

Genesis 1:26-31  
Sermon Discussion Guide for Growth Groups

Icebreaker questions:

- Tell about your favorite job that you've ever held. Who gave you this job? What made it enjoyable?

Read Genesis 1:26-31

- Andy mentioned three views on what it means that we were created in the image of God. Talk about the ways each of these views makes an impact on what it means to be created in God's image. Do you think one is more helpful than the others in understanding "made in his image"? Are there other ways that you can think of us bearing his image?
  - o Substantive view – This view identifies the image of God as some definitive characteristic within the human BODY that separates us from the animals – namely our brain. Our ability to reason, or to think theologically. Humans have the unique ability to evaluate evidence and identify truth and falsehood.
  - o Relational view: This view says that being created in God's image means that we were created to have a relationship with him, and with other human beings based on their same capacity.
  - o Functional view: being made in God's image gives us a certain ROLE in creation – namely, to rule over it.

The word "subdue" is the subject of much debate.

- What does it mean to subdue the earth?
- What does it require us to do, and what are the boundaries of this task?

One point Andy mentioned in the sermon was, "God created us in *his* image; we do not get to create God in *our* image?" Meaning, we are invited to get to know God for who and what he truly is, and not make him into who we would want him to be. (See Acts 17:16-34)

- In what ways might people have a hard time accepting who God is?
  - o How might they try to "make God in their image", into the kind of God they could accept? What are the dangers of this?
- If you are comfortable, share with your group if there is something that you have a hard time accepting about God? How can your group support you as you wrestle through this?

The New Testament indicates that one day, this earth will be made new. (See Revelation 21:1; 2Peter 3:10-13)

- How should we treat creation in light of God's delight in it? In light of the temporary nature of our world?
- In what ways do you "rule" over creation? What influence or impact do you have on the environment, or plants or animals?

Close in prayer. Is there an aspect of creation, or a way that you participate in ruling over it that you'd like to express gratitude for? Pray for one another.