

The Image of Him That Created You

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Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

- [0 : 00] Good morning and welcome to the service this morning.
- We come together to worship God and we pray the Lord blesses unto the sound of His Lord. We can begin by singing some verses from Psalm 114.
- Psalm 104 and we're singing from verse 24. Psalm 104 verse 24.
- How manifold, Lord, are thy works! In wisdom wonderful! Thou every one of them hast made earths of thy riches full.
- So is this great and spacious sea wherein things creeping are, which numbered cannot be, and beasts both great and small are there.
- [1 : 06] Their ships go, there thou maids to play, that Leviathan great. These all wait on thee that thou maids. In due time give them meat.
- That which thou givest to them, they gather for their food. Thine hand thou copent liberally, they fill thou with good.
- We're going to sing these four stanzas. How manifold, Lord, are thy works! In wisdom wonderful! Psalm 104 verse 24. How manifold, Lord, are thy works!
- In wisdom wonderful! In wisdom wonderful! The very one of them haste made earths of thy riches full.
- So is this great and spacious sea, when in things creeping are, which number cannot be, and be.
- [2 : 56] What great and small are there? What great and small are there? There ships go, there thou maids to blame, that never has an dream.
- This all wait on thee that thou maids. This all wait on thee that thou maids.
- In truth I give them me. That which thou givest unto them, they gather for their blood.
- Thine hand thou open, they gather for their blood. Thine hand thou open, they gather for their blood.
- Thine hand thou with good. Thine hand thou with good.
- [4 : 28] And let us join together in prayer. Let us pray. Let us pray. Heavenly blessed God, as we gather together in your name, we give thanks for the opportunity to do so.
- God. And that we are under the gaze of the all-seeing eye of our God. A gaze that not only contemplates what we are outwardly, but what we are inwardly.
- What we are doing with our hands and with our mouth and even with our eyes, our lips. What we are doing in the thoughts and the deep recesses of our saiki thoughts that are possibly not fully formulated.
- And yet they undergird our actions and our endeavours.
- We pray that you would remember us today. And that you would minister to us through your word. We give thanks for the picture. Your psalmist.
- [5 : 49] The sweet psalm singer of Israel. Your servant as he composed these songs of praise.

Words that speak of the creator and the creation. That speak of your activity in creating.

But also in sustaining what you have created. You are the God who supplies all our needs. We may think that this is merely true of the humankind that we are part of.

That you have an interest in us and that you provide for our well-being. But so too must it be said that the creatures that occupy this world with us.

Be they the birds of the air, the fish of the sea and all that dwell within the sea. You are their God. You have created them. And you are their creator.

[6 : 58] As such you sustain and maintain their life here in this world. However short lived it may be. And there are creatures that are short lived.

We understand that there are others who exceed our span. That we bless you and thank you that you rise upon all that you have brought into being.

And you were pleased with it in the creation. And we bless you for the interest that you maintain in it. We pray that you would remember us today. However insignificant we may think of ourselves.

We probably at times are guilty of comparing and contrasting ourselves to other places within the world that appear on the face of it to be of greater import.

Perhaps the cathedrals of our land. The large gatherings that come periodically to exercise the God given requirement to worship their God.

[8 : 19] And however exercised they are in truth. They may appear to us to be of greater import in the sight of God.

When the kings and the lords and the ladies of the land. And those gentry who belong to the higher spheres of power.

Those occupying our parliaments. Those who have responsibilities pressed upon them to care for the needs of the populace.

That they may appear to us to have greater significance in their acts of worship. When the reality is far from that. Those who approach a throne of grace do so.

As individuals. And they do so collectively. But they do so with the one and same truth.

[9 : 20] That they are applied to every one of us. That we come in the name and for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is our way of access.

And no one because of who they are or what they are or what they have done or intend to do. Have any superior right. All that we are.

All that we are. The focus is upon all he is. And we give thanks for that. For the youngest present year. We pray that you would make yourself known to them.

