



A weekly resource to spark biblically-centered conversations with your kids about the issues they face in today's youth culture.

IMAGE OF GOD

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Should every person be valued and treated with dignity? In a culture that struggles to truly value every human, Scripture reveals the unique view of humanity that highlights every person's value and purpose. The Bible's first two chapters reveal God's good and beautiful design while powerfully highlighting what it means for humanity to be made in God's image, the imago dei, (pronounced: "ee-mah-go day").



What is Happening?

Sadly, many people do not treat others fairly or value them rightfully. The culture at large may seek valuing people but it tends to pick which ones are valued while disregarding others. This manifests itself in issues such as abortion, racism, not caring for people with disabilities, and socioeconomic disparity. Our world mistreats others because we don't understand or believe human value or the God-given purpose of helping all people flourish. An example of our cultural confusion are the disagreements we have over social and theological issues in the culture and the church. People on both sides of these issues tend to value those who are like-minded, and devalue those who may disagree. We may say we value all people, but end up de-valuing other people and creating value hierarchies.

Often present in how people treat others, many also struggle with a proper view of self. Examples include low self esteem, anxiety, loneliness ([Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation - U.S. Surgeon General Report](#)), guilt, shame, and even suicide. These are all complex issues and each situation is unique but often in some way the individual does not believe how important and valuable they truly are - value not based on what they have accomplished or mistakes made, but value based solely on being God's wonderful creation.

While sin impacts each individual and thus societal structures as a whole, a secular worldview cannot answer why a human is innately valuable. If a person is simply the result of blind purposeless chance then why would a person be more valuable than any other part of the material world? What sets humanity apart as unique? Outside of scripture, there is no coherent explanation for valuing human life.





WORD

What Does God's Word Say?

Our Value

In Genesis 1:26-28 we encounter God's good design for humanity. We read how God sets humanity apart during creation. We are made in God's image. There are many implications of this: the innate value of every person, humanity's need for a relationship with God and other humans, love entering the created order, the ability to make choices, and consciousness. While all of these are important to human existence and flourishing, the value we each have because we are made in God's image is the foundation for understanding how the Bible, and thus humans, are to view and treat other humans.

The value of most created things is directly connected to its creator. Generally something from the dollar store is not as valuable as a brand name product. In Genesis (and all of scripture) God is revealed as a powerful, holy, loving, just, all-knowing, kind, and good God. This is the God who created every person in His image. If this is God, how valuable must each human be? Every person, from the womb to the tomb, is important and valuable.

Our Purpose

Directly related to humanity's value is our purpose. Genesis 1:26-28 reveals how humans are given tremendous responsibility. We were to have dominion over (or steward and care for) the earth as God's representatives while reproducing more people to do the same. Humans were called to fill the earth with culture and society that represented God's good and perfect ways. Humans are meant to be sub-creators of God as we use what He has made to create a culture that seeks His glory and the good of others.

Another way to think about this purpose as God's image bearer is to think of a statue. The purpose of a statue is to make a person think of the original subject. Similarly, a person is meant to make others think of God and who He is.

Sin impacted the desire and ability for humans to image God, but thankfully God did not leave humanity on our own, Through faith alone in Jesus (Ephesians 2:1-10) our sins are forgiven and then we begin the process of becoming more and more like Jesus, the second and perfect Adam (Romans 5:12-21). Jesus was and is the only one to fulfill God's purpose for humanity, and calls us to live as He did by loving God and loving others (Matthew 22:37).





WALK

Conversation Starters and Questions:

Our value and purpose work hand in hand as we fulfill Jesus' great commandment of loving God and loving others. Every person is important. Truly believing every single person is cherished by God will help us faithfully live out our purpose. As we eagerly await Jesus' return to judge the earth and renew all things, He invites all of His followers to join Him in helping others be reunited with their Savior, understand their value, and work to help humanity flourish.

In order to do this, Christians must be humble. Attempt to start each day by thanking God for His mercy and grace in your life. Genuine gratitude will help create a heart posture of compassion and care. Unfortunately, the Church has not been and is currently not immune to explicitly or implicitly ignoring the ramifications of humans being made in God's image. May we stand boldly to protect and care for all humans, especially the vulnerable. The unborn, orphans, children in the foster system, or the elderly are types of people who need to be remembered and cared for.

Do you have areas in your life where you show bias against other people (James 2:1-13), especially those different from yourself? Take a moment to consider this and repent as needed. Ask God to give you and your family a heart of valuing all those wonderfully made in God's image. Then ask God to help you and your family understand how God has placed each of you in unique places and situations to be used by God.

- How does being made in God's image impact you right now? Do you believe you are important to God and that He loves you?
- Do you believe you have the God-given purpose to know God and help others know and enjoy Him, too?
- Talk about the current cultural moments surrounding loving your neighbors who are different than you. Some topics may include abortion, racism, or showing bias towards certain types of people.
- Are there peers at school or neighbors who have different lifestyle choices? How can we lovingly interact with them while being full of grace and truth?
- What is one way you can help someone know they are valuable and that they are loved by God?

For further reflection:
Check out The Bible Project video titled [Image of God](#).



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Then 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 birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

*So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.*

And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:26-28)