



CREATION AND THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN HISTORY

#16 - Created In The Image Of God Genesis 1:26-27

PICTURES NEEDED

- 16-1 Adam and Eve
- 16-2 Michelangelo's depiction of creation of man

REVIEW (Before Teaching Lesson)

- **Journal Review:** Ask students to share an important truth that they learned from their journal readings at home that week. Share some of your own insights.
- **Previous Lesson Review:** (Use the visual from the last lesson to aid in review)
When were dinosaurs created? How do we know dinosaurs lived at the same time as people? What does the description of behemoth sound like? Why? What is a reasonable explanation for what happened to the dinosaurs? Why?
- **The Big Question Review:** What can we know about dinosaurs from the Bible?
Let the students give their answers to the question.
- **Bible Verse Review:** Job 40:15
God made dinosaurs along with people.

¹⁵ "Look at the behemoth, which I made along with you and which feeds on grass like an ox.

LESSON CONTENT

Note: The Bible verses included in the lesson are from the NIV 1984 edition. The wording of the questions is derived from that version. If another version of the Bible is used, questions may need to be adapted.

What are the living things God has created so far in our study of Genesis? God has created all the plants on the earth, all the animals that live in water, all the birds and insects that fly in the sky, all the creatures that crawl on the ground and all the wild animals and livestock. What was the only living thing left to create? The only living thing left to create was man. (picture 16-1)

Genesis 1:26-27

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

What was different about the creation of man from the other living things God created? Of all of God's creation, only man was created in the image of God.

What is an image? An image is a reflection or replica (copy) of something.

(picture 16-2) (Show Michelangelo's famous painting of the creation of Adam.) Is this an accurate depiction of the creation of man in the image of God? Michelangelo shows God in the form of a man. God is spirit and doesn't have a physical body so we know that man wasn't created in his physical image.

What then do you think it means to be created in the image of God? God is a personal God: he has a mind, he has a will and he has emotions or feelings. Since man was created in the image of God, he also has those characteristics and that is what makes him different from other animals. Man was also created to be able to reflect God's character, which is something animals cannot do.

What does having a mind enable people to do? Because we have minds, we can learn and understand ideas. We can discover new ways of doing things. We can be creative and inventive. We can communicate with words and pass on our understanding to others. We can know who God is and recognize our need for him. Animals can't do those things.

What is the difference between God's mind and man's mind? God has all wisdom and understanding; there is nothing he doesn't know. He has right thoughts about all things; he knows what is true. People have limited understanding and can be easily misled into believing what isn't true.

How does having a will affect people? Having a will means we can make moral choices. We can choose to follow God and do what is right or we can choose to reject God and do what is evil.

How are people different from animals that way? Animals don't have a will; they just follow their design. They act on instinct rather than making a choice of what is good or bad.

When a person does something really bad, like kill another person, you would say that he did something evil. If an animal kills a person, you might say that what happened was bad or awful but you wouldn't call the act evil because the animal didn't make a moral choice to kill.

What is the difference between God's will and man's will? God's will is perfect because he is holy and perfect. God only does what is good, right and true because he only wants what is good, right and true. He doesn't act out of selfish interests. Man's will tends to be very self-centered; people often act out of selfish interests.

How does having emotions/heart affect people? Having emotions means that we have feelings; we can feel love or hate, happiness or sadness, joy or sorrow, hope or despair. Our emotions affect the way we think about and respond to things. Sometimes the way we feel can make us more compassionate toward others. Sometimes we harden our hearts and become angry and resentful.

What is the difference between our emotions and God's emotions? God responds to people and situations in a right manner, he sees them as they really are. God knows and understands all things so his emotions are always right and justified; they are always appropriate; the way they should be. Like our will our emotions are generally self-focused.

How can our emotions affect our thinking? Our emotions can cloud our thinking so we don't view situations or people clearly; we don't see things the way they really are. We see everything from our own perspective. Our emotions aren't always appropriate; we often respond to people or situations in inappropriate ways. Sometimes we throw a fit when things don't go our way or make fun of others who seem a little odd.

Because we are created in God's image, we were designed to reflect God's character. What does it mean to reflect God's character? If we know God and choose to love and fear him, we can reflect his love, kindness, justice, compassion, etc., to others in what we say and do.

How are we able to reflect God's character? To reflect God's character, we have to give our lives to Jesus and be filled with his Spirit. We then can have a personal relationship with God and bring delight to him as we submit our mind, will and emotions to him. Our desire as Christians should be to reflect God's image and live in a way that pleases and honors God.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 says, ¹² *And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,* ¹³ *and to observe the LORD's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?*

What does it mean to fear the Lord? To fear the Lord means that we know who God is, that he knows and sees everything we do and we are accountable to him for our thoughts, words and actions.

How do we show we fear the Lord? We submit ourselves to God's authority and go his way. We worship and honor him.

Why should we love and fear God? It is what we were created to do. It is the only way we can reflect God's image and bring him glory and honor. It is the only way to live a good life and experience God's blessing.

