

The Image of God in Mankind: The Sixth Day

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[0 : 00] It's a beautiful song, a beautiful testimony of God's grace. Jesus, strong and kind. History wants to teach us.

I don't know what it's like in the public school system these days, but I get the reports that history is way back-burnered in most school curriculums now.

Now, it's just not important to teach history, but history wants to teach us. History wants to instruct us. History wants to help us to keep from making the same mistakes that humans make as they seek power and influence and money and status and all those kinds of things.

And we don't listen, and we repeat the mistakes of history over and over and over again. And I love to, and have since I was a boy, read about world wars.

They fascinated me. I was curious about how in the world you would ever get to the place where the entire world would be at war. How does that even happen? And then I got sucked into the personal stories that civilians and military people alike experienced during great conflict around the world.

[1 : 20] Here's one of them. From 1900 to 2000, godless men like Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, and Mao Zedong, along with many, many other leaders from many nations, exterminated literally millions of people.

And all of it based on evolutionary doctrines of the survival of the fittest. Every one of those people that I just mentioned believed in evolution and based much of what they approached social action on by the doctrines taught by evolution.

The title of my message for this morning is The Image of God in Mankind. The sixth day. We'll be dealing with one verse again. This will be a part two for us as we explore the sixth day.

One of the bases for what these world leaders put forward and led into world wars and conflicts and millions and millions of people being killed.

One of those philosophies was naturalism. Excuse me. You've heard me talk about naturalism before. Naturalism tells us that matter is all there is.

[2 : 41] In other words, what we can know and what we can experience in the here and now is what is real. So it's what you can see, taste, touch, feel, smell. It's just the tangible stuff of what we have in front of us in this life.

That is all that there is. There is no such thing as God. There is no such thing as the supernatural. There is no such thing as an afterlife. The best that we can do is hope to be reincarnated as something better than what we are now.

And in many people's minds, in some faiths, that means even a bug. Now, I don't know how you get from being a human to a bug and that being better. I don't want anybody stepping on me and squishing me or some lizard eating me, for heaven's sake.

But that's all wound up in that. Atheistic humanism is another one you need to hold on to. Atheistic humanism is at the heart of naturalism.

Atheistic humanism means there is no God. Atheism. And that humanity is at the center of all things. Humanism.

[3 : 52] So you're all that matters. The here and now is all there is. And if those two things are true, then you better live your best life now. Seems like I heard somebody preach about that one time and even wrote a book about it.

Well, that's a lie. Your best life is not here. If this is our best life, we're in deep trouble, aren't we? So we believe that God teaches a higher and better way for us.

And he starts teaching that to us in the first verse of the first book of the Bible. That's what we believe. Well, with hatred against the truth that God created man in his own image, doctrines of demons deny and replace the truth with the wisdom of man.

That's what we're battling. You've heard me talk to you about this is a battle of worldviews. It's not a battle between the truth of God's word and science. Science will always, true science, will always and only support the claims of Scripture because God invented science.

The natural laws that we live by are laws created by a sovereign God to govern his universe. Wisdom of man, on the other hand, is something that rebels against God and the claims that God makes in Scripture.

[5 : 08] Ungodly men and women who suppress the truth of God in unrighteousness force people to serve their ideals and ideas for the greater good.

Those in power get to define what is good and what is not good. That's the world that we live in. And so people are in constant struggle over this.

Now we may think, well, yes, we have societies around the world who are in turmoil. We have wars going on right now because of this very thing. Because there are people who want power and they want to be the ones to define what's good and what's not.

They want to be God. But do you know this happens in marriage? For those of us who are in marriage, we've experienced this. I get, as the husband, I get to define what's good.

I get to make the rules in this particular moment when I'm wanting to put self forward. Now I know there, I'm probably the only husband in the room that's ever done that.

[6 : 15] We have wives in here that do the same thing. You get married and you find out that there's a battleground brewing. Now I don't know what your dating life was like, but Suzanne and I discovered that before we ever got married and we did it anyway.

