

Citizens & Saints Part 1 Image Bearer - Genesis 1:26-28

Intro: I sure most of you have seen a video of the guy who tried to drive his car through flooded waters/river

A) Pretty soon the car is stalled and floating in the water - why is that?

B) Cars were not designed to be driven in deep water - definitely not under water -

1) designed to be driven on land

C) There is no sticker on your dash board that says - for land use only

1) But Any sensible person knows that

I have even seen Videos of people who wanted to see how far they could get their boat to travel out of water

A) They go racing up to the shore - sliding across the beach or grass or road - boat breaks up -

B) Dude what were you thinking- Most of the time that is the problem - they weren't thinking - intoxicated or something

C) Again there is not a warning sign on boats that says - This boat is for water only

1) Any sensible person knows - Boats are designed for water - cars/trucks are designed for land.

Like Cars and Boats we also have a purpose as human beings

A) We have been made in the image of God

Genesis 1:26-27 ²⁶ 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." ²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

B) Now we read in the book of Genesis that God spoke the world into existence:

C) After each day he it is good! The creation process is moving along just fine

D) But Day six was different – there is a pause in the narrative –

1) A conversation takes place amongst the Godhead.

Let us make man in our Image: Translation - the next thing that is created is going to be different than all the rest.

A) TALKING THE CROWN JEWEL OF CREATION

B) Man and woman, uniquely made in the image of God ! – Imago Dei – Unique and Special

C) What does it mean that we have been made in the image of God?

1) Consider the ways

God is eternal

A) And like God only man is eternal -

B) Humans are spirit beings - People have an eternal Spirit that lives forever

C) God has put eternity into the heart of every man - A sense that there is more Beyond this life.

D) Animals are not eternal they don't possess an eternal spirit

The Bible says that God is light and in him is no darkness at all!

A) God is righteous and always does what is Right and Just

B) Man was made with a Moral Compass

1) We have built into us a Conscience that can discern right and wrong

C) In order to do what is wrong - man has to ignore his conscience

1) The more he ignores his conscience - the Bible says it becomes seared -- insensitive - Doesn't feel any longer

D) So When a person ignores the warnings of his/her conscience their heart becomes hard - past feeling

E) Now when we get saved - we not only have our Conscience that warns us

1) but also the Holy Spirit in us to warn and guide us

Animals have neither

A)Your dog gets lose one night and goes around the neighborhood and impregnates all the female dogs -

B)You can't get mad at him- he isn't going to understand that

1)He is being what he is - Animal with no conscience

C)Dog for a walk - say hi to other dog - Start smelling each other in all the wrong places - NO!

D)People don't do that- we no better - animals don't

Genesis 9:6 "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man."

A)God didn't give a word like this for animals -

B)Animals in the wild attack other animals - why?

C)That is what animals do - it is literally a dog eat dog world

D)So Humans have been made different from Animals - Eternal spirit / Moral compass -

1)A Conscience difference between right and wrong.

God is highly relational - Trinity

A)Relationship with People - Make himself known

B)We have been made in God's image to be relational creatures -

1)To live in relationship first with God - then with others people

C)But here lies the problem: That is how man was created in the beginning, Made in the Image of God

1)Made to be image bearers reflecting God and his glory

D)But when Adam and Eve rebelled - sinned - the Image was marred.

1)It became tainted and distorted

Ever been to a Carnival - Carnival mirrors

A)It is humorous for a short kid to see what he would look like as a tall, skinny guy, and vice versa.

B)We laugh as our faces distort and our bodies stretch out of proportion.

C)Carnival mirrors are fun to play with at the county fair,

1)but their effects would be terrible if they persisted in everyday life.

And yet, in a way that is what has taken place.

A)Sin has caused us to live in a world of carnival mirrors.

B)Our sin has distorted the image of God within us, 1)and we now live in the midst of others who bear this distorted image.

C)Sometimes that Distortion is LOUD and seen in prevalent ways

In 2006, Michael Vick became the first quarterback to rush for the illustrious 1,000 yards in a season.

A)Although his team finished 7-9, his future looked bright.