As to the oldest. Whatever span of years. Passes between these two points. We know not.

And yet you are God. To the young as you are God to the old. And we pray that that would be acknowledged. We pray your blessing upon our congregation.

[10 : 21] Upon our communities. All the neighborhoods that we reside in. All the homes and families that we are part of.

May your blessing enrich them lives. We pray for those who have illness to contend with. We plead for them. That you may bless them.

In their time of sickness. Those who are able to attend. The means of grace. Those who are able to come to church. To worship God. We give thanks.

That you have given that ability to them. We remember others. Who would be desirous of being present. But are unable. We would ask Lord.

That you would bless. All who have special need today. Those that we know of. And many. That we know little of. Remember their homes. Their families.

[11 : 17] The care that is being shown to them. Within the body of family. Others who may be. Placed in solitary situations. We remember them to you.

And ask that every. Every endeavor that is made. To them and for them. Would be owned and honored. By the great name of the one.

Who is the giver of every. Good and perfect gift. Remember the grieving and sorrowful. We bring them into your presence once again. And we are thankful.

That you are able to bless the broken hearted. And to heal their hurt. And to visit them. In mercy revealing. The one who is the prince of life.

The one who is the way. The truth. And the life. The one to whom. Access is given. And encouragement. To put their trust in him.

[12 : 16] In all the varying needs. That may. Represent themselves. To us. Represent themselves. To us. So here are prayers. Remembering.

Our islands. Our nation. Those who rule over us. We pray for the king. And his family. We pray for the parliaments. And their.

The various representatives. That function within these roles. Remember our local council. And those councillors appointed. To labour.

On our behalf. We pray for the nations of the earth. Thinking of. The countless numbers. That are embroiled in war. Be they. Wars against their neighbour.

Or wars within. The nations. And there are. Numerous. Wars. Wars. That have been going on. For many. Many. Years.

[13 : 12] And. We pray for those. Who have been swallowed up. With these. Things. And who are. Deeply affected by it. Disturbed by it. Who are destitute.

And demoralised. And left. With. No place to go. No. No. No wisdom. To direct them. To the one. Who alone.

Is the God of peace. So hear our prayers. On their behalf. And work amongst them. Using the instrumentality. Of the testimony. Of your sins. Even as they are enabled. So to do.

So grant to us. The liberty. To wait upon you. The short time. That we're together. Bless your world. To us. We pray. For give sin. In Jesus name.

Well boys and girls. Before you go out. Into Sunday school. Just a word.

[14 : 08] To you. You've been working your way. Through the. Moral law. The Ten Commandments. And you. You've come to the.

Seventh commandment. Which is. There shall not. Commit adultery. Now that. Commandment of God. Reminds us. Of how God.

Sees. The importance. That there is. In covenant relationships. How he sees. The importance.

Of. The relationships. Being. Honorable. And chaste. And holy. Holy. And. I suppose.

I suppose. At the back of that. Behind that. Is. The. Requirement. That we. Honour him. By the way. That we live our lives. But.

[15 : 07] With this commandment. It. Reminds us. Of the sanctity. Of marriage. The importance. It is. For us. To be. Faithful.

To. Our wife. Or our husband. As we have promised. To be. And that God is. Displeased. With us. When.

That is not. The way it is. One of the saddest examples. We have in the Bible. Is the example. That God has seen. For. To.

To make known. To us. The example. Of David. And. David. Was. A man of God. Somebody. Who loved the Lord. And the Lord.

Had blessed him. In his life. Blessed him. Considerably. He gave to him. Many. Many. Many. Precious. Victories.

[16 : 03] And gifts. In all kinds. Of different ways. He had also. Blessed him. Within his family. Now. David. Was somebody.

Who. Had. A. Wife. I think. Four wives. Now. It is a different world. In which David lived. But.

We know. That. He was. He had. Mechar. The daughter. Of Saul. Although. Something. About that marriage. Saul.