We got married. But we got married in the Lord. And that was truly in every way our salvation. And I was telling her the other day after 40 years of marriage, God has brought us through so many different things together and proven himself so faithful so that our marriage is really a testimony to the goodness and reality of a wonderfully forgiving God.

That's what we are. We are walking poster boards for God being gracious to two sinners who just need to get over themselves. This kind of thing happens all over the world, but I don't want you to make this some kind of a macro social issue or an environmental issue.

This comes to roost in your heart and in your home and in the way you do life. The sinful, corrupt nature of mankind knows the right and rejects it.

knows the good but refuses to embrace it. Knows the truth but lives a lie. Knows that God is but chooses a God of their own making.

[7 : 44] That is the insanity of sin. History teaches us that lesson and the Bible affirms it over and over. Now in contrast, God's word tells us what God has declared good.

Over and over again in the first chapter we see a supernatural God, a sovereign God creating the universe and declaring after each phase of that creation it is good, it is good, it is good.

And then pretty soon now we'll get to the point where he tells us it's very good and we'll talk about why that is. From the first chapter of the first book of the Bible God explains to us that all of his original work is good by his declaration.

So that anything not good is not from the hand of God it's from mankind. Mankind. Acting in rebellion against the truth of the good that God is good and does good.

We can't say that about ourselves can we? We are not good in our nature are we? We need a good God to do a good thing in a corrupt nature.

[9 : 03] So what do we need? We need a new nature. From the very first chapter of the Bible we're being rooted and grounded in the gospel. What is at stake here is a good God doing a good thing and setting the groundwork for his gospel.

His salvation of what's coming. God because we're going to mess it up and then we're going to need a savior. This is what the Bible is telling us and it brings me to say to you guys then or to ask the question why does Genesis matter so much?

Why am I pausing here and taking this kind of time to determinedly point by point unpack some of this with you?

Well why does Genesis matter so much? That was what author Brian Thomas titled his chapter in the book Creation Basics and Beyond.

In his chapter he titled it Why Does Genesis Matter So Much? And here is how he answered it very succinctly. Look at this. Well God wrote it.

[10:17] There you go. I love that. Whoever takes his words at face value who treasures the words of his mouth more than my necessary food according to Job 23:12 engages in a lifelong journey of trusting him and friends that is the issue that we're faced with in Genesis 1 do we wholeheartedly trust God as telling us the truth about our origins without any measure or any hint of his account in Genesis being anything other than what he says it is taken literally not figuratively not allegorically is God telling us the truth in plain terms or is he messing around with us and leaving it up to us to come down the pike centuries and centuries later 6,000 years later after he did all of this or a little more and now modern man has come to the place where we can take Genesis 1 and interject all of these quote unquote scientific ideas into it to make sense of something supernatural something that only God could do by speaking it into existence

God doesn't need our help to explain the supernatural way he created the world he just needs us to believe it in faith and there's no good reason not to God's account is what he says it is you might remember this quote as I put it up here to know God and his intentions for humanity we must start where the scripture starts that is in Genesis 1 many Christians derive their doctrine of origins from this chapter this landmark text however offers not simply knowledge of God's creative work but knowledge of God's design of humanity Owen Strand God's design of humanity that is what every theory of man refutes that God is and that God designed us now that's where we have to draw the line and hold it so let's do like we did last Sunday let's frame all of this in the way of my introduction in terms of what the Bible tells us about being made in the image of God

I'm summarizing our image bearing as four gifts from the Lord and which are unique to humankind on day six I'm just trying to unpack some of what's behind and within these verses telling us that God is creating humankind in his image four gifts we covered the first one last Sunday and it was that God gives us the gift of ruling or dominion that was last Sunday this Sunday God's gift of relating we need to talk about this unique idea of relationships in the way that God made human beings to be in his image he did not make any of the other animals to have relationship with him and with each other anywhere near to how he's done for us as human beings the animals cannot know God in any way close to what we know God how we know

