

# Man as God's **R**epresentative and **R**esemblance: Part 2: God's **L**ikeness

Genesis                  Sermon 10                  Genesis 1:26c

Theme: Where did man's personality come from? From a personal God. Unlike the animals, we're able to interact with God. That's from being made in His likeness.

Genesis 1:26

And God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness..."

- I. Genesis answers man's **big questions**: *Who are we?* • God's creation, divided from Him by our sin.  
*How* do we return to God? • God retrieves us, promising Christ from the start, Gen 3:15.  
 How retrieved?                  • Justification by faith, Gen 15:5-6  
*Where* are we going?                  • Judgment is coming again, like the Flood. Christ is the only ark.

## II. Outline of Genesis

<b>I. Creation</b>	1-2	A. <u>ABRAHAM</u>	12-25
II. Fall	3	B. Covenant with Isaac	25-27
III. Judgment	6-8	C. Covenant with JACOB	27-36
<b>IV. Renewed creation</b>	9	VI. A New Nation: Jacob's 12 Sons	37-38
V. A <u>Touchstone</u> Covenant	12	VII. Blessing to the <i>Nations</i> : JOSEPH	39-50

**Kid-speak:** What is the book of the Bible we're studying today, the first book of the Bible?  
 Genesis.

## III. Genesis Lessons so Far

- A. Creation is the foundational teaching of the Bible, an account Jesus believed, Mk 10:6-8.
- B. Redemption teachings *keep* and *build on* the doctrine of Creation, a cause for praise.
- C. John 1:1-3 repeats "In the beginning," making Christ Mediator of Creation and Redemption.
- D. The days so far:
  1. Day 1: Earth & heavens in darkness, v 1-2. **Light**, its division from darkness; their new names, v 3-5. • The better work of Christ shining God's knowledge into us, *2 Cor 4:6*.
  2. Day 2: Upper & lower waters separated by an expanse called the heavens (our sky), v 6-8.                  • The work of distinguishing given to us as an aspiration, *2 Tim 2:20-21*.
  3. Day 3: Earth and its produce. • We are sown to be sowers, *Jms 3:18*.
  4. Day 4: **Light** (v 2) embodied. • We who were darkness are now light in the Lord, *Eph 5:8*.
  5. Day 5: Souls for sea and sky. • *All in all* realms will ascribe glory to the Lamb, *Rev 5:18*.
  6. Day 6: Land souls near us as teachers. • Called to praise God with us, *Ps 148:10, 14*.
    - a. God's plurality.
    - b. **Man** as God's image and likeness.

IV. The Idea of God's Creation of Man: Man is *different* than the animals, made in God's **IMAGE**, meaning man was made to **represent** God. Man was also made in God's **LIKENESS**, meaning God gave man a soul that thinks and feels **as** God's own soul is able to do.

How much, if any, of God's image and/or likeness has been lost in the Fall? There's good Bible data to inform us.

V. God Pronounces a New Work: His Pinnacle Work on Earth: Man

A. "Let Us make"

1. "God" has been singular, v 1-25; now, God is "Us, v 26." The Tri-Unity.
2. The Father, Son, and Spirit 'convene' and decide to make man, but differently than the rest of soul-life created prior to man.

B. "Let Us make **man**"

1. "Man," Heb., *adam*, 552x. From a root word for redness.
  - a. The word for "ground/ soil" comes from *adam*.
  - b. *Adam* being the name for the first man, Adam, Gen 2:19, but mostly for **mankind**.
2. Earth was made *for* man, Ps 115:16, for better or worse. We fall, it falls.

VI. Man Made in God's **Image**: Review

A. "Image" = **representation**. Man was made to represent God. Caesar's coin, Matt 22:19-23.

B. There is **PROTECTION** for man because He was made in God's image, e.g., Gen 9:6.

1. But there is no inherent, positive value in God's image, or it would be unjust to cast any of God's image-bearers into Hell.
2. Men cling to the idea of man's dignity, but we should rather think of man's rank.
3. Satan's high rank has remained- yet he uses it for evil. So with man.
4. Critically, man in God's image *does* continue to differentiate us from animals.

**Kid-speak:** God made us to be His messengers. To do that He made us in His \_\_. Image.

C. NT, **Christ** is God's image, 2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:15.

- ✘ 1. One Scripture we overlooked was Heb 1:3, calling Christ the *karaktayr*, or "express image" of the Father's substance/ essence.
2. Christ came as God's image, implying that man had in some way, to some degree *lost* it.
3. Christ came to *restore* God's image. Through Him, Christians are able to represent God again.

D. Per **Col 3:10**, a Christian is "renewed unto full knowledge according to *the image* of the *One creating him*."

1. If God's image is RE-created in us, it must have been lost in some way, to some degree.
2. From the word "renewed," you *could* argue that God's image had been completely lost.
- ☞ 3. Eph 4:24 might tell us exactly what went missing of God's image in the Fall, saying that the New Man in Christ is "created **ACCORDING TO** God in **righteousness** and **true holiness**." That may be our golden key on the subject.

