Creation Day 6, Part 2
Genesis 1:26-27
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And we continue tonight in our study of the book of Genesis, chapter 1, origins, day six, the creation. What a great, time we have had doing this. I can't think of a series I've done in recent years that has had the response that this one has had, and as soon as I have finished it, and that's just the next couple of weeks we'll actually wrap up the part about creation. We're going to plan on putting it on the radio and spreading it around the English-speaking world so that others will have the opportunity to come to grips with the great, great testimony of the book of Genesis.

In our study of Genesis, we have come now to day six in God's creation, the pinnacle of God's creative work, creation of man. Let me read starting in verse 24 of Genesis 1: "Then God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind' and it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' And God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female, he created them. And God blessed them and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'

"Then God said, 'Behold, I've given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth and every tree which has fruit yielding seed. It shall be food for you, and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food,' and it was so. And God saw all that he had made and behold, it was very good. And there was evening, there was morning, the sixth day."

Now, there couldn't be a more straightforward account of creation than that. Tells you exactly what God did on the sixth day. He created the land animals. Dividing into three categories, we find all of them, both the domestic animals indicated by the word "cattle" and the more wild animals indicated by the term "beasts of the earth" and then everything that walks lowly on the ground or crawls, insects, reptiles, amphibians, rats, and squirrels and *et cetera* and *et cetera*. Then, having created that form of animal life, already the day before having created all the birds in the air and all the animals in the sea, God had completed his creation with the exception of man. Finished it off as verse 26 and 27 indicates by creating man. All of that, He did on the sixth day. Actually, a 24-hour period as indicated at the end of verse 31, an evening and a morning. A period of light and a period of darkness, that is to say, one revolution of the earth.

Now, the enemies of God and the enemies of the Bible have denied this revealed Word from God. They have claimed that man has evolved over millions and billions of years and that modern man is

the result of mutation. Modern man is the result of some– some random and yet self-willed genetic transformation. Man is the product of the survival of the fittest. That is not what the Word of God says. What I just read you couldn't be more clear. It is also reiterated in the second chapter, verse7: "The Lord God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being."

And down in verse 19: "Out of the ground, the Lord God formed every beast of the field, every bird of the sky, brought them to the man to see what he would call them. Whatever the man called a living creature, that was his name." And the man gave names to all the cattle, to the birds of the sky, to every beast in the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon man, he slept. Then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place, and the Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man and brought her to the man. There you have the creation of woman. In both cases, the creation of man, the creation of woman, is a direct and immediate creative act of God.

Over in chapter5 of Genesis, the fifth chapter begins: "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. He created them, male and female, and he blessed them and named them man in the day when they were created." Repeatedly it says there was a day when God created man, both male and female. That is what the Bible says. Isaiah 45:12 echoes it: "It is I, says God, who created man." Job 33:4: "The spirit of God has made me." Deuteronomy 4:32 talks about a day when God created man on the earth. Now, this is repeated not only in the verses I've given to you but elsewhere as well.

In spite of the clear teaching of the Bible, the clear teaching of Genesis and other passages of Scripture, evolutionists, some of them calling themselves Christians and therefore theistic evolutionists; that is, that God caused evolution to bring man into existence. These evolutionists have tried, against the clear testimony of Scripture that God created all these things in a day, tried to prove that man evolved, that everything evolved from a one-celled creature through water animals, amphibians, apes, to finally the erect man who was then the pinnacle of creation. But scientists, though they deny the Bible, have found it impossible to find proof for the evolution of anything, including the evolution of man.

The reason they can't find proof for it is because there isn't any. You can't find proof for something that didn't happen. And evolution never happened, and that's why they can't find any proof for it. In six 24-hour or solar days, God made the entire universe, the earth and all its living creatures, and as we've been saying, He did it about six or seven thousand years ago.

Now, that does bring up the issue of fossils, and I have to address this. I did a little bit last time but I know many of you are students, and even in elementary school and the later grades, certainly in junior high and high school and on into college, you're faced with a supposed fossil record that proves that man evolved from some kind of a four-legged apelike creature. How do we deal with the supposed fossil testimony that is used to prove evolution? Don't scientists actually have missing links? It seems like every few years or every few months, some scientist claims to have found some transitional ape-man form. Do they have missing links? The answer: Absolutely not. Absolutely not.