God who we know him to be the animals haven't been given the miraculous gift of language where they can speak to their creator that's prayer we have been given the gift of prayer God has given us a language that he understands and we speak to him in a language that we understand as I stand up here and pray the pastoral prayer you're following along with me and understanding we're taking it right out of God's word just think of the miracle of language the gift that God has given us as human beings made in his image to communicate with him to talk to him and to have him give us his word and talk to us wow right out of the gate we're way ahead of the game we're nothing like the animals what an insult to tell us we came from animals what an insult to God no he's given us the gift of relating so this is in

Genesis verse 27 where we'll camp out but let me read the verse before and after verse 26 Genesis 1 then God said let us make man in our image according to our likeness so that they will have dominion 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 and God created man in his own image in the image of God he created him male and female he created them God blessed them and God said to them be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that creeps on the earth friends the relational aspects of being human reflect the relationship in the

[16:03] Godhead between the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit our ability to relate to each other is the direct result of us being made in the image of God as Father Son and Holy Spirit are in communion with each other God has made us to be in communion with him and with one another and that is unique to us as humankind it's as clear as it can be what is being hinted at here in the way of the plurality in the Godhead let us let us make them all of that suggests to us that what what is being hinted at here will be further developed in the New Testament in the doctrine of the Trinity we see that here but the basis for what we're understanding about ourselves being made in the image of God here is that we're being made relational even as God is relational that is a beautiful beautiful emphasis of verse 27 and it's very clear look look how

I'm illustrating the emphasis here in repeated phrases and God created mankind he created him he created them the repetition gives us the emphasis doesn't it we're not we don't have to do weird gymnastics with the text to see what God is wanting to impress on us what Moses wanted the

children of Israel to be overwhelmed with in their hearts and souls three times the verse emphasizes God creating human beings not creating some animal that will evolve but creating human beings in his image as we'll see three times in that one verse alone now this is the same pattern of emphasis we see in the other days of creation where Christ is creating instantaneously supernaturally so there's no process over time allowed in this literary structure the contextual literary pattern emphasized creating not evolving in any shape or form and now here here there is also a critical addition to the narrative we're just we're talking about it we've been talking about it for a couple of weeks now and here it is a critical addition to the narrative what is being created is being made in God's own image and God created man notice the emphasis in his own image in the image of

God he created him male and female he created them folks you gotta ask we don't talk this way you and I will come close to talking like this when we want to make a point right when we're in some debate or we're in some discussion with our spouse and we want to make sure our point gets across we may repeat ourselves over several sentences or something like that interjecting that main idea that we want to get across maybe I want to say in my discussion and you know I'm right and then I'll say a few things and so I'm right aren't I and I might say that a few more but normally we don't talk like this do we but God chose to write it like this to impress on us what he wants to emphasize and put into what we understand about relating to him and to each other the first would be I created you I stand behind what you are the second thing he wants us to know is I created you unique from anything else

I've made because I gave you my image you bear something about me that nothing else in creation bears you stand unique and so out of the out of the gate you have intrinsic worth before your creator and designer but it gets better better and better the word create that's being used here in verse 27 is the word bara in this particular form it means to shape fashion create here's the kicker always with God as the subject another way of saying that always with God as the one doing the shaping or fashioning so bara emphasizes God's activity God's working God's doing God's acting that's that's what we need to establish right off the bat now if you go back to

Genesis chapter one you'll see this established in the very first verse of the Bible that's how important it is have you ever wondered why God didn't start the Bible some other way why didn't he start the Bible with Jesus I don't I can't answer that you can't either why didn't he start it with the book of John why did God choose to start the Bible where he starts it why is it arranged for us like this why do we have this emphasis I think it's a beautiful testimony to what God once emphasized in the way of his activity I made all this I am I am you go back to verse one in the beginning God created God created and he created everything so what we're seeing here from verse one in the beginning

[22 : 04] God created is the establishment of the foundation of what he wants us to begin knowing about him the second use of Barah is in verse 21 and God created Barah the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves every living creature that moves they are creations of God they are not gods themselves there's no aspect of creation that we should bow to we should bow to the creator himself God is making that very very clear God then is the shaper God is the fashioner he's the potter fashioning the clay making it like he wants to make it from the trees to whatever it is he's creating God is the one doing it this idea of God is the shaper the action behind all of this is also brought forward in the literary structure of verse 27 in a very specific way

