Section: Doctrine of God

**TEACHING NOTES**

**Q14. Who made each of us and every other created thing?**

God made us and every other created thing.

**John 1:3** All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

**Intro:** Good evening Disciples church. I am thankful for our time together tonight and excited to dig into creation and all that comes along with it! Let’s open in prayer and then we’ll dig in!

**Prayer:**

Our question tonight is a simple and scripturally clear question but it has massive implications. As I read the lesson I wrote in 2015 about this topic, it was quite apparent that my main concern was a right understanding of the creator – creature distinction. I will definitely touch on that tonight but I wanted to take a fresh approach to our overall lesson. I’ll begin our time tonight working backwards through our catechism answer. In each main point of our lesson I want to draw out three main categories. The simple and clear category of who created all things, the beautiful way that the creation of all things took place, and the implications of both of these realities. Hopefully you’ll pick up on this pattern tonight in each major section.

With that here are the major sections of focus:

1. God is the creator of the physical universe
2. God is the creator of heavenly beings (rulers/authorities) (angels)
3. God is the creator of (mankind) and we are made in His image

As we get into this lesson, let me quote one Ligonier theologian who boldly declares important starting points for the topic we are venturing into tonight.

“God is the ultimate Being. Before there was a universe, there was God. He exists independently of matter and sequence of time. God transcends space and time. He is not limited by spatial considerations (He is everywhere in His fullness continually).”

Let us always remember, before the created universe existed, there was God.

**Preface: Trinity in creation**

Before we dig into each main point I want to start with a sub point of sorts. With what we’ve learned about God throughout our catechism so far especially in regards to His triune nature, I wanted us to see the roles of each member of the Godhead in creation. As with all things God does, because He is triune in nature, we can see all three persons of the Godhead active in creation. God the Father willed that all things be created.

**1 Cor. 8:6a** yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist…

All things are from God the Father.

All things that were created were created through Jesus. Jesus commanded the things that exist to exist and they became.

**John 1:3** All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Jesus was the person through whom all things were created.

All things that were created through Jesus, through His commands, were executed by the Holy Spirit:

**Job 33:4** The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

All things are “from” God the Father. Whatever the Father wills, does most certainly come to pass.

We see this same execution of things in regards to salvation and God’s elect. God the Father willed that a group of people He called the “Elect” would be saved from eternity past. God the Son purchased the redemption of this group of “Elect” through His sacrificial atonement upon the cross and His victorious resurrection from the dead. God the Holy Spirit executes the purchase of Christ by causing new birth upon the once dead in sin person. God the Father wills it, God the Son mediates it, and God the Holy Spirit executes it. The glorious trinity at work!

All things are created through Jesus. Jesus is the mediator of all things. This is clearly seen in creation. Multiple passages of scripture declare that God created through Jesus. Jesus is also referred to as the Word of God. When God “spoke” things into creation, He created through Jesus the “Word.” There is only one mediator between God and man, the God man Jesus Christ. Jesus mediates for us in every way, this is why He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

All of Jesus’s commands are carried about by the Holy Spirit.

**Psalm 104:30** When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.

You see the word Spirit is the same word for breath. You could think of it this way, if Christ is the Word of God, the breath that carries out the Word through whom all things were made, is the Holy Spirit.

The intimately unique connection between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is truly amazing. God the Father speaks (is revealed to us) through the God the Son who is called the Word or Logos, and the Word is active through God the Holy Spirit, the breath or wind that moves the Word. In this, I want to draw our attention to the unique roles of the Triune Godhead in creation.

Now, let us also know that because there is no division in God (He is one God, not three gods), what can be said of each person of the trinity can be said of the other two persons of the trinity. There is true unity in the three persons.

For example, the Father does not have a separate will--the Godhead's will is one, so you could say Jesus willed creation as well, and the Holy Spirit willed creation as well.

While this is true, and very important, it is also true that Scripture highlights things based on their distinction as well. It's above us a bit, but both of these realities are true.

With that sub point let’s look at our first main point for the study.

**POINT 1:** God is the creator of the physical universe

**1689: In the beginning it pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, to create or make the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.**

In this short paragraph on creation from the confession of faith we see the same focus I intend to draw out of our three major points. Namely that the Triune God is the creator of all things (it says “it pleased **God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit** … to create”), the Triune God created everything from nothing because it pleased Him to create, and it pleased Him to create because it put on display the glory of His eternal power, wisdom, and goodness.

