

### **Bearing His Image**

*And 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 fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. – Genesis 1:26*

The Bible makes it clear that humanity is a special and unique creation of the living God. Of all the mysteries of the universe, our existence is the most exquisitely peculiar and the most jealously guarded in the heavens. Angels were made a little lower than us only by the fall of our first father, but in ages to come we shall be exalted above the heavenly host to share in the joy of our Lord by the redemption He purchased for us as our near kinsman Redeemer on Calvary's cross. Proper apprehension of our position in God's grand creative design generates within us an overwhelming call to humble worship and a desire to steward our lives responsibly before Him. There are several ways in which we bear the image and likeness of the living God.

We bear a composite likeness to the Triune God. "Let us make man in our image." He is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We do not divide His substance nor confound the Persons. He exists eternally as the incomprehensible Three-in-One and One-in-Three, and He has created us to be fundamentally comprised of body, soul, and spirit. Our very nature bears the mystery of tri-unity. The Word of God is the only tool in the universe able to divide asunder soul and spirit, for even theologians cannot articulate an adequate definition of where soul ends and spirit begins. And our bodies, while currently curse-bound, will be raised in newness of life at the resurrection of the just so that our full tripartite being will enjoy the presence of God forever and forever.

We also bear a mental likeness to Jehovah. While our intellect is unarguably limited, it is so far advanced above that of any other sentient life. We think abstractly, reason integrally, and even often act altruistically due to the ability to ponder ramifications outside our sphere of singular existence. Was this mental likeness not the foundation of His dominion mandate to Adam – to have dominion over and subdue the earth? None of His other creation bears this imprint of His nature.

We bear a structural and social likeness to God as well. We are male and female. We desire each other's company. We fellowship. We laugh. We enjoy one another. The animal kingdom may traverse their existence in gaggles and packs and schools and flocks, but that is really about surviving, not thriving. Humans thrive by relationship with other humans. We change the world when we are not alone. The family unit is the most sacred of all building blocks of civilized society where father, mother, and children share life and experiences. This is truly a gift from our good and benevolent God that we should cherish and steward as His own.

Finally, humans bear a moral likeness to God. We are free moral agents – designed good but with a free will to choose between good and evil. The lions and tigers and bears of the earth do not wrestle with moral decisions. The apes and peacocks and deer and groundhogs do not have laws or criminal courts. Morality is something fundamentally intrinsic to humankind alone within the realm of three-dimensional existence. It mirrors the unseen world of the heavens, reminding us that we are eternal creatures, made for the pleasure and purpose of God, to do what is right before Him.

Let us adore our good God for His lovingkindness toward us by making us in His image and likeness. And let us by the power of the Holy Ghost reach for the heavens in our living today and everyday forthcoming. — D. Murcek