I want to try to put it up here let's see if it comes off we tried to form it where you could see some of the way this is actually structured and the Hebrews I think would have caught on to this right away as they heard it in their own language they would have been making these literary structural associations in their minds all right look at how I'm going to do it up here for you the literary structure shows divine action the divine action to start with God created man in his own image all right that's the divine action then the recharacterization of that creative shaping is expressed as in the image of God so God created man and now he's going to characterize what he's created in the image in the image of almighty God now I'll keep going because I want you to see how this is carried out throughout the verse look at this next divine action he created him divine characterization male and female divine action again he created them what's the point God creates and characterizes what he made because he is the divine designer shaper and fashion everything about who we are points back to God as creator everything everything about us stands to showcase God as God creator we are walking tabloids for God we are walking poster cards for

God or are we because something's going to happen to mar that isn't it I was telling Greg earlier that's where we bring in the hope because as we share this with people as we try to communicate to people you have intrinsic worth God made you with great worth in his eyes there is something about you that is

DNA into you something that cannot be cut out or removed and what that is is you've been made in the image of God and given worth beyond anything anyone could ever put a value on well what is the question begging at that point well if we have been given all this worth and we're so worthy to God why is there such evil in the world why do we hurt each other so much why do we kill each other and rape each other and talk down to each other and belittle each other why do we take advantage of each other and exploit one another you see how that just begs and the gospel comes right in doesn't it God had to make a way for us to have a savior because something happened to that God created well did he did he create you and did he create you in the way that he said are you made in his image or do we need to do something with science and come in and explain that doubt that reform that as soon as we start messing around with this we get into trouble it's as plain as it can be and

I tried to put it up here to help you see if you just look at all of the ways the text just one verse verse 27 is emphasizing these things it really overpowers you it's just a beautiful display of grace from God as our designer the question you might want to ask at this point is who is defining whom God not only gets to make us and create us but God gets to define the character of what we are who we are how we are he gets to do all of that and we're going to impact that a little bit more as we move through it a critical mark then of God's design and characterization is this being made in his image as either male or female boy we can't overlook that one that's foundational to verse 27 that designation is God's designation please hear me say this especially you guys if you're under age 20 look at pastor

[27 : 48] Jeff and hear me say this to you being made as a boy or a girl that is God's design for who you are that's just not a part of you that's who you are it is special that God made you a boy or a girl very special now Satan doesn't want you to believe that Satan doesn't want you to own that Satan wants you to get all hung up on I don't like my nose I don't like my hair I don't like the way God made my chin my feet are too big I'm not as pretty as I'm not as handsome as I wish I was 6'4 220 with blue eyes and blonde hair surfer boy I'm 5'8 I weigh 160 pounds and I'm gray this is the kind of thing that

Satan wants to distract you from and he doesn't want you to understand but I say it again the designation of God making you in his image as a male or a female has everything to do with God making you who you are not just a part of who you are I'm going to explain this this is critical and boy does our world need to hear this you cannot be separated from your maleness or your femaleness assigned to you by God you were not born by chance you didn't have a 50 50 chance of being a boy or a girl God assigned your sex to you whether you're a male or female a boy or a girl before he ever made the foundation of the world God used your parents to bring you into the world but God is the one doing the assigning so it was no accident it was no chance thing that God made me a boy or you a girl now friends this is a gift you being a boy or a girl is a gift you may not like your nose or your feet or some other aspect of how you look but you should you should relax and be at peace like that about that thing because God made you the way you are you need to embrace with a thankful heart the truth that God designed you to be a boy or a girl and he did that as his divine will for your life did you hear what I said friends you will always be a girl she is like yes right you will always be a boy Caleb you will always be a boy if you live to be 101 years old you will stay what you are in the way of your maleness and femaleness you can try to cut yourself you can try to have operations you can take medicines to change your anatomy around and make your voice deeper or higher or what you can go to all these extremes that our world goes to you will never ever be able to take out of you your maleness or your femaleness ever ever you cannot do that you cannot undo what

