints of Christ receive the authority Adam forfeited by his sin.

2. How have these readings contributed to a fuller picture of the restoration that is to come for God’s people?

Building our Understanding

3. Put the pieces together by describing what our relationship with God, the world, and others will be like when God’s people are fully restored to His image.

Looking at the Implications

4. In what ways are the truths in this lesson hope for the world?

5. How does the church act when it fails to believe and live this truth?

6. How is the truth of this lesson different from what you thought prior to the study about mankind at Christ's return?

7. How do the truths of this lesson motivate you toward holiness and obedience in this life?

8. Of all that you read, what gives you the most hope to continue persevering?

9. What excites you about what is to come?

10. What have you learned that you can praise God for?

Take those thoughts and the Scripture below to enjoy our great God and Father and to worship our loving brother Jesus. Let your heart yearn in anticipation of what is to come!

Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. I Corinthians 15:49 (RSV)

Appendix

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Suggested Reading

Designed For Dignity by Richard L. Pratt, Jr.

	Before the Fall	Because of the Fall	In Christ	When Christ Returns
Physical	<p>*Adam and Eve's physical bodies bear the image of God.</p> <p>*They reflect the power and presence of God.</p>	<p>*Pain in childbirth</p> <p>*Physical toil with work and the land. (Gen. 3)</p> <p>*Physical death (Rom. 5:17)</p> <p>*Disease</p>	<p>*Body as instruments of righteousness (Rom. 6:13)</p> <p>*Body as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1-2)</p> <p>*We are the body of Christ, connected to one another (I Cor. 12:12-19,27)</p> <p>*Temple of H.S. (1 Cor. 3:16)</p>	<p>*Eternal life (John 3:16)</p> <p>*Creation will be liberated (Rom. 8:19-21)</p> <p>*Souls are united with their glorified bodies (I Cor. 15:42-44; I Thess. 4:16-17)</p> <p>*No more death or pain (Rev. 21:4)</p>
Functional (Official)	<p>*Adam and Eve were given the job to multiply (fill the earth with image-bearers) and to rule over the earth.</p> <p>*They were "assistant kings" or vice regents.</p>	<p>*Don't glorify God. (Rom. 1:21-23)</p> <p>*Follow the ruler of the kingdom of the air; the ways of this world. (Eph. 2:1-2)</p> <p>*Enemies of God (Col. 1:21)</p>	<p>*Make disciples of all the nations (Matt. 28:18-20)</p> <p>*We have the ministry of reconciliation and are Christ's ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:17-21)</p> <p>*Transferred to the kingdom of His Son (Col. 1:13-14)</p>	<p>*Authority to reign (Rev. 22:5)</p> <p>*Authority to judge (I Cor. 6:3; Matt. 19:28; Rev. 20:4)</p> <p>*Ruling cities (Luke 19:11-27)</p>
Ethical	<p>*Adam and Eve had knowledge, righteousness and holiness.</p> <p>*They have free wills.</p>	<p>*Wicked and unrighteous (Rom. 1:28-32)</p> <p>*Sin and death (Rom. 5:12)</p> <p>*Inherited guilt (Rom. 5:16)</p> <p>*Inherited corruption</p>	<p>*Gift of righteousness (Rom. 5:17)</p> <p>*Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23)</p> <p>*Righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:22-24)</p> <p>*New self being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator (Col. 3:9-10)</p>	<p>*Never sin again (Rev. 21:27)</p> <p>*Holy (Rev. 20:6)</p> <p>*Be like Jesus and bear his image (I Cor. 15:49; I John 3:2)</p>

Confessional Resources

Heidelberg #6

Q. 6. Did God create man evil and perverse like this?

A. No. On the contrary, God created man good and in his image, that is, in true righteousness and holiness, so that he might rightly know God his Creator, love him with his whole heart, and live with him in eternal blessedness, praising and glorifying him.

The Westminster Confession

CHAPTER 4

Of Creation.

I. It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create or make of nothing the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.

II. After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness after his own image, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. Besides this law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; which while they kept were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures.

The Westminster Confession

CHAPTER 6

Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the Punishment thereof.

I. Our first parents, begin seduced by the subtlety and temptations of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory.