The Ligonier theologian quoted earlier wrote that, “No sentence is more pregnant with meaning than the opening one of the Bible. It tells us several things all at once…”

Let’s look at this sentence now…

**Genesis 1:1** In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

One key point to note here is that God had already existed in “the beginning.” As we have learned in a previous catechism teaching, God is eternal. Since we’ve already spent a night working through God’s eternality I won’t go into great detail about it tonight, however it is a very foundational point to remember; God was not created (He is not a created being), He has always existed. And He is the creator of all things that are created. Incredibly important. So back to our verse; in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. At this point in our Scriptures we see the primary creation of an all-encompassing physical universe – the Heavens and the earth.

Before we move on we need to emphasize again a crucial issue, which is that God created out of nothing (this is called, creation ex nihilo). The biblical testimony here and elsewhere insists that at the point of the beginning there was nothing apart from God, and what exists apart from God was brought into being by Him.

Hebrews 11:3 (ESV)

By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

Revelation 4:11 (ESV)

“Worthy are you, our Lord and God,

 to receive glory and honor and power,

for you created all things,

 and by your will they existed and were created.”

As the Genesis 1 passage continues we see; 2The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

So in this first creating of the heavens and earth there is water and darkness, there’s no form to the earth, it is empty or void.

We also see the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, is “hovering” over the water. This is often the term or passage in the creation account that reveals the active work of the Spirit of God in creation.

The passage continues;

3And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. So God spoke (used words to command nothing to become something) and it came to be.

This reveals the power and authority of God. To be able to speak and have nothing become something is amazing. I hope you are already considering the beauty of God in creation. It’s very clear that He is the Creator, but have you slowed down to see how beautiful His power and creativity is?

Verse 4 continues; 4And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.

God sees the work He has done and recognizes that it is good. All of God’s works are good. God is the standard by which we measure all things. This reality begins to be unpacked right here in this verse. By the Scriptures declaration of God “seeing” that the light He called into creation is good, the Scriptures reveal to us **WHO** decides what is good or bad. God being creator, reveals that He is the standard and He alone declares what is good/bad - right/wrong. God is the great Judge, He alone is worthy to look at creation and declare that it is good. This is why Eve’s offense in the garden was worthy of death. She stepped back and looked at the fruit that God said was forbidden, the very fruit that God said would be bad for her to eat. She then decided to take God’s throne, by deciding for herself that the fruit looked good to eat. By taking the fruit and eating even though God had commanded otherwise, she revealed that her ultimate standard (who decides what is good or bad) was herself rather than God, and she suffered the punishment for it.

When God sees a thing as good, so it is. When God sees a thing as evil, so it is.

Despite the Eve-like trend (a desire to sit on God’s throne kind of trend) that our society is taking (approving evil things as good and good things as evil), let US, church, agree with God—not fallen, fallible man. As Scripture says in Isaiah 5:20, “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!”

God is the authority and standard, not created man. Let us know this and live according to this truth.

Notice another thing that God did in verse 4 of Genesis, God separated the light from the darkness. At this point (if you remember my last teaching) the sun and moon and stars had not yet been made. God has created light that is not coming from a fuel source (at least as far as what He has revealed in this passage). He not only created it but He commands it to be separate and it obeys. Now we see ruler-ship and authority, we see God’s providence to carry out His decree of creation. Church if professing Christians would simply spend some cautious time in the first few verses of their bible they might realize so many foundational truths that could save them from serious error! God creating, judging, and ruling over His creation, reveal to us an awful lot of truths about God. Are you beginning to see why it matters that God is the Creator? These are just a few implications but they hold such great depth and significance.

As we continue in verse 5, God names the light calling it day and names the dark calling it night.

5God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

From this verse I gather two major points. God reveals ownership by naming the light day and the dark night. Parents you name your child because they are yours--so to speak. God owns all of creation, but you understand the way I am saying that, you procreated them. Not only does God reveal ownership of the things He creates here but He also establishes times and seasons and years by first establishing a single day. We will see this played out in more detail when He creates the stars but we can already glimpse the plan and action of God here.

So God rules over light and darkness, and He rules over days and months and years. The longer I sift through these passages the more I see, it really is amazing how these first few verses of God’s word show us so much about the God we worship.

If we had time to continue on in the first chapter of Genesis we would see that God made the sky and the seas, the plants, the great lights to rule over the day and night, the creatures of the sea and air, then the creatures of the ground and God concludes on the sixth day with creating man.