A most interesting scientific book called *In the Beginning* is written by Walter Brown, who is a Ph.D. from M.I.T., Massachusetts Institute of Technology. For 21 years, Walt Brown was the chief of science and technology studies at the Air War College and professor at the Air Force Academy. A

very fine scientist. He has exposed, as have many others, the lies of evolutionists trying to make their case. He writes that stories claiming that fossils of primitive apelike men have been found are grossly overstated. For example, it is now universally acknowledged that Piltdown man was a total hoax, and yet it exists and has existed in textbooks for more than 40 years.

Prior to 1978, the evidence for Ramapithecus consisted of a mere handful of teeth and jaw fragments, and as I told you last week, Ramapithecus was one of the largest categories of transitional ape man. We now know that it came simply out of some teeth and jaw fragments. It is now known that Ramapithecus was just an ape. The dethroning of Ramapithecus, supposedly the first human, the dethroning has been a serious blow. We now believe, scientists believe, that Ramapithecus was probably the extinct relative of an orangutan, nothing more. You find some interesting information about that in a book by Roger Lewin called *Bones of Contention*. I mentioned that last week as well.

One of the other supposed transitional forms is called Nebraska man. The only evidence, by the way, for Nebraska man turns out to be a pig's tooth. Quite a leap. The skulls of the famous Peking man are considered by many experts to be the remains of apes that were systematically decapitated and exploited for food by man. The classification *Homo erectus* is considered by most experts to be a category that should never have been created when– with regard to them. The first confirmed limb bones of *Homo habilis* have recently been discovered. They show that this animal clearly had apelike proportions and should never have been classified as *Homo* or manlike.

And then australopithecines, as I mentioned last time, which were made famous by Louis and Mary Leakey, found most in South Africa, are quite distinct from humans. Several detailed computer studies of the australopithecines have shown that their bodily proportions were not intermediate between man and living apes at all. Further study of their inner ear bones that were used to maintain balance show a striking similarity with those of chimpanzees and gorillas but a complete difference with those of humans. One of the fossils, a three-and-a-half-foot-tall, long-armed, 60-pound adult called Lucy– you remember the discovery of Lucy– was initially presented as evidence that the australopithecines walked upright in a human manner. However, studies of Lucy's entire anatomy, not just a knee joint, now show this is not true. Lucy, hate to tell you, swung from trees.

For about a hundred years, the world was led to believe that Neanderthal man was stooped and apelike. Recent studies show that this erroneous belief was based upon some Neanderthals who were crippled with bone disease such as arthritis and rickets. Neanderthal Man, Heidelberg man, and Cro-Magnon man were completely human. Artists' depictions of them, especially of their fleshy portions, are quite imaginative and not at all supported by the evidence. And so it goes.

And furthermore, as we've been saying all along, the dating methods of evolutionists are grossly in error as well, so bottom line, they don't have any transitional forms, they don't have any proof for the evolution of anything, certainly no proof for the evolution of man, and the reason they're having a hard time proving it is because it didn't happen and, therefore, it can't be proven.

What did happen is recorded for us in the Bible. Let's go back to Genesis chapter 1. On the first day, according to verses 24 and– on the sixth day, I should say, according to verses 24 and 25, day six featured the creation of land animals. Cattle, I mentioned this last time, would be domestic and tame. Creeping things, all the creatures low to the ground. Beasts, four-legged, non-domesticated animals. Having done that, we then come to verses 26 and 27, and here we find the creation of man. It

occurred immediately *ex nihilo*, as it were. God brought man into existence in his immense complexity instantaneously. Created Adam full-grown and then as chapter2 indicates, later on created a helper, Eve, full-grown, fully functioning as well.

Now, everything that was created up to the point of the creation of man, both male and female, was to provide the environment in which man would live and in which man would enjoy the blessing of God and for which he would thank and praise God, the creator of it all. As wondrous as all created life was, as good as it was, and God said it was good, as intricate and complex and vast as it was, it was nothing like a man. It was separated from the nature of man by so great a gulf as never to be passable by any natural process. Nothing could ever become a human. Nothing. No fish, no sea mammal, no reptile, no monkey, no ape, no gorilla, no creature could become a man. We've already gone over that again and again. Because of DNA genetic coding, that is impossible.

But there's another component that can't be found in the DNA. There's another component that is wonderfully mysterious and it is introduced to us in verse 26 by the words "then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness.'" And verse 27: "And God created man in his own image, in the image of God." And then, as I read you earlier, in Genesis 5:1: "In the day when God created man, he made him in the likeness of God." This is man's unique identity. This is the part of man that cannot be reduced to genetics. This is that mysterious spiritual part of man that can't be put into a test tube. This is that part of man that cannot become– that cannot come into existence by a mutation or a transition. This is the image of God.

