

The 'image of God' certainly infers that man possesses aspects of human nature not shared by animals (Gen 1:26-27). Those aspects which differentiate us from animals include: moral consciousness, the ability to think abstractly, an understanding of beauty and emotion, an eternal soul, and above all, the capacity for worshipping and loving God. Man created in the image God points to the day when the eternal Son of God would come to earth as the perfect image of God and receive the human nature given Him by the Father (Heb 10:5; Luke 1:35; Col 1:15).

The image of God is at the very core of our identity and purpose as human beings. Our identity as the image of God means we must know God in order to know ourselves. This is at the very core of our identity and purpose as human beings. To reject the knowledge of God is to completely miss our identity as His image-bearers (Rom 1:18-21, 32; 2:14-1).

The Bible describes humanity as *embodied souls*. Man is a working duality of body and soul. The Scriptures indicate that both body and soul are for the Lord (1 Cor 6:13). The biblical foundation for personal responsibility before God is tied to the following principles: 1.) *The body never makes you sin.* 2.) *The physical body gives 'shape' to inner responses (of the soul).* Discussion: How is the physical body sometimes used as an excuse for behavior?

Because our identity is the image of God; our whole duty is to *be the image of God*. We are designed by God to reflect, or represent Him on earth.

Since man is the image of God; sin is always the misrepresentation of God. Our moral duty is to be like Him in holiness; to reflect His character (1 Pet 1:15-16; Eph 5:1). All unrighteous behavior is the misrepresentation of what God is like. This helps us understand the seriousness of sin in God's eyes. We are the creatures made to represent His character and Person on earth; He can never be neutral or indifferent toward wickedness.

Because sin entered through Adam's transgression; fallen man bears a *distorted image* of God. The image of God in sinful man is no longer an accurate reflection of the Creator. That image, therefore, needs to be renewed through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus (Col 3:10; Eph 4:24). God's wonderful plan in the Gospel is to restore sinners to the true image of God through Christ who is the perfect image of God (2 Cor 4:4-6).

We were created in the image of God in order to commune with Him; to share His purposes, and to share His dominion. The image of God places man in covenant relation to God; mankind is obligated to interpret all the works of God truthfully—to the glory of God. The image of God is the basis for our moral responsibility. It assures man that he is made to know God. It means that man's faculties are designed to receive divine revelation.

The image of God has a profound significance for ruined sinners—rescue is only by Jesus Christ, the perfect image of God. He suffered in the place of sinners as a perfect substitute. Christ's work will ultimately restore redeemed men and women to the perfect image of God. Unbelief is rebellion against God; it is to prefer independence from God, which is 'war' upon the image of God.

Knowing we are created in the image of God is essential in our knowledge of God, and His purposes for us. Our present evil generation (in its delusion of autonomy from God) imagines that man can have meaning, purpose, value, and certainty apart from Christ. Why can't man be fully human and fulfilled apart from Christ? Sinning does not create a new reality; it does not produce autonomy from God. Unrepentant sinners will still bear the image of God in everlasting hell.

Man can never shed his God-given identity as divine image-bearer. In terms of counsel, man is dependent upon either God or Satan (2 Cor 4:4; 1 Jn 5:19). Satan attacks the Word through *doubt, distortion, and denial*. Satan's destructive counsel is advanced by the ungodly (Ps 1).