In all of this creation, consider the intricate details that God placed into His creation to make it do the things that He wanted it to do. Consider the effortless power of God to make some of the most fantastic things we get to enjoy as God’s gifts to us. The beauty of God’s creation should declare with the loudest possible sound that God is real, that He is beautiful, that he is all powerful and unfathomable. There is so much that God’s creation declares about Him to the very beings He has created. Let’s turn to the implications of God having created all things, remember our focus here is still on things other than mankind or angels (though we will get to that).

God is the owner of all things since He is the creator and sustainer/ruler of these things. We see this clearly in the first section of Genesis but let me retell a story of how I helped my youth see this reality.

ILL: Years back I had my student take some play dough and break up into groups to create something. We had a sweet prize for the best play dough creation and many of the students enjoyed making their masterpiece. A few students hated it and you could tell by their blob but thankfully enough of them went with it for this project to work. After they finished their creations we took a youth vote about which masterpieces were the best. I told the youth that we were going to take them into the other room with just the leaders to decide while they hung out. When we got into the other room the leaders and myself quickly destroyed every one of the creations until all that was left was a rainbow colored play dough pile. When I brought them back out and asked the students to identify their art, they lost their MINDS. When I finally got them to calm down I asked them this very poignant question. Why are you all so upset? The unanimous answer was that I (and the leaders) had no right to destroy their work because they were the ones who made it not me. I reminded them that it was my idea, that I was the one who provided the play dough, but no matter what I said they were still very upset. It was at this point that I helped them to see the real reason why they were upset. You see when you create something there is a very real sense that the thing you created belongs to you. You are the one who decides what happens to it, you are the one who decides what it should do and what its purpose is. And so it follows with God. God is the creator of all things, this isn’t just material things but He is the creator of Love, therefore He defines what Love is.

He is the creator/designer of physical intimacy between a man and woman in marriage and therefore He is the one who defines what that is and how it should be done. Do you guys see the implications here? The creator of all things is therefore the ultimate source and standard for the governing, enjoyment, use, and stewardship of all things by the very default that He is the creator. You see in a similar way to those students, God being creator, means that He is the authority and owner of all things. Now where this illustration falls short is that God created from nothing so everything that is, is so clearly His. The students created from things I gave them and ideas I shared so there is a small way in which I can argue for some claim to their creation. The ideas, the play dough, the brains that are creative, the breath in our lungs, the food in our bellies, the blood that pumps through our veins, EVEN the veins themselves are created by God and are therefore His! He is the owner of all things because He is the creator of all things. This is also why He is the standard by which we measure all things.

Every spec of dirt, every animal from the smallest insect to the largest mammal, every depth of sea and the furthest galaxy in the heavens that we can’t even see, all of these things have been made by our great God! None of this would exist apart from Him, and apart from Him none of this would have any purpose. The heavens declare the handiwork of God, the galaxies scream His name at the top of their lungs. The strangest to the most beautiful of creatures are an intricate display of God’s creativity and design. God has made all things and is therefore the rightful owner and ruler of all things!

By God creating all things we see clearly that He is above all things. When mankind worships animals or stars and planets, they are worshiping the creation rather than the creator who is blessed forever amen. This is the very concern of God revealed to us in the first chapter of Romans. These amazing things were meant to point us to God their creator, ruler, owner. We are not meant to worship or idolize them, rather we are meant to see God’s beauty through them and be drawn to worship Him.

By being the creator of all things God reveals that He is above all things. He is infinitely more valuable than His creation. He owns all things, nothing would exist apart from God’s creating it. He rules all things, the waves obey His commands. This means tsunamis, earthquakes, floods, tornados, all natural disasters are still under the sovereign reign of God! There are many more implications but we need to turn to our next point.

**POINT 2:** God is the creator of heavenly beings (rulers/authorities) (angels)

I’m going to use the term personal in the sense that these beings (angels) have personhood much like humans have personhood. Animals are beings but not persons. Angels are spiritual beings with personhood or personal characteristics.

**Colossians 1:16** For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

Focusing on “whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities” in our passage there.

Gill: “by these some understand civil magistrates among men, and the various degrees and orders of them. … But since these seem rather to be said of the invisible things in heaven, and to be an explanation of them … the apostle's sense is, that the angels, the invisible inhabitants of the upper world, are all created by Christ.”

