

Humanity and God

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[0 : 00] We're not going to use this, are we? Recording. Nine o'clock, so I guess I'll get started. I'll give a little introduction. My name is Rob Torcent, for those of you who don't know.

And I am a Master of Systematic Theology, or Master of SIGA Theology student at the Divinity School with a focus in systematic theology.

This is my wife, Julia. We've been married two and a half years. And my thesis for the program had to do with the image of God, and its relation to modern technology.

So that's why I thought this would be a good class. If I was going to teach a class here, I could do it on the doctrine of the image of God and just kind of run from there. So this is more of a systematic theology, but the way that I'm going to approach unpacking this for you is going to be more kind of like a lecture sermon or a lerman, as a former professor of mine once called it.

So it's going to be more expositional. We're going to kind of look over all the different texts of Scripture that deal with the image of God, and then we're going to kind of make a systematic conclusion about this.

[1 : 15] All right. So why don't I just get started on this with a word of prayer. Heavenly Father, thank you so much for bringing us here this morning.

We have the privilege of being able to benefit from your word and to hear your voice spoken through it. Help us understand ourselves more in light of who you are.

We pray all this in Christ's name. Amen. In 1920, there was published a book entitled *Allowing the Destruction of Life Unworthy of Life*.

The author was Carl Binding, who was a jurist, and Alfred Haack, who was a psychiatrist. It was a description of people who were intellectually disabled as mentally dead, human ballasts, and empty shells of human beings.

In short, this book advocated elimination, life unworthy of life, was the saying. This demonstrates the power of ideas, and it led to eugenics and the so-called final solution of the Nazi regime.

[2 : 49] Now, this is a repugnant idea. I don't think I have to describe that to you. And our first instinct is to recoil from it. Yet, this kind of thought of being able to make qualitative judgments over what deserves life and what doesn't deserve life is all but endemic in modern thought.

In fact, I think it's led to, today, so pregnant in our minds and society, a crisis of humanity and what it means to be human.

The eugenics movement moved into America after World War II, and it led to, even now, a fight over these bills that militate against partiality in abortion, that is, abortion over race or gender or disability.

You see these fights even lately in 2019. So this is widespread, and it encompasses every issue that you could possibly imagine.

It encompasses gender issues, this distinction between sex and gender, the LGBTQ issues, social justice issues, political issues, ethical issues.

[4 : 09] All of these revolve fundamentally around the doctrine of what it means to be a human. Now, the earliest roots of this confusion have to do in scientism and logical positivism, which is this idea that everything can be scientifically deduced and has to be verified demonstrably in order for it to be true.

In fact, C.S. Lewis talks about this in *Abolition of Man*, where he very provokingly asks, what will happen to the human being if we subject it objectively to science in the same way we subject it to the world around us?

And his thesis was that we would essentially lose our humanity. So that returns to the question, what does it mean to be human?

In fact, that's the same question that David poses in Psalm 8, verse 4, when he asks, what is man that you take thought of him and the son of man that you are mindful of him?

And the answer is rooted in the creation of humanity in God's image. So if you have your Bibles with me, I'd invite you, it's okay if you don't, it's a bit more informal this morning, turn with me to Psalm 8. [5 : 35] We're going to use this as a platform to hop around and unpack in systematic form what the Bible says about humanity and what it means to be created in God's image.

And for the next few weeks, we're going to be discussing the doctrine of the image of God as the Bible's answer to what humanity is and what makes us so distinct and special in God's plan and creation.

Basically, we're going to be doing a theological and biblical anthropology. And it's going to be somewhat difficult to directly unpack the image of God just in itself because the nature of systematic theology means that we're going to have to go and touch on every doctrine as it relates to the image of God.

So we're going to be talking about theology proper. We're going to be talking about creation. sin, Christ, redemption, sanctification. And eventually, in our last class, we're going to be talking about glorification.

