



LIFEGROUPS

Series: Identity
Message: Imago Dei

**Scripture: Genesis 1:27-28; 5:1;
9:6**

Date: January 11-12, 2020

—[LET'S START]—

Let's begin today's session with a time of affirmation. The Bible tells us that each of us have been created in the image of God. Take turns sharing how you see the image of God in each person in your group. (If your group is too big or too new to do this, consider splitting into groups of 3 people. Have each person share a little bit about their background – where they grew up, what they do, and finally something that they are dreaming of doing some day).

—[LET'S TALK]—

1. **GRATITUDE AND PRAYER:** What happened last week for which you are thankful? What challenges do you see in your life? Your family? The World? Thank God for the beautiful ways that He has been at work. Pray for the challenges that those in your group are currently facing.
2. Pastor Dale spent a good deal of time this week making the argument that we have been created in the image of God. Read these three foundational passages that speak about being created in God's image as a group – Genesis 1:26-31; Genesis 5:1 and Genesis 9:6. What does it mean to be created in the image of God? What are the implications of being created in His image?
3. Pastor Dale gave a lot of examples this week of what happens when we fail to recognize the image of God in ourselves and others. Which of his examples were most striking to you?
4. Pastor Dale talked about the mirrors that we need in order to see ourselves in others in the right light. He began by talking about the mirror of the Word of God. Read James 1:22-27. What do these verses teach us about the mirror of God's Word? How does God's Word help you see yourself and others in His light?
5. The second mirror Dale talked about was the mirror of community. Read Philippians 2:1-5. What do these verses teach us about community? What does James 3:7-10 add to this teaching?
6. The final mirror that Dale talked about was God's face. In the Old Testament, Moses ascended to the mountain of God and his face radiated that he had been in God's presence. What do Romans 8:29, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Galatians 4:6-7 teach us about this principle?

—[LET'S ACT]—

We started today by affirming each other. We all have people in our lives who could use some encouragement. They need to be reminded about their worth and value as people created in the image of God. This week, let's take time to affirm the worth that we see in other people. Share with at least one other person what you see about them that is so special. Come back next time prepared to share how these people responded.

—[SERMON REVIEW]—

- Most of us don't know who we are. WE don't even recognize each other.
- You're a male or female who has been created in the image of God!
- Our identity has nothing to do with anything in us. It's actually a status which God has conferred on all human beings. Being created in the image of God means to be an "imager" of God. In a sense we are the second most important beings in the universe! C. S. Lewis said, "We are not mere mortals we are immortals."
- If you don't believe or accept that you and everyone has been created in the image of God, it opens the door to self-harm and injustice of every kind!
- There is no scientific basis for saying that human beings have rights and dignity and value.
- There is a plethora of writing and information out there which talks about how worthy and valuable each person is.
- The idea of human rights came from the Bible and got into European jurisprudence and cultural institutions through the church. (Brian Tierney, Cornell University)
- Christianity introduced the concept of equal rights. It overthrew ancient social hierarchies between rich and poor, master and slave. According to Christianity, "We are brothers and sisters on the same level as creatures of God." (French Philosopher, Luc Ferry)
- University of Chicago professor Richard Rorty said, "Christianity gave rise to the concept of universal rights derived from the conviction that all human beings are created in the image of God." In the modern age, however, Rorty says due to Darwin we no longer accept the idea of creation. Therefore, we are no longer morally bound to maintain that everyone who is biologically human has equal rights!
- When you deny the God of the Bible as the Creator, you open the door to self-harm and injustice.
- Intellectual Nancy Pearcey in her book, *Love thy Body* writes that there is no longer a debate in the western world over when a person becomes a human being. Science has proven and it is mostly accepted by secularists and even pro-abortionists that you're a human being at conception. The issue is no longer when are you human but when do you become a person. It's called personhood theory. And what does it mean to be a person? Who decides?
- Andrew Walker says that history's greatest crimes result from denying God's image in every single person!

- How do we overcome seeing ourselves and others in the wrong light? We need a mirror – the Word of God.
- One of the places we should be able to look and see ourselves is within the community of our family and the church.
- Is there any community we can look to that will love us like God does? Of all the places in the world where anyone should be able to find a mirror that reflects the love and grace of God, it should be the church.
- The church should be a place where:
 - Those who have been beat up by the world should come and experience healing.
 - No matter who they are or what they've done they feel valued for being created in the image of God.
 - You feel your God given worth because people stand up for you, protect you and try to empathize with you. It doesn't mean that we affirm, approve or encourage sinful behavior but like Jesus we even love those who reject us.
- Finally we need to the mirror of God's face!
- Does your life shine with the presence of God because you've been in His midst?

—[NOTES]—
