



## "WHO AM I?" – RELATIONSHIP

### Genesis 1:26-28 | Dave Solmes

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The goal of this series is to help connect the dots, so we can fully appreciate how a biblical perspective sheds light on what it means to be human and would therefore shape the **way** in which we develop our sense of self and ultimately live our lives.

To dig into this, we are asking some honest QUESTIONS such as:

How is our sense of self shaped by our culture, and what does it mean to have a Christian perspective on HOW we shape our self-understanding?

In week #2 – Luke – helped us by walking us through Genesis 1/ 2 to see the narrative of how and why humans were created.

- We are from someone
- We are part of somewhere
- We have been given body and breath
- We are reflections

Today, let's think about how relationships shape our understanding of ourselves ... let go to Genesis 1 again and learn about the importance of being rooted in relationships.

#### Read Genesis 1:26-28

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals,<sup>[a]</sup> and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

<sup>27</sup> So God created mankind in his own image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it."

- Humans are made with image and likeness
- Humans have been given a role on earth to be fruitful and multiply
- Humans were made to understand themselves within community

#### #1. HUMANS ARE MADE WITH IMAGE AND LIKENESS:

**Genesis 1:26, Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may..."**

As was said in the first two weeks identity formation begins with an understanding that we are created. Both Kirsten and Luke have talked about this.

This verse says, *God created you and I in His own image and likeness. The actual wording is in: "our image and our likeness". Plural speaks about relationship. So, A bi-product of having this image and likeness, is that we live, work, and have our being in relationship with God.*

- God - a triune God,
- A triune Creator – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

- *A God who is inherently relational and needs to be understood and experienced relationally. According to God's plan and our need - we can have a personal relationship with God.*

**IN Genesis 1:27**, makes the point again, for it speaks of us not individually but in twos. We are in relationship with our creator and with our fellow creatures. These relationships are not left as philosophical abstractions in Genesis.

**IN Genesis 2:19**, We see God talking and working with Adam in naming the animals

**IN Genesis 3:8**, We see God visiting Adam and Eve "in the garden at the time of the evening breeze"

Humans are to find identity in an active relationship God. It is a collective as well as an individual. The application of this, is that the Christian life isn't meant to be an isolated one. From day 1 - We're part of a community, a family. If we neglect to recognize that, then we're missing out on a large part of human identity formation.

## #2. *Humans have been given a role on earth - be fruitful and multiply.*

**Genesis 1:28** God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number (multiply) fill the earth and subdue it.

This was the blessing that was to set humans apart – this blessing was to shape identity and secure our future – an identity formed by the blessing of provision and promise that comes from obedience to God.

**Question is: So, what are we to MULITPLY?**

**Answer:** Multiply this blessed life. This blessed life was meant to set us apart (be the human experience) which would no doubt – shape of course would shape our lives & our identity...

**Practically – What is this blessing for us as created beings.**

**Genesis 1 & 2 invites us to a:**

1. Knowing "whose we are" – as we appreciate the security that comes when we understand our human origin and have a growing relationship with God.
2. Knowing who will take care of us – as we appreciate that we can trust God as supplier of all things that humans need
3. Knowing *who others are to us* – as we appreciate the value God placed on all people – specifically how God made all people of equal value.
4. *Knowing where our hope can be founded upon* – as we appreciate God's heart that for generation-to-generation

**What a beautiful narrative that is secure, hopeful, helpful.**

**QUESTION: How has this been going for the human race?**

**QUESTION: What happened?**

Human experience is far from the vision of Genesis 1 / 2, because this was challenged very early on, Adam and Eve went looking for independence rather than interdependence ... and mankind has suffered since the fall of Man, recorded in Genesis 3

God's design for our identity and values were set aside, and mankind still suffers, thousands of years later, because of a curiosity to take full advantage of our free will, thus multiplying unhealthy relationships and walking away from the blessed life which is meant to be our inheritance from generation to generation.

So now we live in a world that is often broken relationally, a world that suffers, and the wage of sin and reality of brokenness is easily seen within our own lives and all around.

**OF COURSE, this is not the end of the story!**

Thank God that He has been gracious and merciful and continues to call us back to things that are best for humans.

God is deeply committed to humans. Jesus came to restore relationship, so it's no surprise that relationships are one of the most important things talked about in the Bible.

*2 Corinthians 5:18-20, All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:<sup>19</sup> that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.*

*<sup>20</sup> We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.*

### Why is this huge?

When coming to Christ, we receive forgiveness of our sin and rebellion. Human identity is restored, as a person is reconciled back to God and begins to carry a priority that all humans would be reconciled to God as well. Kirsten will talk more about this next week. This new identity, new nature, new mind gets us and going fulfilling our original responsibility – be fruitful and multiply. Jesus coming changes so much – gets us back to God's design and healthy identify formation.

