Created in the Image of God

Have you considered the _______ God created you in His image? Being created in God’s image is no small _______! Let’s take some time today to consider it. We’re here to _______ the Scriptures for God’s will. In SEARCH of the Lord’s Way _______ broadcasting 41 years ago on September 1, 1980. Mack Lyon was its founder and speaker for ________ years. He passed away in 2015 at the age of 93. We thank God for his _______ for God and people and for his hunger to reach the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When God saw all that He had made, He said it was very _______. God created man in His likeness and knew that the more each person _______ to be like God the better for all humanity. Like God, man could reason, could choose, and could communicate. God gave each person a conscience that gave them a self-awareness, and led them to evaluate their ________ behavior. They knew when they had done something ________ and they knew when they did something that was ________.

God expects those who turn to Him as Christians to live in a ________ that reflects the image of God. Ephesians 4:21-24 says, “if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him ( that is, in Jesus), just as _______ is in Jesus, in reference to your former manner of life, that you lay aside the _______ self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the _____ self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.” God gave us the Bible so that we may know what it means to _______ the Lord and live righteous lives. While God created each of us with the __________ to be like Him, we must be willing to follow His teaching.

Our reading today comes from the first book of the Bible, Genesis 1:26-31, and discusses the creation of mankind.

Let’s pray together. “Father, we’re thankful that You have created us in Your image, we’re thankful Father for all the blessings that You’ve given to us through all of these years, and Father we pray that You will continue to be with us, and help us to be devoted to You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Hebrews 12:9 says that God is the _______ of spirits. The spirit you have and I have came from God. While other creatures on earth are ________, only man was given a spirit and created in the likeness of God. What does that mean? How do humans ________ from the other creatures God made? William Grasham in his commentary on Genesis published by Truth for Today presents several differences between mankind and animals. First, only man can think above himself and _________ about his thoughts. He can ask the most important _________, “Who am I?”, “Where did I come from?”, “Why am I here?”, or “What will happen to me after I die?” Only man considers his ________ or tries to discover his origin or heritage. Only man wants to know about his _________ for existing or evaluates his place in life. Animals never struggle over such concepts; they just ________.

Second, only man is able to ________ from experience, to accumulate knowledge from others, and to share that knowledge and wisdom with those who follow. Man is the only creature to whom ________ and the past are important. He accumulates knowledge from the past and cares enough to share it, so that the following generations _________ more knowledgeable than his own. As William Grasham noted,
“Man can preserve knowledge in both oral and written forms, so that his children and grandchildren don’t have to discover everything anew.”

Third, only man has dominion or _______ over the earth and all the animal kingdom. God gave mankind this rule, when He created them; but this rule is a sacred trust and stewardship. While man’s physical body requires food, water, and air as the animals do, man is the _______ creature who can hear and meditate the words that God revealed. Certain animals have physical abilities that far exceed humans, but God made man _________ as well as physical.

Fourth, only man shows restlessness with the ___________ things of life. Perhaps this is true because God “has also set eternity in their _________” (Ecclesiastes 3:11). While man longs for more than he has, animals are ________ with the necessities of life. While man fails to be satisfied with who he is, what he looks like, what he knows, what he experiences, or what he accomplishes, animals don’t ________ to see, hear, or experience something new all the time.

Fifth, only man is a moral being with a _______ of oughtness. His conscience makes it mandatory for him to ________ with right and wrong. His conscience bears __________ to his behavior and his thoughts alternately accusing or defending him (Romans 2:14-16). He longs to have a _______ conscience (1 Peter 3:21). While animals act on instinct doing what comes __________, mankind constantly evaluates his thoughts and actions morally and ethically. Only man is a _______ moral agent with the ability to choose how he will live.

Romans 6:16 says that we can present ourselves as _______ for obedience to sin that results in death or to obedience to God, which results in righteousness. Verses 17-18 remind us that we can _______ course: “But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of _________ to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.” We thank God that we don’t have to be trapped by enslavement to sin, that we can become the people God intended!

Sixth, only man has an aesthetic nature that allows him to ________ art, music, and poetry. Animals care nothing for aesthetic matters because such things don’t _______ their well-being. Though birds can instinctively weave intricate nests from things they find on the ground, and spiders can instinctively produce and weave intricate webs from the silk strands coming from the tiny organs called spinnerets in their abdomens, only man shows the ability to ________ many different intricate and beautiful things.

Seventh, only man has a concept of a __________ life beyond the grave. Only man thinks to _______ for the life beyond. He may fear death and mourn the departed, but he has ______ for life beyond. He sees this life as precious but realizes it’s not the ______. He also realizes there will be a _______ that affects his eternity. Second Corinthians 5:10 says, “For we must _____ appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his ______ in the body, according to what he’s done, whether good or bad.” Only man works to lay up _______ in heaven, where moths and rust do not destroy.