Now, verse 26 starts: "Then God said," and verse 27: "And God created." It's the same formula. God says and God creates, and really they are synonymous. God says, "Let it happen," and does it. Only this time, there's a very important difference. A very important difference. For the first time, a major language shift occurs. Never before has the text said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness." Never has God spoken in a plural form. Every other time, let there be, let there be, let there be. It is impersonal. Nothing that God has created to this point has any personal connection to Him. You need to mark that because that is a very important issue to understand.

The language is impersonal. Let there be, let it happen, and God speaks it into existence, creates it, but never identifies personally with anything that He has made, not with light, not with water, not with elements, not with the sun, moon, the stars, the stellar bodies, not with the earth, not with the separation of the land from the sea. He has no personal relationship to those things. Not with birds, not with swimming life, and not with land animals. No personal relationship exists, no personal involvement exists, either in time or eternity. There is no bird that is related to God in any personal way. There is no– sorry about this– dog or cat that is related to God in any personal way.

There is no creature related to God in any personal way. Until we get to this point. At this point, God becomes personal and He begins to speak in relational terms. "Let us make man in our image." And God, for the first time in the Bible, introduces Himself– now listen carefully– in a relationship. Up to this point, it's just God. But now God defines Himself with plural pronouns. Let– not let me, let us. And we are introduced to the fact that God has within His very nature relationships. That can only occur when there is more than one. We are now then introduced for the very first time to the fact that God is a Trinity, and of course it's been hinted at because the word for God, *elohim*, has a plural ending. But this is specific.

Now all of a sudden we have been introduced to God who is more than one, and we are introduced

to the relationships within the Trinity by this statement, “Let us make man in our image,” and now all of a sudden we’re introduced to the great reality that there is an executive divine committee. That there is an executive divine council. We got a little bit of a hint of that back in chapter1, verse2. God creates, at the beginning of verse1, and then in verse2, we’re introduced to the spirit of God moving over the surface of the water. When we go to the gospel of John in the New Testament, this is the creation account we read there. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.” That is the second member of the Trinity, Jesus Christ.

Now we are introduced to Jesus Christ. It says all things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In John1, we find that the second member of the Trinity, the Word who became flesh (John1:14) that has to be the second member of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, was in fact the creator. Genesis1, we see God as the creator. Genesis1, we see the spirit of God in creation. John1, we see the Son of God or the Word of God, the incarnate Word, in His creative character. We now are introduced to the fact then that God is more than one, and we know from all of the testimony of Scripture that God is three persons in one.

We are now introduced to a relationship, and this is very, very important. He doesn’t employ the impersonal fiat, let-there-be terminology. He uses language that reveals He is communicating with others. He is in communion with others in this creation. I want you to follow this because this is really important. This is a clear, unmistakable, inarguable reference to the Trinity, though the fullest clarification of the doctrine of the Trinity doesn’t really unfold until the New Testament. You can’t fully understand the Trinity until the third person of the– the second person of the Trinity, rather, is incarnate and until the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, comes at Pentecost and begins to do His mighty work as revealed at that time. But the seeds of the doctrine of the Trinity are planted here.

It would be fair to say that we would overstate the case if we expected any original reader of Genesis to grasp the doctrine of the Trinity from Genesis chapter1. That would be overstating the case. It’s not there. B.B. Warfield, the great Princeton theologian, once wrote: “The times were not ripe for the revelation of the Trinity in the unity of the Godhead until the fullness of the time had come for God to send forth His Son unto redemption and His Spirit unto sanctification.” And that’s exactly right. We don’t see the fullness of the Trinity until the Lord Jesus Christ comes and until the Holy Spirit is sent.

So this verse cannot in some simplistic way be used as a proof of the Trinity, but looking back at it from the vantage point of the incarnation and the vantage point of the coming of the Holy Spirit, we can see the richness of the meaning here because we have the full revelation.

Now, there are throughout the Old Testament– and it needs to be mentioned– there are throughout the Old Testament passages of Scripture which indicate communication between the members of the Trinity. For example, in chapter2 of Psalms or Psalm2 verse7, the psalmist writes: “I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord. He said to me, ‘Thou art my son. Today I have begotten thee,’” and there is the first member of the Trinity, the Father, communicating to the second member of the Trinity, the Son, and that of course prophesized what was fulfilled in the incarnation of Christ and referred to in Hebrews chapter1.