God assigned to you and built and can't do it so you have a choice you can either honor the God that made you the way that he made you or you can spend your life rebelling against that God hating God and trying to change yourself and be your own God that's it you got two choices bow to the Lord in terms of how he made you and what he made you and be thankful and honor him in it or rebel against him and live against him for the rest of your life it's your choice but that's where we live thus saith the Lord embrace with a thankful heart God's divine will for your life look I'll say it again

God designed you and he designed you to relate to him and to others as a boy or a girl being male or female is a God given gift of your person hood it's not just a part of who you are like your arm is a part of your body or like your elbow is a part of your body look your sexuality when

Pastor Jeff says the word sexuality here's what I'm talking about in this context your sexuality has to do with everything related to you being a boy or a girl all right you with me in this so your sexuality your maleness or your femaleness is who you are by divine design God chose to make you in his image as either a girl or a boy now I told the Wednesday night group this past Wednesday night we answered one of the questions from the theology exams about being in the image of God that just that just the way it fell and I told the Wednesday night crowd you cannot cut God's image out of you and if you could you would cut out what makes you you and it's the same with your sexuality whether you're a boy or a girl if you tried to cut out your maleness or your femaleness you could never do it your very identity you cannot change your

[33 : 50] God assigned identity you cannot do it so we have many many people in our world today where we have come to the place where it's fashionable it's vogue it's popular it's cool to identify as something other than the sex you were born with I was born a boy I don't want to be a boy anymore now I want to be a girl and I'm going to go out and I'm going to take medicines to change my voice and I'm going to do myself up like a girl and now I'll tell you what that's all about in terms of Genesis chapter one it's about rebellion that's it people who do things like that no matter what they might say hate God and this is the way that they're showing their hatred and it's sad what do they need they need Genesis one they need

Genesis three and they need the rest of the scriptures to help them understand what God has done in assigning their identity to them why would you want to change your identity unless you were rebelling against God and his will for you why would you even want to do that most of you are not struggling with this issue and probably will never have to face changing your gender in your future I hope not I hope not I hope you're going to be sound and solid in what God teaches you about being a boy or a girl and you're good with that and yet you face a world every day who is reeling reeling like this from being buffeted by these lies that Satan is perpetuating against the truth of Genesis chapter one and they don't know what to do with it and so they're running after all these aberrations all of these wrong things that fly in the face of

God creating them as male or female you with me now I know you know a lot of this but we want to take time to say this is the good of God making mankind in his image so many of the issues that we face today in our world are answered before we ever get out of the first chapter of the first book of the Bible we're already getting our answers before we ever go anywhere else in scripture I'm going to show you how foundational this is God made us God made us God made us as human beings he made us in his image and he made each of us male or female there is no in between and there is no other than so these biblical perspectives are really important to how you live your life while your sexuality isn't some kind of throw away reality about you so that you can mess with it and do whatever you want to with it the bible's emphasis on you as a sexual person a boy or a girl a male or female does not mean that it is primarily what defines you being a boy or a girl is not primarily what defines you as important as it is it is well what is pastor

Jeff here is what defines you more than anything else as a human being here it is your relationship with God is what most defines the person you are you are either rightly related to God by faith in Jesus or you are spiritually separated from God by your absence of faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord that's what defines every single person in the world isn't it and it's the most important thing about your neighbors it's the most important thing about your co-workers it's the most important thing about your family and your friends do they know Christ as Savior and Lord or not I hope you're tracking with me on this primarily you are a spiritual being whose spirit is either alive to God or dead to God according to scripture that's the most important thing about you God made you in his image to relate to him so look your sin is your enemy separating you from this vital life with your creator it's the most important thing for you to deal with as a boy or a girl look at this from scripture the one who does not believe

God has made him a liar because he has not believed the witness which God has borne witness about his son and the witness is this that God gave us eternal life and this life is in his son he who has the son has the life he who does not have the son of God does not have that life he he so God made you for relationship with himself and with others made in his image the fact that we can't and don't relate well to him and other people that's just simply proof that his image in us is marred but

still there so our hearts are bent in the direction of believing lies about who we are deceived into thinking that we need to somehow change or alter who we are we need to promote ourselves and put ourselves forward in our relationships with