Scripture doesn’t give us a lot of insight as to when the rulers/authorities were created. Genesis 2:1 tells us that the angels were made at some point before the seventh day of creation: “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the **host** of them” (“host” here refers to the heavenly beings).

There are some passages in Job that could be used to argue that the angels were made on the first day of creation, however the “when” of the creation in regards to the angels isn’t our focus here. What we need to see clearly is that angels were created and obviously with the passages we’ve already read about in regards to creation we can see that God is the one who created them.

Now there are different kinds of angels and scripture refers to the fallen angels as demons. According to one systematic theology;

“There are three types of angels in the Bible Scripture names three categories of heavenly beings that appear to be types of angels: cherubim, seraphim, and “living creatures.”

Now it is clear from scripture that there was a rebellion among the angels and those who rebelled were cast down from heaven. These are the beings we commonly refer to as demons. In all of this my main point is to be clear that “all” of these beings were created by God. They were all created by God and for God.

John Piper said in a 2007 sermon;

**But of all the things — the millions of things Paul could have mentioned that Christ made and that exist for his glory — he chose to mention these: “thrones, dominions, rulers and authorities.” Verse 16 (of Colossians 1): “For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether**thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities**— [even these] were created through him and for him.”**

**Now Paul knows that these “rulers and authorities” include evil supernatural powers. Look at Colossians 2:15 where Paul celebrates Jesus’ triumph on the cross:**

**He disarmed the**rulers and authorities**and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.**

**So here are the “rulers and authorities” that he referred to in Colossians 1:16. They turn up again in Ephesians 6:12:**

**We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but**against the rulers, against the authorities**.**

**They are, Paul says, “the cosmic powers over this present darkness . . . the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”**

These rulers and authorities are made by God and for God’s glory. The angels who remain in good standing with God are the elect angels and those who rebelled are commonly referred to as the demons. The reality is that both serve God ultimately and will be used to magnify the glory, wrath, and goodness of God. We will have a study later on in the catechism about angels so for now I really just want to focus on the implications of the reality that God is also their creator.

The rulers and authorities are subjected to the rule of God because He is their creator. Much like our first point tonight God being creator gives Him certain rights and ownership over the rulers and authorities. What made the rebellious angels think that they could rebel and win is beyond me, however it is clear in scripture that they had never stood a chance and that their efforts will be for naught one day.

Now one of the more amazing passages, as it relates to angels, is found in 2 Kings.

2 Kings 6:15-17 When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And the servant said, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?” He said, “Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” Then Elisha prayed and said, “O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see.” So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

We see regularly in scripture that God uses His angels to protect and minister to His people. We even see the angels ministering to Christ after His 40 days in the wilderness. God’s uses His angels all throughout the old testament as messengers, as protectors, and even in the New Testament Hebrews 13:2 (reads) Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

The focus though is that God created the angels (even the ones that He ordained to fall) and therefore God has authority over and rules the angels. Church this is a good thing, because as we read earlier Paul says that the real dangerous battles we face are the spiritual battles against these rulers and authorities. If God does not have sovereignty over them, then we would be in grave danger right. Praise God that the Scriptures reveal God’s power and rule over all things even the rebellious angels who are referred to as ruler’s and authorities. He created them, so He rules over them.

This brings us to our last point tonight.

**POINT 3:** God made us (man) in His image

God created all things, and as a crescendo to His creation, He finished by creating man.

The 1689 Confession of Faith says, “After God had made all the other creatures, he created humanity. He made them male and female, with rational and immortal souls, thereby making them suited to that life lived unto God for which they were created. They were made in the image of God…”

Up unto this point everything that had been made was made according to its kind. But when it came to man, God said “Let us make man in Our image.”

Genesis 1:26- 27 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.

Nothing else in all creation was made in the image of God. Mankind was the crowning point of God’s creation and therefore we were given a great and weighty purpose. Before we dig into this though let’s look a little more closely at the way God made man.

Genesis 2:7 then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

The imagery I think of here is limited because of my human mind. I almost always picture this event as God sculpting on the ground the form of Adam into the dirt. I almost liken it to a sand castle setting. However what we must remember is that God could have commanded the dust to be formed in an upright position and it would have had to obey. What is unique here is that God used something He had already created to form the man. There is a real unique connection between man and the dirt that man was created to cultivate. Now what we see God do after he had shaped the dirt is really quite amazing. The intimacy of God breathing into the dust formed nostrils of the man and thus giving him life is spectacular. Nothing else was given life this way, it is clear that man was meant to be unique. When God used the first man to create the first woman there is also a very unique reality at play.