Later on the Psalms in Psalm 45– and this is very foundational, so I’m going to take a minute with it here. In Psalm 45 and verse7, again the Father is speaking, speaking of the Son. He says, “God, thy God, has anointed thee with the oil of joy above thy fellows.” Again, that is referred to in the book of

Hebrews as being directed at the second member of the Trinity, the Son. So there is the communion between the Father and the Son again. And maybe the more familiar one would be Psalm 110:1, some of you may be familiar with, and you have a very direct communication there, if I can find it here. “The Lord says to my Lord”– there it is, two Lords, one speaking to the other. “The Lord [being the Father] says to my Lord [being the Son]: ‘Sit at my right hand until I make thine enemies a footstool for thy feet.’” And again, that is referenced in the New Testament as being a Messianic prophesy.

You could look at Isaiah 48:16. You find the same thing where there is communication between the members of the Trinity. But again I say, until you come to the incarnation, you don’t see the full identity of the second member, and until you come to the book of Acts with the coming of the Holy Spirit, you don’t see the full presentation of the third member; namely, the Holy Spirit. But here you have, back in Genesis, indication that God, by nature, is in relationship to Himself. He is multiple persons in perfect relationship. Now, let’s dig a little deeper into this. In verse 26, “Let us make man in our image,” implicates the whole of the Trinity in the creative act. The whole of the Trinity are brought together to do this. “Let us make man in our image.” And then verse 27 says, “And God created man.”

You can speak of God as one as in verse 27 or you can refer to God as more than one as in verse 26, and He says, “Let us make man in our image.” God is one god and yet He is three persons as we know. What you have here then is the council of the Trinity engaged in the purpose of creating man and now the time is right.

I have to stop at this point. I wouldn’t be faithful to the intent of Scripture if I didn’t do this. Through the years, I have tried to show you that God had a divine purpose before the world began and that that divine purpose was to take a bride, as it were, for His Son. That God the Father desired to give to His Son an expression of love in a bride that would be a redeemed humanity to be given to His Son to love and adore and praise and glorify His Son forever and ever and ever and also to serve Him. That eternal purpose of God unfolded within the executive council that is God within the Trinity.

Let me just give you a brief reminder of it because it is so very important. So very important. Speaking of Christ, in 1Peter 120, it says, “He was foreknown [which means predetermined] before the foundation of the world but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you.” So Jesus, who has appeared in these last days for your sake, to die on the cross, to rise again, to be your Savior. Jesus, who has appeared in these days, was planned before the foundation of the world. So before Genesis1, before day one of creation, before this creative week unfolded, redemption was already planned, okay? In other words, God planned redemption before He created the race of people from whom He would draw the redeemed. His redemptive purpose came first.

Let’s follow that even further. Titus chapter1, for a moment, talks about the gospel in Titus1:1-2. “Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ”– Paul’s identifying himself there, and he says he is for the faith of those chosen of God. That’s salvation faith for the elect. The knowledge of the truth according to godliness, the hope of eternal life, so he’s talking about the gospel. The gospel involves saving faith, it involves the election, it involves the knowledge of the truth, it involves godliness, it involves the promise and the hope of eternal life.

But notice this: God’s whole saving purpose, His whole saving purpose, was something God, who cannot lie, promised– when? Says long ages ago. The Greek says before time began. Now, when

did time begin? When did time begin? On day one. So before day one, God had already planned the gospel. And there was an element of the gospel that was a promise he promised long ages ago. God promised that He would choose some, that He would grant them faith, that He would give them the knowledge of the truth, that He would produce in them godliness, that He would grant them eternal life. God promised that before day one. The question is: To whom did He promise it?

Didn't promise it to any human being. We weren't even created until day six. He didn't promise it to angels. As I told you earlier, angels were created at the same time everything else was created. We don't know exactly or precisely when, but he certainly didn't promise salvation to angels because angels don't experience salvation, do they? So he didn't promise them that. The angels who sinned and fell out of heaven fell forever and there is no salvation for angels. So to whom did God make a promise of salvation before time began?

Well, go over to 2Timothy chapter1 and verse9. We'll get a little deeper into this. It says that God, the end of verse8, who saved us, called us with a holy calling, *et cetera*, *et cetera*, *et cetera*, did this according to His own purpose and grace, which was granted us in Christ Jesus– and for some reason the translators here translate the same phrase that's in Titus1:2, same exact phrase. There, it's translated long ages ago or whatever. Here, it's translated from all eternity. It's the same phrase: before time began. Here, we have it again. God made a promise, according to Titus1:2, before time began. Here, it says he had a purpose that involved Christ Jesus from before time began.