Took her away. From him. But he was also. Married. To. Apikil. A widow. And. Ahenohan. And another one. Macher.

And all of these wives. Were his. And he was. He was a loving husband. To them. But. He saw the wife. Of somebody else. And he decided.

[16 : 58] That wife. For himself. And. Now. That was wrong. For him. To do. Maybe. We don't understand. The culture.

We don't understand. A lot. Of what went on. But. There is. No doubting. That. David. Had God's word. David. Would have known.

The commandments. Of God. Said. Said. But. He desired. Another man's. Wife. For himself. And that. Led David.

Into all kinds. Of sadness. His. He. It took him. Down a road. Where. He was guilty. Of course. We have to say. That.

It was murder. He caused. Uh. Uh. Uh. Uh. Uh. To be sent. Into the. Hufiest.

[17 : 52] Part. Of the battle. So that. He would die. Which was. Effectively. Murder. Uh. Uh. I think. The saddest thing.

Of all. All of that. Is. It's against. God's law. And it's against. What God commands. But the saddest thing. Is. That he didn't. Really.

See it. That he didn't. Really. See it. For himself. And. It reminds us. Of how terrible. Sin. How blinding. Sin.

When we go. Down a certain road. Sometimes. One sin. Leads us. Into another sin. That we can't see. What's happening. And. Uh.

God. Mersifully. Taught. David. That what he was doing. Was wrong. What he had done. Was wrong. And.

[18 : 47] The servant. The prophet. Nathan. To speak to him. And he spoke to him. Using a. A parable. And. We see. How blind. David was.

When the parable. Was told. And he was so. Angry. At the person. Who was in the parable. That was wronged. And yet. He didn't see. Himself.

In that. Until God. Opened his eyes. And we have to. Remember. That when we see. God's law. God gives us. His law. For good reasons. Every one of these laws.

Are there for our good. They're there to. Keep us safe. They're there to. Keep us. Holy. They're there to keep us. Close to himself.

And when we. Disregard any one of them. Does not matter. Which one. It will. Affect us. Deeply. And.

- [19 : 42] It will. Cause us. Great. Sorrow. So we need to. Remind ourselves. Of what the law is for. And. Every one of them. Are for our good. Well.
- We hope that. As you. Look to these lessons. From the bible. Which are there for our good. That you. Remember these things. And learn from them. I'm going to sing now.
- As you go out. To Sunday school. Some verses. From Psalm 139. Psalm 139. And. We're going to. Sing.
- From. Verse 14. Verse 14. And. We're singing. To. Verse 18. The evil I praise.
- For fearfully. And strangely. Made. I am. Thy works. Are marvelous. And. Right. Well. My soul. Doth know.
- [20 : 39] The same. My substance. Was not. Hid. From thee. When. As in secret. I was made. And in earth's lowest parts. Was wrought. Most curiously.
- Thine eyes. My substance. Did behold. Yet being. Unperfect. And in the volume. Of thy book. My members. All were written. Which after. In continuance.
- Were fashioned. The one. When. As they yet. All shapeless. Were. And of them. There was none. How precious. Also. Are thy thoughts.
- So gracious. God. To me. And in their son. How passing. Great. The. If I should. Count them. Than the sand. The more.
- In number. Be. For time. Soever. I awake. I ever. Am. With thee. Precious. Fourteen. Fourteen.
- [21 : 34] To eighteen. Of some. One hundred. And thirty. Nine. Teal. The. Well. I. Press. For.
- Fearfully. And. Strangely. De. I am. Thy. Words. Are. Am. Am. Thine.
- Are. Am. Am. Am. Are. Am. Am. Am. Am. Am. My soul does not know the same.
- My substance was not great from thee. When I was in sacred eye.
- Was made and gained as low as parts. Was wrought mysteriously.
- [22 : 49] Thine eyes my substance did behold. Yet being imperfect.
- And in the volume of the book. My members all were rich.
- Which after in a continuance.
- Where God shamed everyone. When I see it.
- I see it. I see it. I see it. I see it. I see it. And of them there was none.
- [23 : 56] How precious also are thy thoughts.
- O gracious God to me. And in an ensemble.
- Number passing in thee. And numberless in thee.
- If I should tell them understand.
- Then what in a number be. What time so ever die away.
- [24 : 57] I ever am with thee. I am going to read. I am going to read from the New Testament scripture.
- Paul's epistle to the Colossians. And we will read chapter 3. Colossians and chapter 3. If ye then be risen with Christ.
- See those things which are above. Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above.
- Not on things on the earth. For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear.

