

HIS STORY

To reflect God means to rule wisely.

What does it mean to be created in God's image? What comes to mind when you hear the phrase "created in God's image"? Do you think we still bear God's image today, even in our sinful state?

As the story of the creation of man and woman unfolds, we begin to see what being created in God's image entails. For starters, God calls Adam and Eve to rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth. His command for humans to fill and to subdue the earth is an invitation to bear His image—to reflect Him by doing what He has just done in creating the heavens and the earth.

To reflect God means to relate.

To bear God's image means to have a relationship with Him. Our image-bearing started when God created us. The account in Genesis shows how powerful a scene this was—when God's face was toward us, when He breathed into the first man the breath of life. Just as a mirror best reflects an image when the mirror is directly in front of the object, we reflect God's image best when we are in close relationship with Him.

After multiple statements of God seeing that His work was "good" and then "very good" comes the first moment when something is described as "not good." We were not created to bear God's image on our own or to have an isolated relationship with God. We reflect God best when we are in community with one another—relating to others in love and grace. Thus, reflecting God's image means we are to relate rightly to Him and to others.

To reflect God means to work and rest.

A lot of people have wrongly assumed that the command to work was a result of man's sinning and rebelling against God.

Work isn't something that God gave man as a curse after the fall into sin; the toil of work is what came with sin, but work itself is designed to give us fulfillment and provide us an environment to reflect God.

God did not rest because He needed it, as if He were tired or worn out. He gave us an example of rest to show that even though we are unlike any other creature in that we are the most "like" God, we are not God.

Essential Doctrine

Image of God in Humanity: *Some theologians believe "the image of God" refers to our mirroring of God's attributes: our nature models God's nature. Others believe we see the "image of God" in what human beings do. Still others believe the "image of God" concerns our relationships with God and with others. In Jesus we see the true image of God. He perfectly mirrors God's attributes, fulfills God's will, and enjoys a perfect relationship with the Father.*

Leader Note: Because some content from the Personal Study Guide will not be available on the One Sheet, make sure to adapt the session based on how you use the material with your group.

YOUR STORY

- ▶ **What comes to mind when you think of humanity being made “in the image of God”?**
- ▶ **When was the last time you thought of fish, birds, or even worms as living creatures that God has entrusted to you to care for?**
- ▶ **In what ways can your life demonstrate the priority of your relationship with God? What are some signs that your relationship with God is not your priority?**
- ▶ **In what ways does our culture diminish the value of work? How have you diminished the idea of work in your own life? How can you correct this?**

YOUR MISSION

Head

The fact that God created humanity in His image means that each individual person on planet earth, no matter how big, how small, or the color of their skin, possesses inherent worth, value, and dignity.

- ▶ **How should the doctrine of humans being created in God’s image influence the way we think about others?**
- ▶ **Why is it important to note that humanity has a special place among creation because we were created in God’s image? What are the dangers of not affirming this?**

Heart

The reality of God creating humanity in His image not only means that we see other people in a different light, but it also influences the way we feel toward others who bear the same image, both Christians and non-Christians.

- ▶ **How should the doctrine of humans being created in God’s image influence the way we feel about others, both Christians and non-Christians?**
- ▶ **Why should we be grieved when we see image bearers of God living in a way that is contrary to the way God intended?**

Hands

As we learned throughout this session, bearing God’s image is a tangible reality that shows up in our day-to-day lives. Not only does it show up in our relationships, but it also shows up in the way we steward the earth God has given us, as well as in the way we work and rest. No matter how old you are, everyone works (home, school, sports, etc.), everyone rests, and everyone contributes, for good or bad, to the little corner of this planet where God has placed them.

- ▶ **How will you begin to treat friends, family members, and even strangers differently based upon the truth that they are created in God’s image?**
- ▶ **What are some ways you can begin to reflect God by being a better steward of the world He has given us?**