[39 : 35] God and others now look that is the corrupting power and influence of sin you want to do those things and I have been tempted to do those things as you are because of sin that's not God's design now hear this please every theory every idea every doctrine which dilutes or denies what God has told you about yourself in Genesis 1 through 3 those are toxic lies formed by demons they're formed to rob you of the truth of who you really are now did you hear me every single lie every single idea every single theory that serves to deny or dilute Genesis 1 through 3 are lies that are aimed at robbing you of living as who you really are as God has made you in his image every one of them it's all about attacking relationship

I hope this is making sense to you it is a very very well planned scheme to draw us away from almighty God God made you for relationship now please hear me folks atheistic humanism evolution naturalism all tell us there is no God and we as human beings are at the center of everything we are what this world is all about and I just told you that the literary structure of just one verse in the first chapter of the Bible points to the fact that we were made to reflect and glorify God as creator the glory doesn't hit us and get absorbed the glory hits us and reflects off on the God who made us he gets the honor and the praise and the glory we've been created to worship him not worship what he's made to include ourselves amen this is where we are this is where we're trying to camp out what

I've been explaining to you about these demonic lies that speak against your maleness and your femaleness and against God as your creator made in his image look these are toxic systems of belief toxic poisonous when we take these things into ourselves they poison our personhood that's why we see what we see in the world here is your explanation for why you're seeing the world go upside down in this area it's because these lies poison our personhood they replace the truth of God who he made us to be they're false systems of belief they form the basis for why people want to change their gender and abuse their body and sexual sin and chase after perversion and form parades and put their perversion on display and call it pride they take pride in it because there's no shame well why not if there's no

God why do we need to be ashamed if there's no authority why should we worry about it they are believing and living out demonic lies let's call it what it is it's we can't just stop and say well they're just bad people I'm glad we're good people they're the perverts we're something else no we're sinners and they're deceived as we have been deceived maybe you weren't deceived in that specific sin or that specific area but they need the same savior you need and I need they are believing demonic lies about the precious gift of being made in the image of God as male and female look folks the church of Jesus Christ needs to do battle on their behalf we need to boldly speak God's truth and love to them will they like it most of them will not like it because it puts them bowing before a

God that they are accountable to and that's what they're running from but we still need to speak the truth in love look I'll put it up here for you if you doubt if you disbelieve what Genesis 1 through 2 reveals to us about God as creator based on the plain literal reading of these chapters is true historical narrative you rob yourself of the truths the Bible reveals about the foundation for who you are and why you exist so much so that if you try to mess with a literal understanding of all of this folks you're doing nothing but messing with your foundation for who you understand yourself to be and that is going to create all kinds of issues as you try to move out of that platform and face the world why let me tell you in plain terms because the world is going to jack slap you to death you're going to step out onto the world onto that shaky platform of what you've done with

[45 : 01] Genesis chapter one and the world is going to cold cock you right in the face the truth the world abuses the truth and the world will abuse you now what do we do now where do we run now what do we stand on well we run back to Genesis and we read God created the heavens and the earth then we read God created me and he created me special in his own image now the fact that I don't reflect his image what does that tell me about me what do I need to do about that where do I go how do I face that and the answer comes back Jesus Christ Jesus Christ and him crucified and raised again to give you a new nature a new nature you stay a boy you stay a girl you get a new nature and

God redeems you God it's a beautiful thing but it's all grounded in what we understand God to teach us in Genesis chapter one we can only truly know ourselves in our world as we truly know God as he has revealed himself to us in his holy word now catch this I don't want you to miss this there is even more at stake if you doubt or disbelieve God's account of making you in his image as a male or female by what we read in Genesis one there's even more at stake than what I've been saying more at stake yes in addition to I'm not necessarily saying even worse I'm saying in addition to this there's even more at stake this is how foundational this becomes everything I've been saying to you this morning is leading up to this I'm going to read the verse again God created man he created him in his own image in the image of God he created him male and female he created them that is the foundation for our personhood not a part of who you are that's who you are if you doubt and disbelieve