Then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth. Fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil, concupiscence and covetousness which is idolatry.

[26 : 10] For which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience. In the which ye also walked some time when ye lived in them.

But now ye also put off all these. Anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Lie not unto another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds. And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge. After the image of him that created him.

Where there is neither Greek nor Jew. Circumcision or uncircumcision. Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free.

But Christ is all and in all. But on therefore has the elect of God holy and beloved. Bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering.

[27 : 13] Forbearing one another and forgiving one another. If any man have a quarrel against any. Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts.

To the which also ye are called in one body. And be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.

Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

And whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

[28 : 13] Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things.

For this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh.

Not with eye service as men pleasers, but in singleness of heart. Fear in God. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily.

As to the Lord and not unto men. Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance. For ye serve the Lord Christ.

But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done. And there is no respect of persons.

[29 : 17] Amen. And may the Lord add his blessing to a reading of this word. And to his name be the praise. I'm going to sing to God's praise Psalm 8.

Psalm 8 and we're going to sing the whole psalm. Psalm 8 and we're going to sing the whole psalm.

Psalm 9 and we're going to sing the whole psalm. avenging for his train.

When I looked up into the heavens, which thine own fingers framed, unto the moon, unto the stars, which were by thee ordained, then, say I, what is man, that he remembered us by thee?

Or what the son of man, that thou so kind to him shouldst be? The whole of this hand to God's praise. So excellent in all the earth, Lord our Lord, is thy name.

[30 : 28] How excellent in all the earth, Lord our Lord is thy name, who has thy gloryFrurgical■, the beautifulstro ■■■■■■, thou please darkness.

From infant and from suckling smart Targegestrene torging For life was lost at all of my
The hour changing for a stream When I look up unto the heavens Which thine own vain
desires Unto the moon Unto the stars Which way by thee are dim

Then say I watch this man That he remembered this by thee For what the sun of man And
thou so guide To heaven judge me For thou rally till no advice And blinding truth be With
glory and with dignity The blood it must descend

Of thy hands were submitted course of three Of shall or will i show 50 alleys etone The
trance and Oscar Thou side the doubt And of the trance do stream folks of the air fish of
the sea on that past stream the same how excellent king on the earth the

Lord is thine name I'd like to turn with you for a short time we're together this morning to
the passage read Paul's epistle to the Colossians chapter 3 and we can read verse 9 on
verse 10 lie not one to another seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds and
have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that
created him particularly these words after the image of him that created him when we look
to the scriptures the scriptures they set before us many truths that we may consider
unpalatable we may consider them things that would be better glossed over and not said
but

[35 : 49] God means us to read these truths and to be aware of them and to understand what they
are saying about ourselves and about himself and we see in this in this passage as a
whole that it is descriptive of the changes wrought in the life of a person who at one point
were strangers to God they were indifferent to the influence that God had upon their life if
they were influenced by it and they lived the kind of life that was in many cases utterly
reprehensible and yet

God in his mercy spared them and took them out of these lives but he he doesn't tell them
now forget it and move on and pretend these things didn't happen no he reminds them
that these were the kind of people they were that's the kind of sins that they were
embroiled in and it was only by virtue of his own goodness and his grace that they were
saved from them and it's important for us to realize that that when a person becomes a
Christian their lives necessarily I would insist needs to be changed necessarily it's not
something that is random it's not something that is arbitrarily open to you to do but we
must change we must become what we were not and we must become what we are yet to
be and a process is begun by God that will take us to where he wants us to be and where
he wants us to be is to be like Christ to be as like him as we possibly can and you know
we can't get away from that that's that's at the heart of what