II. By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

III. They being the root of mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by original generation.

IV. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.

V. This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated; and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both itself, and all the motions thereof, are truly and properly sin.

VI. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal.

Of Sanctification.

Chapter 13

I. They who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by his Word and Spirit dwelling in them; the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified, and they more and more quickened and strengthened, in all saving graces, to the practice of true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

II. This sanctification is throughout in the whole man, yet imperfect in this life: there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part, whence ariseth a continual and irreconcilable war, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.

III. In which war, although the remaining corruption for a time may much prevail, yet, through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome: and so the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

WLC

Question 1: What is the chief and highest end of man?

Answer: Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever.

Question 17: How did God create man?

Answer: After God had made all other creatures, he created man male and female; formed the body of the man of the dust of the ground, and the woman of the rib of the man, endued them with living, reasonable, and immortal souls; made them after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it, and dominion over the creatures; yet subject to fall.

Question 20: What was the providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created?

Answer: The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was the placing him in paradise, appointing him to dress it, giving him liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth; putting the creatures under his dominion, and ordaining marriage for his help; affording him communion with himself; instituting the sabbath; entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge; and forbidding to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.

Question 21: Did man continue in that estate wherein God at first created him?

Answer: Our first parents being left to the freedom of their own will, through the temptation of Satan, transgressed the commandment of God in eating the forbidden fruit; and thereby fell from the estate of innocency wherein they were created.

Question 22: Did all mankind fall in that first transgression ?

Answer: The covenant being made with Adam as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in that first transgression.

Question 23: Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

Answer: The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

Question 25: Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

Answer: The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of that righteousness wherein he was created, and the corruption of his

nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually; which is commonly called original sin, and from which do proceed all actual transgressions.

Question 27: What misery did the fall bring upon mankind?

Answer: The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse; so as we are by nature children of wrath, bond slaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world, and that which is to come.

Question 28: What are the punishments of sin in this world?

Answer: The punishments of sin in this world are either inward, as blindness of mind, a reprobate sense, strong delusions, hardness of heart, horror of conscience, and vile affections; or outward, as the curse of God upon the creatures for our sakes, and all other evils that befall us in our bodies, names, estates, relations, and employments; together with death itself.

Question 55: How does Christ make intercession?

Answer: Christ makes intercession, by his appearing in our nature continually before the Father in heaven, in the merit of his obedience and sacrifice on earth, declaring his will to have it applied to all believers;

Answering all accusations against them, and procuring for them quiet of conscience, notwithstanding daily failings, access with boldness to the throne of grace, and acceptance of their persons and services.

Question 75: What is sanctification?

Answer: Sanctification is a work of God's grace, whereby they whom God has, before the foundation of the world, chosen to be holy, are in time, through the powerful operation of his Spirit applying the death and resurrection of Christ unto them, renewed in their whole man after the image of God; having the seeds of repentance unto life, and all other saving graces, put into their hearts, and those graces so stirred up, increased, and strengthened, as that they more and more die unto sin, and rise unto newness of life.

Question 86: What is the communion in glory with Christ, which the members of the invisible church enjoy immediately after death ?

Answer: The communion in glory with Christ, which the members of the invisible church enjoy immediately after death, is, in that their souls are then made perfect in holiness, and received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies, which even in death continue united to Christ, and rest in their graves as in their beds, till at the last day they be again united to their souls. Whereas the souls of the wicked are at their death cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, and their bodies kept in their graves, as in their prisons, till the resurrection and judgment of the great day.

Question 87: What are we to believe concerning the resurrection?

Answer: We are to believe, that at the last day there shall be a general resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust: when they that are then found alive shall in a moment be changed; and the selfsame bodies of the dead which were laid in the grave, being then again united to their souls forever, shall be raised up by the power of Christ. The bodies of the just, by the Spirit of Christ, and by virtue of his resurrection as their head, shall be raised in power, spiritual, incorruptible, and made like to his glorious body; and the bodies of the wicked shall be raised up in dishonor by him, as an offended judge.

Question 90: What shall be done to the righteous at the day of judgment?