So before time began, God made a promise. He made a promise that He was going to redeem some creatures that He would make, and He was going to redeem them by means of Christ Jesus. He must have been discussing then with the second member of the Trinity the necessity of an incarnation, the necessity of an entrance into the world, the necessity of a sacrifice for sin, and all of that. It was all planned before time began. Verse10 says: "But it was revealed by the appearing of the Savior Jesus Christ" or "Christ Jesus." Now, I'm taking you before Genesis1. I'm taking you before time began, before the earth was given its foundations, before there was any creation, in the councils of God.

The plan was there was going to be a redeemed humanity who would be created and redeemed, brought to glory by means of the incarnation and the sacrifice of the second member of the Trinity. We know further in the New Testament that they would be redeemed by the work of the third member of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, who would convict their hearts of sin and righteousness and judgment, who would illuminate their minds to understand the truth, who would regenerate them and grant them the new birth, and of course at that particular point they would be transferred from death to life, they would become one of God's own. Those who would experience all of that are those whom God chose before the foundations of the earth, before time began.

Ephesians chapter1, verse3, talks about the purposes of God. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ." Why? "Just as he chose us in Him before"– what? Foundation of the world. So the whole divine decree unfolded before time began, before anything was ever created. And this was in the council of the Trinity. Verse4 says He predestined us. He did it simply because of His own Will.

How far did this go? Well, the Father said, "I'm going to create and redeem some people. I'm going to give them to the Son as a love gift." In fact, if you look at John6– and I won't take the time– and look at John17. Repeatedly, Jesus refers to every believer as those whom the Father has given me.

Remember that? Jesus in John6 says, “No man comes to me except the Father draws him.” Jesus says, “All that the Father gives to me will come to me and I will lose none of them.” In John17, Jesus prays, “I pray, Father, that all that you have given me will be brought to glory to see our glory.” Jesus refers to believers then as those whom the Father has given Him, and that begins to shape this plan. The Father then desires to show His love to the Son. It is a supreme love. It is the love that only God knows.

The love that is so great that it longs to give, and God determines that the way to express that love is to create and redeem humans and then bring them to glory, and when they’re brought to glory, they are made like Christ. Philippians tells us in chapter3 that we’ll be conformed to His glory, to the very body of His glory. 1John3 says we’ll be like Him for we see Him as He is. And so the Father is going to make us literally reflections, replicas, of Jesus Christ, who will radiate His glory, and we will praise Him and honor Him and glorify Him forever and ever and ever and serve Him as well. That is the Father’s love gift to the Son.

The wonderful story– and I’ve told you this in the past– is that 1Corinthians 15 says when the Son receives that redeemed humanity from the Father, when the Father gives the Son that redeemed humanity, when they’re all brought to glory, when we’re all there and time is no more and we’re all in the presence of God and we’re given by the Father to the Son, when the Father gives the complete redeemed humanity to the Son, 1Corinthians 15 indicates that the Son turns right around and gives it back to the Father and God is all in all. And what has been achieved by that is a whole redeemed humanity along with holy angels populating the new heaven and the new earth forever, for no other purpose than to serve and praise and glorify God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, who is worthy of glory.

Now, this gets personal in Revelation chapter 13 and Revelation chapter 17 where twice– in both cases, chapter 13, verse8, and chapter 17, verse 8, it says the same thing. It refers to believers as those whose names have been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life. Those whose names have been written from the foundation of the world in the book life, and again it takes us back before the foundation of the world. Now let’s go back to Genesis chapter1 with that in mind.

The Trinity, we could say then, has been planning this. There has been consultation and communion within the Godhead. It took place long before day six. It took place before there was any long before. It took place before there was any time. It took place before there was any creation. There was a plan before it was ever carried out, and God is now saying, “Everything else is impersonal to me. Everything else burns. Everything else perishes. Nothing that I’ve created lasts. The whole universe will be uncreated.” As Peter tell us in 2Peter, it’ll melt– the elements will melt like fervent heat. I actually believe there will be a run-the-tape-backwards kind of thing and creation will become un-creation and there will be atomic dissolution as the whole universe goes out of existence. It all burns.

