

WHO AM I?

King David asks God in one of his psalms *“What is mankind that You are mindful of them, human beings that You care for them?”* (Psalm 8:4). Here David expresses wonder that God should pay so much attention to his human creation. We are insignificant in comparison to the vastness of the universe but are we significant in the eyes of God?

It is another way of asking ‘Who am I?’ or ‘What does it mean to be human?’ The universal cry is the same today: ‘Do I have any significance?’

Created in the Image of God

The first chapter of the Bible states *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female he created them”* (Genesis 1:27). This verse is of key importance because it provides the basis for our understanding of who we are as human beings.

Francis Schaeffer wrote, *“For twentieth-century man this phrase, the image of God, is as important as anything in Scripture, because men today can no longer answer that crucial question, “Who am I?” ... man has lost his unique identity”*¹

Created for Relationship

Humans alone were created in the image of God as eternal beings with body, mind, soul, and spirit. The main idea here is that humanity has been especially created for a relationship with God, intended to be personal and eternal.

While secular humanism regards mankind as mere animals on the evolutionary ladder, the Word of God tells us that we are much more. *“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do”* (Ephesians 2:10). We are God’s works of art, His masterpieces!

Humans alone were created as immortal, spiritual beings who could enjoy a relationship with God that was transparent and holy. Humans alone were created with intellectual, rational and creative powers to know God and reflect His character. Humans alone were given dominion over the earth to enjoy it and use it and take good care of it.



The vivid Bible story of the idyllic life in the Garden of Eden shows the enduring relationship God desired to have with humanity.

When God created Adam and Eve He placed them in a garden paradise which He had planted especially for them. It was a place for Adam and Eve to relate together and enjoy each other as they looked after the garden together. Then in the cool of the day God would walk in the garden to spend time with Adam and Eve.

Jesus later confirmed that humans were created for relationship with God and with each other when he gave the two greatest commandments: *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your strength and with all your soul and with all your strength”* and *“Love your neighbour as yourself”* (Mark 12:30,31).

Image Desecration

In their perfect sinless state Adam and Eve could look forward to a never-ending fellowship with God. But God didn’t want a mechanical, robotic, programmed love. He created us with freedom of choice and set moral boundaries. He forewarned Adam and Eve that if they transgressed His boundaries that *“you will surely die”* (Genesis 2:17).

When they did fall into sin they didn’t immediately die physically but something in them died spiritually. Their relationship with God had been broken. As a result the image of God in Adam and Eve and all their descendants had been desecrated but thankfully not totally lost.

Image Restoration

God’s rescue plan was to fully restore His desecrated image in people. He did this by sending His Son Jesus Christ, the perfect *“image of the invisible God”* (Colossians 1:15), to earth as a human being to live amongst us.

Those who believe in Jesus have become a *“new creation”* (2 Corinthians 5:17). Those who belong to Jesus have *“put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator”* (Colossians 3:10). They are being transformed into the likeness of Christ *“with ever increasing glory”* (2 Corinthians 3:18). The wonderful news is that the image of God will be fully restored in His people when we see Him face to face in heaven.

Jesus declared that *“God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth”* (John 4:24). Today as we live our lives before God we relate to God through prayer and worship giving glory to God.

¹ Genesis in Space and Time, Francis A Schaeffer p.46

Father in Heaven, We thank You that You created men and women in Your own image that we might have a right relationship with You for all eternity. Thank You that this belief has been at the foundation of Western civilisation for many centuries helping humanity to flourish as You intended. Thank You that You sent Your Son Jesus, the perfect image of the invisible God, to so restore the damaged image in men, women and children that they could enter into an eternal relationship with You. Yet your word tells us the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Our adversary is bent on destroying all who are made in Your image, especially those who have not yet been made new creations through faith in Christ. In his fury the devil stops at nothing to prevent humanity from entering into an eternal relationship with You. Help us to resist Satan's wicked plans by standing firm in the faith. Help us to fully embrace our humanity and experience the joy and privilege of being human. Help all Christians in Australia to declare every human life is indeed something wonderful because each was created in the image of God. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

About 'Image of God' Leaflets

In the Bible we read that God "*created man in His own image*" (Genesis 1:27). Many maintain that all human history revolves around this truth. The Judeo-Christian belief in the unique dignity of human beings is at the very foundation of Western civilisation.

The 2010 Canberra Declaration therefore states:

"We believe that all human life, being made in the image of God, has intrinsic and equal value from conception to life's natural end."

'Image of God' leaflets relate the doctrine of humanity as created in the image of God to various issues we face in Australia today.

The 21 leaflets in SERIES ONE are dedicated to Sophie Scholl who was martyred at the age of 21 in World War II for writing and distributing leaflets.

You can download other 'Image of God' leaflets at The Canberra Declaration website.

Please:

READ & SIGN

The Canberra Declaration
to Protect

- *Religious Freedom*
- *Marriage and Family and*
- *Human Life*
in Australia

Website: www.canberradeclaration.org.au

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Date last modified: 22 September 2017

SERIES ONE

Leaflet 2

Humanity



and the Image of God