

Creation – Children in the Image of God

- *“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth...¹¹ And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. ¹² The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds...²⁰ And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” ²¹ So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good... ²⁶ 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.” – Genesis 1:1-26*
- *Genesis 5:1-3 - “This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. ² Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. ³ When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.”*
- *Luke 3:23-38 – “²³ Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli... ³⁸ the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.”*
- *“Language is being stretched here, as a literal son of God is certainly not in view, but nevertheless, the writer uses an analogy to make a point.” – Roy Ciampa*

Fall – Children of Another father

- *1 John 3:10 – “By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God.”*
- *“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind” – Eph 2:1-3*

God’s Covenant Children

- *Exodus 4:22 – “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, Israel is my firstborn son, and I say to you, “Let my son go that he may serve me.”’*
- *Hosea 11:1 – “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.*
- *Psalm 103:13 – “As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him.”*
- *Hosea 11:1-3 – “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. ² The more they were called, the more they went away; they kept sacrificing to the Baals and burning offerings to idols.*
- *Rebellious Children: Hosea 1:8-9 – “When she had weaned No Mercy, she conceived and bore a son. ⁹ And the LORD said, “Call his name Not My People, for you are not my people, and I am not your God.”*
- *Promise of Redemption: Hosea 1:10 – “Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And in the place where it was said to them, “You are not my people,” it shall be said to them, “Children of the living God.”*

Another Son?

- *Genesis 1 – “Let us make man in our own image”*
- *Psalm 2:7-12 – “I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. ⁸ Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. ⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.”¹⁰ Now*

therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. ¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. ¹² Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.”

- Psalm 110 – “The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”
- Daniel 7:1-14 – “In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed... “As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. ¹⁰ A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened...¹³ “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. ¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.”

The Eternal Son

- Jesus is the Eternal Son of God:
 - John 1:1 – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.
 - John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son”
 - John 1:14 - ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”
- The Son and Creation:
 - John 1:1-3 – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.
 - Colossians 1:15-18 – “¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 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. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.”
- The Eternal Father:
 - “‘Father’ is the Christian name for God.” – J.I. Packer
 - “You could summarize the whole of New Testament teaching like this: *a revelation of the Fatherhood of the holy Creator.*” – J.I. Packer
- The Eternal Father loving the Son:
 - John 17:24 – “Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.”
 - “Actually, “relationship” is putting it mildly: the Father loves his Son with a unique and quite dazzling intensity. He did so from before the foundation of the world (Jn 17:24), and now he rejoices to let all the Son the world hear “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mt 3:17). For the Son is “the One he loves” (Eph 1:6), “my chosen one in whom I delight” (Is 42:1), the one he yearns to glorify. As such, the Son is the one for whom he does everything, his Alpha and Omega: all things would be created for him, the heir (Col 1:16). – Michael Reeves
 - “Indeed, in the triune God is the love behind all love, the life behind all life, the music behind all music, the beauty behind all beauty and the joy behind all joy.” - Michael Reeves
- Jesus came to reveal the Father’s Heart:

- Hebrews 1:1-3 – *“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.”*
- *“If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”⁸ Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.” - John 14:7-9*
- Salvation - Being brought to the Father through the Son:
 - John 6:44 - *“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.”*
 - John 14:6 – *“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*
 - John 17:3 – *“And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”*
 - John 1:12-13 – *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*
 - *“Everything that Christ taught, everything that makes the New Testament new, and better than the Old, everything that is distinctively Christian as opposed to merely Jewish, is summed up in the knowledge of the Fatherhood of God.” – J.I. Packer*
- The Crucified Son:
 - Mark 14:36 – *“And he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”*
 - *“Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying... “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” – Matthew 27:45-46*
 - *“The one who for all eternity had dwelt in the bosom of the Father was thereby exiled from his presence.” – Iain M. Duguid*
- The Resurrected Son:
 - John 20:17 – *“Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”*
 - Gal. 3:26 – *“for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.”*
- Adopted Children of God:
 - Romans 8:15-17 – *“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.”*
 - *“In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world.⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.” – Galatians 4:3-7*
 - *“Adoption is the highest privilege of the gospel... In adoption, God takes us into his family and fellowship—he establishes us as his children and heirs. Closeness, affection and generosity are at the heart of the relationship... To be right with God the Judge is a great thing, but to be loved and cared for by God the Father is greater.” - J. I. Packer*

- “The notion that we are children of God, His own sons and daughters... is the mainspring of Christian living... Our sonship to God is the apex of Creation and the goal of redemption.” – Sinclair Ferguson
- Sharing in the Father’s Love for the Son:
 - “As the Father looks with pleasure and delight on this perfect Son of his, so he looks with pleasure and delight on all who are in him.” — Michael Reeves
 - John 17:20-23 – *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”*
 - i. “This tells us that God binds us to himself in a deep personal relationship. This relationship is like those that are internal to him. Just as the Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father, so the Son is in us and we are in God. Nothing less than the love that the Father has for the Son is in us, and the glory the Father gave the Son has been given to us. It is as though the inner life of the Triune God is so rich that it spills over into his relationship with us. We are caught up in the most basic and fundamental of all realities: the relationships that make God who he is. To have a part in something so good, so rich, and so real is an immense privilege.” - Allen Chappel
 - 1 John 3:1-2 – *“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are...Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.”*
 - Romans 8:35-39 – *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?³⁶ As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Life in the Trinity

- Christian Life is Communion with Father, Son, Spirit:
 - 1 John 1:1-7 – *“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—² the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—³ that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.⁴ And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.”*
 - “If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God’s child, and having God as his Father...If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all.” – J.I. Packer, Knowing God

Eternity in the Family of God

- *“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb² through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.³ No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the*

Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.” (Revelation 22:1-5)

Practical Application

- J.I. Packer: “Say it over and over to yourself first thing in the morning, last thing at night, as you wait for the bus, any time your mind is free, and ask that you may be enabled to live as one who knows it is all utterly and completely true.”
 - I am a child of God.
 - God is my Father.
 - Heaven is my home.
 - Every day is one day nearer.
 - My Savior is my brother.
 - Every Christian is my brother too.
- John Owen: “So much as we see of the love of God, so much shall we delight in Him, and no more. Every other discovery of God, without this, will but make the soul flee from Him. But if the heart would be taken up with this the supremacy of the Father’s love, it cannot choose but to be overpowered, conquered, and love Him. This, if anything, will work on us to make our dwelling with Him. If the love of a Father will not make a child delight in Him, what will? Practice this then: exercise your thoughts on this very thing, the eternal, free, and fruitful love of the Father, and see if your hearts won’t be changed to delight in Him. I dare boldly say, believers will find it as thrilling a journey as they ever went on in their lives. Sit down a little at the fountain, and you will quickly have a farther discovery of the sweetness of the streams. You who have run from Him, will not be able, after a while, to keep at a distance for a moment.” – John Owen
- Robert Murray M’Cheyne: “Live much in the smiles of God. Bask in his beams. Feel his all-seeing eye settled on you in love, and rest in his almighty arms. Let your soul be filled with a heart-ravishing sense of the sweetness and excellency of Christ and all that is in Him. Let the Holy Spirit fill every chamber of your heart; and so there will be no room for folly, or the world, or Satan, or the flesh.” - Robert Murray M’Cheyne

Resources:

- *Delighting in the Trinity*, Michael Reeves
- *Life in the Trinity*, by Donald Fairbairn
- *Rejoicing in Christ*, Michael Reeves
- *Knowing God*, by J.I. Packer
- *Communion with God*, by John Owen

Pray...Q&A