

Created In God's Image

Genesis 1:26&27 and 2:7

Lesson 1

Exploring Faith Bible Study Series

Lesson Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to present the concept of the image of God. Through the creation story we see God's activity of bringing life to the world. When He created humans He created them in His image, He breathed His life into them. Understanding we are created in God's image is an important aspect of knowing God. His care and love for us is seen from the very beginning when He created us.

Ice Breaker:

Invite the group to think for a moment about this question: **Growing up, who did you idolize?** Ask group members to share their responses.

Life Connections:

Use these questions to help your group members to begin to open up with one another and to think about their own lives. The answers to these questions need not be spiritual in nature. The intention is for practical real life responses.

- 1) **What makes celebrities attractive to us?** Their money; their looks; their popularity.
- 2) **What does it mean to have an image?** You have everything together; it is what the rest of the world sees; it is about what you wear, how you talk, and how you live.
- 3) **How do you create an image for yourself?** By buying things; through acting certain ways so people think certain things about you; by working hard and using your skills.
- 4) **What tarnishes someone's image?** Scandals; if people find out they aren't really who they said they were; rumors and gossip.

Scripture's Answers: Genesis 1:26&27, 2:7

In this section the Life Connection questions are now related to the passage of Scripture being used in this Bible Study. The answers to the following questions should come from the text as well as out of the individual's hearing and understanding of what they have heard read. Have a member of the group read the Scripture passage aloud for all to hear. Make sure extra Bibles are available so everyone can follow along.

Scripture:

Then God said, "Let us make humans in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

So God created humans in His own image, in the image of God He created them, male and female He created them.
(Genesis 1:26&27)

The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Introduction:

Although there are differing views on creation, don't let that sidetrack your group from the idea of the image of God. The final thing God created was people and He didn't speak them into being like He did everything else. God formed, molded and created His greatest creation. He breathed His breath of life into the humans. Being created in the image of God is what makes us different from every other aspect of creation. It is the image within each of us that enables us to be in relationship with God.

The story following Creation is about The Fall. Because of the choices Adam and Eve made they were separated from God by sin. In this separation the image of God in all of us was hurt. Through sending His Son Jesus, God made it possible for the healing and restoration of the image of God in each of us.

5) **What does it mean that God created us in His image?** We look like Him; we can all be gods; we are His children.

Teaching Time:

Say to your group: **There are many images that people try to make the world see. For example, many people want to look successful, wealthy, intelligent, powerful or popular. This is not the kind of image we are talking about. The image of God in each of us is who we are at the core. Being created in God's image doesn't mean we are just like Him or even look like Him, what it means is we are meant to be with Him. The Bible tells us human beings were created in such a way so they could know God and be in relationship with Him. To be created in God's image is to be His child. We are not God's pet or servant or some kind of object, we are created to be His son or His daughter.**

6) **What is important about God breathing life into the first humans?** It made them different; it shows that part of Him is in us; He took special care to bring them to life.

Teaching Time:

Say to your group: **When God created humanity He did something different. The Biblical account never says anything else was created in His image. That makes human beings different. The difference is, God made us like Him so we can know Him. We were created specifically to be in a relationship with Him. The problem is human beings have made wrong choices and caused a separation to grow between God and us. The more we choose to go our own way, the wider the gap becomes. Some people think this gap is not important, but it really is.**

7) **Why do you think the gap between people and God is important?** It shows God is better than we are; it is sad we are separated from Him; because it wasn't meant to be this way.

8) **What do you think the gap between God and humans does to the image of God inside of us?** It makes it smaller; if it is inside of us from the beginning, I don't think it does anything; hurts it.

Teaching Time:

Say to your group: **The gap between God and people has caused the image of God to be damaged. What God wants is for us to come back and to be in relationship with Him. When that happens we can become the people we were created to be.**

9) **If we were meant to be in relationship with God, how would your life look different if you turned to Him?** It would be in better order; it would be easier; I don't know what that kind of a relationship would be like.

10) **What does it mean to turn to God?** You have to give up all the things you like; you start going to church; you become a better person.

Teaching Time:

Say to your group: **Turning to God means inviting Jesus to come into your heart. When you do this, the gap between you and God is bridged. This is important because the person you are meant to be, the image inside of you that cannot be tarnished when you are in relationship with Him, and the life you have the potential to live can be realized.**

God created you. You are special to Him. When you choose to turn to Him you don't turn and head into a bunch of rules and restrictions, making your life more difficult. No, turning to God frees you from the sin that holds you. Life begins to make more sense because you can realize what your purpose for living is and that is to know and love God.

He wants to know you. Isn't that amazing? God created you and He wants to know you, He sent Jesus to restore our image of God and to bridge the separation between us.

Reflection:

Invite the group to take a moment to reflect silently on the questions you are going to ask. These questions can be answered or you may choose to allow the members of the group to think about them.

11) **What image are you trying to show the world—an image that is fleeting or can be tarnished or the image of God in you?**

12) **How does being separated from your Creator make you feel?**

13) **How does it make you feel that God wants to be in a relationship with you even though you have made choices to separate yourself from Him?**

Optional Activity Time:

As a way to make the reflection more meaningful in the lives of group members there are two activities to engage in. First, give the group time to write the answers to the reflection questions in a journal they can keep throughout the study time and the week to come. Second, send each group member home with these questions to think about and write about in a journal during the week. When the group gathers together the next time, break the group up into smaller groups and give them the opportunity to share what they have been thinking about since they last met.

Conclusion:

Take time to pray together before the group leaves. Allow group members to share insights and ask questions they may have.

Possible Prayer:

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for bridging the great distance between God and us. Thank You for Your interest in a relationship with us. Will You help us to see the places we are pulling away from You? Will You help us to turn around and become the people You want us to be?

Thank You for making us in Your image. Help us not to care about what other people think, but to only care about knowing You so You can heal our broken relationship. We know when we do, our identity will be in You—that is an image that never can be tarnished or ruined. Help us to live our lives how You intended them to be lived, as Your creation.

Amen.