

IN HIS IMAGE: THE UNIQUENESS OF HUMAN LIFE

Introduction

- A. Text: **Gen. 1:27**.
- B. Today, it can no longer be taken for granted that everybody accepts the “uniqueness” of human life.
- C. One scientist was quoted as saying that the human species has no more inherent worth than the bacteria that inhabit our intestinal tracts.
- D. But ideas have consequences, and the idea that the human beings are nothing more than another form of biological life has consequences.
- E. Many of the more troubling aspects of modern life ultimately stem from a lessening of the priority of human life.
- F. On the other hand, a proper view of ourselves as unique creatures of God ought to have a very positive effect on our conduct, and especially our treatment of others.

I. THE UNIQUENESS OF HUMAN LIFE

- A. We are more “like” God than any other creatures in the physical creation - **Gen. 1:27**.
 - 1. Eternal spirits - **Eccl. 12:6,7**.
 - 2. Minds that can engage in rational thought, “hearts.”
 - a. Intellect.
 - b. Will — including *freedom* of the will.
 - c. Emotion.
 - 3. Conscience, moral nature. Free moral agency and the consequent accountability to God.
 - 4. Imagination - **Eccl. 3:11**.
 - 5. Language.
- B. We are “personal” beings - **Ac. 17:26-29**.
- C. In God’s design, we are the centerpiece of the physical cosmos - **Gen. 1:1-2:3**; **Psa. 8:1-8**.

II. IMPLICATIONS: WHAT OUR UNIQUENESS SHOULD MEAN TO US

- A. The “sanctity” of human life. Man having been created in God’s image, the unlawful shedding of human blood is a much more serious matter than the taking of animal life - **Gen. 9:6**.
 - 1. Abortion.
 - 2. Capital punishment.
- B. Social justice.
 - 1. No human being can be without concern for the just treatment and well-being of others.
 - 2. **Psa. 82:3,4**; **Jer. 5:28,29**; etc.
- C. Personal morality.
 - 1. Ultimately, immorality is the conduct of “brute beasts” (**Jd. 10**).
 - 2. Good (parental) advice: “Remember who you are!”

D. Stewardship of our unique endowments.

1. In all things, we must be “good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (**1 Pt. 4:10**).
2. An example: our stewardship of the gift of speech - **Eph. 4:29**.

E. **Acknowledgment of our creatureliness, our need for God.**

1. Serious results of failing to honor God as our Creator and give thanks - **Rom. 1:20,21**.
2. We ought to long for God “as the deer pants for the water brooks” (**Psa. 42:1,2**).

Conclusion

- A. As creatures made in God’s image, we are each on our way to eternal *glory* or eternal *corruption* — *there is no middle ground* - **2 Cor. 3:18**. Cf. **Gal. 6:8**; **2 Pt. 1:4**.
- B. “The dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people” (C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*).
- C. In the end, we convey our sense of the uniqueness of human life *not by our words, but by our deeds*.
- D. Let us live — and treat all others — like *persons* . . . made in the very image of God Himself - **2 Cor. 5:16**.