B)Along with his NFL salary, Vick earned money for being the face of Rawlings, Nike,/ other companies.

1)In 2006 he brought in an estimated \$25.4 million.

C)By the end of 2007, Michael Vick was broke and in prison for his contributions to an illegal dog-fighting ring.

His estimated losses totaled \$142 million, with some \$50 million lost in endorsements.

A)Apparently, Rawlings and Nike did not like being represented by someone convicted of cruelty toward animals.

B)They made a choice to terminate their relationship with Michael Vick.

C)To continue using Vick as a spokesperson would have been tantamount

1)to promoting dog-fighting themselves- Neither company was about to do that

D)See When you represent someone, everything you do reflects on that person.

God created humanity to represent Him and to declare His glory.

A)Sadly, mankind abdicated that high calling, in the Garden when Adam and Eve Sinned-

B)Bringing shame upon the image of God.

1)And infecting every other human being who would come after them.

C)Theologians refer to this as the doctrine of Original Sin - Think Origins -

1)One man's sin was passed on to the rest of the human race

D)Infected with the sin gene - if you would - propensity to sin and rebellion - Selfishness

E)The image was marred!!!

1)Thankfully, our failure is not the end of the story.

Through the work of Jesus God's Son, God is in the process of restoring what we ruined.

A)As Christians/followers of Jesus - we have the opportunity to be image bearers again.

B)Though not perfect - we still have the opportunity to reflect Him

Consider what the Bible says about Jesus

A)Colossians 1:15-He is the image - of the invisible God

B)Jesus comes on the scene - He is the perfect man - born not of the seed of a man - But of God - perfect human - sinless

1)He is the perfect image bearer of God

C)And in John 8:12 - "I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life."

D)Light Reflects and it exposes: -

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of men John 1:1-4

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth John 1:14

E)Jesus came Reflecting the Light of God to

Humanity - Shinning in the darkness -

1)perfect blending of Grace and truth.

But Light also exposes what is wrong in the Darkness

¹⁹ This is the judgment: The light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does evil hates the light and avoids it, so that his deeds may not be exposed.

John 3:19-20 CSB

See much of the tension going on in our world right now is the result of this truth -

A)Light exposing darkness!

B)Those walking in the darkness - hate the Light -

1)exposes their evil deeds. Exposes their sin - exposes what is wrong with us

C)Those in Darkness want to turn off the Light - Repel the light - hate the light.

D)The more that Darkness prevails the louder it's voice gets!

Now Jesus the light of the World spoke this about us his followers

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house.

Wait how can that Be ? How can we be what Jesus is - the Light of the world?

A)No light in and of ourselves - His light has been put into us - We are to Reflect him

B)Similar way: The moon shines at night but the moon has no light in and of itself -

1)It's life is a reflection of the SUNS Light
We are to reflect Jesus to the World around us

C)This truth immediately creates a tension with our culture that is getting darker by the day.

D)Many in our culture are not going to like the Light that we are shinning - standing for.

But As image bearers of Jesus we are called to shine as lights in a dark world

A)Our light will both expose and Reflect.

B) We expose Darkness by being a light in a dark place.

C) Ever experience the conversation going silent when you walked into the room?

1) What just happened - you exposed the darkness of a conversation

D) Golfing - Guys dropping F bombs- Hey Rob what do you do for a living - I am a Pastor in Vista

1) awkward? - Everyone cleans up their language

We expose Darkness by speaking against it! Calling it what it is

¹¹ Don't participate in the fruitless works of darkness, but instead expose them. Ephesians 5:11

A) The World is trying to silence our voice. Intimidation - Cancel Culture

B) Limit our first amendment rights of free speech.

C) We must not shy away from speaking truth!! -

D) But we need to Speak the truth in Love

1) That is how we reflect Grace and truth the way that Jesus did

E) So Our Light should also expose the darkness

We reflect the light of Jesus through our attitudes and actions

¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:14-16

A) I love seeing how the church runs to the front lines

B) When there is a disaster somewhere in the world or the USA

1) Hurricane Milton and Helene hit - some of the first responders to react - Samaritan purse

C) The church shows up - Mucking houses - food

Jesus said the world will know that you are my disciples by your love

A) Love for God, love for others, love for the lost.

