



## Wk 2: Humanity: 'In the Image of God' - Ch 2v4-25

### This Weeks Summary

Humanity was created as the pinnacle of God's creation, to enjoy friendship with Him and with each other, and to rule over His world. This stamps every human being with intrinsic value and worth.

### For Study:

- Read **Isaiah 43:1-7** & **1 Peter 1:17-19** and reflect on the worth that God sees in His people.
- Read **1 Corinthians 12:12-26** and reflect on the picture of a community of people living and serving together.
- Read **Ephesians 5: 22-33** as Paul explains the picture that marriage was intended to be.
- Reflect on **Psalms 19** as David speaks first of creation, then of his attitude to God's law. Finish by making the prayer at the end of the Psalm your own.

This week we looked at the origins of humanity as God placed Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. This chapter introduces 3 mega-themes of the Bible that run throughout the whole of the Scriptures right to the end of Revelation - God's People were living in God's Place under the rule of God's Word:

## **1. God's People**

Adam and Eve were the very first of God's own people. They were created by God, belonged to Him, and were made for relationship with Him as He came and walked in the garden with them (as we find out in chapter 3). However there's something surprising about the way the creation of humanity takes place. We're told in chapter 2 verse 18 that amongst all of the 'good' things that God had created, that it was 'not good' that man was alone. The surprising part about it is that in one way man wasn't totally alone - he was with God in the garden, and yet still the situation was pronounced as 'not good'. What this does is that it teaches us something fundamental about ourselves - an essential part of what it means to be human is to be in community with other people. It's one vital way in which we have been made in the image of God - we serve a triune God, 3 persons in perfect unity, who before the world even came into existence shared perfect fellowship, love and community together. Just as the 3 members of the trinity love one another, serve one another and fellowship together, so we too as human beings need the support, the love, the fellowship and the accountability that comes from living in community with other people. This is true outside of the church, but for us as Christians it should be something we pursue with all our hearts if we want to live for Jesus in this world. Community isn't always easy, and it can often not be pretty, but the Bible knows nothing of a lone-ranger Christian. We need each other, and investing in each other is what will cause us to grow into the church God wants us to be.

## **2. God's Place**

It's simple but important - when God made humanity He couldn't just leave us floating around in space, but had to give us somewhere to live together. What God did was to give Adam and Eve a perfect garden containing everything they could ever have wanted or needed. He gives

them a space in which to begin to grow and develop their community life, and God would continue to do that for His people Israel in bringing them into the promised land, which is ultimately a picture of heaven - God's perfect place for all eternity. How we relate to this world that God has given us now it has been ravaged by sin must be in two ways. Firstly we should care for the world around us - after all it is still a gift that God has entrusted into our care for the time we spend here. However that environmental consciousness must always be tainted with the knowledge that this world is passing away. We are just strangers and pilgrims passing through this world until the day when God recreates a new heaven and new earth, and this one is destroyed by fire. We must not be looking to set up permanent residence here on this earth, but should live our life looking ahead knowing that eternity is what really matters. We should make certain that heaven is our destination, and take as many people there with us as we possibly can.

### **3. God's Word**

You could use the word 'law' here to describe what we're talking about because that's really what it was. The funny thing is that as soon as the whole concept of rules and regulations is brought up we have this in-built aversion to it as if it's something terrible that is just there to restrict us, spoil our fun, and bring us into bondage. However think for a second about the 'law' in God's perfect world. There were positive commands - 'go forth and multiply' and 'subdue the earth' were good things that Adam and Eve could enjoy bringing real satisfaction into their lives. There was freedom to eat and enjoy any tree from the garden - again, good gifts from God. Then there was just 1 negative command - stay away from the fruit of just a single tree in the garden. Was that a harsh command? No - it was telling them to stay away from something that would ultimately cause their death. Was any of the 'law' in the garden burdensome, or trying to steal Adam and Eve's joy? No, none of it was, and God's law, or His Word is exactly the same now, even though our view of it has been twisted by sin. For humanity to really thrive as we ought, we must live under the law of our perfect King, and in a world that instinctively rejects authority, we as God's people should model what it means to live under a law, not meant to harm us but to save us.

## For GC Discussion:

- What are the different implications of the truth that we are made in the image of God for our own lives.
- How does the truth of those around us being made in the image of God affect how we treat them?
- How can we make sure that the 'law' of God has the right place in our lives?
- How does Genesis 2 shape our view of community, and what practical things can we do to respond to that view?

**For the Kids:** *Genesis 2 tells us that we were made to look like God in the way we live. How do you think you can do that in your life?*

### Next Week:

We'll be studying Genesis 3 and the entrance of sin into the world at the 'Fall'.

## *Notes & Questions*

**For Worship:** listen to '*Creation Sings the Father's Song*' by Keith and Kristyn Getty - you can find it on YouTube, or on the Hill City Church blog on the website.