Genesis 2:21-22 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

God took material (a rib) from the man He had created, and used this material to form the first woman. Even the term woman is used because she was taken from man. Men and women (in regards to marriage) have an intimate relationship as was this first marriage and relationship in the garden. Again our focus tonight is on God as creator not man and woman, so we won’t dig into this right now but it will be unpacked at a later point in our catechism.

What I mainly want us to see is that God created man and woman in a very intimate relational way. This makes total sense in light of the fact that we are made in God’s image. God has eternally been relational. The three persons of the triune God have always been in deep intimate relationship, an eternal intimacy that we cannot even begin to comprehend. Therefore man being made in the image of God reveals that we too were created for relationship. Our relationships point the world back to the triune nature of God.

Now before we try to make this an apples to apples comparison we must remember that God and man are different. Being made in God’s image does not mean that God is like us, rather it means we were created uniquely to reflect attributes of God to the world around us. Now there are many applications when it comes to this point so let’s begin digging into these.

Because God is the creator of man, God alone is the sole authority over all that pertains to mankind and their life. God not only created man and therefore has ownership, He also sustains man and therefore has rule over mankind. If not for God we would cease to exist. This means God – not man – gets to define what He has created. For example;

1. Marriage is an institution, designed by God, to be a one flesh union between a man and a woman. This union is to continue until death ends it. This is God’s design and we as men and women do not get to change it because some prefer something else.
2. Sexual intimacy is designed by God for the marriage covenant to be enjoyed for our pleasure and to be used for procreation. This means God has defined the terms with which we enjoy it and we do not get to redefine it because some prefer something else.

You see before we dive too deeply into the details of God’s commands and decree’s, we must see that God is the authority (ruler, sustainer, and standard) of all things including mankind. God is the creator of us and that reveals to us a very clear distinction. God is creator, we are created. Therefore God is above and over us, and we are not to answer back to our very creator with “why have you made me like this?” You see rightly understanding this distinction will allow us then to understand why God makes the rules and has the authority.

A correct view of who God is and who we are (this what we call the creator/creature distinction) really does save us from so many errors. Here’s what I mean; for many years people have read God’s clear teaching in scripture but this teaching did not seem fair. In fact I’m willing to bet many of you who held to a different understanding of God and His word before learning reformed theology can relate to this. So when passages like those in Romans 9 were read we simply dismissed what was truly being said for our own idea of what it should have meant. This is called eisegesis, a reading into the word of God what we want it to say instead of exegesis, allowing the word of God to show us what it truly means.

In Romans chapter 9 God helps us see the creator creature distinction by using the illustration of a potter and clay. This illustration is meant to show us our proper standing in light of who God is. You see man’s tendency is to think too highly of himself and too lowly of God.

Romans 9:18-21 So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills. You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?” But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use?

In Romans 9, and really all throughout scripture, the massive distance between Creator and created is clearly revealed. Church mankind is clay (so to speak) that God has formed from the dust. God forms whatever way He decides too. That’s the whole point, mankind is like clay. We were formed by God from dust and therefore God is the one who decides how we are formed, for what purpose we were formed for, who will be shown grace, how long we will exist, the list goes on and on.

Because God is the creator (or potter) He has the right over His creation (or clay) to do what He wants. According to God, (who breathed out all scripture), we as men have no right to answer back (to question Him, not believe Him, or declare Him wrong). You see a proper understanding of who God is, allows us to read scripture and see what it actually says. A proper understanding of who God is in comparison to who we are frees us from fighting for our so-called rights over and against God’s true rights. Church when we have a proper understanding of who God is it saves us from a million improper thoughts about God. It frees us to live the life God has commanded us to live, instead of fighting to live a life that the world deems is fine.

Fallen man wrongly claims that this all is unfair, but the Gospel is unfair. If you and I fight for our rights or what we deserve, we would all be in hell paying for our rebellion against a holy God—that would be fair—getting what is due us for our deeds. But, Jesus Christ on the cross was the substitute to be treated unfairly. . Jesus never sinned and therefore did not deserve to die nor take the wrath of any sinners. The bible is clear the wages of sin is death, so as sinners our just payment is death, but Jesus never sinned, therefore he was the only one who did not deserve to die. Praise God for the gospel. Praise Jesus for His work and willingness to be treated unfairly at the hand so lawless men.