Paul is teaching here he's telling us about the this being true for all believers you know in
verse 11 for example there is neither Greek nor Jew circumcision nor uncircumcision
barbarian scythian born or free but Christ is all and in all all the things that divided all the
things that separated all the things that were distinctive characteristics that marked us out
as different to others these things are no longer applicable they are somebody else they
are something else and that applies to all believers but looking at this passage what I was
thinking of more than anything else is the reason why that has to be so and you as a
collective are all the same in the sense that you are either

Christians who believe in the salvation Christ has to offer and you trust in that Christ in
order for you to be saved or you are those who are aware of it and understand to a degree
what it means but because you are here and because you are under the gospel you
understand in a measure what the gospel is saying to you whether you agree with it or not
whether you are maybe saying well I'll go so far and not any further with you on this I don't
agree with your application of the bible I don't agree that everybody needs to be like the
minister or like the elder or like the deacon or like the Christian down the road I don't
believe I can be just as good as them without being one of them without being one with
them without making the same public declaration of interest in the

Christ that they say that they're interested in well that may be so that is your position but I would say to you that is what you believe that what you believe will be tested just as truly as what I believe and I what I believe is firmly grounded in what God has said concerning my relationship with himself that there has to be one and it can only be one through Christ and if I don't have that relationship with himself through Christ then the day will come when he will test me on that single solitary issue whatever else you think is important will not be as important on that day what will be important is are you in Christ or not are you a believer or not are you trusting your soul to the finished work of

[42 : 06] Jesus Christ or not and if the answer is no then there's only one conclusion that you can possibly arrive on the basis of what God's word says and that is that you will have to answer to God who requires that from you now but the fact that you're here today suggests to me that there is a truth that is being taught whether you realize it a truth or not that is that you your presence here suggests to me that you know that there is a God and that that you have a soul whatever clarity you have on that issue I can't I can't answer but

I believe that your presence in a place of worship where God is at the heart of the worship but the focus of the worship suggests to me that you do believe that there is a God and that God has something to say to you and that is something that you declare by your presence here now why is that important well it brings you back to what the apostle is reminding us in the way that he's explaining the doctrines concerning Christ that what Christ does in the life of an individual is take the person who has gone away from God back to God and in the language that the apostle is used there is a lot

I'm sure there is a lot that can be considered in this passage and we can go down any number of avenues but my thinking is on this that in this one statement that the Christian is somebody who is a new man renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him that means on the basis of what Paul is saying there on his own understanding of what God has taught him that God is the creator God and that at one point in the experience of this universe of ours God created the world he created those who inhabit the world and so on and while you may not think that by you being here that you are acquiescing in that truth or not well strangely you are because your presence here you're not you know when you think about the world and there are occasions when you see birds for example flying in the air and then you see hundreds and maybe thousands of them gathered together on the telephone wires or telegraph wires whatever these wires electric wires and you'll see them gathered together and nobody's told them to come to this one place and they're there randomly and they're there without any orchestration and you say well that's just that's nature for you it's a mystery but you're not one of these and you're not here as a random act you're not here because it's something that others do or maybe it is but

I don't think that is at the heart of the gatherings of God's people the world over today because you are here today as somebody who has had the privilege of God's favour in your life and you have imbibed in a measure greater measure some of you the truth concerning God that God is to be worshipped God is to be praised and you have come to the place where this happens and that takes you back to the fact that you are here because God is your creator why is that so well we have to look at what the Bible says about that so the first thing I want you to do with you is take you back to the picture that the