Only one component in the physical universe lasts forever and that is man. For only man in the end mattered to God ultimately. Everything else was only created to provide a world for man which would cause man to praise and thank and glorify God. And put God’s wonderful power on display and God’s wisdom on display and God’s intelligence on display. Certainly the complexity and the variety in the universe does that so that man would glorify God and honor God. But it all burns. It all burns. Only man is made in the image of God. It was only man that concerned the Trinity ultimately. It was only man that was the product of intra-Trinitarian communion.

Yes, man was a living creature like animals. That simply means that he moves and he is conscious. Yes, man was given the breath of life. Chapter2, verse7, God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being, but that was true of animals. In Genesis chapter7 and verse 22, it says of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life. All animals have that. They're all alive and the breath of life or being a living creature is a Genesis designation of that created life which has consciousness; that is, it's not plants, it has consciousness and it moves. And certainly that is true of man, but at that point the similarity ends. And the Trinity has planned a creature who is unlike any other part of creation; cannot evolve into this.

Now, there are four features here discussed about man. Four features. The first feature is obvious. Man is made in the image of God. It says it repeatedly, "Let us make man in our image according to our likeness." Image and likeness are synonyms. There is no distinction in the Hebrew language between those two terms as to meaning. They are just repeated for emphasis, which is very typical of the use of the Hebrew language. In our image, according to our likeness, the same thing. Verse 27, in His own image, in the image of God, He created– repeated again, four different times, we have been created in the image of God. Well, what does it mean? Well, whatever it means is really important because whatever it means, it's different. It's what identifies the difference between us and every other created thing, even the highest of created beings, conscious animals.

The answer to this is critical, and the answer again tells us that man cannot evolve. That is impossible. You can't evolve into the image of God. That is not something that shows up in genetics. That's not something you find in a chromosome. That's not something that appears in DNA.

What is the image of God? The root of the Hebrew word for image, *tzelem*, appears to mean to carve or to cut off. In other words, man was sort of a chip off God, in a sense. He was sort of shaped and formed like God. He was created in an exalted fashion. You could even say he was carved, he was whittled, as it were, he was shaped like God. That means that we are created on a heavenly pattern, folks. That means we are created on a divine pattern. Let me take it a step further: That means we are created on an eternal pattern, which is not true of anything else that was created. Nothing else in the time-space universe.

We do share biological features with the rest of the creatures. We are all designed by God to live together in a common environment. We have to share biological features because we share the biological environment. We have a certain biological reciprocity with plants, don't we? We create carbon dioxide and they create what? Oxygen, which we need. We have a reciprocity with the plants because we eat them. We have a reciprocity with the animals, we have a reciprocity with the water, we have a reciprocity with the sun and the moon and all the other features of our world, and so we must fit into the biological environment, and therefore we are made out of the same stuff physically.

But we are not highly evolved apes. We are transcendent in our significance because we have been literally cut off and carved as in the image of God. Now, this must describe some aspects of human nature which are not shared by animals, such as self-consciousness. Animals are conscious; they're not self-conscious. That is, they're conscious, they react to their environment, but they don't know they do. Such as reason, the ability to think abstractly, which animals cannot do, and that has been proven repeatedly. Such as appreciation for beauty and aesthetics. Such as feeling emotion. Such as being morally sensitive and morally aware and morally conscious. And here it is above all, above everything else– get this one: Above all, the image of God indicates the ability to personally relate to someone else, especially to God Himself. Being able to know Him, being able to love Him, being

able to obey Him, being able to worship Him.

Let me say it to you. The core of the image of God can be summed up by the word “personal.” We are persons. We are persons. We live and move on the basis of relationships. Relationships. We understand fellowship. We understand love. We understand communion. We understand conversation. We understand sharing thoughts and sharing attitudes and sharing ideas and sharing experiences with others. And that is why when God created man, He immediately said, “It is not good for man to be alone.” Why? Because the image of God is personhood, and personhood can only function in relationship. The image of God, folks, is the capacity for personal relationships and, most importantly, for a personal relationship with God.

And isn’t it then important to understand that when God said, “Let us make man in our image,” He introduces to us at that point the concept that He is a God of relationship. And then creates us in that image so that we are creatures of relationship. That’s the issue. The image of God is the capacity for personal relationship. God Himself has never existed as a single, lonely, solitary, isolated individual. He has always existed in a family. He is the Father. The second member is the Son. The third member is the Spirit. As the great St. Athanasius used to say in the 4th century, the Father has never been without His Son.