So let’s not talk about fair—like we are entitled to any good thing. Let’s talk instead about our unworthiness. When we see passages like;

Daniel 4:35 all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, “What have you done?”

It really helps us to keep in perspective that God is far superior to man and rightly so. This is no more clearly seen in that God is the very one who created us. I hope this round circle is beginning to make sense. Because God is our creator and we literally would not have existed apart from Him then our only worth and value must be found in Him. If in comparison to God we are accounted as nothing, then what gives us value?

God has declared that our being made in His image brings us our value and worth. In

Genesis 9:6 (God declares) “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed,

for God made man in his own image.

You see the reason murder should cost the murderer their life is because of the value we have from being made in God’s image. So we exist in this really unique position. In comparison to God (Creator/creature distinction) we are accounted as nothing. We are clay and He is the potter. However through God’s design of mankind, God has given us a distinct value by make us in His image. In this, mankind is set above all other creation, even angels. But let us not get arrogant and entitled…while we are set above all other creation, we are still so far inferior to God there is no way to measure the gap.

Of all God’s creation we are the only thing made to be image bearers. Now don’t get me wrong everything God has created reflects His glory, it tells of His divine existence and eternal power, however we (mankind) do that uniquely. We actually see some of these parallels in the Genesis account.

Recall earlier in our passage in Genesis that God names light and darkness on the first day. We then find in Genesis 2 beginning in verse 19 that God has man name every beast and bird.

Genesis 2:19-20 Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field…

So just like God gave names to light and darkness, God allowed mankind to name the animals. Now if you recall I said that naming something was a clear way of showing ownership. God was instituting man’s authority or headship over the rest of God’s creation in this very event. Now it is still very clear that God is the true owner of these things and that man is given a stewardship role, truly subordinate in all of this to God, however we do see God giving us a great role that mirrors His. His role of ultimate ruler and sustainer is (though on a much smaller scale) reflected in the role He gave us to have dominion over His creation.

In this God essentially establishes a hierarchy for His creation. God first and unfathomably far above all things, then man, and then the rest of creation. Notice that man was the only creation given authority or dominion over the rest of creation. We have been given this because of our specific role being made in God’s image.

Ultimately what I want to encourage us in is this:

Our lives should be lived out for God’s glory. We know that God created everything and therefore has ownership and authority over all things. Christians this means we live open handed lives. We don’t cling to the things we own as if they ultimately belong to us, rather we use them for God’s kingdom because we know they are His. We use these things the way God commands us to use them. God is the creator, therefore He knows perfectly what His creation was designed to do, and how it was designed to be used. I can use a mobile phone as a paperweight, it’s big enough and heavy enough that it would work, but that’s not what it is designed to do. How many things would I miss out on if I didn’t understand what it is designed to do? How many things do you miss out on because you aren’t trusting God when He tells you what his created things are designed to do?

So we obey God, because God is the only one worthy of our obedience. He has created us, therefore He is the rightful owner and ruler of us. Do you see how many different ways these truths affect our lives? If you have a job it’s because God created you and gave you the abilities you have to do that job. His sovereignty goes way deeper than that but because He provided you with all you have, He can command you to give back what is His in the first place. How much are you missing out on because you don’t obey the correct and true way that God has commanded you to manage the money he has given you?

There is joy in the act of worshiping God with your first fruits that you will never know if you aren’t obedient to your creator to give of your first fruits. There is a joy you are missing out on when you don’t obey God’s commands because you think you know better than Him. Ask any teenage mom who is left to raise a kid on her own, if the “joy” she thought she’d have by disobeying God’s design for intimacy in her relationship was worth the hardship it brought to her and her child’s life. Because God is the creator he knows His creation better than we do. Church don’t miss out on His joy in your life.

Mark 8:34-37 And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul?

The Creator of all things declares that the greatest thing we can do with this life is to spend for God’s sake and the gospel, do you trust Him?

Let’s close with one last quote from the 1689 Confession of Faith, listen carefully to this wonderfully written declaration, “God the good Creator of all things, in his infinite power and wisdom, upholds, directs, arranges, and governs all creatures and things, from the greatest to the least, by his perfectly wise and holy providence, to the purpose for which they were created”

All things exist for God’s purposes. Let us praise, worship, and trust the Creator—the one true God!

Let’s pray!