**Romans 12:5** so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.  
NIV (NLT says, to each other)

Yes, we are made a certain way, uniquely and wonderfully made, but made with a design on how best to fit us into the body. The body of Christ.

- #3. *We were made to understand ourselves within community. A community that has God in the center. Identity is not found in independence but interdependence.*

*CS Lewis say, "We function as a community. Though there is a sense of unity, the community highlights our individuality. The Christian life defends the single personality from the collective, not by isolating him but by giving him the status of an organ in a mystical body."*

By God's design – Individuality is only discovered within relationships (community).

## A FEW CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERDEPENDENCE THAT SHAPE OUR IDENTITY.

- #1. *Interdependence as... Humans need help to find our way back to God.*

*Therefore Jesus came and this is why you and I have a role to play.*

*James 5:19 My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back,<sup>20</sup> remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins.*

*Our identity is shaped as we learn to give and receive a helping hand.*

- *If someone comes looking for you ... you need to receive them.*
- *If you know of someone whose faith is failing .. you need to go to them*

- #2. *Interdependence during loss + when those we rely on fall short.*

*During Times Is Loss: God says, Psalm 68:5 "A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.*

*When Others Fall Short: Verse continues Psalm 68:4 God sets the lonely in families."*

*The family of God becomes a restorative family because of loss and when first families, and other relationships fall short.*

**#3. Interdependence, when it comes to knowledge and wisdom**

*Proverbs 12:15 A stubborn fool considers his own way the right one, but a person who listens to advice (counsel) is wise.*

*1Corinthians 14:26. What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.*

*Value of collaboration and reasoning together.*

**#4. Interdependence during times of Sickness**

*The Prayer of Faith James 5:14 <sup>14</sup> Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup> And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.*

*During sickness we are not meant to sit and suffer alone, be wise, but in our suffering we were designed with a need to benefit from community ...*

*Again, this is about invitation and initiation ... inviting people to come your way when in need, and of course, initiating care and connectivity for those who are sickness and suffering.*

**#5. Interdependence when addressing sin and brokenness**

*James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*

*Bible teaches that we confess our sins to God for forgiveness, and secondly, confession to another trusted (righteous) friend is often a big part of healing and deliverance.*

*Why ??? By God's divine design we are relational, we are interdependent.*

*Ex. I find that when I confess and admitted things to Julie, my wife, I find freedom, clarity, peace.*

*Interdependence means we, "bare the burdens of others" which creates the picture of someone bearing their weight, handling, carrying the wage of sin & discouragement, heaviness of dispair, we lay our need on another. Carry this weight to Jesus together.*

**#6. Interdependence when walking discovering gifts and calling that we have been given**

*1 Corinthians 12:18 But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. <sup>19</sup> If they were all one part, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup> As it is, there are many parts, but one body.*

*I was made uniquely but God had others on His mind when making me.*

*Ex. think about our team at LWC – all so unique, sensing God's call to be together and work together. So when He made me and knew I would be here HE made Luke, Kirsten, Ryan, Mike .. we are all so uniquely called and gifted but together a great team is formed.*

**#7. Interdependence needed for us to enjoy life.**

*QUESTION: Have you ever been alone and something happens .. first thought is to the need to share it with someone .. take a picture .. text it ..*

*Why? Some of that is FOMO .. some of that is our identity . God's design, we encouraged to sing together, eat together, celebrate, dance together,*

*Perhaps this ... how we were made ... to share and enjoy life with others..*

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**So during this series we are taking a look and asking: So, Who are you ??**

- In behind this comes the second question:
- Where are you at in your Christian identity formation?

***Perhaps if you are just starting this journey the place to start is considering that .***

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***We are learning. Together ...***

***How true it is that ... maturing has little to do with the number of birthdays we have had. Maturing begins and continues as we accept the invitation of the gospel, as taught in scripture, and then to be very determined to have a Christian perspective (worldview) as we shape our self-understanding?***

*I can't help but think we have good days ahead*

#### ***DISCUSSION QUESTIONS***

1. What did mankind fall from in Genesis 3?
2. Do you think of your faith as more of a personal matter or community matter?
3. What has been your experience within community?
4. What are steps we need to take to lean more deeply into community?
5. In what ways has Jesus come to make our world a better place?
6. Why is the gospel so hopeful for people?