



We often see people that remind us of someone else. Sometimes the resemblance is so uncanny, that we catch ourselves taking a second and third look, and even awkwardly staring in their direction.

According to Scripture we all bear a resemblance to our Heavenly Father. Our lives should cause people to take a second and third look and see something in us that points back to Him.

One of the profound truths of Scripture is “That God created us in His image and that we will be profoundly unsettled until we recapture what it means to reflect the heart and character of our heavenly Father.”

A REFLECTION OF A TRIUNE GOD (v. 26a, 27)

Verse 26 breaks the rhythmic cadence of “Let there be... Let the water... Let dry ground... Let the land... Let the birds...” with the shocking phrase, “Let us make mankind in our own image...” The narrative moves from singularity to a plurality. We have already witnessed a huge clue that there might be more to God’s person than we could possibly grasp in the phrase, “the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.” “Let us make mankind in our own image” is yet another clue that God is a multidimensional being. While the early Hebrews could not have processed the clues, we as New Testament believers look back and see early hints of a triune God, and celebrate the unfathomable truth that the Father, Son and Spirit were all actively involved in creation.

1. What are some of the implications of being created, not simply in the image of God, but in the image of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
2. According to verse 27, in the same way God is a plurality, we were created as a plurality. How do we come much closer to reflecting God's image in community (whether in marriage, or "the church" than we do alone?

ROYAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GREAT KING (vv. 26b, 28b)

The ancient Hebrews would have witnessed the magnificent images of gods and kings in the land of Egypt. They almost certainly passed by some of these towering figures as they escaped the grip of Pharaoh. The images were said to possess the soul of the god or the king they depicted and were themselves objects of worship. Pharaoh was also described as the "image and likeness of Rah." Many of these images were positioned to extend the power and the rule of the king.

1. How does the fact that we were created to "...fill the earth and subdue it," and "rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground" fit in with the ancient understanding of "image and likeness?"
2. How does the ancient understanding of "image and likeness" fall short of what it means for us to be created "in the image and likeness of God?"

SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF OUR HEAVENLY FATHER (Gen. 5:3)

The next occurrence of the phrase 'image and likeness' is found in Genesis 5:3. "When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth."

"Sonship" is a significant concept in Scripture. God refers to Israel as His firstborn Son. He promised he would be a Father to the king, and the king would be a son to Him. In the New Testament we are introduced to "the uniquely begotten Son (my translation)" and those who are in Christ are adopted into his family as "sons and daughters."

1. How might the concept of "family resemblance" or "sonship" add to our understanding of what it means to be created in the image and likeness of God?"
2. What are some of the privileges of "sonship?"
3. What are the responsibilities?

4. What are some of the ways we most often fail to display a family resemblance to our heavenly Father, and older brother (Christ)?
5. How should the image of God be on display in our lives as God's sons and daughters?

RECOVERING WHAT WE LOST (Ephesians 4:22-24)

Take a few minutes to meditate on Ephesians 4:22-24.

"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³ to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."

1. What are some of the deceitful desires that are destroying your ability to enjoy and reflect the fact that you are created in the "image and likeness" of God?
2. Thank God for creating you in His image, and recreating you in His image through Christ. Ask Him to enable you to put off those things which destroy the "family resemblance."