

Back To The Garden – Made In the Image of God

Lesson 3

Before the lesson

- Growing up, what beliefs did you see religion teaching about how God sees mankind? What were you taught about how we should see ourselves?
- Consider the following statement: “Our understanding of how God views us has a dramatic impact on our lives.” Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer.

Part 1

- When you think of yourself, do you see yourself as made in the image of God? Explain your answer.
- Take a moment and think of the people you are around in your everyday life. Perhaps it's family, friends, your boss and co-workers, neighbors, people in your community, your city, your country. (Pause for a moment to allow people to think) Is it easy or difficult for you to see them as made in God's image?
- Do churches do a good job of treating people like the image of God? What do you see as an opportunity for the church at large?
- Read Gen 1:26-28: When talking about being made in God's image, these two verses repeat the same idea. What word or phrase was repeated? (If people are reading from the NIV it will say “rule over”. If reading the ESV or NASB it will say “dominion.” Dominion is the literal translation)

Part 2

- God gives you a kind of authority when it comes to having “dominion” in your life. Does that encourage you or does it make you uncomfortable? Explain.
- It is easy to celebrate our own God-given dominion, but want to limit or control the dominion of others. How do you see this tension play out in the world around you? Do you ever experience this tension in your own life?
- Jesus tells us that the greatest commandments are to love God and love others as we love ourselves. How might these words help us as we live as people with dominion?

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- Does knowing that God has given you freedom encourage you? Explain why or why not.
- Does knowing that God gives you freedom make you nervous? Explain why or why not.
- Think of a time in your life where you really wanted God to simply tell you what to do but you didn't receive a clear answer. How did you use your "dominion" to move forward? What helped you in that process? What did you find challenging?
- Consider the following statement: "Religion often seeks to create rules and dogma so that people can simply follow them and avoid having to use their God-given freedom."
- Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer. If you do agree, how have you seen or experienced this in your own life?
- Take a moment to think about a God who creates you in His image. He gives you dominion and He gives you freedom. Those aren't small things to give someone. What does that tell you about how God sees you? How does it make you feel knowing that you are made in the image of God?
- Now that you've considered that truth for you, what does that tell you about how God sees others? How should that impact the way we see and treat others
- Take a moment and complete the following sentences:
 - One area in my life that I want to see myself as made in the image of God is _____.
 - I will remind (insert name of person in your life) that they are made in the image of God this week.
 - If comfortable, share your first answer with the group.