But fundamentally, I want this to be expositional. Pastor Craig wanted our Bibles to be open, so we're going to be looking at Psalm 8 as well as Genesis 1 and 2.

[6 : 57] Now, let me just explain the context of Psalm 8 a little bit before we move into it. this is a creation psalm. And it's sandwiched between two psalms that speak of God's righteous judgment of the wicked.

And I don't think that that's incidental. I think it's organized very intentionally because they want to talk about the nature of humanity and why we would be morally responsible for being held to account for our wicked actions.

in fact, note the heading of this psalm. It's for the choir director, right? That's the liturgical director, meaning that this is kind of a didactic tool.

It's a theological instruction through praise in a temple. And that's apparent, isn't it, in the question that we're going to be discussing today in verse 4, which this psalm kind of revolves around.

In fact, it's a sort of theological riddle concerning humanity's place in creation. With the point, of course, being God's sovereign majesty, and you see that in verses 1 and 9 it's bracketed with this refrain, O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.

[8 : 18] So, let me just read this and then we'll unpack it a little bit more. Psalm 8, for the choir director, on the getteth, on the David.

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. You have displayed your splendor above the heavens. From the mouth of infants and nursing babes you have established strength, because of your adversaries, to make the enemy and the revengeful cease.

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which you have ordained, what is man that you take thought of him, and the son of man that you care for him?

You have made him a little lower than God, and you crown him with glory and majesty. You make him to rule over the works of your hands. You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea.

whatever passes through the paths of the sea. O Lord, our God, how majestic is your name in all the earth. The question that we're dealing with here in verse 4, it contains a certain paradox to it, doesn't it?

[9 : 41] In fact, the words in the language used here for man, it's this word, enosh, which has to do with a weakness or a frailty. It could even connote sickness.

And of course, that phrase the son of man is literally the son of Adam. It's singular, which recalls Adam and even the sinfulness that we would incur from being descended from him.

Now, note that the text in verse 5 then goes on to describe how we're a little lower than God. Now, however, I think we're already speaking to God in this text, so there's an interpretive issue.

The Greek version of this text, the King James version, in fact, as well as how the New Testament also will render the Greek version translates this angels, and the word is Elohim, which could be translated angels, so I think that's preferable.

Either way, the idea is that we're finite, we're not the same as God and we have a particular place in the order. Yet, at the same time, we're higher than every variety of living thing in creation.

[11 : 02] And just look at those descriptions in the following verses. We're higher than sheep, oxen, beasts, birds, fish, that's everything under which it's put under our feet.

Now, that's a unique station, according to verse 5, and this is actually kind of a complementary concept. It says, yet you have made him a little lower than God, and you crown him with glory and majesty.

These two things aren't mutually exclusive for me, but there's an inherent connection here.

Because God made us this way, we're crowned with glory and majesty.

Summarily, according to the psalmist, it is the unique station of humanity, lower than celestial angels, yet ruling among terrestrial beasts, that is the answer to the riddle of what makes us the special recipients of God's paternal care.

This would have provoked in the minds of the Israelites reading this psalm and singing it in the temple, the entire Genesis creation context, what is called antecedent theology.

[12 : 20] And they would have realized that David is invoking the language of creation of God's image in man. So let's go ahead and turn to Genesis 1.

looking at verse 26 here.

Of course, this is the creation narrative, and this is the sixth and final day of creation. God has just created all of the animals and the beasts of the earth. Now he turns to humanity.

And he distinguishes humanity from the rest of creation with this kind of divine soliloquy. Some people think this is an inter- trinitarian dialogue going on here.

But when he does that, he distinguishes how he's going to go about making mankind from all of the rest of creation. So let's read verses 26 to 27 real quick.

[13 : 28] Then God said, Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness, and let them rule 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.

God created man in his own image, and the image of God created he him, male and female. He created them. Now, those are the same elements as in Psalm 8, right?

However, what is assumed in Psalm 8 is that humanity is made in God's image, and according to his likeness. And by the way, those two terms are synonymous in the original.