The amazing mystery of the origin of personhood, of the origin of personality, is that the one God exists as three persons in one being or substance or essence or reality. And the one substance, the one essence, the one being of God involves personhood. And when God made us in His image, He made us as persons, and that is, He made us for relationship. Now, being persons, self-conscious; therefore, capable of relationships– if I’m an animal, I’m not even conscious that I exist. How can I be conscious that anybody else does? But I am a person and I know I exist and I know you exist and I know God exists.

God is a plurality. God exists in Trinitarian relationship and I have been made for relationships. That is the ontological aspect or the aspect of nature, which is the image of God. Personhood and relationship.

There are also some ethical things, and I’ve already hinted at them. As a person who is self-conscious, there are ethical features. I know right from wrong. I understand virtue. I understand morality. I understand righteousness. I understand sin. I understand holiness. I understand disobedience and rebellion. I have the capacity to do what is right. I have the capacity to do what is wrong. I have a capacity for holy and loving fellowship with my heavenly Father. I have a capacity to know God, to know Christ, to know the Holy Spirit. I also have a capacity as a person in the image of God to know what’s right and to know what’s wrong, to know what’s good, to know what’s bad.

It is true that as a human being, I resemble the creatures in my physical, corporeal form. I am made up of flesh, I am made up of the same components, I am made up of the same atomic material, the same raw elements. But what makes me distinct is my invisible part. It’s the part that you can’t find in my DNA. It’s the part that’s not in the chromosomes. It’s that invisible self, it’s that true person that makes me like God, that is capable of relationship with you and with God. And the question has been asked through the centuries: Does the body of man bear the image of God? No, not in the purest and truest sense.

I don't want to get into splitting philosophical hairs here, but we are dust to dust, and that's not like God. The personhood is eternal and that's like God. And we are capable and shall enjoy personal relationships forever with one another in the kingdom of God and with God Himself. But while the body is not so much the expression of the image of God, the body does serve as a vehicle through which the image of God is manifest. To put it this way, if I didn't have a body, I'd have a hard time relating to you. So while the body is not the image of God, because God is a spirit and has not a body, my body gives me the vehicle in a corporeal world, in a physical world, for the image of God to manifest itself.

Augustine used to say man's body is appropriate for his rational soul, not because of his facial features and the structure of his limbs but rather because of the fact that he stands erect, is able to look up to heaven and gaze upon the higher regions. John Calvin sort of felt the same way, that God has caused us to stand up so that we can face each other and so that we can look up and face Him, sort of emblematic and symbolic of our ability to have relationships. The body is not the image of God but the body is a vehicle. Henry Morris wrote this about that: We can only say that although God Himself has no physical body, He designed and formed man's body to enable it to function physically in ways in which He Himself could function without a body.

God can see, hear, smell, according to Genesis 8:21, He can touch and He can speak, whether or not He has actual physical eyes, ears, nose, hands or mouth. Furthermore, when He has designed to appear visibly to man, He has done so in the form of a human body, such as in Genesis chapter 18, and the same would be true of angels. They are spirits and there are occasions when they take on bodies.

"There is something," says Morris, "about the human body, therefore, which is uniquely appropriate to God manifesting Himself on occasions. He must have designed man's body with this in mind. Accordingly, He designed it not like the animals but with an erect posture with an upward-gazing countenance, capable of facial expressions corresponding to emotional feelings and with a brain and a tongue capable of articulate symbolic speech. He knew, of course, that in the fullness of time, even He would become a man. And in that day, He would prepare a human body for His Son, and it would be made in the likeness of men, just as man had been made in the likeness of God." Well said.

So we are created in the image of God. Personhood, relationship, and understanding of right and wrong and morality, which is critical to all our relationships, particularly our relationship to God.

By the way, there's just a very interesting use of singulars and plurals here. Verse 26: "Let us make man in our image according to our likeness and let them"– isn't that interesting that man, which is singular in the English, is given a modifying pronoun which is plural, "Let us make man" and "let them." Verse 27: "And God created man in his own image in the image of God he created him." There, man is referred to with a singular pronoun. Man then can be referred to singularly or in a general and plural sense. "Man" did refer to mankind. God created mankind, but He created mankind by creating man, first one, and then a female, and the two of them multiplied to make the rest of the human race.

"Man" did refer to a single man. As chapter2 shows, Adam was created first. But Adam is also generic, including male and female. That's why the plural pronoun "them" is used here. We see the distinctive creations of each in chapter2. First came the man, then he went through naming the animals.

Somebody said the reason God didn't give him a wife until after he had named the animals is obvious. He didn't have to deal with the second opinion. I don't know if that's true or not. It may have slowed down the process, I'll put it that way. Nothing to do with anything feminine, just another opinion.