Old Testament gives to us of man as God created him and then consider briefly the consequences of man's departure from that created privileged position man as God created him is no longer in existence man as God created no longer exists and I think I can say that whatever the Christian is he is not man as God created him he is somebody different to that and we want to see that as well so man as God created him man as he departed from his created position with God's blessing and then man as God restoration the restoration is to fellowship to to the blessings that

[48 : 19] God has to impart to them but they're different they're different in some measure to what was once our first parents experience well if you know the passages the most obvious passages that you can go to when God created the world at the end of his activity coming towards the end of his activity we read there of the creation of man God said let us make man in our image after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle and over all the earth and so on God created man in his own image in the image of God created him male and female created them in chapter 5 this is the book of the generations of

Adam in the day that God created man in the likeness of God made him so that's a whole area of theological discussion the creation of man what man has a superior position of privilege God created all things and he made all things well but when he made man he made man in his own image he created man in his own image now there's discussions amongst the theologians as to what that image consists of

Reformed theologians tell us that if you look at well just for the example we believe in the word of God and we believe in the Westminster Confession of Faith which summarizes for us the important parts of the Bible that we need to believe in and the Westminster Confession of Faith states this God created man with reasonable and immortal souls he made man a rational being he was endued with knowledge righteousness and true holiness after his own image having the law of God within their within written in their hearts and power to fulfill it that's a very good summary that instantly distinguishes sets man apart from the rest of creation birds did not have the moral law written upon their hearts birds and beasts and fish did not have the life that you could consider an emotional life or a spiritual life they did not have the power or the ability to fulfill what the law of God told them

God wanted them to fulfill but man did and therefore you can understand that man has this special place man was the as some put it as the pinnacle of God's creation physically and spiritually now you you may inevitably make comparisons between the power and the prowess of some creatures there are there are some creatures that are more powerful physically than man there are some creatures that have natural characteristics that may be more suited to certain environments than man is suited but taking all the creation all the creatures that occupy the created order man is endowed with the faculty of reason and rationalisation that allows them to overcome the obstacles where weaknesses are are liable to overpower them and

I'm using man as a generic term man and woman there are some who are offended by the use of the word man as if you're ignoring woman I'm not doing that God created man male and female Adam was created by God and he was created out of a rib from Adam's side God's creation both are included but the superiority of man was not in his physical prowess not even in his mental prowess but in his spiritual likeness to God and his creator marked out that difference by entering into a covenant relationship with man he didn't do that with others other creatures he didn't say to the fish now if you live like good little fish in the sea you'll do this and do that and as long as you do that then I will bless you and you will go on living as you are without change when God spoke to his created being man he entered into a covenant with him and he blessed him in the covenant and he told him what the relationship of covenant involved what it meant for him to live with

[55 : 18] God for God in the light of what God was telling him was good for him and while there are differences within the environment in which man was placed that we could highlight that that marks out the creature's experience this is what was important now this didn't go on it didn't last Adam sinned Adam disobeyed God Adam knew right from wrong and he chose wrong rather than right and the Bible tells us that that had consequences for him but also for all of creation not just for Adam Adam lost communion with God he was no longer in fellowship with God he was no longer able to continue as he was because of his sin he was put out of the garden that God had placed him in and the blessings that belonged to being in the garden he was deprived of these blessings he has he had the potential for life without end and that came to an end and the image of God was affected now there again we come into an area of study where there is a debate amongst even conservative theologians if the image of

God was thus surely it was lost entirely man became depraved the deprivation of the image meant that depravity was now marking him out now that word depraved has probably caused more more problems in the sense that people sometimes understand that word to mean that man could man became as evil as he possibly could at that moment his depravity meant that everything that was true meant that he was almost perfectly evil now that's not what the word depravity means there it means that he was open to all kinds of evil without being essentially and defectively evil but the creature as man was did not remain as he was and what we need to remind ourselves of this is that just because man fell the creation fell some people would think and they speak about the environment as if the environment is a sanctified place man is the evil man is the wrong do which is right to a degree as if the environment is in some way spared from the fall that affected man now that's not right all of creation was affected by the fall it became cursed because of man's wrong and the ground produced all manner of nettles and thorns and everything that was previously under