Answer: At the day of judgment, the righteous, being caught up to Christ in the clouds, shall be set on his right hand, and there openly acknowledged and acquitted, shall join with him in the judging of reprobate angels and men, and shall be received into heaven, where they shall be fully and forever freed from all sin and misery; filled with inconceivable joys, made perfectly holy and happy both in body and soul, in the company of innumerable saints and holy angels, but especially in the immediate vision and fruition of God the Father, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, to all eternity. And this is the perfect and full communion, which the members of the invisible church shall enjoy with Christ in glory, at the resurrection and day of judgment.

Canons of Dordt

Article 1: The Effect of the Fall on Human Nature

Man was originally created in the image of God and was furnished in his mind with a true and salutary knowledge of his Creator and things spiritual, in his will and heart with righteousness, and in all his emotions with purity; indeed, the whole man was holy. However, rebelling against God at the devil's instigation and by his own free will, he deprived himself of these outstanding gifts. Rather, in their place he brought upon himself blindness, terrible darkness, futility, and distortion of judgment in his mind; perversity, defiance, and hardness in his heart and will; and finally impurity in all his emotions.

Article 2: The Spread of Corruption

Man brought forth children of the same nature as himself after the fall. That is to say, being corrupt he brought forth corrupt children. The corruption spread, by God's just judgment, from Adam to all his descendants-- except for Christ alone--not by way of imitation (as in former times the Pelagians would have it) but by way of the propagation of his perverted nature.

Article 3: Total Inability

Therefore, all people are conceived in sin and are born children of wrath, unfit for any saving good, inclined to evil, dead in their sins, and slaves to sin; without the grace of the regenerating Holy Spirit they are neither willing nor able to return to God, to reform their distorted nature, or even to dispose themselves to such reform.

Article 4: The Inadequacy of the Light of Nature

There is, to be sure, a certain light of nature remaining in man after the fall, by virtue of which he retains some notions about God, natural things, and the difference between what is moral and immoral, and demonstrates a certain eagerness for virtue and for good outward behavior. But this light of nature is far from enabling man to come to a saving knowledge of God and conversion to him--so far, in fact, that man does not use it rightly even in matters of nature and society. Instead, in various ways he completely distorts this light, whatever its precise character, and suppresses it in unrighteousness. In doing so he renders himself without excuse before God.

Article 11: The Holy Spirit's Work in Conversion

Moreover, when God carries out this good pleasure in his chosen ones, or works true conversion in them, he not only sees to it that the gospel is proclaimed to them outwardly, and enlightens their minds powerfully by the Holy Spirit so that they may rightly understand and discern the things of the Spirit of God, but, by the effective operation of the

same regenerating Spirit, he also penetrates into the inmost being of man, opens the closed heart, softens the hard heart, and circumcises the heart that is uncircumcised. He infuses new qualities into the will, making the dead will alive, the evil one good, the unwilling one willing, and the stubborn one compliant; he activates and strengthens the will so that, like a good tree, it may be enabled to produce the fruits of good deeds.

Article 16: Regeneration's Effect

However, just as by the fall man did not cease to be man, endowed with intellect and will, and just as sin, which has spread through the whole human race, did not abolish the nature of the human race but distorted and spiritually killed it, so also this divine grace of regeneration does not act in people as if they were blocks and stones; nor does it abolish the will and its properties or coerce a reluctant will by force, but spiritually revives, heals, reforms, and--in a manner at once pleasing and powerful--bends it back. As a result, a ready and sincere obedience of the Spirit now begins to prevail where before the rebellion and resistance of the flesh were completely dominant. It is in this that the true and spiritual restoration and freedom of our will consists. Thus, if the marvelous Maker of every good thing were not dealing with us, man would have no hope of getting up from his fall by his free choice, by which he plunged himself into ruin when still standing upright.

The Second Helvetic Confession

Chapter 8 - Of Man's Fall, Sin and the Cause of Sin

The Fall of Man. In the beginning, man was made according to the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, good and upright. But when at the instigation of the serpent and by his own fault he abandoned goodness and righteousness, he became subject to sin, death and various calamities. And what he became by the fall, that is, subject to sin, death and various calamities, so are all those who have descended from him.