They're kind of seen used interchangeably later in chapter 5 of Genesis. And this is just a way of making the point emphatic. There's been a historical debate over whether image and likeness are two different things, and they've drawn strange conclusions from that.

But that's not what's going on here. This is just an emphatic making of the point that mankind is in some way to reflect God. And that manifests itself in humanity's rulership over all creation, what is often referred to as a cultural mandate, made clearer here in verse 28.

[14 : 51] We're to fill, subdue, and rule. Also, note that in a text it says we're both made male and female, an added element of the mandate to multiply and fill the earth.

This is a corporate mandate within creation. Now, of course, this would imply a bodily element to humanity in God's image, wouldn't it?

However, there's a great historical discussion concerning the nature of the image of God that we have to touch on briefly. On the one hand, you have those who hold to a purely spiritual and intellectual view of the image of God, that it consists only in our reasoning faculties or in our morality.

And on the other hand, there are those that hold to a more holistic view, that it concerns the whole person and the whole human nature. Now, in the former camp, the body is viewed as kind of carnal or unnecessary.

Often, people who argue for that position will use Platonic language of the body as this prison for the soul. It's simply a way that we kind of relate to God through the mind and the mind alone.

[16 : 12] And in fact, very prominent theologians, like Jonathan Edwards and Thomas Aquinas held to this view of the image of God residing in the intellect. Now, this is a view that will view the image of God as a part of humanity.

And it's led to some other kind of strange ideas like the image of God also consists in the angels. And it's that reasoning from lesser to greater that you would see in that kind of mindset, right?

If we have reasoning faculties, well, angels have even greater reasoning faculties. They're greater spiritual beings, so of course they're going to be the image of God as well. However, in verse 26, we see a particular attention to the language here, that man, or literally Adam, singular, is made in

the image singular.

That is Adam here being viewed as kind of the head of the human race, what's called patronymy. He's that patriarchal kind of head of all of his descendants after him, and he's thus representative of the human race.

This is speaking of humanity itself, not a part of the image, but the actual image itself in mankind. In and life.

[17 : 32] Now, of course, mankind isn't the exact image of God, is it? Only Jesus Christ is the exact image of God. What we're talking about here is analogy, but we're going to get into how Jesus Christ relates to the image of God in the next session, so stay tuned on that.

All of this is to say, the image of God in humanity is everything that constituted us in our original created state, including spiritual uprightness, as well as our body and corporate natures.

Now, this is a view that's held by prominent theologians, like John Calvin and Herman Boving. And the point here in the text, however, is made even more emphatic in the next chapter, which kind of provides the how to the what of chapter one.

Sometimes you'll try and see people pit chapter two against chapter one in Genesis, by the way, as though they're two different creation accounts. but these aren't at odds with each other at all.

In fact, chapter two, some commentators believe, is just kind of a commentary on chapter one. So let's read verse seven, chapter two, and then we'll provide a final element to this puzzle.

[18 : 51] Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being. Now what's especially important here is this language of man being made from first from the dust of the ground.

This is a play on words, with man being Adam and the Hebrew word for ground being Adamah. Yet, very importantly, it's not until God's breath of life does he become a living being, which is singular.

The theological term we'll use for this is psychosomatic unity. That is to say, both body and soul are essential elements in what constitutes humanity, and thus what the image of God is.

Now, how do both body and soul reflect the image of God? Well, God is holy, and so we're supposed to be holy.

That's an easier one, right? But also, God is a relational being. He's Trinitarian. He's pure love, and pure disposed to want to love.

[20 : 05] Therefore, we are to be relational as well. He's designed us to be fundamentally relational and loving creatures. God is also the sovereign and divine creator, and we're to emulate that in our stewardship mandate by subjecting creation and governing it as representatives.

Now, the great question is, how does this extend to the body? But I think it does extend to the body, which enables us to act as our natures, and within our natures, just as God does.

