

**Imago Dei**  
Genesis 1:26-27

**Why is the Imago Dei Important?**

Imago Dei: The image of God specifically on people

- The image of God is not something man *has*, but something man *is*

Understanding the Imago Dei helps us:

- Helps us understand who we are
- Helps us understand creation, order and operations
- Helps us understand Gods plan for all of creation
- Our relationship with God
- Our relationship with others

Understanding who we are in God, effects our outlook on life, God, and the world

**1. What it means to be made in the image of God**

Like God we have:

- Dominion and authority
- A rational mind
- Morality
- Immortal/soul
- Relationships

Takeaways from the Imago Dei

- All Human life has worth (Psalm 139:14)
- Marriage is a practical example of God's personality on us
- One of the greatest arguments for existence of God is peoples moral code

**2. Effects of Sin and the fall**

We did not stay in the perfect image

- Sin corrupted our image
- The image was still there in structure
- The gifts, capacities, abilities – are now used against God will
- Dominion, work, relationships

If we are fallen - Why does God still keep us?

- Psalm 8:4-5 - "What is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands and you have put all things under his feet"
- God kept us because we are made in his image
- We have worth and inherent value in his sight

Our corrupted image, and God's love for us are summed up in one verse

- Genesis 9:6 "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man"
- Note the fallenness of man
- And the reiteration that we still have value because we're made in his image

### 3. Christ

Christ is the exact image of God

- Colossians 1:15 "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation"
- Hebrews 1:3 "who 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,"
- 2 Corinth. 4:4 "lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them"
- John 14:8-9 "Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us. Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father."
- These verses are reflecting this theme in the Bible

How does Jesus exemplify the image of God?

- He is wholly pointed toward God
- Has full dominion over the earth
- Loves perfectly

*Anthony Hoekema - "We may learn what the image of God is by looking at that which was central in the life of Christ: Love for God and love for man. If it is true that Christ perfectly images God, then the heart of the image of God must be love. For no man has ever loved as Christ loved"*

Christ's Perfect love

- Jesus tells the disciples 3 times on night of arrest to love each other
- Jesus loved others perfectly
- Jesus sacrifice - John 15:13 – "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."

Love - As the image of God

- We do not love perfectly, but our capacity for love is a God attribute
- 1 John 4:16 "God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him"
- We alone in creation can forgive our enemies, care for the needy, have compassion on the weak
- That's why Jesus says "Luke 6:27-29 - Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them."
- We have the capacity to love because we are made in the Image of God / we are compelled to love others because they are made in the image of God
- Love is the highest good because 1) God is love and 2) all other attributes flow out of love
- As God so loved the world that he gave his only son, we must so love our neighbor that we give ourselves to them

#### **4. Renewing the Image of God**

The Image of God is restored in us in 2 ways

- Progressively through sanctification
- Perfectly through future glorification

*Starts with regeneration - After we're saved, we are joined together with the Holy Spirit and our souls are regenerated. In the redemptive process, man who was using his image in the wrong ways is now again enabled to use them the right way through his union with the Holy Spirit*

##### 1. Sanctification

- Defined by Hoekema - "That gracious and continuing operation of the Holy Spirit, involving mans responsible participation, by which the Spirit progressively delivers the regenerated person from the pollution of sin, and enables him or her to live to the praise of God"
- Sanctification is the progressive renewal of that image of God over the course of our lives
- We are now enabled to live and love properly, to forgive, show mercy, care for others, serve others - in the same way that God does
- The Structure has been there – but now the gifts, capacities, abilities are used for God's will once again

The choice and action to 1) forgive rather than grudge 2) mercy instead of revenge 3) Pray for rather than persecute 4) give rather than take

- Are the active renewal of our image over the course of our lives
- Marriage example – when you exercise forgiveness – you are reflecting Gods forgiveness – for only God can forgive perfectly
- All sanctification is from a regenerated heart: Love for God and love for Man

2 Corinthians 3:18 – “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”

## 2. Glorification

- 1 John 3:2 – “It has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”
- We shall be like him – He is the perfect image of God – So shall our image be perfected
- Not just in our spirit such as now, but also in our bodies

## From Garden to Garden

- Gen 1:26-28 – we were made perfectly in his image
- We’re fallen but he is restoring us
- On that day, we will be like he originally made us
- God’s perfect unity restored with his creation and image bearers

## Summary / Application

- God’s story of redeeming his image
- Sanctification is the current renewing of the image
- Will be perfected one day
- Love God and love Man