



Course Schedule

Class 1: Diversity? Unity? For God's Sake!

Class 2: How God Builds Unity and Diversity

Class 3: The Image of God in Our Unity and Diversity

Class 4: God's Purposes for Similarity in the Church

Class 5: Counsel for Christians in the Minority

Class 6: Counsel for Christians in the Majority

Class 7: Working Through Disunity

Core Seminar

Unity and Diversity in the Local Church

Class 3: The Image of God in Our Unity and Diversity

I. Introduction

A. The Importance of the Image of God:

1. The Image of God is the only lasting reason to love those who are different from us. Alternative reasons?
 - Love others because they contribute to society.
 - Love others because it's in our best interest.
 - Love others because, well, we're supposed to!
 - Love others because we identify with them.
2. The Image of God has vital implications for every person everywhere.

B. The Imago Dei in God's Big Story:

1. The Image of God & Creation
2. The Image of God & The Fall
3. The Image of God & Redemption
4. The Image of God & Consummation

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II. The Image of God & Creation (Gen. 1:26-28)

The image of God is the foundation of our identity and our primary job description, which means...

- A. Our differences are good. Praise God from whom all differences flow!
- B. Our value isn't based on what we do but whom we reflect.
- C. Our shared identity is greater than our differences.

III. The Image of God & The Fall (Gen. 3-4)

We still bear God's image, but we've broken it. We now devalue God's image in one another by...

- a. Elevating ourselves above each other (Rom. 12:16)
- b. Judging and using people vs. serving them (Phil. 2:3)
- c. Fearing other people (Proverbs 29:25)
- d. Nursing unrighteous anger or gossiping (Mt. 5:21-22)

James 3:7-10: "For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people **who are made in the likeness of God**. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so."

IV. The Image of God & Redemption (Rom. 8:29)

Colossians 1:15 "Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation."

In Christ, we have a new identity and a new job description, which means...

- A. We are to put away sin (Col. 3:10)
- B. We are works in progress (2 Cor. 3:18).

V. Conclusion: The Image of God & Consummation (1 John 3:2)

The image of God in man...

- Created (Gen. 1:27)
- Fractured (Gen. 3)
- Incarnated (Col. 1:15)
- Restored (Col. 3:10)
- Perfected (1 John 3:2)