God's superintendence and control it no longer was given that privilege if you remember Paul writes in the epistle to the Romans in chapter 8 he says we know that the whole creation groaneth and travelleth in pain together until now in other words not only is man as God created him fallen from his created position the world in which he lives is affected and the world is awaiting deliverance as if this linguistic device says that the trees and the plants and the birds and the fish are all waiting for the day of deliverance because they're looking for restoration but it's just an image that is concrete about the extent of the fall and the effect that it has and we have to quickly move on and say

Adam pre-eminently did not remain as he was he was a changed man and the image that was marking him out previously was no longer what it once was and there are a number of reasons why that is so because man departed from God man was cursed by God man was removed from the presence of God but some would say that means everything about him was affected but in some sense we have to understand that the image of God was something that remained with man and that made man distinct in the sight of God by this I mean that God himself has a claim on man because of his place in creation and the place of his claim has to do with the image and whatever that image consists of knowledge righteousness and holiness is the summary version of it but when you look at the scripture the scripture tells you especially with regard to the preservation or the sanctity of life that man in the sight of

God is this retaining the image of God because if you take the life of man you are answerable to God for it you know when there is we are taught in the moral law that it's wrong to take life why is it wrong to take life if life is meaningless why should we be concerned about the sanctity of the life of the unborn child if it means nothing if they're just brute beasts like every other creature why should we be concerned today if those who are pushing for euthanasia should have their way why should we be concerned after all we're no different to the beasts of the field if all we are is just somebody that thinks that they're something when really they're not what is important is in the sight of

[63 : 14] God he has made us different and he has made us something he created us in his image and that image requires us to understand that body and soul in the sight of God is important if you read Genesis 9 and verse 6 it reminds us I better just read it for you it reminds us there of the fact that God insists that it is wrong to take life why who so sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed why for an image of God made he man now that's after the fall that's after man sinned that's after man went away from God but God through the writer of the book of Genesis tells us that it is wrong to take the life of someone because that person is in the image of

God and whatever part of that image is retained by man or to whatever degree it is sufficient to bring God's wrath to bear upon the person who takes that who usurves the law of God with regard to the preservation of life let me quote you the words of one theologian man's personality is distorted man and he is depraved in the whole being man is characterized in his fallen state by understanding feeling will and conscience but his understanding is darkened his emotions are perverted his will is enslaved and his conscience distorted he is mind but it is carnal and enmity against

God and it is the dignity belonging to man as in the image of God that aggravates this depravity in other words it's the fact that we are in the image of God that makes our behavior as fallen creatures worse it makes our sin more heinous because we are disregarding what we know God to be saying however limited our understanding of it is how man is by nature he cannot come back to God although he is obliged to do it and yet God in his in that person psyche however limited he is in his psyche that there is a

God to whom he is accountable this is the thing however much we would want to put God away from us we can't get away from God however much we want to suppress God in our thinking we are incapable of doing that because God looms large in our psyche in our soul because we are in possession of never dying souls somebody used these two quotations he said regarding the atheist during war time he said there are no atheists in foxholes there are no atheists in foxholes in other words when the bombs and the bullets and the explosions are landing round about you that moment you will find that most people are crying out to some

God I'm not saying it's the right God it's not the only living and true God but it's some distorted sense or awareness that they have there is a God and the second illustration that he used alongside that one was this an atheist a committed atheist a declared atheist who had been sentenced to death because of a murder that he had committed and he didn't care he didn't believe in God he didn't believe that taking somebody's life was all that bad but he was criminalized he was sentenced to death and he was awaiting the sentence to be carried out and his prayer which is strange why should a person who was a declared atheist pray but this one did and his prayer was this oh God if there is a