So, we communicate with each other, with our voices. We see our environment in order to act. We hear things around us. But unlike beasts, we attempt to make sense of these things.

We harmonize them with our sense perceptions, and we understand the creation God has made. Of course, God doesn't have a body, but God is able to do all these things without a body because of his infinite love, infinite wisdom, the immensity of his nature, his omnipresence, and the absoluteness of his essence.

There's really something very special, unique, and set apart to the human form and the human body as it bears reference to our composition. And that's why Paul will later say in 1 Corinthians 15, 39, all flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds.

[21 : 34] And in that context, he's talking about the uniqueness of the resurrection in relation to Jesus. So, this raises a classic question.

Is the image of God lost with sin and the fall? We've talked about holiness. We've talked about our standing at original creation. But what about the fall? I think, however, if we take this view that the image of God is the whole person, then the answer is clearly no.

There are still human beings around, yes? And that means that the image of God is still in some way, shape, or form extent. extent. Regardless, Genesis 5, 1-3, Genesis 9, 6, James 3, 9, all speak of the image of God as continually present in humanity.

Instead, the language that theologians will use is that it has been defaced but not erased, which is just a little helpful way of remembering how that works.

So there are certain aspects of the image that is right reasoning, spiritual standing before God, also known as original righteousness, even bodily harmony with the soul.

[22 : 53] In Genesis 3, 7, that you can see kind of starting to function improperly, where they've sinned initially in the garden, right? They've been tempted.

And then all of a sudden, they are aware of their nakedness, and they're ashamed of that, right? There's something that has gone wrong in the physical order. Everything has become, in fact, disordered with sin.

And that's why everything needs the promise of redemption, of the redemption of humanity achieved in the person and work of Christ, who is the second Adam. And again, we're going to hold off on talking about that a little bit more until next week.

So, I thought I would just give some points of application. Here's one just major point of application that we can draw from this view, this very cosmological or fundamental created view of the image of God.

And the primary point here is that of the dignity of humanity, right? I mean, this sheds new light on the first and foremost commandment, that we are to love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind, and that we should love our neighbors as ourselves, right?

[24 : 10] According to Christ, these two are one commandment directly related to one another.

That is to say, the way you treat your neighbor who is in God's image directly corresponds to what you think about your creator.

John Calvin, in talking about the image of God, writes this, verse 1. We are not to consider that men merit of themselves, but to look upon the image of God in all men, to which we owe all honor.

Therefore, whatever man you meet who needs your aid, you have no reason to refuse to help him.

Say, he is a stranger, but the Lord has given him a mark that ought to be familiar to you, by virtue of the fact that he forbids you to despise your own flesh.

Say, he is contemptible and worthless, but the Lord shows him to be one to whom he has deigned to give the beauty of his image. Say, that you owe nothing for any service of his, but God, as it were, has put him in his own place in order that you may recognize toward him the many and great benefits with which God has bound you to himself.

Say, that he does not deserve even your least efforts for his sake. But the image of God, which recommends him to you, is worthy of your giving yourself and all your possessions.

[25 : 42] We must remember not to consider men's evil intentions, but to look upon the image of God in them, which, with its beauty, allures us to love and embrace them. Now, that's breathtakingly universal in scope. And it's breathtakingly universal because it reflects the very heart of our creator, doesn't it? This should profoundly shape how we think of every man, woman, and child. That is, everyone who's in Adam, without exception. This is a dignity, in fact, that extends not just to the soul, but which extends to the body as well.

And that has some profound implications for ethical issues today. I won't get into that in particular.

In fact, I started to list out all of the ethical issues that we face today that could be affected and informed by this view of the image of God. And I just gave up because it encompasses really everything that we deal with in terms of modern, the modern conversation.

We are held to have a stewardship of our minds and our bodies that's tied to the integrity of both. And in doing so, that means that God himself is honor.

