

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Made In God's Likeness**Made In God's Likeness - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2007/9/8 21:08**

Thoughts for the Week

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<http://www.anabaptists.org/clp/youth/>**MADE IN GOD'S LIKENESS**

(Genesis 1:26-31; 1 Peter 2:5-12)

WHY WAS I BORN?

Your parents may or may not have planned for your conception. That makes no difference; Ephesians 1:11 refers to "the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." The timing and location of your birth were predetermined by God so that you might effectively fulfill His plan for you. And He has brought you to this place and point in time in order to use you.

You were born so that God might call you "unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:9). Imagine! God made you so that He might enjoy your comradeship, your companionship, your friendship, your fellowship! Do you "begin the day with God...go through the day with God...conclude the day with God"? That is one of the reasons for your birth! Might He feel let down? I hope not.

You were born as raw material from which God might build a person "conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29). What experiences and influences do you allow in your life that God can use in the process of reshaping you? If we could see the damage we do to His handiwork when we read the wrong things (for example), we would not be so careless. Evaluate your life to see if you are cooperating with or working against God's work in you. Make yourself available and moldable. You were born with a high purpose -- to become the conformed image of Jesus!

You were born to reproduce yourself, to "bring forth fruit" (John 15:16). As God perfects His work and His image in you, He expects your help in accomplishing that same work in someone else. "We are laborers together with God" (1 Corinthians 3:9)! Now this business of reproduction is a sobering thing. I will be reproduced in others. God purposes that such a reproduction be in "the image of His Son." So how is your life before others? Are you an example of and to the believers? That's your mission! Your success here contributes to that of others.

"Awesome!" suffers from chronic overuse, but it certainly serves as an appropriate reaction to God's purposes for you. I challenge you to find other biblical reasons for your birth. I can think of four others -- "created in Christ Jesus unto good

works" (Ephesians 2:10), "be witnesses unto Me" (Acts 1:8), "shew forth the praises of Him" (1 Peter 2:9), and "be to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:12).

DOES GOD NEED US?

How often have I heard (and said) that God is so self-sufficient that He doesn't need anybody or anything? Well, I've come to the place of doubting the truth of that. I agree that the triune God is entirely and perfectly self-sufficient and whole. However, I'm coming to the place of believing that He does in fact need us.

If He didn't need us, why make us in His image and likeness? I believe God made us to provide Himself with a type and level of companionship and fellowship which He could not find in anyone else, not even in His triune self. So, does He need us? It sounds like it to me!

Another dimension of that concept is that He made us to provide a bride for Jesus. Does He need us? I don't know how else to express it!

Shall I deny Him? Today, shall I dare neglect the role for which He created me?

THE CREATOR REJOICES

Psalm 104:31 says that "the LORD shall rejoice in his works." That concept interests me, because I enjoy the times I am able to rejoice in my own works. When I succeed in building or repairing a mechanical device or a computer application, I rejoice. My rejoicing goes beyond the immediate sweetness of success; it extends to the times I use that device or application. Success is wonderful and a worthy cause of rejoicing! And in a small measure, that should help us see creation (ourselves included) from God's perspective.

"The LORD shall rejoice in his works." That concept also sobers and challenges me. You see, it reminds me that, in a sense, God's rejoicing depends on me. As His physical and spiritual creation, am I functioning according to His design and intent, thus bring glory and rejoicing to Him?

Psalm 104:34 declares that "I will be glad in the LORD." May the Lord be glad in me as well!

FAITHFULLY BEARING HIS IMAGE

Man and woman are more than visible, tangible physical bodies. God created us after His image and in His likeness! We climaxed God's creative activity! In a theoretical sort of way, these are marvelous pieces of information. They establish our worth, even though we don't amount to much physically. They provide the foundation for our fellowship with the Almighty and with one another. While these and other blessings have their practical results, what difference does being in His image and likeness make in your daily living? Where the

rubber meets the road, what kind of imprint does this make?

The God of mercy, love, kindness, peace and patience made me once in His image. The God of forgiveness and reconciliation later recreated me that I should bear the image of His Son. Therefore, my contacts with other individuals ought to be characterized by mercy, love, kindness, peace, patience, forgiveness and reconciliation. I wonder how I'm doing!

The God of order and cleanliness chose to make me in His image, so I try not to litter. God saw everything that He had made...and there wasn't one piece of litter. Man has so allowed God's creation to "go to pot" that one tossed-aside gum wrapper or paper cup won't make that much difference. However, I am still in God's image, bound by Genesis 2:15.

The God whose likeness I bear is high and set aside from everything else. I believe He has set me high and aside from everything else under me (Genesis 1:26,28; Psalm 8:5-8). I am neither plant nor animal. Even some Christian textbooks toss me into a common pot with all animals. I am called a mammal, and I object. I am firmly fit into the animal kingdom, and I protest. I refuse to accept such evolutionary, anti-biblical classification (1 Corinthians 15:39)! I am in God's image!

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