Now let's look back at the text and we'll wrap this up. There's so much to cover here. When God created man, the reason He can say "them" is at the end of verse 27 because it says He created him and then it says male and female, He created them. Male and female, He created them. That takes us to the second point, and I think probably it's better to wait to develop that next time. It's fascinating. But let me just tell you what the four things are that are distinct about man's creation.

First of all, he was made in the image of God. That's the first thing. He was made for personality and relationship. Second thing, he was made as king of the earth to rule and subdue creation. The third, he was made as propagator of the human race to populate the earth, and fourth, he was made to be the recipient of rich and plentiful bounty all around him. Far above the animals. One last distinguishing characteristic: If you're going to talk about personality, if you're going to talk about relationship, listen carefully. You have to talk about language, right? How much of a relationship can you have if all you can do is grunt? You say, "Well, I'm working on it with my husband, that's about it." Well– and that's right.

Relationship comes down to communication, doesn't it? Animals can't relate. They don't have self-consciousness, they don't have personhood, they don't have relationships. They do whatever they need to do instinctively to achieve one end in life and that is food and preservation. But when you come to mankind, you come to the ability to speak language. This is remarkable. And I told you a few weeks ago that there was a whole article in *Newsweek* magazine, scientists trying desperately to figure out, unsuccessfully, how man evolved the ability to speak languages. To speak abstractly. To reason abstractly.

Linguistic studies demonstrate, as Oller and Amdahl, two linguists, have stated, that, "Apparently, human beings and only human beings are specifically designed to acquire just a range of language systems, just the range of language systems that we see manifested in the world's 5,000 plus languages." Interesting. There are about 5,000 languages in the world, and only human beings can acquire those languages. You say, "Well, what about a dolphin? When you say 'jump' don't they jump?" They don't jump because you said "jump" and they abstractly understand that those letters form a word that means to go into the air. There's a certain sound that results in a fish going in their mouth. They learn that.

Oller and Amdahl have said the rate of vocabulary acquisition is so high at certain stages of life and the precision and delicacy of the concepts acquired so remarkable that it seems necessary to conclude that in some manner, the conceptual system with which lexical items are connected is already substantially in place. Wow. That's technical language to say there's something going on in the abstract reasoning capability of a human brain that demands the acquisition of language to satisfy it. And we all begin to see that with the children, don't we? They begin to speak and they begin to acquire the complexity of communication in language.

Noam Chomsky, who is a great Jewish linguist, has shown that the ability to learn language is a

given in being human. He demonstrates that even the higher apes are unable to deal with a number system or with any abstract properties of space or in general with any abstract system of expressions. Chomsky speaks elsewhere of initially given structures of mind and deep structures in humans, which give rise to universal grammar– listen– invariant among humans. That's true. You can take any language that exists and translate it into any other language that exists because the structural components of language are identical. They're literally part of the fabric of the image of God so that we who are relational beings with personhood can connect.

All the hard wiring is there. His research, by the way, this Noam Chomsky, on the uniqueness of the human species as regards language is so convincing that he is not welcome in evolutionist circles. They have labeled him as a creationist, which he denies.

Unlike apes and other living creatures, human capacity for language is a door into the eternal realm. It's a door into the presence of God and it demands the recognition that we have been created on a heavenly pattern for communication with one another and communication with our Creator who made us in His image. Oller and Amdahl write: "Our capacity for language cannot have originated within the narrow confines of any finite duration of experience. If all the eons of the space-time world could be multiplied clear to infinity, the material world would still fail to account for the abstract conceptions that any human being can easily conceive of through the gift of language." Amazing. Only a speaking God could have made speaking persons, right? God communicates and so do we. So we are made thusly in His image. Next week we'll go to those remaining points, man being king of the earth, propagator of life, and recipient of rich blessing.

Lord, it's been a wonderful day and a wonderful evening considering all these things. We thank you for the power of the Word to clear the cobwebs and confusion out of our minds so often planted there by unbelieving people. We thank you that your Word is clear. We want to be faithful to it in every sense. We acknowledge You as the Creator who created in just the way that is described in Scripture, that You have made us to have a relationship with You. You have made us for Yourself and we're restless until that relationship is made. Thank you that it's possible to know You as well as to know each other. Thank you that the best of life is found in personal relationships. And the best of all is to have a relationship with You, our Creator and our Savior. We're so privileged, so blessed, and so grateful. Amen.

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