

Masterpiece

Made From the Best

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago

—Ephesians 2:8-10

To become the masterpiece, we have to understand the master.

To rediscover our supernatural and spiritual makeup, we must allow His character to shape our identity and purpose.

Knowing the basis for our dignity and worth helps us believe that we have gifts and talents to employ.

We were designed to be image bearers and promote the elements of God's character in a world and environment that operate on different elements and values.

The elements of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit change circumstances, release us from bondage, heal the sick, transform, and give us freedom.

WE NEED BALANCE

We combat addiction instead of embracing purpose.
We fight temptation as opposed to marveling over grace.
We deliberate over decisions against releasing ourselves
in faith.

We buckle under depression all the while we have been
given a sound mind.

*With the tongue we bless our Lord and Father and with it
we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of
God.*

—James 3:9

**Shame is not conquered by the irradiation of guilt but
by embracing grace.**

*For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them
to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the
firstborn among many brothers and sisters.*

—Romans 8:29

Our worth is connected to our Creator and WHO HE IS,
not our circumstances, past, faults, or successes.

If God is of great and inestimable worth, then human
beings made in his image must be of great value, too.

A powerful life is more about what we need to embrace
about God than what we need to despise about
ourselves.

We live by what we can see, taste, and feel.

We have become governed by the periodic table of natural elements and a tabulation of pain hurts, and disillusionment..

We have forgotten that we are not constructed naturally or as flesh-bound organisms.

We were built by the breadth and creativity of a supernatural being, and as such, we are spirit beings first.

We are crafted from a table of supernatural elements.

The natural elements were constructed to support the supernatural creation of God.

The governance of all things was supposed to be based on the divine elements of the heavenly courts and His character.

Thinking Differently

It is why Jesus could think differently and why we are called to think differently, not according to the elements of nature or the flesh but from a different table of elements.

“On earth as it is in heaven...”

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you

think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

—Romans 12:1-2 (NLT)

MADE FROM DIVINE SUPERNATURAL DNA

Then the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person.

—Genesis 2:7 (NLT)

Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us..."

So, God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

—Genesis 1:27 (NLT)

This is the written account of the descendants of Adam. When God created human beings, he made them to be like himself.

—Genesis 5:1 (NLT)

"The image of God is not so much something that man has as something that man is. Humankind was created to be a graphic image of the Creator — a formal, visible, and understandable representation of who God is and what He's really like."

—John Piper

Sin Does Not Remove The Image of God

God's commands to Noah demonstrate that the image of God was still in play even after the flood!

“And I will require the blood of anyone who takes another person's life. If a wild animal kills a person, it must die. And anyone who murders a fellow human must die. If anyone takes a human life, that person's life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings in his own image. Now be fruitful and multiply, and repopulate the earth.”

—Genesis 9:5-7 (NLT)

The image has become distorted but not completely lost.

Though man is still in the image of God, in every aspect of life some parts of that image have been distorted or lost

—Systematic Theology p.444

Moral purity has been lost. Intellect corrupted, speech degenerated and impulses controlled by selfishness.

Elements like love have become second to offense and retribution.

Despite man holding the image of God in a broken, distorted, and watered-down form, man cannot lose the image of God.

It is what keeps us redeemable and worth redeeming.

With the image of God lost completely, God would have had no reason to send Jesus, who called our attention back to the image of the Father.

That the image of God has been given to us despite our brokenness is the very key to understanding the divine element of grace.

The Practice of The Image

Our born-again state is a renewed realization of the image of God.

We have a new nature and are a new creation.

Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him.

—Colossians 3:10 (NLT)

As we grow in being able to superimpose the divine table of elements over the flesh we are being transformed into the image of God and from one degree of glory to another.

So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

—2 Corinthians 3:18 (NLT)

Knowing that we are made in God's image affects not only our understanding of our Creator and our relationship

with Him. It also sets the stage for understanding and defending the sanctity of all human life.

Every single human being, no matter how much the image of God is marred by sin, or illness, or weakness, or age, or any other disability, still has the status of being in God's image and therefore must be treated with dignity and respect that is due to God's image-bearer.

The impact on our conduct towards others.

This has profound implications for our conduct toward others. It means that people of every race deserve equal dignity and rights.

It means that elderly people ... and children yet unborn deserve full protection and honor as human beings - as image bearers.

Every flesh element causing the breakdown of our society today would be corrected and the effects mitigated if we could begin operating in the supernatural and divine elements of the image of God.

And that is our purpose: To live governed by the elements of God's divine character.

God always talks about having purpose or direction when He talks about follows the discussion of being made in His image with a purpose for humankind.

Genesis description in Eden (Genesis 1,5)

Post-flood description (Genesis 9)

We do not embrace our purpose by overcoming sin; we embrace it by allowing ourselves to become image-bearers.

Being Made In God's Image Has Implications

1. There are no ordinary people.

“There are no ordinary people. You have never met a mere mortal.”

—C.S. Lewis *The Weight of Glory*

2. We live balanced.

We should not focus only on our sins without considering His qualities of mercy, grace, redemption, and divine direction.

We could focus on our dignity and self-worth without much mention of our sinfulness. On the other hand, the overwhelm of life could have us caught solely on our unworthiness and sinfulness without any recognition of God's grace.

3. The restored image of God looks like Christ.

The fruit of living a life in the fullest expression of God's image in us looks like Jesus.