Yes, God created mankind in His image; and man is unique. Grasham observed, “The blessing of this uniqueness is attached to a _______ responsibility to serve and to praise the Creator.” We exist to give _______ to God, our Creator. The twenty-four elders of Revelation 4:10-11 _________ God who lives forever and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed and were created.” God wanted the _______ for mankind, but mankind lost sight of God.
Though made in God’s image, people _______ to follow their selfish desires and ignored the warning of the Lord God. They chose evil and _______ themselves much suffering and heartache. First, it was Adam and Eve sinning by _______ from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God punished Adam and Eve by expelling them from the Garden of Eden. Adam had to _______ for his food by the sweat of his brow. God caused Eve to _________ at childbirth and yet to desire their husbands who will “rule over you.” God also cursed the _______ because of Adam’s sin; “both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you” (Genesis 3:17-18).

Genesis 4 tells how Cain offered up a ___________ that God didn’t accept, but He accepted Abel’s offering. This resulted in Cain becoming _______ at his brother and murdering him. First John 3:12 describes Cain as one “who was of the _______ one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his _______ were evil, and his brother’s were righteous.” Evil grew in Cain’s _______ to the extent that he would murder his innocent brother.

Years later the Lord witnessed how evil had multiplied throughout humanity. Genesis 6:5-7 says: “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was _______ on the earth, and that every intent of the thought of his heart was only evil continually. The LORD was _______ that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. The LORD said, ‘I will _______ ______ man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them.’” God decided to destroy the world, but Noah found _________ in God’s sight. No matter how bad things got, God was still wanting to offer _______ that people could live right before God. Noah built an ark just as the Lord ____________, and God brought eight people safely through the water. First Peter 3:21 says, “Corresponding to that, baptism now _______ you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Just as the ark gave hope to Noah, the _______ of Christ that saves through baptism can give us a good conscience.

Scripture can _______ us about the glory and power of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Scripture can open our ________ so that we can see God’s holiness; it also helps us to see ourselves as God sees us. Isaiah 6 tells of Isaiah’s vision of God. The Lord was sitting on a ________, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim, that is heavenly beings stood above him, and one called out, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts, The whole earth is full of His ________.” When Isaiah saw the majesty and the holiness of the Lord, he said in verse five, “Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I’m a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have _______ the King, the LORD of hosts.”

We sometimes compare ourselves with ________ people, because we can always find someone who is morally lower than we think we are; but if we _________ ourselves with our holy God, we know that we can never measure up. We can begin to see ourselves as we truly are: sinners in _______ of salvation. Like the prophet Isaiah, we realize that without the Lord Jesus, we too are ________. Ephesians 2:1-3 describes us when we’re separated from Christ, “And you were _______ in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the _________ of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”

If the Scripture had stopped there, we’d all have to face being children of ________. Ephesians 2:12 reminds the Gentiles, who had come out of paganism into Christianity, what their way of life was like before coming to Christ: “remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the
commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no _______ and without God in the world.” I can think of nothing worse. The pandemic of 2020 separated us from one another, which was heartbreaking; but to be separated from God and without hope is the _______ condition of all.

I’m thankful for verse 13: “But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought _______ by the blood of Christ.” You might be living in a way that’s far off from God, filled with guilt and regret; but you can draw near to God because of the _______ of Jesus Christ. You can _______ and become a new creature. Second Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a _____ creature; the _____ things passed away; behold, new things have _______.” People who are without God and without hope can come to Christ and find hope and live for the God who created them. You can break from the old ways and be _______ again.

Because of the blood of Jesus, you can be _______ and become a child of God. Ephesians 2:19-22 describes what became of the converted Gentiles who came to Christ: “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you’re fellow _______ with the saints, and are of God’s household (His family), having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy _______ in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.” In Christ, you’re no longer a _______ to God but part of His family. You’re a fellow citizen with the saints. Every person in God’s family, the _______, is now a saint. A saint is a person whom God considers holy. We are washed, sanctified, and justified by the _______ of Christ. You can leave hopelessness for hope and wrath for salvation. You were created in His image; now become God’s child.

Let’s pray together. “Heavenly Father help us to be obedient to Your will, to turn from the things of this sinful world and to live in righteousness, knowing that we were created in Christ to be Your child. Help us heavenly Father to love You and to serve You always. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

God created you in His image because He wanted you to be _______ Him and to live in love and righteousness. The Lord Jesus wants you to _______ forever a place in the Paradise that He is preparing for you in heaven. God wants us all to put away the evil of the past and to live _______ lives devoted to godly ways. Colossians 3:8-10 says, “But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.”

Jesus Christ can help us _______ the person God intended us to be. We can leave the old sinful life and become people who _______ the image of God, who can choose the righteous path and _______ the way of sin. We don’t have to be trapped in a lifestyle of shame and guilt. We have an _______ in Jesus Christ.

Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Decide today that you will no longer practice the sins that make you guilty and ashamed. Repent. Confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God and make Him your Lord. Be baptized into Christ Jesus, uniting with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection. When you’re immersed (that is, baptized in water), God will wash away your sins and give you newness of life (Acts 22:16; and Romans 6:3-7). You can be a new creature, you can be a child of God.

We do ask that you focus your heart on God by worshipping at church. Everybody needs a church family. And there’s probably a church of Christ near you. If you’re looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we’ll gladly help you find one.