B) The greatest way we can be image bearers is by loving others well -

1) even those who don't agree with us. - Lost

C) But another way that we Reflect God to our world is by Loving what God loves -

1) standing for what God stands for.

D) Standing for what He says is true and important

Consider four things that God loves and stands for - that our world has distorted and our culture is confused about ?

A) Gender: Marriage: Life: Justice

B) Start with **Gender**: Our culture is essentially saying

C) You get to be God and you can decide what Gender you want to be:

1) Male Female Non Binary - Other

D) But look at our text again: Genesis 1:26-27

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; ²⁷ So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

E) The Bible is not confused on this topic - Male and Female - only choices - God is the one who decides

But can we trust the Bible?

A) We could spend hours talking about textual criticism

B) And how when it comes to ancient original manuscripts - Bible is very reliable

C) The Bible is the most reliable ancient manuscript you can find -

1) even more so than all the works of Shakespeare

D) The Bible written over 1500 yr period by 40 different authors/ 3 different languages/ 3 different continents

E) Same Message - Man has sinned - God sent a Savior in Jesus

When it comes to believing the Bible: Jesus is the answer did what no other person has ever done -

A) Came on the scene - Claimed to be the only way to God - died - Rose - His claims are true

B) Jesus Validated what the Bible says about Gender

⁴ And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made *them* at the beginning ‘*made them male and female*,’ Matthew 19:4

C) Jesus also validated what the Bible says about Marriage: One man and one woman. -

D) In Matthew 19:5 Jesus quotes from Genesis 2⁵ ‘*For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh*’? Matthew 19:5

The Mission of Marriage

²⁸ Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it;”

A) Only a man and woman can carry out that mandate Biologically

B) And even if a couple cannot get pregnant naturally - so they are going to adopt -

1) or use artificial insemination to accomplish pregnancy

C) It still takes the Biology of the Male and female - to make a child to adopt or through artificial insemination

Life:

A) Great debate today - When does life begin?

B) God tells us it begins at conception - Psalm 139:13 You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother’s womb. (NLT)

C) Another interesting passage about Life happening at conception is found Jeremiah 1:5, Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

D) What is really interesting is the Hebrew word Knew -

1) Yada = to be acquainted with - to know by experience

E) The insulation is this: God is caring on a relationship with the Baby in the womb

I think that is why people come into this world sensing there is a hole in their heart that only God can fill.

A) Might be a reason too why people are much more open to the idea of God

B) and having a relationship with him when they are kids.

C) It is innate - It resonates it perhaps speaks to what they were experiencing in the womb

D) Now if we are going to be image bearers of God - 1) It is imperative that we speak of for the unborn babies

E) God tells us as his image bearers in Proverbs 31:8-9— to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.

F) Babies in the womb - cannot speak for themselves - We who are image bearers of God must speak for them - Stand - walk

1) Love Light. -

One more issue that is important to God that our culture has distorted and is confused about -

A) That is Justice:

B) Now there is a phrase that has been politicized in our culture - Social Justice -

1) Means different things to different groups

B) I am not talking about Social Justice - I am going to call this Biblical Justice.

C) Difference: Social Justice promotes a just society by challenging injustice and valuing diversity

D) Problem is that definition is very vague and can lead to many different conclusions

1) about what Justice looks like - or what injustice is

Biblical Justice starts with this premise: It starts by seeing all people the way that God sees them -

A) Created in the image of God

B) Biblical justice Values all people from that perspective

C) Biblical justice centers around helping all people discover their God given purpose in life -

1) Bring God glory.

D)With that in Mind - this is what the Bible tells us concerning the heart of God - toward his people.

“Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.” – Psalm 89:14

“He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.” – Deuteronomy 10:18

E)He is for the fatherless and the widow - the foreigner

God instituted this rule for a National Biblical Justice in Israel

“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the Lord your God. Leviticus 19:9,10

God instructed his people when they were harvesting their fields to leave some leftovers for the Poor -

A)And the Sojourners

B)Now That doesn't mean that God doesn't believe in Borders ?