So, I thought I'd close, we're closing a bit early, but I thought I'd close by asking, what is man that God is mindful of him? Well, he is created in his very image to personally reflect his goodness in our creatureliness. And that is the image of God in man. So, let's just close with a quick word of prayer, and then we'll have some questions and answers at the end here.

Heavenly Father, it's humbling to realize that of all the creatures, the creatures that you've created, we alone are in your image. And the fact that we don't deserve to be in your image, that was your choice to create us this way. And that we're held to a higher accountability because of that.

[28 : 02] Let us live lives that emulate that, that respond to your presence in creation.

And help us as believers realize the amazing reality that we bear not only the image of God, but the image of your son, Jesus Christ. And help us live up to that responsibility by the work of your spirit.

Amen. Amen. So, if there's any questions. I know that's kind of a lightning round image of God, right? That's like everything that you could, it's kind of crammed into 30 minutes. And we're going to be getting into a lot more of the other aspects of the image of God in the following weeks because

there's a lot that we have to talk about, about what it means to be in Adam, right? And then in Christ. And then also, what does it mean for our human bodies when we're glorified into eternity? So, Tyler, yeah. You mentioned the debate between where does the image of God entail with the rational faculties versus the body. What's that state in that question, depending on how you answer it? Like, what are the implications of saying it doesn't involve the body?

You know, like, it's only the mental and rational faculties of a man or a woman. What's that state in that question? Yeah, so the human body in that sense tends to be downplayed and there's less of a, less of an understanding of the integrity of the body, right? How we're going to treat that, how we're going to view it as, you know, trying to preserve it, trying to uphold it as something that is, has a kind of inherent worth in it.

[29 : 46] And you'll see this kind of, this kind of move that some people have, um, classically in theology, um, where the human body is seen as this, this shackles for humanity. Um, whereas the Bible doesn't depict it that way. It's seen as the very vehicle by which we can interact with the world around us. It's seen as something that's very beneficial towards, um, having a, you know, human flourishing, uh, uh, that we can enjoy creation. Uh, creation is never pitted against, um, our souls in that kind of way. Um, it's seen as something that's very, very, uh, beneficial. Um, so people who hold that view tend to kind of use the body as, I think sometimes we think that implicitly too, don't we, that this body is just getting in the way of, of us being able to reason properly or think properly. Whereas you kind of think through it and you realize there have been some interesting studies about this as well. Um, that in order for us to have a, uh, you know, very whole psychological development, we need to have kind of an embodiment to us. We need to be able to interact with other people and to see them and to read expressions. And, um, some of the psychological studies have had to do with infants as well. Um, where it's shown that they kind of mirror people's expressions and that's how they, they grow and develop psychologically. Um, um, but so if you take the somatic element, the, excuse me, the bodily element, you know, out of it, then you start to get this kind of, uh, dualism almost. Uh, this is very, very classically kind of platonic. And it leads to some odd theology. One of those is the image of God and angels as well. Um, which

I don't think there's biblical proof for. Um, and that goes all the way back to this, this kind of pseudo Christian Greek thinker called Dionysius, pseudo Dionysius. We know that he's not really Dionysius anymore. Uh, but he, he had this reasoning, uh, that led to, uh, influenced Gregory, that influenced Thomas Aquinas, and it started to get more built into how we thought about the image of God as consisting in angels. And then another weird theological implication, um, that you see crop up in the 16th century. And actually I just wrote this paper that Jonathan Edwards, uh, on Jonathan Edwards, where in his sermons he teaches this as well, which is if you lose the intellectual faculty, right? It's actually a part of man. If you lose that part of man, that is the intellectual faculty being in the image of God. Well, what, what do you have to replace that? Well, it's the image of Satan. And so you see Edwards teaching it in some of his sermons. It's very weird. He doesn't teach it in his published literature. Uh, so I, I don't, I'm not sure you actually believe it. But, um, it was a huge controversy because in a, in a sense that meant that, uh, God was actually creating, continuing to create people who are in Satan's image. It's very, a strange idea. So you have to have the somatic element, all that to say, or else you, your theology starts to go, to go left a little bit.

