

8-21-2023

Imago Dei

Anna Bennett

“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.’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him...” Genesis 1:26-27a, ESV

Imago Dei

Do you ever feel like you're a small fish in a big pond? Perhaps it is a bit challenging finding a sense of belonging on our campus because it feels like there's so many people you don't know where to go to find your people. Maybe your mind ponders more existential questions about who you are, why you were put on this earth, and what you're made to do. Just one look up at the sky once the sun has moved beyond our horizon at the starry host above can make anyone feel small, insignificant, or lost. But I've got good news! No matter what career you are pursuing, what your relationship status might be, or where you come from – your life is significant! How do I know this?

The psalmist David declares: “...You have made [mankind] a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet,” Psalm 8:5-6. You are crowned by the Creator of this universe with glory and honor! Being made by the very hands of God, you have been made to be the representation of God on this earth: *Imago dei*.

Hannah Anderson writes, “*Imago dei* means that your life has purpose and meaning because God has made you to be like Himself. *Imago dei* means that your life has intrinsic value, not simply because of who you are as an individual, but because of who He is as your God. *Imago dei* means that your life is sacred because He has stamped His identity onto yours.”^[1]

Finding identity as an image bearer means that we are meant to live in dependent communion with God. This is not to feed an egotistical God; instead, by placing His own image within us, God is assuming a measure of responsibility for our lives as a good parent seeks to protect and nurture His children. When we lean into relationship with God and find “refuge under His wings,”^[2] we discover God is always working for our God and our glory!

This week, as you make The Main Thing, the main thing in your life, may you grasp hold of the truth that you are made with a purpose for a meaningful purpose in this life on earth and beyond - you were **made for more!**

Reflection

1. Read Psalm 139. How does this passage relate to your life today and what is the invitation God is calling you to?
2. Read Luke 20:19-26. What does this passage teach you about bearing God's image?
3. How does the reality that you are made by the hand of God to represent Him on this earth speak to who you are and what you do this week?

News and Resources

- Join us this week for Vespers at 7:30pm in the University Church with our lead chaplain Joseph Khabbaz!
- Find a meaningful sense of belonging by joining a student or faculty/staff LifeGroup today: [click here](#).
- If you are feeling anxious or have recently experienced loss or grief, call 423.236.2782 to talk to a counselor on campus! (This is a free service for Southern students.)
- **Talk** with Chaplain [Anna Bennett](#) or [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or have a desire to grow spiritually.

^[1] Anderson, Hannah. 2014. *Made for More: An Invitation to Live in God's Image*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 32-33.

^[2] Psalm 91:4.