

Beginnings: Lesson 3 — Humanity: The Bearers of God's Image

Based on Genesis 1:26-28 & 2:18-25

Key Takeaways from the Lesson

1. **Being an image bearer is not an achievement to be earned, but a reality to be embraced.**
 2. **You don't have the image—you ARE the image of God.**
 3. **God established two ruling groups intended to work together: a heavenly host and an earthly family.**
 4. **Dominion is stewardship modeled after God's rule—a priestly vocation to work and keep the world for the Father's glory.**
 5. **True relationship requires the option to leave—the tree wasn't a trap; it was necessary for genuine love.**
 6. **The creation of humanity shifted the angels from joy to intense jealousy, leading to angelic rebellion.**
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Discussion Questions

Section 1: Understanding Image-Bearing

Read Genesis 1:26-28

1. What does it mean to you personally that you don't just "have" the image of God, but that you "are" the image of God?
2. Pastor David mentioned that even people in comas, with Alzheimer's, or the unborn bear God's image. How should this truth change the way we view:
 - The elderly and sick?
 - The unborn?
 - People with disabilities?
 - Those society deems "unproductive"?
3. C.S. Lewis said the "dullest, most uninteresting person" may one day be a creature we'd be tempted to worship. How does this perspective challenge the way you treat people you encounter daily?

Section 2: Our Divine Responsibility

Read Genesis 2:15

4. Pastor David explained that "work and keep" are priestly terms. How does viewing your job—whatever it is—as a "sacred vocation" change your perspective on Monday morning?
5. What does it mean to "subdue" the earth in a way that honors God rather than exploits His creation?
6. Share one practical way you can see your current work (job, parenting, volunteering, etc.) as fulfilling a divine mandate this week.

Section 3: The Two Accounts and the Tree

Read Genesis 2:16-17

7. Why was it necessary for God to give Adam and Eve the choice to disobey? What does this reveal about the kind of relationship God desires with us?
8. The pastor said, "True relationship requires the option to leave." How have you experienced this truth in human relationships?
9. How does understanding the tree as a "moral test" rather than a "trap" change your view of God's character?

Section 4: The Mystery of Eve's Creation

Read Genesis 2:18-24 and John 19:34

10. What connections do you see between Eve being formed from Adam's side and the Church being born from Christ's pierced side?
11. Pastor David called this a "prophetic mystery." What does it reveal about:
 - God's long-term plan?
 - The value of marriage?
 - Christ's relationship with the Church?

Section 5: The Angelic Rebellion

Read Job 38:4-7 and Genesis 3:1-5

12. How does understanding Satan's jealousy over humanity's status help you understand spiritual warfare differently?
 13. Pastor David described this as a "cosmic custody battle." How does this framework help you understand:
 - Why Satan attacks humanity?
 - Why Jesus came to "destroy the works of the devil"?
 - Your own identity as a child of God?
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Personal Reflection Questions

- In what area of your life have you been living as though you need to "earn" your worth rather than embracing your God-given dignity?
- Where has God placed you to exercise dominion as a priestly steward (work, family, community)?
- How might your life look different this week if you truly believed you bear the image of the Creator of the universe?

Practical Applications

Choose one or two to focus on this week:

1. **Dignity Practice:** Identify someone in your life whom society might overlook (elderly neighbor, person with disability, service worker). Intentionally honor them this week, remembering they bear God's image.
2. **Sacred Work:** Write out a prayer dedicating your work (paid or unpaid) to God as a sacred vocation. Pray it each morning this week.
3. **Relationship Reflection:** Thank God for giving you genuine freedom to choose Him. Journal about how this freedom reflects His love.
4. **Identity Declaration:** Each day this week, speak this truth aloud: "I am not trying to become an image-bearer. I AM an image-bearer of the Most High God."
5. **Study Deeper:** Read Psalm 82 and John 10:22-39 to better understand the "divine council" concept and how Jesus used it.

Prayer Prompts for this week

- Thank God for creating you in His image with inherent dignity and worth
- Ask for eyes to see others as image-bearers, especially those society devalues
- Pray for wisdom to exercise godly dominion in your sphere of influence
- Ask God to help you embrace your identity rather than trying to earn it
- Pray for protection and victory in the spiritual battle over your identity

Looking Ahead

Next week we'll dive into Genesis 3 and the Fall—the first rebellion. Come prepared by:

- Reading Genesis 3
- Thinking about: What was really lost in the Garden?
- Considering: How does the Fall affect you today?