How, so you seem to want the image of God to kind of, the, the attributes, which go with the image of God at least. Yeah. You want those to be able to grade without the image of God itself being able to grade. Right. So I have a few, I have less of, I have less more rectitude. Right.

Than I really should have. Mm-hmm. Full. Right. Image of God. Yeah. So, so, so, so if you do view it as pertaining to something that's a part of humanity, right, instead of just everything that's combined in humanity together as a quality, then what happens is if, it creates this, this problem, and we can, this would be a great time to mention this, um, one problem with the intellectual issue of the image of God is that what happens with people with mental disabilities. And that's a huge, huge debate. If you read some of the literature on the image of God, it's, you know, what are you going to do with, with people who seem to have some sort of cognitive inhibition here? Well, if you hold the, the image of God has to do with everything that's in man, it has to do, do with who the, who people are, not necessarily what they do, um, then that means you can have a decrease in how, how those faculties are functioning and still realize that person is still in God's image. Um, and you don't have that, like what you're saying, that kind of, um, entire absolute loss of the image of

God, um, if mankind bears it, as opposed to he actually is it. So I guess what I'm trying to say is mankind is the image of God, as opposed to he just has a part of, of this, of this image. Is that, is that helpful? Yeah. Yeah. I guess I'm, I'm still kind of curious about how you manage. Why, how does the image of God manage to be binary when all the parts are not? Does that make sense? How does the image of God manage to be binary when all the parts are not? Like, um, all the, so there's all these different attributes which go into our being in the image of God and they all come in green. Yeah. Why, why isn't the image of God a gradient, kind of like an average of where you fall in all the other aspects? Yeah. I mean, it's not necessarily, again, it's not necessarily that it pertains to all the, each individual moving part in the equation. It seems like you're still, like you're, you're still thinking of it in terms of like how, how if all those parts are contained together, right? How if you miss one part, then that doesn't affect it systemically as a whole. Is that what you're asking? Um, yeah. Something like that? Okay. Yeah. Answer that question probably in certain parts. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. So, um, and again, I, I, you know, don't want to sound like a broken record, so I'm sorry if I'm not quite answering your question, but it's all of those elements in the unique union together that forms the, the image of God, right? So, okay. It, it isn't necessarily those elements themselves, right? The body, the soul, the reasoning faculties, the original rectitude, or whatever. It's the fact that all of those are taken together in one person, right? It's like the fact that we have this capacity. We have the capacities. So I've heard it described as, is the faculty versus function, right? We're, we're not talking about what we, what we do necessarily. Who we are leads to what we do, right? But it, it has to do with actually who we are on a more kind of ontological level. Yeah. [37 : 06] So, um, I mean, part, in a sense, I guess part of the challenge of this is, it doesn't seem like, and one of the reasons why you have so many different theology, but we're all evangelicals, and so we do want to kind of base it on the way to, uh, we, uh, we can't quite decide this thing decisively. Is it, we're not really that simplistic on what actually the image of God is supposed to be on. So there is a measure of expectancy. Yeah. And I really appreciate how the way we do it, where there's certain things that it is clear on, and certain things that we need to sustain. But, and, and maybe this is kind of the question you're getting at. If it seems like there is going to be an aspect where, um, you want to have an absolute, but then there's also a sense of being recognized relative. Because if, if, if, if fundamental the image of God, human image of God is Christ. And I'm sure you can get to this. Right. In one sense, we are an image of the image of God. Um, and there is a sense in which we will, uh, we will reflect. Yeah. Yeah. We're increasingly conformed to the image. So there's a sense in which we need to recognize that there's a relative. We, we are increasingly, increasingly conformed to Christ. That's going to, that's going to, that's going to grow. It's in, in one sense we've talked about it's attainment. Yeah. But the reason why we don't, we worry about that and we can't simply that is because, by the way, I'll sit down and speak about it in an absolute sense. Mm-hmm. Where, so we might think there's a, there's a reflection aspect, but then there's also a relation. We as human beings have a special relation to God that is an absolute. And that, and that grounds our worth and value and in this, but there is a sense of which the, as you might put it, it's not, it's not defaced, it's defaced. Mm-hmm. You can progressively gain that back. But that doesn't change that special relation. So that's what undergirds our, our, our, our, our value. That's an absolute. But there is this relative sense. So I think that's, you need to maintain those two distinguishable things. That there's always a special relation that we have. All humanity has that's going to value. But there is an other sense that we have, obviously, as something that we can increasingly reflect