Genesis chapter one as literal history speaking into your life and telling you who you are as God has made you if you doubt or disbelieve that look you rob yourself of biblical truths to help you navigate the harsh realities of this life and help you faithfully combat lies which work against God redeeming and redefining you into his treasured workmanship regardless of your past experience underline and understroke that last phrase regardless of your past experience the devil doesn't want you to know this the devil wants to work against this for all of you young people in here look this isn't me trying to scare you it's me trying to sober you and I hope your parents are working with you this way the world is a harsh place people are not going to appreciate you because you run out here and you love Jesus Jesus said that you'll be persecuted for loving him and it will come at great cost and so it will you need to be ready for that you need to be ready to learn to love the Lord in the face of all of that and not become bitter and resentful and fearful those are the tools that Satan uses to keep you down because people will hurt you and abuse you and take advantage of you if you don't live on the foundation of Genesis 1 you rob yourself of the truths that will help you navigate that harshness folks please hear me now especially in the area of your sexuality underscore it there's a reason that we see God destroying cities like Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities of the plain and the valley there because of the immorality the sexual impurity they'd come to there's a reason that God tells us in Genesis that he comes to the place where he destroys the whole world with a flood because people had become so sexually vile there is something about us being made in the image of

God as male his greatest attacks in that area and if you're not careful you'll carry that with you the rest of your life those scars about your sexuality and you'll struggle with it I'm telling you this is the teaching of scripture we don't want you to fall victim to all of that I'll say it this way as I move toward a close look every lie countering God's truth is at its root a lie about God's design for relationships based on being made in his image the fact that we abuse each other the fact that we lie to each other hurt each other deceive each other defame each other that is all God's image in us being marred and proof that we need a redeemer friends relationships hurt they bless and they hurt eventually eventually and they can be toxic for us because

[50 : 43] God's image in us has been marred by sin and because we have an enemy who lies to us and lies about our identity and he wants to shake us up at the very beginning of the Bible and leave us off platform off foundation trying to build something on our own no he's either telling us that we're fine when we're not or he's telling us our faith in Christ is useless when it's not this is how he comes after you and me so Satan Satan would make you a prisoner of your past Satan would make you a victim of your failures he would make you a slave to what others have done to you or to what you have done to others that's the devil's plan it always involves lying to you to leave you without any hope of being forgiven and made complete in Christ

Satan wants you to feel fragmented fearful isolated distracted and apathetic about your relationship with God and others what what difference does it make after all he wants you to become cynical and bitter and resentful and fearful he'll deceive you by lying to you about how God created you and loved you in the past by making you in his image and about how Christ can forgive you for your sins past present and future you hear that Christ can forgive you past present and future now folks this is why you and I must listen to the Lord very carefully and very prayerfully as he tells us the truth in his word here it is again I'll put it up and God created man in his own image in the image of God he created him male and female he created him for relationship with God and each other when the Bible speaks of you as a created being it tells you the truth about your value and uniqueness in God's created order and it also tells you the truth about why you and

I need a savior and why that savior came in the form of a human being to die in your place and redeem you to the father who made you in the first place this is where we live well I hope that's a blessing to you I hope it reassures you and possibly even go on record to share it with others we need to tell the world that God loves them and God made them in their in his image and the worth that they have already out of the gate is something precious to God the evil that is done to them and that they do can be redeemed in the Lord Jesus there's the hope there's the hope all right let's pray together father we thank you that in Christ Jesus we can know your goodness and your grace we thank you that in this message today we have just over and over again from one verse been reminded that you are the actor you are the action you are the initiator behind making us who we are so that who we are as a boy or a girl father is glorifying to you that was your design and assignment for us so help us to take great gratitude in our hearts that that was your plan and help us to live as a boy or a girl a man or a woman to the fullest giving thanks to you and glorifying Jesus showing the world what does it look like for a man to be a man in Jesus what does it look like for a woman to be a woman in Jesus even as you redeem us and lead us may we bring may we bring much honor and glory to you and Jesus name we pray amen amen so