



Steve Holdaway
LifeSpring Church
09.10.17

Genesis 1:26-29 ESV

26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

The Beauty of the Image of God means that we are:

Made for a _____ with God.

Made for a relationship with _____.

Made for the responsibility to _____ the _____.

Implications of the Image of God:

Your new nature will display most clearly the image of God.
Colossians 3:5-11 NIV

Jesus will not let you get away with treating any image bearer with disrespect. Luke 10

Even people that you dislike or who dishonor God are worthy of your love. Galatians 3:26; 28

GOD'S BEAUTIFUL DESIGN SERIES

Preview:

Sept. 10: The Beauty of the Image of God

Sept. 17: The Beauty of Gender

Sept. 24: The Beauty of Identity

Oct. 1: The Beauty of Sexual Purity

Oct. 8: The Beauty of Singleness

Oct. 15: The Beauty of Covenant Marriage



LifeGroup Discussion Guide 1: The Beauty of the Image of God

Opening: When were you first exposed to someone of a different skin color? What was your response? Was prejudice a part of your family? Have you ever experienced prejudice?

1. **Read Sunday's passage:** Briefly review the main points.

Genesis 1:26-29 ESV

26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

The Beauty of the Image of God means that we all are:

Made for a relationship with God.

26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.

Made for a relationship with other people.

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Made for the responsibility to rule the earth.

28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

2. Read this summary from GotQuestions.org:

The first thing to understand in this discussion is that there is only one race—the human race. Caucasians, Africans, Asians, Indians, Arabs, and Jews are not different races. Rather, they are different ethnicities of the human race. All human beings have the same physical characteristics (with minor variations, of course). More importantly, all human beings are equally created in the image and likeness of God ([Genesis 1:26-27](#)). God loved the world so much that He sent Jesus to lay down His life for us ([John 3:16](#)). The “world” obviously includes all ethnic groups.

God does not show partiality or favoritism ([Deuteronomy 10:17](#); [Acts 10:34](#); [Romans 2:11](#); [Ephesians 6:9](#)), and neither should we.

In the Old Testament, God divided humanity into two “racial” groups: Jews and Gentiles. God’s intent was for the Jews to be a kingdom of priests, ministering to the Gentile nations. Instead, for the most part, the Jews became proud of their status and despised the Gentiles. Jesus Christ put an end to this, destroying the dividing wall of hostility ([Ephesians 2:14](#)). All forms of racism, prejudice, and discrimination are affronts to the work of Christ on the cross.

Jesus commands us to love one another as He loves us ([John 13:34](#)). If God is impartial and loves us with impartiality, then we need to love others with that same high standard. Jesus teaches in [Matthew 25](#) that whatever we do to the least of His brothers, we do to Him. If we treat a person with contempt, we are mistreating a person created in God’s image; we are hurting somebody whom God loves and for whom Jesus died.

Racism, in varying forms and to various degrees, has been a plague on humanity for thousands of years. May [Galatians 3:28](#) be completely realized, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

3. Take turns reading through and discussing some of the following topics and scriptures related to the image of God, prejudice, and racism.

Is racism a sin? Yes!

James 2:8-9 Indeed, if you keep the royal law prescribed in the Scripture, Love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing well. But if you show favoritism, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

Racism is the same as murder in the Bible and no one who lives in such a way will enter into Heaven.

1 John 3:15-16 Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.

1 John 2:11 But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.

Scripture strongly condemns prejudice and favoritism.

John 7:24 Do not judge according to appearance, but judge the righteous judgment.

James 2:1 My brothers and sisters, do not show prejudice if you possess faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 5:21 I solemnly command you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus and the highest angels to obey these instructions without taking sides or showing favoritism to anyone.

Acts 10:34-36 Then Peter started speaking: "I now truly understand that God does not show favoritism in dealing with people, but in every nation the person who fears him and does what is right is welcomed before him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, proclaiming the good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)."

The Israelites were to love foreigners and strangers.

Leviticus 19:33-34 When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

Exodus 22:21 Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt.

Scripture tells us to love others as ourselves and think of ourselves less.

Mark 12:31 The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.

1 John 4:19-21 We love because He first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For the person who does not love his brother he has seen cannot love the God he has not seen. And we have this command from Him: The one who loves God must also love his brother.

God offers salvation to everyone. God wants us to spread the gospel to all the nations.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

Romans 10:12-13 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

God was angry with Aaron and Miriam for criticizing Moses and his interracial marriage.

Numbers 12:1-10 Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite. "Has the Lord spoken only through Moses?" they asked. "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" And the Lord heard this. (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.) At once the Lord said to Moses, Aaron

and Miriam, "Come out to the tent of meeting, all three of you." So the three of them went out. Then the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud; he stood at the entrance to the tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam. When the two of them stepped forward, he said, "Listen to my words: "When there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, reveal myself to them in visions, I speak to them in dreams. But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" The anger of the Lord burned against them, and he left them. When the cloud lifted from above the tent, Miriam's skin was leprous it became as white as snow. Aaron turned toward her and saw that she had a defiling skin disease.

There is only one race, human! At the end of the day we all bleed. There are different ethnicities of the human race, but we all are made in the image of God.

Many people hold on to racism, but if you have ever been racially profiled or if you feel as if you have been discriminated on in the past, let it go and forgive. God knows! This world is full of sinners. Just like He has forgiven you, forgive others.

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Colossians 3:13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

(Source: BibleReasons.com)

4. Apply:

Is there any sin of favoritism, prejudice, or racism that you need to confess to God and others? Do so.

How can you become more inclusive and loving towards those who are different from you?

What can LifeSpring Church do to be more loving and inclusive?