E. **2 Cor 3:18**, we are “being changed into the same image” of the glory of the Lord that we’ve beheld.

1. Again, if we’re being changed *into* God’s image, to that same degree we were *minus* it.
- ☆ 2. Whatever remained, the main part is certainly what’s being returned to us.

**Kid-speak:** When all people turned away from God, now God has to make us in His \_\_\_ all over again. Image.

F. To the degree we miss this point, we invite great damage.

1. The very Gospel is at stake. If I retained dignity via God’s image, my reclamation through the Cross *didn’t have as far to lift me up*. I was already partway there.
2. Doesn’t any remnant of God’s image only *exacerbate* our defiance of God?

G. Whatever *does* remain of God’s image only pertains to PROTECTION, that I can see.

1. Gen 9:6. You can’t kill man because of God’s image.
2. That’s not saying he’s something great. (Unless it’s the same way Satan is great.)

## VII. Man in God’s LIKENESS: Old Testament.

A. The OT Hebrew word for “likeness” is *duh-muth*, from the root *damah*, to compare, 25x.

B. The most important OT occurrences of “likeness” besides ours are Gen 5:1 and 5:3.

C. Gen 5:1 refers back to our creation, “In the day God created man, in the likeness of God He made him.”

1. “Likeness” is considered a sufficient description of our original reflection of God.
2. We might have expected “image” as the standalone word there.
3. But Moses is about to detail an important distinction between *God’s* production of us and *our* reproduction of children. “Image” and “likeness” will swap places from Gen 1.

D. Gen 5:3, at age 530, Adam begot a child “in his likeness, according to his image” (Seth.)

1. Moses swaps the order of likeness and image from 1:26.
2. He also swaps prepositions.
  - a. 5:3, “in” his [Adam’s] likeness, versus “in” God’s image, 1:26.
  - b. 5:3, “according to” his [Adam’s] image, versus “according to” God’s likeness, 1:26.
3. I still hypothesize the distinction as this:
  - a. **God** had made man as a **representative** and *therefore* man needed to sufficiently **resemble** Him for the task;
  - b. whereas, **Adam** had children **resembling** his inner being, who would *therefore* carry on that **new** human stamp or **representation** to succeeding generations.

**Kid-speak:** God made us so we could talk to Him. That means He had to make us in His \_\_\_. Likeness. That means He made us \_\_\_ Him. Like.

- ◇ 4. A point God might be making in 5:3 is that man’s IMAGE AND LIKENESS are both more appropriately REFERRED BACK TO ADAM now.

- a. Whatever changes occurred in Adam’s original composition as God’s image and likeness can be seen in who Adam’s seed is going forward.
  - b. Our study of “image” showed us that changes occurred. Jer 17:9↓, Isa 59:2-15, etc., suggest that our changes *away from* reflecting God are very far and deep (“incurable”).
- E. “Likeness” in the OT after 5:3 is never about production or reproduction again.
- 1. Just as “image” in Gen 9:6 is its last OT appearance about man in God’s image.
  - 2. After 5:3, the most significant OT use of “likeness” is Isa 40:18, asking “what likeness will you compare to God?”
  - 3. The rest of the OT references to likeness tell of the similarity between one item and another. Most are in Ezekiel 1 (10x). Or they speak of a picture, as in 2 Kings 16:10.

### VIII. Man in God’s **Likeness**: NT

- A. “Image” has several helpful NT occurrences. “Likeness” only directly has one: Jms 3:9.
  - 1. James uses the Septuagint word for likeness, *homoi-o-sis*. **1x**, Jms 3:9.
  - 2. Same basic meaning as the more familiar word, *homoi-o-ma*, 15x.
    - a. As in the OT, mostly of one thing being similar to another.
    - b. But, as we’ll see, this Gk. word has the most significant verses on the subject.
- B. “Likeness” in Jms 3:9 mirrors the function of “image” in Gen 9:6, providing PROTECTION.
  - 1. James says our tongue, which blesses God, should not curse men “having come into being/ been made according to God’s likeness.”
    - a. James directly borrows the Gen 9:6 idea. There, men can’t kill men because of God’s image; in Jms 3:9, men can’t curse men because of God’s likeness.
    - b. As Gen 9:6, Jms 3:9 implies nothing about man’s dignity.
  - 2. Only here, James could have chosen “likeness” for a different reason. He could be defining a Christian.
    - a. After all, in context, it is badmouthing Christians that is in view.
    - b. And we already saw that the most definitive idea of “image” in the NT is of our RE-creation in Christ’s image.
    - c. James may be saying we shouldn’t curse Christians- those re-made in God’s likeness.
    - d. He uses “likeness” because Christians are actually like God again.
    - e. Making the slander of a Christian *fully* incongruous.
    - f. But if James includes unbelievers in God’s likeness, it simply refers to protection, since they, unlike Christians, don’t act like God.
- ☞ 3. But even Satan is afforded this kind of protection! Jude 1:9.
  - a. Archangel Michael dared not bring a “vilifying judgment” on Satan!
  - b. Why? Did Satan retain goodness? Does he have positive value and dignity? No, but he retains *rank* according to his creaturely order of being.
  - c. Just like man.