C)Quite the contrary - He established borders for his people in the land of promise.

D)But there was also a provision made for those peaceful foreigners in the land to be taken care of.

1)That was one of the ways - that they would be introduced to Jehovah God

The Jews were placed in the world to introduce Gentiles to Jehovah God

1)A mission they failed miserably at

Christians have been placed in this world to introduce non-Christians to Jesus

A)In many ways - we are failing miserably in that regard too

B)9-10 Christians have never led another person to Christ.

C)That is you - I am Not saying that to condemn you
1)I am just stating a fact - that you still have time to change.

D)Start praying daily - Lord show me a person in my sphere of influence - Pray for

1)Establish a relationship with - eventually share Jesus with

E)Or maybe there is already someone in your life - you just need to share with them!!!!

So God instituted a system of Biblical Justice for taking care of the needy.

A)God spoke something similar to Moses in the book of Deuteronomy

¹⁷ For the LORD your God *is* God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe. ¹⁸ He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. ¹⁹ Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. ²⁰ You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name. Deuteronomy 10:17-20

B)It is interesting that God even judged nations when they failed to do this

Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy. Ezekiel 16:49 ESV

C)God spoke this about the nation of Israel through the prophet Amos

The people of Israel have sinned again and again, and I will not let them go unpunished! They sell honorable people for silver and poor people for a pair of sandals. They trample helpless people in the dust and shove the oppressed out of the way.... corrupting my holy name. Amos 2:6-7 NLT

Now how a nation accomplishes this mandate of Biblical Justice today

A)IS up for debate and speculation- many factors to consider.

But for those of us who are called to be Image bearers of God - to shine as lights in the Darkness

A)We cannot wait for our GOVT to figure it out -

B) We are called to do our part as the Church
“Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the
oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead
the case of the widow.” – Isaiah 1:17

Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord,
and he will repay him for his deed. Proverbs
19:17 ESV

C) We should be looking for ways as individuals and
as a church to exercise this form of Biblical Justice
1) Wednesday mornings Food distribution

D) Partnerships with Solutions for change
1) Got your back - Weekly meals for kids in the
public school system

E) Individually - Showing the love of Jesus to the
hurting that God brings in our paths

Now as we close today: I want to say this:

**A) There is another way that we can fulfill our
calling as image bearers**

B)) Pertinent to this cultural Moment that we are
living in - that is through our Vote.

C) Oh no - I knew this is where you were going -
Hear...

Here is something that breaks my heart- according to
the Barna Research group -
A) only 51% of people who identify as people of faith
will vote in this upcoming election

B) That means there will be 104 million people of
faith who will not vote
1) including 41 million people who identify as born
again Christians

C) If these numbers are accurate that means that there
are 41 million Christians
1) Who are not OBEYING their mandate to be image
bearers of God - and Lights shining in the Darkness

D) That is so sad - because it is so simple. - 41 million
people can make a big difference.

E) Especially if they are taking seriously this calling -
to reflect God and to expose darkness

1) Voting in line with God’s heart as it relates to
Gender, Marriage, Life of the unborn and Biblical
Justice.

**Why am I talking about this? I love Jesus - I stand
for what he stands for - As your pastor I love you -**

A) I want you to be all that you are called to be in
Christ - Bring to maturity

B) And I love this Country: Flawed - falling apart -
Last days -
1) but still the best country in the world to live

Church can I encourage you to be a part of the
Solution and not a Statistic

A) Listen I realize that all the candidates are flawed-

B) None have perfect Character
1) Not voting for a Spiritual leader

C) and in Many ways - it can be the lesser of two evils

**But your first Loyalty as a Follower of Jesus is to
His Kingdom and Mission - Matthew 6:33 - Seek
first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness -**

A) So I have to ask myself - who’s policies and
Philosophy most reflects the heart of God
1) on all four of these important issues.

B) Keeping in mind this truth from James - who in
James 4 said this about our decision making process
¹⁷ So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to
do it, for him it is sin. James 4:17

C) Mad? Don’t leave: Let’s talk - email me: