

The Divine Image Outline

Genesis 1:20-31

I. The confusion of the world.

- A. *“As a politician [the secular person] will cry out that war is a waste of life, as a philosopher, that all life is a waste of time. [He] goes to a political meeting, where he complains that savages are treated as if they were beasts; then he takes his hat and umbrella and goes on to a scientific meeting, where he proves that they practically are beasts.”* G.K Chesterton

II. What does creation teach us about God?

- A. The world has no desire to know God (Romans 3:10-17)
- B. The reason for the creation account in Genesis 1 is for man to know God.
1. God, through creation revealed Himself to ALL mankind (Romans 1:18-20)
 2. Man is with no excuse when it comes to seeing evidence of the existence of God (Romans 1:20).
- C. Remove God and you will believe anything.
1. Remove God and you remove all true authority and objective truth, you remove purpose and meaning.
 2. The God hole.

III. The sea and sky (Genesis 1:20-23) the fifth day.

- A. **“Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures”**—Verse 20 : the small creatures of the sea.
1. Psalm 104
- B. God creates the large sea animals.
- C. The first blessing in Scripture—**“Be fruitful and multiply”**
1. God’s commands with obedience yields blessing.

IV. The sixth day

- A. God creates land animals:
 - 1. Livestock
 - 2. Insects
 - 3. Beasts
- B. Jesus used creation to teach the disciples (and us) the priority and greater love God has for humans (Matthew 6:25-29)
 - 1. Man is superior to all of creation.
- C. Man is given dominion over all the earth (Genesis 1:26).
 - 1. Why?
 - a. Man is made in God's image (Genesis 1:27)
- V. Man is made in God's image
 - A. The image of God (Latin, imago dei) refers to the immaterial part of humanity. It sets human beings apart from the animal world, fits them for the dominion God intended them to have over the earth (Genesis 1:28).

The Divine Image Pastoral Notes

Genesis 1:20-31

We've been looking at the history of the universe.... Beginning in the beginning with Genesis 1. The reason we are doing so is to recover God's foundations for all of life which are found in the beginning book of the Bible....The designer and creator of the universe designed and created all things to work optimally according to His design and plan and His purposes...

He has revealed to us foundations that if we build upon will indeed have the solid footing in which to build our lives as the designer designed them to be... with optimal results...but these foundations...which our culture was built upon and generally embraced for a few hundred years now have been systematically, intentionally dismantled... crumbling before our eyes.

And now people are looking around asking *Why aren't things working like they should?...Why does the world look so messed up?...why am I always so depressed?... why is the suicide rate climbing so high especially within our youth?... why did we have a debate like that last Wednesday night?* A lot more *why's* than *answers* today.

And we join the Psalmist who asked ***If the foundations are destroyed what can the righteous do?...*** we can reclaim the foundations!

Just by referring to the beginning of things as "Creation" distinguishes the Christian from the secular humanist...If as a student you went to your secular science professor and asked him how did the universe get created... he would respond *it didn't... it just happened....we don't deal in creation... we deal in "origins"*.

Some of you may remember Bertrand Russell... one of the famous atheists of the early 20th century... He wrote in his book *Why I am Not A Christian*:

"We are the product of causes that had no provision of the end they were achieving. [the idea of random chance] The hopes, fears, loves, and beliefs of our minds are just the outcome of the accidental collocation of atoms."

You may think there is meaning to life... but there is no meaning... everything by chance came together...by accident... all of your feelings are just meaningless social constructs.

Another famous atheist of the same time... the famous chief justice and major intellectual Oliver Wendell Holmes...not known for church attendance... wrote: "*Scientifically, I see no reason for attributing to man a significance different in kind from that which belongs to a baboon or a grain of sand.*"

Humans... Baboons... grains of sand...all the same in value

Do you see the confusion?... our culture...our secular society tells us the individual is the center of the universe... *you're a valuable human being... you are full of potential... you have dignity... self-worth...you're important... you can choose to be whatever you want to be...your destiny... you have power... and rights.*

But then... the cultural philosophy of that same secularism.... *Says you have no more significance than a baboon or a grain of sand.*

I love reading G.K. Chesterton...[I was told in homiletics class in seminary that if you include a quote by G.K. Chesterton your sermon's value increases by 50%]... He saw the confusion within secular thought...

listen to this: *As a politician [the secular person] will cry out that war is a waste of life, as a philosopher, that all life is a waste of time. [He] goes to a political meeting, where he complains that savages are treated as if they were beasts; then he takes his hat and umbrella and goes on to a scientific meeting, where he proves that they practically are beasts.*

Confusion... no foundation

Timothy Keller answered all these by saying *Christianity, because of the doctrine of the image of God, can say to people, grounded in ultimate reality, 'God does not make junk. You're in the image of God.*

This morning I want to put this message under the general heading... **Creation determines the special worth of all humanity**...which will come to full fruition in the next two Sundays... groundwork this morning... **the special worth of humanity that hinges on the foundation that we all have been created in the image of God**....but we need to begin where we left off last week...and work our way to this amazing reality.

I want to begin by taking in the big picture of creation... then move into some of the details of creation here in Genesis 1.... The move back out to take in what it all means for us.... but first the big picture and ask the question **What does creation teach us about God**

...the greatest distinction between Christianity and secular thought is that we have everything resting on the foundation of God Himself...God is our solid rock.

And this leads to the greatest conclusion... distinct from secular thought which concludes everything is meaningless...you remove the designer and creator of the cosmos... and all is an accident.... Chance... but if there is a designer/creator...and He creates... there is value and purpose....So let's look at the big picture

I. What does creation teach us about God?

First note that the world has no desire to know God...The apostle Paul makes this all clear in Romans 3... When you read this passage... you'll think something like...*Glad that is not me!*... but the truth is... it is describing all mankind without God... all of us at one time was without God.

Romans 3:10-17

10 As it is written: [Psalm 14:1-2]

“There is no one righteous, not even one;

11 there is no one who understands;

there is no one who seeks God.

12 All have turned away,

they have together become worthless;

there is no one who does good, not even one.”

13 “Their throats are open graves;

their tongues practice deceit.”

“The poison of vipers is on their lips.”

14 “Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”

15 “Their feet are swift to shed blood;

16 ruin and misery mark their ways,

17 and the way of peace they do not know.”

All mankind without Christ..

Those who do not have a faith in Jesus Christ have no interest in God... for to know who God is, is to know our sinfulness... and to know our sinfulness is to understand that we are in need to place our lives under the authority of the all sovereign God....and mankind does not want to be placed under any authority!...naturally man wants to live as he wants.

The reason the creation account in in the Bible is for us to know God... for us to recognize God as our creator... and then for us to glorify God in our response to Him... for the rest of the days of our lives....

Psalms 14:1 says **The fool says in his heart there is no God.** The unbelieving world has no interest... to submit to the One who created all things....the reason we are here this morning... The reason you come to church is to submit your lives to Jesus Christ for His glory...to **present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service**
Romans 12:1

In that I'm stuck in Romans... turn with me to that foundational chapter in Romans... chapter 1...this is so connected to Genesis 1...**what does creation teach us about God?**...

Read Romans 1:18-20

God intentionally... by His design... revealed to us...all mankind... {what about the natives in Africa?}...everybody...since the very beginning of creation... Genesis 1:1...revealed who He is...His invisible attributes... His eternal power... His divine nature....**WHY DID HE DO THAT?**

To reveal Himself to all mankind... He created the cosmos to reveal to all mankind His existence... and ALL MANKIND can see it!...**God made Himself evident to all people through His creation**..... so as we read through these verses in Genesis 1... even though these verses reveal to us the creation of all things... the planet... the universe...but also all living things... plants... animals and humans....those are secondary to the purpose of Genesis 1..... God is the subject!

God is the ultimate thing we should see when we look at creation...if you read Genesis 1... creation... and you do not see who God is... you've missed the main point of the creation story.... When you do see who God is... you can't help but think of Him whenever you see His creation!

When you watch the sunset... when you gaze at majestic mountains... the ocean... your garden... Herb's strawberries...your dog... your... cat... it's all about God!...How important is it for us to see God and acknowledge God in creation?... haunting words at the end of Romans 1:20...

So that they are without excuse.... God is so clearly seen in His creation... that after looking at it... You don't see Him in it.... which is denying Him...**suppressing the truth....** then you are without excuse... which points back up to verse 18... you will experience the wrath of God... judgement.... For denying Him.

The world says the things of creation evolved over billions of years... denying the existence of God... and being apart from the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit... mankind refuses to submit their lives to the authority of God and refuses to acknowledge Him as God.

Perhaps you've heard of *The God Shaped Hole*... it's the concept... a theory... that every person has a void in their souls that only God can fill... and if they don't fill it with God... they will fill it with something... anything else... remove God and you will believe in anything!

"I was an atheist, but now I am God...It doesn't seem "bizarre" to me, but We are God."

"God is the Collective Unconsciousness."

"We are each different cells and microbes within the organism known as God."

"We are all living in the matrix. Reality isn't real."

"We all create our own unique reality, God is what you want her to be"

"I am the only person that exists. You, and all of reality are mere figments of my imagination, MAKING ME GOD!!"

"My cat is God"

How can people believe in that stuff?... How can they be so crazy?... because we live in a Romans 1 world!... people...have denied the one and only designer, creator, sustainer God... and through their sin have embraced complete foolishness...going so far as to even put animals and creeping things in place of...or above their view of God...

This is why I saw a bumper sticker the other day *I love dogs and cats... I hate people....* taking what God has shown them.... revealed to them... and shove it aside for something/anything else...an ideology of complete foolishness...

Read Romans 1: 21-23

Remove God and you will end up worshipping something else... Romans 1 says you will worship the creation over the creator... I don't want to embarrass them...but two of our young adults who met in our college young adult group decided that being together Thursday nights wasn't enough so they just got engaged...

Jesais and Kaitlyn... It's official... Jesais has placed a beautiful gift on Kaitlyn's finger...check it out after the service... that ring is important... it is an expression of love...Jesais showed that beautiful ring before he gave it to her... the intent of that ring was to represent his love and commitment to Kaitlyn... it was not to be a replacement for his love for her...

In other words... He gave the ring as a gift to express his great love for her... but if she... upon receiving the ring started loving the room more than him... that would be tragic!... and foolish... but they are both smart people.

Point... Our culture has been given the gift of creation to reveal Almighty God... Psalm 19 1... **The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.** but instead of seeing and embracing the creator... they've valued creation more... Romans 1... you take creation... remove God... you've got nothing...

Remove God and you remove all true authority and objective truth... you remove purpose and meaning... . A culture without foundations... so now let's go back Genesis 1:20... shift from the big picture to some of the details of creation...

God had already created the infrastructure of the universe... the stars... the sun... the moon... the earth are all in place... We've gone through four days of creation, entering the fifth day... it is important to note that what God creates now in verse 20 are distinct from what He created back in verses 11 and 12.... Plants and vegetation... these are *living creatures*...

These are reproductive creatures...

II. How Did the Sea and Sky Get Filled?

Read verse 20

That word "swarms" is important... in this case.... swarms are small things... insects... small reptiles... very small animals... the word suggests movement... these are tiny things... large in number that can move on their own...

All living things before these couldn't move on their own... these are conscious creatures... plants are NOT conscious creatures... this verse has a literary device called a polyptoton... *A repetition of a word in a different case, inflection, or voice in the same sentence...*

Let the waters swarm with swarms of living things... the earth is getting more complex... more formed... there is abundant moving conscious life... these swarms of life have *instincts*... they instinctively know things...

They instinctively know when they should go somewhere else... that there is danger... they instinctively know when to get out of the way... I marvel at this... especially in the Spring when I go down one of our country roads and birds are all over the road... and I always think I'm going to hit them with my car...

As I get closer and closer I think for sure I'm going to hit them... and I do hit them... and they die... but some get away!... they had better instinct than the others!

Psalm 104:24-25

How many are your works, Lord!

In wisdom you made them all; they all have purpose... God didn't create anything that shouldn't be here... hard to believe isn't it?... anteaters...

the earth is full of your creatures.

