

Genesis 1:26-30

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Preacher: Rt. Rev. Mike Stewart

[0:00] Well, good evening, everyone. It's such a joy to be here with you at St. John's. And boys and girls, I'm just going to sit here. So can you just give me a little bit of room there? And I'm going to need your help, too, with a couple of things this evening, okay?

But first of all, I want us to think just for a few moments about that first reading that Elizabeth read to us. Because what we're doing in the month of July in these family services is we're thinking about four really, really big questions.

Now, was anyone here last Sunday, if you can remember back that far? Were you here last Sunday? Anyone in the congregation here last Sunday? Can you remember, if you were here, what the big question was last Sunday?

Aaron here was helping us to think about what the big question was. I watched it on a video, and I made some notes. And I think the big question was, what does a literary hermeneutical approach to the book of Genesis mean?

How did that go, by the way, Aaron? The kids loved it. Loved it? Fantastic. But there was another big question last Sunday, which was, where does the universe come from?

[1:18] Right? That was the big question. Where does the universe come from? And the answer is God. Right? And you've been thinking about this at Bible camp, too.

God created all things through Jesus, his son, who is holding all things together, and who has promised one day to make all things new in heaven and on earth.

So that was last week's big question. Where did the universe come from? Here's tonight's big question. Are you ready for this? The big question tonight, what were we made for?

Okay? So if God made us, what did he make us for? That's tonight's big question. Elizabeth read to us just a few moments ago from the first chapter of the first book, the whole Bible, Genesis chapter 1, verses 26 and 27.

We read these words. God said, let us make mankind in our image. After our likeness, let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

[2:42] So God created mankind in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them.

Isn't that amazing? Wowza. God made human beings in his own image, and likeness. And this is what makes us different from everything else that God made.

And this is what makes us most special. Now, boys and girls, have you noticed anything particularly fun happening in Vancouver these days? Have you noticed a lot of people walking around in different colored shirts, cheering for different countries?

Yeah? What's going on at the moment? The FIFA World Cup. And I want to show you something I've got here that is a very special treasure for me.

Ready? Ta-da! Look at that! The FIFA World... Not the FIFA World Cup ball, but a FIFA World Cup ball, which is called Trionda, because, if you know about the World Cup this year, three countries have been hosting it.

[4:01] Right, everyone? Three countries. And they're represented on this ball. What are the three countries that have been hosting the World Cup game? Yeah?

Canada? That's right. Mexico? Yeah? USA. And the USA. So get this. Mexico has about 133 million people living there.

Canada, we have around 41 million people living here. and in the United States of America, they have around 349 million people living there.

That's a lot of people, isn't it? Aaron, could you hold this ball for me? Good catch. Good catch. And the whole world, right, every country in the whole world has a population population of, get this, around 8.3 billion people.

So today, there are about 8.3 billion people living on this planet. And every single one of them is made in the image of God.

[5 : 32] And in his likeness. Isn't that something? 8.3 billion people. So you see how special you are? Boys and girls.

Men and women. Made in God's image. And made in God's likeness. So here's the big question for tonight then. What were we made for?

And I want to suggest to you that we were made by God for three things. And they are three words that begin with the letter R. Yes. To rule over the earth.

Yes. To represent God and to have a relationship. Fantastic. That's the end of the sermon.

Absolutely. Bang on. Give me five.

That's absolutely right. So we were made for relationship. Right? First our word. As you said relationship.

[6 : 32] Relationship with God our creator and relationship with one another. God loves his creation and he especially loves us who are made in his image.

He made us to love us and we can love him back. Because he wants us to live with him as our friends.

So that we can live with him the king of the wonderful kingdom while we're on this earth and forever in heaven as well. So firstly God made us for relationship with himself and relationship with one another.

Secondly he made us to be his as you said representatives. Now that's a big word eh? Represent. What does it mean to be someone's representative?

If someone's going to represent you what are they going to do? Any thoughts? They're going to act on your behalf aren't they?

[7 : 40] If they're your representative they're going to act on your behalf. They're going to say what you would say and they're going to do what you would do. So I have something else in my bag here.

And what do we have here? A mirror and who can you see? I would thank as we sang earlier I thank you Lord for my fine looks.

this is you guys isn't it? It's a mirror. It's your reflection. You can see everyone here and this is what it means to be God's representatives.

We are made to reflect God's character in the world by the things we do and by the things we say. We are to reflect God's character as his representatives. So we look like God by the things we do and by the things we say.

[8 : 48] So first our word relationship second our word representative representative and third our word rule.

Right? We were made to rule the earth. Now I have a daughter who loves cats. Do you like cats? Untold people love cats or dogs or maybe both.

I have a daughter who loves cats and she has one cat particularly that she's very very fond of that she's called Romeo. and when my daughter goes away on holiday guess what she asks me to do? Yeah. She says dad can you feed Romeo and can you make sure Romeo has enough water? So while she's away on holiday I go to my daughter's house and I make sure there's food in Romeo's bowl and there's enough water in the dish and that Romeo's okay and that's what it means when God said to men and women made in his image have dominion rule over my creation it means take care of my world take care of my creation on my behalf look after it just like I look after Romeo while my daughter is away so what were we made for relationship to reflect God as his representatives and also to rule people now there's one further thing that God has planned for his whole creation and especially for those of us that are made in his image and we're going to hear about this now in our second reading that Elizabeth is going to read to us thank you

Elizabeth so you see friends this is God's biggest plan of all you see we are like God but Jesus is God we are like God but Jesus is God everything in creation was made through him see that lovely bulletin cover that Emma did for us everything in creation including the fish of the sea the birds of the air and you and me were all made through Jesus and he is holding everything together

including you and including me but you see if you remember from the first book in the Bible the story of how God created the world after that if you remember something really bad happened do you remember what happened something really bad happened that ruined

[11:47] God's creation do you remember what that was it's called sin right it's called sin yeah the snake deceived Adam and Eve and they sinned and sin entered the world and it ruined God's creation and we weren't friends with God anymore and God's image in us became broken it's like it's like this so here we are as human beings made in God's image but then something happened sin came into the world and something happened to God's image in us see this it got blurred it got spoiled it got ruined can you see yourself through that kind of but not much and because sin entered the world we weren't friends with

God our creator anymore but you know the wonderful news and this is what we heard about just now in the second reading that Elizabeth read to us Jesus through whom everything was made became a human being like us he never sinned and he died for us on the cross and through the shedding of his blood this happened God's image in us is restored and we can be friends with God our creator again and live with him as our king forever isn't that wonderful that's how much God loves you as a special part of his creation

Jesus has restored the image of God in us and he has mended the broken relationship that people have with God through the shedding of his blood so that we receive the forgiveness of all our sins and our hearts are made clean and God's image is restored in us you see the cross of Jesus is the center point in the whole of world history everything changed everything that was wrong was put right on the cross of Jesus where he shed his blood for us and that boys and girls is how much God loves you so why were you created you were created for relationship with God as your friend and your king forever you were created to be his representative and reflect his image in the world and you were created to rule his creation that means take care of his creation shall we pray together thank you

Lord that you have made such a wonderful world and that you have made us in your image we thank you for your continued work in our lives and most of all for Jesus who restores your image in us may we grow more and more like him as we live as friends of God in this world in Jesus name we pray amen thanks for listening boys and girls and thanks for your help and great job perfect answers