Christ, that's progressive. So I think you kind of need to acknowledge both the, the relation and the reflection aspect. Distinguish those and affirm them both. It's, it's hard because trying to get the aspect of, of the study of the doctrine of sin as well is, is going to be very essential to understanding where we stand in relation to Christ. So next week we're going to be getting a little bit more into that. Talking about what it means to be in Adam and having fallen and what's being renewed in, in, in Christ. So a lot of the, I think a lot of the confusion actually comes to this, a very, you could say classically reformed emphasis on the spiritual image of God, which some guys, so John Calvin loves to talk about the spiritual image of God as being completely and wholly obliterated and then being renewed in Jesus Christ. But in the context there, he's talking about what we are presently attaining through regeneration. And, and that is something that's vouchsafed in the person of Jesus Christ. And then he'll later say in some, some other writings, you know, oh, well, you know, we're going to be resurrected too. So that's part of the image of God as well. But, so I need to include

that, but that is a very important emphasis. So thank you.

Yeah. Yeah. How do you recognize the situation where, you know, religion, we're trying to be more focused, more absolute, but the society we live in now is more, uh, whole different areas, it's more, uh, there's a lot of other things that comes into the place about, you know, how we, uh, and how we conduct our lives. Um, how, how do you, you know, do it?

Yeah, actually, I think this doctrine in particular is, is a very helpful tool for being able to, to talk to the world, actually.

[41 : 29] Um, because in terms of how we, how we treat people around us, um, this is a wonderfully kind of profound statement that everyone is in mankind's image. So you can talk to your, your, you know, brother or sister on the street, so to speak.

And you can treat them, uh, in a, in an equal manner with equal dignity with yourself. And you can actually, it's a very helpful event, evangelism tool as well, isn't it? Uh, because you can show them, well, you have an inherent dignity and worth with God as your creator, um, in a, in a way that the vast confusion that we're actually seeing, um, in the world at large doesn't have there. You're right. There is, is no definiteness at all in how the world is, is viewing, uh, mankind. In fact, it's, it's humorous. Al Mohler will talk about this often, about the, the line of new orthodoxy in, in contemporary thought keeps getting moved more and more further on what constitutes actual appropriate behavior for humanity, for how we treat people. Um, and there's this scrambling game to, you know, you're not, you're not far enough. You're not going far enough. Um, because there's no definite, what is humanity? What is human dignity? What is morality? What does it mean to be, to be, uh, human beings and why that's even good? We don't even know why that's good anymore. So

I think this doctrine is a helpful evangelism tool for people as well. Um, uh, we're in God's image, but also at the same time, you know, you see this malfunction that we have in our relationship with God and that renewal can come through Jesus Christ. So you could help someone understand that a little bit more, you know, if they were to ask you for you to talk to someone, you know, you're so absolutely, you're so definite about, about this. Well, yes, because, you know, scripture tells us that we can have this image, uh, that you have right now renewed in its, in its function. It's a relationship to God through the, the personal work of Jesus.