**25 There is the sea, vast and spacious,
teeming with creatures **beyond number**—
living things both large and small.**

Hans Christian Anderson wrote this around 1850...called "*A Drop of Water*"

'Of course, you must know what a microscope is, that round magnifying glass which makes everything look hundreds of times larger than it really is. If you take it and hold it close to your eye and look at a single drop of ditchwater, you'll see thousands of strange little creatures, such as you couldn't imagine living in a drop of water. But they are really there'

What we know now that Hans didn't know then... "*Even a drop of ditch water can hold five hundred million microscopic creatures...they are so small that a teaspoon of water would be as the Atlantic Ocean is to us*

All that to say... *how can you not marvel at God's creation?... God creates things so small and numerous we can't comprehend it...and He creates them very , very large:*

Read verse 21

God creates the large sea animals... as small as the microscopic animals were the other end of the spectrum...these are large... fish and sea mammals... whales, sea lions, halibut, salmon, lobster...yum.

Notice in Genesis 1:20 and 21 God created the birds...**all the winged birds**... that would include chickens... THEN in verse 22:

Read verse 22

God created the birds in verses 20 and 21 THEN He tells them to be **fruitful and multiply**... notice the order! answering one of life's biggest questions... *what was first the chicken or the egg*...

Note... this is the first blessing given in the Bible...**God blessed them**...It is a blessing linked to a command... this is a pattern God will present throughout the Bible... **For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in**

the land you are entering to possess. Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.

Do what I tell you to do... you will be blessed!... when God gives us instructions... a command... we are blessed when we do it!...our obedience glorifies God and we are blessed by it...What is the blessing?... God enabled them to be fruitful and multiply...**Be fruitful and multiply**

So the swarms of small things... the swarms of big things... all the sea animals...have been created.... **A fifth day**...The sixth day begins...and God created all the land animals.

Read verse 24

Three classifications of animals here... 1. **livestock**...four legged animals that can be tamed...2. **Insects**, short legs and low to the ground things... and 3. **Beasts of the earth**...large four-legged animals *not* easily tamed...

These are the very large creatures...I think this would include the dinosaurs...just for fun... over in Job 40:15... God speaking to Job...

“Look at Behemoth, which I made along with you and which feeds on grass like an ox.16 What strength it has in its loins, what power in the muscles of its belly!

In the Old Testament... a Behemoth was used to describe large cattle or land animal... but the description in Job is very unique...some suggest its describing a hippopotamus...until you get to verses 17 and 18:

17 Its tail sways like a cedar; the sinews of its thighs are close-knit. 18 Its bones are tubes of bronze, its limbs like rods of iron.... With that description... many think this is describing God’s most impressive creature... a dinosaur.... [don’t ask me what happened to them!]

All these animals were spoken into existence by God... they were all made “**After their kind**”... which means they have a God assigned classification which they cannot change... a whale cannot while being fruitful... will not multiply a cow.

God spoke it... God decreed it... and it was so....God’s creation accomplishes His will...

Read verse 25 [This is when all the “Creeps” came into the world!]

And God saw that it was good... that was the animal kingdom....someone said a *literal 24 hour day was not enough time to create the entire animal kingdom*...I’ll argue it was too much time!... I calculated that the time it took for God to say **let the earth bring forth....**took about three to four seconds!... what did He do the 23 hours, 29 minutes and 56 seconds!

He speaks everything into existence... according to their kind AND IT WAS ALL GOOD! And it was all for His glory... a display of His attributes... His power... His creativity... His power and His love.... **He loves His creation**...now listen to this... over in Matthew 6... Jesus giving the Sermon on the Mount...He instructs His disciples and us... regarding worry...

Matthew 6:25

25 "...do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is life not more than food, and the body more than clothing?

He then gives the reason for us not to worry about stuff... He does it by referring back to creation... the birds of creation...

26 Look at the birds of the sky, that they do not sow, nor reap, nor gather crops into barns... these birds don't have the blessing of being able to work for their possessions... and yet your heavenly Father feeds them....God cares for them...then He asks a question to us... Are you not much more important than they?

Jesus takes the birds created in day five to let His followers know...that He created the birds... He cared for the birds... I can even say loved the birds... **but makes it clear that man is more valuable than the birds**...remember Romans one?... exactly what the unbelieving world gets wrong....

[22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and they exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible mankind, of birds, four-footed animals, and crawling creatures.]

Matthew 10:29... **Are two sparrows not sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.** What is insignificant to man...is so very valuable to God...

