

The Image of God

Genesis 1: 26-27 "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, 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; male and female He created them."

Certainly, there are several ways in which God created man in His own image.

For instance, in spite of the fact that God has no beginning and man has, both God and man have no end.

Yes, man's immortal soul will continue to exist somewhere in eternity, and that's

why it's so important to have a right relationship with God.

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But I think one of the most striking similarities is found in the Trinity. Yes, God is One, and yet He is manifested in three distinct and equal persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Of course, man began his existence as a unit, being a physical body formed from the dust of the ground.

It was a wonderful creation, but it was still a dead man.

And then, Genesis 2:7 tells us, God **"breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a *living* being."**

At that point he had become an amazing creation, unlike any other living thing on the earth.

Yes, he had been made in the image of God,
having a body, a soul and a spirit.

And Paul recognized that fact when he wrote,
in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, **"Now may the God
of peace Himself sanctify you completely;
and may your whole spirit, soul, and body
be preserved blameless at the coming of
our Lord Jesus Christ."**

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First of all, it is man's *body* that puts him
in contact with his surroundings.

Not only can he see light and *feel* heat and
cold, but with his hands, he can change
the environment around him.

He can build houses, and do a myriad of
other things according to his ability.

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But it is the *soul* that allows him to
interact with his fellow man, one human
soul having fellowship with another.

And it is the soul that is the seat of the emotions, such as love, sorrow, rejoicing, and sympathy.

It even gives him the ability to worship a higher being, which is amply demonstrated by the unending multitude of man-made religions around us.

Nevertheless, it is the *soul* as well as the *spirit* that is involved in the true worship of God.

As Mary said in Luke 1:46-47, **"My soul magnifies the Lord, And my *spirit* has rejoiced in God my Savior."**

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But it's the *spirit* that is the real connection to God.

It is this third dimension in man's makeup that forms the link between himself and his Creator.

As 1 Corinthians 2:11 says, "**For what man knows the things of a man except the *spirit* of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.**"

And when God said---"**in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die,**" He was referring primarily to *spiritual* death. Yes, the spiritual connection between Adam and God would be immediately broken, while it would take over 900 years for *physical* death to claim this wonderful creation.

There's no doubt about it. Man separated from the source of life is spiritually dead.

That's why scripture calls the unsaved *dead in trespasses and sin*.

And that's why Jesus told Nicodemus---"**You must be born again.**"

There's something missing, and good works
can't fix it.

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And when Jesus, an equal member of the
Godhead, became flesh, He took on that
second trinity.

That's why 1 Peter 2:24 says---"**who Himself
bore our sins in His own *body* on the
tree-----.**"

And that's why, during that awful night in
the garden, Jesus told His disciples ---
**"My *soul* is exceedingly sorrowful, even
to death."**

And that's why, on that cross of agony,
Jesus cried out---"**Father, 'into Your
hands I commit My *spirit*."**

Yes, Jesus is a real *man*, possessing a *body*
and a *soul* and a *spirit*.

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And the tabernacle, which pictures the Lord Jesus in every detail of its construction, also alludes to the *trinity* that He took on at His incarnation.

The outer court, that contains the brazen altar, speaks of His *body*, which was so terribly marred and placed on the cross for all to see.

And it was a body that was freely given.

**"Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,
But a *body* You have prepared for Me."**

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And then, in the holy place, where we have the golden candlestick, the incense altar and the table of showbread, we have a picture of the *soul*.

Here, the priests enjoyed each other's fellowship as the incense of prayer ascended to heaven, and as they ate the bread that was provided.

And it is the place where Christians commune with fellow believers while feasting on the Lord Jesus.

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And, finally, the holy of holies pictures the *spirit*.

There, the believer approaches God completely alone, as his *spirit* communes with the Spirit of the Almighty.

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In 1 Corinthians, Paul referred to the believer as the *temple of God*.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17--"Do you not know that you are the *temple* of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are."

Yes, it is a temple in which each part must be sanctified.

And that's why Paul expressed the fervent desire, that --- **"the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole *spirit, soul, and body* be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."**

And that's why 1 Corinthians 11:28, referring to the breaking of bread, says ---**"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup."**