**Kid-speak:** Because God made people like Him, what should we *not* do about people? Talk bad about them.

- C. But let us pause and consider this protection in James 3, whether of Christians or all men.
  - 1. It is of a most serious and binding nature (which is why it may be speaking of slandering Christians especially).
  - \*2. It is an infallible ‘tell’ of our spiritual condition: born again or not.
  - 3. James puts it in unmitigated terms. Sweet and bitter water *don’t* come from the same fountain, 3:11. We only have ONE source internally.
  - 4. It’s not just a “should not” situation. It’s a “cannot” one, Jms 3:12.
  - 5. If we don’t actively promote the reconciliation into which God has brought us, we’ll always wander closer and closer to the edge of this cliff.

## IX. Christ in *Man’s* Likeness!

- A. The most surprising addition we get in our study of “likeness” is Christ coming in **our** likeness!
  - 1. That is by far the more important side of the equation in likeness.
  - 2. Whatever likeness of God unbelievers retain, it doesn’t save them *or* endorse them *for* salvation. As with image, it only exacerbates their choice to walk in Satan’s likeness.
- B. *Homoi-o-ma*, Philip 2:7, Christ took on the form of a servant, and was made in the “**likeness**” of men.
  - 1. Not meaning that he only *appeared* to be man. He was man.
    - a. “Likeness” means he received his human nature like every other son of Adam, Gen 5:3.
    - b. But it also means that He was something *more* than just human, though He appeared to be only human. He was God come in human flesh.
  - 2. (Men imagine this incarnation of their invented gods, Acts 14:11, but it is only true of our God.)
  - 3. Rom 8:3, He came in the “**likeness**” of sinful flesh.
    - a. Here “likeness” *is* of appearance, since Christ had no sin in His flesh.
    - b. By *keeping* His flesh from sinning, He was authorized to “condemn sin in the [His] flesh” on the Cross.
  - 4. The bridge from Him to us also uses a “likeness” verse, Rom 6:5, “We have become united with the **likeness** of His death.”
    - a. That is, we didn’t physically die with Him. Especially, we did not bear God’s wrath with Him.
    - b. But since it was *our* deserved wrath He took, we died with Him in that sense.
- C. *Homoi-ah-o*, Heb 2:17, “From this *basis*, he was obligated, in all respects, to be made like the brothers, that He might become a compassionate and dependable High Priest *in matters* concerning God, to propitiate the sins of the people.
  - 1. From *what* basis? 2:16, His taking hold of the seed of Abraham (not of angels).
  - 2. Hence, the main reason He had to become like us was to do the priestly work necessary to satisfy our sin debt.

**Kid-speak:** People stopped wanting to be like God. What did Jesus have to do to bring us back from that? HE had to become one of US!

- D. This is far more important than any protection man maintains from God's image and likeness.
  - 1. Christ, who IS God's image, came into OUR likeness to bring us back from our alienation from God.
  - 2. Not because we're so special, but *in spite of* our nearness to God occasioning our uprising, a dagger aimed at His heart.

X. Therefore, Let *Us* be Like *Christ!*

- A. 1 Jn 3:2-3, "Beloved, we are now the children of God, and it has NOT been manifested what we shall be. We know that whenever it [or He] is manifested, we will be **like** [*homoi-os*] Him, because we will see Him just as He is; and everyone having this hope *set* upon Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."
  - 1. Having what hope? The hope of seeing Him and thus being made **like** Him.
  - 2. THAT HOPE, to the degree it is daily and ongoing, is our purifying agent.
  - 3. That may be the 'best' definition of sanctification: our hope 'seeing' Christ making us more and more like Christ.
- B. Jesus became like us so that we might become like Him, 2 Cor 8:9.
- C. "The one saying he knows Him is under obligation to walk just as He walked," 1 Jn 2:6.
- D. In particular, **Eph 5:2**.

**Kid-speak:** Jesus became a human like us, so we could become good like Him. What's the main good thing Jesus teaches us again? To **love** one another.

Vision: Men have souls "like" God's. We can understand Him when He talks to us. We speak 'moral-eze,' conscience being our translator. Likeness is the equipment by which God will conclusively prove to each unbeliever (Rom 3:19) that he knowingly preferred to image rebellion, casting off God's oversight.

The travesty will be the better image/ representation we chose *against*. Our likeness to God is what will inform men of the travesty to all eternity... weeping and grinding of teeth.

Likeness then is a capacity, but it is not a dignity. It is a capacity that, when you tell men the GOOD NEWS of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:19), it inwardly informs them of their *indignity*. They cover this in many ways, just as we did.

What an untold blessing, that we are "now the children of God," 1 Jn 3:2! Yes, our newly imprinted likeness to God shows us the grave ugliness of the remaining Old Man. But even being able to hate his aggravation is an assurance that we will eventually be rid of him! Then, only the true image of God and likeness to Him will remain.