

"So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

Genesis 1:27 NKJV



Marietta church of Christ

8150 Driggers St.
Jacksonville, FL 32220

Times of Worship

Sunday:

9 am - Bible Classes / 10 am - Worship / 5 pm - Worship

Wednesday:

7 pm - Bible Study/Worship

Evangelist: Devin Barber

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Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Two of the greatest biblical principles concern man himself. They are the most fundamental of ideas, but also perhaps the least understood. These two principles tell us who we are and why we are so special in God's sight.

The first principle is stated in 1 Corinthians 6.19-20. There the apostle Paul says that our bodies are God's temple. These verses tell us that the physical body that God has given us is His creation, His property, His business, His purchase, and His glory. The second principle concerning man is stated in Genesis 1.26-27. There it says we are created in His image, in the likeness of God, and different from His lesser creatures. This likeness is based upon God's divine nature. The sanctity of life, then, is based on a worth and dignity that is granted to all *equally* by the creator.

Suppose you were given the task of designing the human body. How would you do it? Would you design it so that it would maintain, defend, repair, reproduce and control itself with all of its systems working automatically and without any conscious effort? It just so happens that is God's design of you! God has made your body just as He desired (1 Corinthians 12.18). It is His creation, His design, and it tells me how powerful He really is.

For example, look at the design of the human cell. Each person has over 100 trillion cells in his body. Each minute, 3 billion are made and 3 billion die. If you were to take all of your cells and line them up side by side, they would circle the earth 20 times. Within each cell, every second of every day, multiple reactions occur which produce energy and carry out the normal body function. In the nucleus of each cell a genetic code is stored on chromosomes. These chromosomes are made up of DNA, a helical structure that contains over 6 billion biochemical steps and enough information to fill over 6,000 volumes of encyclopedias. There are more than 30 different kinds of cells in the body that form all of the great organ systems — the nervous system, the circulatory system, the respiratory system, the special sense organs, and many many others. It is any wonder that the body is called God's temple.

Understanding this principle leads to three basic responsibilities. First of all, we have no right to destroy God's temple (1 Corinthians 3.16-17). Secondly, we are to actively keep it holy for His service (Romans 12.1). Thirdly, what we do with our bodies should always be done to God's glory (1 Corinthians 6.20).

What does it mean to be created in God's image? God has given man more than just a body to function and procreate. There is no question that we are similar in creation and function to His other creatures (Genesis 2.7, 19), but if we were exactly the same as God's lesser creatures, the value of our lives could only be measured in the amount of pressure or pain that we experience. Ethics and morality would not exist. On the other hand, even though we have been created in, His image, we are certainly not the same as God. Our physical and mental limitations prevent us from even fully grasping His eternal nature.

God's gifts which distinguish us from His lesser creatures can be summed up in the word *personhood*. What makes man a person is also what makes man a reflection of God Himself. Our ability to choose between good and evil, to reason, to communicate, to comprehend our past, present and future, and to love unconditionally are all characteristics from God. He is the one who has perfected these concepts. He is reality. He is immortality.

While these reflections from the Almighty are characteristics of most of us, there are some human beings who may never develop these gifts, yet that makes their lives no less valuable in the eyes of God. Infants who die prematurely, the handicapped, and the elderly are also created in His image because each one had been given His supreme gift and that is a soul. It is the soul that makes a person, not just an organism. It is the soul that reflects His image. It is through our souls that we can be like Him, and have the potentiality for immortality.

Being created in His image implies that our worth lines not in our accidental attributes or achievements, but solely in the fact that as a person we have the intrinsic worth of God's image with in us. The value of life, then, is in its sanctity, not it's quality, and to disregard this sanctity is to violate a trust given to us by God Himself. For human life is the only vehicle through which God's work can be accomplished on this earth.

So how do you view yourself? Do you consider your body God's temple and do you see yourself as special because you have been created in His image? If so, then how do you decide whether your actions will harm your person? Are those decisions based on love and sacrifice or selfish interest? What are our rights when it comes to harming or damaging the person God has given us? Or what right do we have to harm another — whether it is unborn, developing, or full-grown?

Written by; Rod McMillin

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