



Sermon, Sunday June 6, 2021, “What Does it Mean to Be Made in God’s Image?”

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 1:26-28 ²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” ²⁷ So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. ²⁸ 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 air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

Introduction: Self-Esteem and Guilt

Those who study human mental health say that self-esteem and communication are the most essential part of mental health. Humans can lead a happy life when they have high self-esteem. However, we see people living with low self-esteem.

Low self-esteem is not just due to a lack of money, health, knowledge, poor family environment, or lack of friends. The most important reason for low self-esteem is negative thoughts and feelings of guilt. These negative thoughts and feelings of guilt make us feel worthless.

Today's text shows how precious we are. I hope that all of us, created in the image of God, live a life of abundance with high self-esteem.

Body: Restoration of the image of God

Genesis 1:31 says: “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.” God created man at the end of the creation process. However, unlike other creatures, God made human beings special. We can know from the following two terms that God made human beings special.

The first is that God created human beings **“in the image of God.”** The image of God refers to the attributes of God, not physical characteristics. One of the important attributes of God is holiness. So, man was created in God's image means that man was created holy in God's image.

Also, the fact that God made human beings special can be seen from the word **“rule”**. If humans rule over the creatures entrusted to them according to God's purpose for creation, the world will maintain order and grow healthy. If human rule is not right, the order of creation will be broken and the world will be a mess.

Genesis shows that through the process of human creation, humans were created as beings made in the image of God to rule the world of creation.

However, in spite of the precious and special creation of human beings, in many cases, people live without realizing their own worth. Therefore, we must get rid of negative thoughts and guilt in our minds and restore the image of God's children created as special beings. Only then will we enjoy a more abundant life and will we be able to fulfill the mission the Lord has entrusted to us. **Then, in what part of our lives should the restoration of the image of God take place?**



1) We need to be able to overcome negative thoughts about ourselves.

We live by giving and receiving wounds, without exception. Health, economic hardship, relationships, war, and natural disasters leave us scarred. When we experience these wounds, what matters is how we react to them.

If we live with our wounds, our wounds will destroy us and our neighbors. But if we make wise choices, we will be able to heal our wounds through Jesus and heal the wounds of others.

The Lord is the only One who can heal not only physical diseases, but also our heartaches. The Gospel of John chapter 4 tells the story of Jesus meeting a Samaritan woman at a well.

This woman has had five husbands, and the man she lives with is not her husband. Due to financial difficulties, she had no choice but to depend on several men, and she was criticized by people for that. Jesus pays attention to the poor Samaritan woman whom no one cares about. And He promises to give her water that will leave her never thirsty. The Samaritan woman had an insatiable thirst for life, but she heard Jesus' promise and accepted Jesus as the Christ. And she experienced healing and freedom through Jesus.

Therefore, the most necessary thing for the healing of our inner wounds is to have faith that the Lord can heal even the wounds that have not been healed by any efforts we have made.

When we meet Jesus, we realize how precious we are. Negative thoughts that destroy our self-esteem are not given to us by the Lord. The Lord responds to our little pain because we are precious children to the Lord. I hope you have the grace to respond to the Lord's invitation like the Samaritan woman at the well. **If so, where is the restoration of the image of God in our lives?**

2) Restoration of the family must be accomplished.

The foundation of our lives and happiness begins at home. When we experience happiness at home, we can also build healthy relationships with other communities in society. That is why we must have the wisdom to manage the family well. But if our home is made up of members with low self-esteem, we are less likely to experience happiness at home.

Through the story of Joseph in Genesis, we know the tragic family story of jealousy, favoritism, and inferiority complex. The problem could not have been resolved if the Lord had not intervened in Joseph's life.

In Genesis 45:5 Joseph says to his half-brothers: **“And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you.”** And he goes on to say in 45:8: **“So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt.”**

Please remember. The Lord wants to bring reconciliation and peace to our homes. And wherever there are children of the Lord who have responded to such invitations with faith, He will surely grant them blessings. Therefore, when there are difficulties at home, do not give up, but seek the Lord's help and wisdom. The Lord will surely answer us.

If so, where should the restoration of the image of God take place in our lives?

3) Relations with neighbors must be restored.

When God created humans, He created them male and female. This means that humans were not created as solitary beings. It means that we were created to live together with our neighbors. So, in Genesis chapter 2, when God created a woman for Adam, who was living alone, Adam confessed to Eve



as **“This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh”**. This shows us beings like our own bodies are our neighbors’ as well.

So, when our neighbors are in trouble, the attitude of not paying attention and thinking only for ourselves is not the attitude that creatures created in God's image should have. After all, being human beings created in the image of God does not emphasize one’s superiority. Rather, it means human lives are meant to be lived together.

Acts 4:32 says: **“All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had.”** It continues in verses 34-35 saying: **“There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need. ”**

These verses in Book of Acts show the maturity of the Early Church and considerations for the community. When the image of God is restored, selfishness disappears from the community, and tolerance and devotion towards neighbors take its place. We can enjoy great satisfaction and happiness when we become members of such a society.

The Early Church is showing us practically how the maturity of faith can accomplish these amazing things. So, no matter how harsh reality is to us, we must be able to dream of the beautiful community that the Early Church showed us.

Conclusion: We are created with dignity.

Now let's summarize today’s sermon. The saints were forgiven and saved through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Therefore, we must restore broken relationships by the grace of the Lord. These are our negative thoughts, family breakdowns, and community conflicts.

Please remember. We are very special beings created in the image of the Lord and entrusted to rule the world.

Therefore, we have to be able to value ourselves. And we have to contribute more strength in serving our family and community. The Lord will be with us. And the Lord will do all goodness for the world.