[68 : 29] God save my soul if I have a soul oh God if there is a God save my soul if there is a soul what a silly man and yet the truth is that in his most difficult position he could not shake off the thought that there could possibly be a God even though he had lived his life without him the knowledge of God may be corrupted the knowledge and interest in God may be perverted and however deeply buried it is it may resurrect when you least like it too well what is Paul saying to us here that the gospel is all about restoring a person to this relationship to

God where the lost image or the tarnished image or the perverted image is brought into its own but it's not just simply a motion of that person to be what Adam once was but it is through the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ he is speaking here Paul says seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds and you have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him he is describing the effects of being born again describing the reality of a relationship with Jesus Christ that changes the person from being dead to being alive from being the old

Adam to the last Adam the old man and the deeds of the old man are no more they have put on the new man and this is something that begins when a person is born again by the spirit of God the image of Christ is being formed in them and the actual Greek insists that it is not that he is not pointing here to what happens in conversion in the sense that it is a one-off but the product of an ongoing experience of the work of God's spirit in them where they are being changed where they go on being changed where the sins that were once dominant are deprived of their power albeit piece by piece at times a transformation of the new man

Paul sometimes uses this kind of language you know in Romans chapter 12 he describes a Christian in this way I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice holy acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God it seems that Paul is thinking there that there is a transforming that is going on it's not instant it's not an yes there are certain things that are instantaneous that must be instantaneous that will not be repeated that do not need to be repeated but the process of sanctification the process of of the believer being conformed to

Christ more and more in their life is something that is ongoing Paul says about Jesus what he says about Jesus that he is the last Adam in this very epistle remember what he says he describes Jesus as someone in whom the believer has redemption through his blood even the forgiveness of sins and what does he then say he says this person in whom we have forgiveness and redemption he is the image of the invisible God the firstborn of every creature by him we were all things created that are in heaven that are in earth visible and invisible whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers all things were created by him and for him and he is before all things and by him all things consist so the creation that he's talking about there involves talking about the old creation as it was but also the new creation as it is by being in

[74:10] Christ by faith you are conformed to his likeness but Jesus insists that that begins with the new birth that begins the insistence is you must be born again you must you must be born again you must begin afresh and that new life can only begin by being in Christ maybe I took too long meandering through this but the important thing is to remember God is our creator as our creator we are answerable to him as Adam of old was answerable to him and found himself dismissed from the presence of God under sentence of death with no possibility in his own endeavours to restore himself to where he once was but

God in his grace and his mercy presented even to Adam the gospel and the gospel is the means by which God has decreed that new life begins and the creature that was once destined for destruction is now destined for the fullness of life that Christ alone can bring one difference between what was true about Adam and what was true about the Christian Adam was always open to to falling prey to disobedience that was always a possibility but because the Christian is somebody who stands in the obedience of another and that obedience was the son of the

God of heaven and earth that possibility is not ours we cannot fall from that we cannot experience we cannot think that our heaven will ever come to an end because something will intrude on it because the assurance is ours that Christ fulfilled all righteousness and he has done all things well and all who are in him are secure in that truth may bless to us these thoughts let's pray oh lord oh god we pray for your blessing upon every reminder that you give to us of the security that is your people not a carnal security but a spiritual certainty based upon the Christ of God watch over as we pray for your sin in Jesus name amen we'll conclude our service singing from psalm 33 psalm 33 at verse 10

God doth the counsel bring to north which heath and folk do take and what the people do devise of none effect doth make oh but the counsel of the Lord doth stand forever sure and of his heart the purposes from page to page endure down to verse 14 God doth the counsel bring to north what doth the counsel bring to north which he and hope you take and what love people die monster he managed whenever he help he is oh on car in to

The Lord does stand for yet the good And always hard the word From age to age That nation Blessed honour God Through the grace of God Corsair

[79 : 40] The Lord from heaven sees and beholds.

All sons of men who are in the earth so from his dwelling place.

The Lord from heaven sees and beholds.

May the grace, mercy and peace be God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you all now and always. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.