Hey. Yeah, just picking up on that, I was, um, I was thinking that, I think sometimes people think, well, if we do think so strongly, then, you know, problems in this world are caused by people who believe in their absolute system too strongly, and then as a result, they just cut off everybody else who doesn't agree with them, and sort of disregard them, and I think, you know, sort of what you're saying is like, actually having a really strong and clear conviction about all the men in the country, and that is, I think, also is willing to everybody who has, you know, and it's, it's, I think maybe that's maybe starting to, and then there's, you know, I think, I think the whole point about, like, the, you know, there's many other Christian beliefs that, um, you know, we really understand ourselves, you know, all humanity sinfulness and need for God's grace, well, that should give us, like, humility in how we relate to each other, so I think, sort of starting to show, like, how these Christian beliefs help us relate better to other people, uh, can, can help people see, like, oh, it's not just, uh, that there can be a, a, a beneficial aspect to, you know.

Yeah, and if you don't have that, that, you know, because the image of God is, is a universal doctrine, right, and if you don't have something like that, then actually you find that the boundaries of communication break down between people.

[45 : 07] I, I, I'm, I'm not allowed to speak into your life anymore, because you are your own measure of authority, but if we realize we're all in God's image, and that creates a common denominator, where I can say, you know, you have a dignity and worth, and, uh, that can be, you know, renewed to you in some sense in Jesus, but.

Yeah, just off that, you often see, like, the final solution in Germany, what quickly happens is you stop referring to a particular people group as humans, or as something, you know, something that means that means that language changes, and how we refer to others, you know, we have this universal sense of, like, everyone's managing each other, you know, that, that, that is, uh, buttress to us dehumanizing certain groups that aren't like us.

Yeah, we, we, we still do it today, it's very troubling to see, uh, we, all this, all these bills lately about, um, the idea that you could have, uh, well, to know, and the idea is abortion based on, uh, uh, kind of prenatal, like, uh, attributes or qualities based on race, gender, uh, you can do, and

Julia, Julia's pregnant, so we just had, uh, some, you know, over, overviews and some, some checks, and one test that you could do is to determine whether the baby has Down syndrome, and we decided not to do it, because why would you want to do that, um, unless you were going to make some sort of decision on, on life, the life or death of, of the child based on the outcome of that result, and, um, so we still see it today, but of course, the roots of that whole modern debate do lie in the life and worthy of life, uh, concept in eugenics in Nazi Germany that came over to America after World War II.

Yes? So, if you were to present this argument to the world, they would respond by saying, okay, so you say animals are not the image of God, the humans are, but there's not such a binary difference between animals and humans, and point back to different types of hominids throughout history, and say, well, we're Neanderthals in the image of God, we're, you know, I, I don't even know how many different homo-whatevers there are, but, like, they just found a new one, and they're like, oh, we're going to rewrite evolutionary history, and they'd say, well, okay, where do you, where do you draw the line? I mean, homo sapiens are today quite distinct from the great apes, but from a historical perspective, there hasn't been such a, so how, so in some sense, this argument about distinction exposes that there are differences that are harder to quantify, like, biologically?

Yeah, so you, you placed a nice can of worms on the table, and then opened the top when you brought up evolution, because, you know, I, it's my belief, I know that there's some people who've argued for a theistic evolution, but it's my belief that this text is not homogenous with a scientific view of evolution in man, because if we all do come from, from monkeys, fundamentally, and then we've evolved out of that, then that does have the kind of grandfather's axe paradoxes, where does the, you know, where does the creature end and the man begin, and I think that's, that's very problematic.

[48 : 41] I think that's actually a great argument against, against that, and for, well, the Bible places a particular worth on us as human beings. We were created, at least in our souls, out of nothing by God, and, and that's fundamentally more valuable. Now, if I could actually emphasize that with someone on, on the street, if I'm talking to them, I might want to hedge away from a more secondary conversation, let's talk about, like, evolution, and, and make that the fighting point, and instead what I would want to do is say, well, the Bible simply talks about humanity as we, as we know it today, as, as dignified in God's image, and that's something very different from, from, you know, more historical or scientific evolutionary debate.

All right, well, it's at 9.50, so I want to make sure that you guys have enough time to get up there, but thanks so much. This is a great turnout. Thank you so much for coming out today. Thank you. Thank you.