Jesus takes these seemingly insignificant animals... the Lord reminds us that even they are under the sovereign care of God... verse 30 **But even the hairs of your head are all counted.... 31 So do not fear; you are more valuable than a great number of sparrows.**

Point?... God saw that everything He created was good... and He cares for all that He has made...He loves His creation... but now comes mankind... **His crowning glory in creation!**!... this is foundational!...all of earth is precious... all God's creation is good.... But NOTHING is more valuable than a human life!...Genesis 1 ...which brings us to where we began.... [And next week we will even take it much further.]

Verse 26 **The God said, Let Us make man in Our likeness;** for two weeks I've mentioned that some look at God's creation of the earth as a theater... the sets are completed... the props are all in place... everything is ready to tell the story... the drama... it is time to introduce the players.

Don't miss what comes next... **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.** Man is to take dominion over all creation!

Why? Why are we given this dominion over all the earth?... verse 27 **God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created them....** which means... and this is where I was struck this week...

Having the "image" or "likeness" of God means, in the simplest terms, that we were made to resemble God...not resembling God in flesh and blood but in spirit... Scripture says that "God is spirit" (John 4:24) and therefore exists without a body.

The image of God (Latin, imago dei) refers to the immaterial part of humanity. It sets human beings apart from the animal world, fits them for the dominion God intended them to have over the earth (**Genesis 1:28**)...

This means that you... and me... bear the image of God...**EVERYONE BEARS THE IMAGE OF GOD!**...regardless of who you are!...

I love the ocean... I can sit on my bench and stare at the beauty of the ocean for hours... I am truly struck when the sun goes down over the horizon... the magnificent colors...

I am in awe when I drive through the tunnel at the entrance to Yosemite and come out that other end and before me is the grandeur of El Capitan, Half Dome... and cascading waterfalls... I was in awe this morning as I drove by the canola fields.... So bright... so yellow... so amazing... and God blessed us with such a beautiful creation.

But as awesome as all that is... as you walk downtown by Friendship Square early in the morning [as I did] and see a homeless meth addict laying unconscious next to the fountain... you see one who is made in the image of God...more unique... more valuable...more magnificent than ANY other part of creation!

This is foundational!...every human being is made in the image and likeness of God... it doesn't matter what your record is... it doesn't matter what you've done in your life... it doesn't matter how low you've gone...every human being made in the image of God reflects the creator... God.

Because God made all humans in His image gives them inherent worth... [German philosopher Immanuel Kant argued that “*everything has either a price or a dignity. Whatever has a price can be replaced by something else as its equivalent... on the other hand, whatever is above all price, and therefore admits of no equivalent, has a dignity.*” For Kant, humanity and human rationality had dignity. *They are irreplaceable, and so cannot be valued in price.*]

Every newborn baby is born in the image of God... Every baby in the womb is a human being... being formed by God... in the image of God...

Because humans are made in God’s image.... And are priceless...It is exemplified when God sent His Son...not to take care of the birds... or the cattle...the whales... or to restore the earth... He came to save sinners who are all made in the image of God... by His grace.

So that all who would turn from their sin... and trust in Christ...embrace the creator of the universe as Lord... will be redeemed...

John 3:16

16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him. 18 The one who believes in Him is not judged; the one who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

So to conclude... how should we view all this?...what is our response?

1. Gratitude—embrace God’s creation!... be thankful for it...enjoy it... not to worship it... the gift is not more valuable than the gift giver!... let creation drive you to a greater appreciation for the creator!...let all of creation declare the glory of God....be thankful for it.

Be thankful that God so loved us enough to create each one of us in His image... and that He sent His only Son to pay the price for our sins....

2. Conviction—Be convicted by that awesome truth... that all human beings are made in the image of God... this could be radical for you!...the way you see other people... the way you see yourself!...

Every person that comes across your path you need to treat with a sacredness... a reverence... a respect... a concern for them...a kindness... there are people who you think smell bad...and they dress in clothes you find appalling...and they act in ways you find disdainful... we only let people in our car that we like...

Be convicted of the sanctity of life... all life... the living and the “on their way”... I’ve had many conversations with many Christians who wonder where we get the idea of the sanctity of life... those words are not found in the Bible.

3. Outflow—let this reality have great ramifications for your life...action follows conviction