LESSON WRAP-UP

- **Overview Questions:** What does it mean to be created in the image of God? What does it mean to have a mind? A will? Emotions? What is the difference between God's mind and man's mind? God's will and man's will? God's emotions and man's emotions? How can a person reflect God's character?
- **Thought Questions:** What do you think are God's feelings currently about the people he created in his image? Why? Did God know that people would reject him when he created the first man? Why do you think he created people in spite of knowing that they would reject him? Why is it beneficial for a person to reflect God's character?
- **Prayer:** Thank God that he has given you life. Pray that you would bring delight to God by the way you respond to him. Pray that in all situations you would want to go God's way and reflect his character in your thoughts and the things you say and do.
- **The Big Question: How are we to reflect God's image?**
Let the students give their answers to the question. Share the memory verse. Ask how it answers the question.
- **Memory Verse: Deuteronomy 10:12-13** We are to walk in God's ways and serve him.

¹² And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹³ and to observe the LORD's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

Questions: What does God ask of us? Why does God want us to do those things?

ACTIVITIES (Completed after the lesson)

Any age appropriate activity can be included which fits into the class time. The activities with a star are included on the class notes.

- ★ **Lesson Notes:** Ask the students to summarize in one sentence what the lesson was about. Then have them give three main points covered in the lesson. An example is below.

Theme: God created people, both men and women, in his own image.

1. Because people have a mind, they can think and understand who God is.
2. Because people have a will, they can choose to follow God and do good things or disobey God and do bad things.
3. Because people have emotions, they can feel happy or sad.

- ★ **Memory Verse:** Read the memory verse on the cover of the class notes and then have the students fill in the blanks in the verse.

★ **Activity Page:** Attributes of God Crossword Puzzle

Instructions: Find each attribute of God by inserting, "Because God is," at the beginning of the clues. The answers are included below. As this crossword is difficult, you might want to write the words on the board so the children can pick from the list.

- Because God is compassionate he cares about what we are going through.
- Because God is our protector he watches over us.
- Because God is good he will always do what is best for us.
- Because God is faithful he will keep his promises.
- Because God is merciful he forgives our sins.
- Because God is loving he sacrificed his Son for us.
- Because God is just he judges men fairly.
- Because God is longsuffering he doesn't punish us like we deserve.
- Because God is truthful he will lie or deceive us.
- Because God is holy he grieves over our sin.
- Because God is generous he provides for our needs.
- Because God is righteous he will never do anything wrong.

★ **Further Understanding:** Investigation/Reasoning Skills

Do I reflect God's image?

1 John 4:16b says, *God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.* Love is the very essence of who God is. Since we were created in God's image we need to understand what love really is. Read through 1 Corinthians 13: 4-5 and underline the attributes of love listed in those verses. Then go over each attribute and discuss what it means. (Only the verse and attributes are listed on the discussion notes sheet.)

1 Corinthians 13:4-5

⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

- Patient: Puts up with pain, troubles or difficulties without complaint or ill temper over a long period of time. Takes all things in stride and carries on in the midst of difficulty.
- Kind: Goodness expressed in acts of friendship: sympathetic, helpful, thoughtful and gentle, in speech and actions. Considerate of the needs of others.
- Content (Does not envy): Expresses gratitude in all situations and doesn't desire what has been given to another. Satisfied with the provision and position God has given.
- Humble (Not proud or boastful): Doesn't look down on others, sees self as is, a sinner in need of mercy. Doesn't compare strengths to the weaknesses of others.
- Respectful (Not rude): Is always polite and shows proper respect in thought, words, tones, and looks. Elevates others above self.
- Self-sacrificing (Not self-seeking): Puts needs of others before own. Does not focus on having own needs met. Seeks after God and trusts him to meet needs.
- Peace-loving (Not easily angered): Does not let what others do affect actions or emotions, self-controlled, turns away wrath with gentleness. Lives at peace with others. Does not easily take offense.

- Forgiving (Keeps no record of wrongs): Forgives when wronged and does not think about it or bring it up again. Does not harbor bitterness when wronged.

Discussion: According to 1 Corinthians 13 is love a feeling or an action? How do you know? When you substitute God for the word “love” in the verses are the verses true? If you substitute your name for “love” in the verses are the verses true? What is the difference between God’s love and our love? What would life be like if God didn’t demonstrate the attributes of love towards us? What would life be like if we truly demonstrated love towards others?

JOURNAL

The journal is passed out at the end of class for the students to complete at home. It has six readings that answer a digging deeper question. It would be beneficial for the teacher to work through the journal readings also.

Digging Deeper: How are we to follow after God?

Reading 1: Micah 6:1-8 We do what is just and right.

What did God want Israel to remember about the past? What kind of sacrifice did God want from the people? What does doing what is right show about a person? What does it mean to act justly? What does it mean to love mercy? What does it mean to walk humbly with God? Why is it important to do all the things God asks of men?

Reading 2: Psalm 103:1-12 We remember all God’s benefits.

What does God do for us? What is God like?

Reading 3: Psalm 103:13-22 We remember God’s precepts.

Who experiences God’s love? What does it mean to fear God? What is God’s covenant? What are God’s precepts? Over what does God rule? What should be our response to God’s authority?

Reading 4: Deuteronomy 6:1-9 We are to love God with all our being.

Why did God give Moses the law to teach the people? How were the people to respond to God? What does it mean to love God with all your heart? What does it mean to love God with all your soul? What does it mean to love God with all your strength? What were the people to do with God’s commandments? What does that mean?

Reading 5: 1 John 5:1-5 We believe in the one God sent.

How do we follow after God and love others?

Reading 6: Isaiah 40:25-29 What is God like?

Reflect on who God is and his attributes.