### BEING HUMAN, THE IMAGE OF GOD The Privileges of the Christian Life Westminster Presbyterian Church September 27, 2020

### I. Introduction: Is This Really a Christian Privilege?

### II. The Uniqueness of Man (Male and Female) as the Image of God

1. At Creation

# Genesis 1:26-27

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

<sup>27</sup> So God created man [A] in his own image, [B] in the image of God [B'] he created him; [A']

male and female he created them. [C]

# Genesis 2:7

<sup>7</sup> then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, *and the man became a living being*.

"It is in the human hand that we have the consummation of all perfection as an instrument." – Sir Charles Bell, The Hand: Its Mechanism and Vital Endowments, as Evincing Design, 231.

### III. Being God's Image as a Christian Privilege

1. Since the fall, only those renewed in Christ *rejoice* that they are the image of God.

### Romans 1:18-20, 32

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. <sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup> For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse ... <sup>32</sup> Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them. (Rom 1:18–20, 32)

"[T]he question 'What is man?' must be answered by a sentence that has a reference to God in it. When, in the pursuit of the project of the self, we exclude the person of God, we not only cut ourselves off from knowing him, but also from knowing ourselves. The project ends in frustration." – Sinclair Ferguson 2. While all are the image of God *in their essence* as personal, rational, moral beings, those united to Jesus Christ are being renewed in *the ethical orientation of their identities* as the image of God!

**Eph 4:24** – "But that is not the way you learned Christ!—<sup>21</sup> assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, <sup>22</sup> to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, <sup>23</sup> and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, <u>created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness</u>."

**Col 3:9–10** – "Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices <sup>10</sup> and have put on the new self, which is <u>being renewed in knowledge after the image of</u> <u>its creator</u>."

"In connection with the question, whether the image of God belongs to the very essence of man, Reformed theology does not hesitate to say that it constitutes the essence of man. It distinguishes, however, between those elements in the image of God which man cannot lose without ceasing to be man, consisting in the essential qualities and powers of the human soul [rational, moral, willing creature]; and those elements which man can lose and still remain man, namely, the good ethical qualities of the soul and its powers." (Berkhof, ST, 207)

By falling into sin, man lost his ethical glory. The covering of glory was replaced by the nakedness of shame ... Fallen man is a naked image." – Meredith G. Kline, Images of the Spirit, 32

# **IV. Implications for the Christian Life?**

- A. Recognize (and work for the recognition of) the sacred dignity and value of every human life.
- B. Recognize (and work for the recognition of) the intrinsic goodness of the human body.

"The body is not a prison, but a marvelous piece of art from the hand of God Almighty, and just as constitutive for the essence of humanity as the soul . . . It is so integrally and essentially a part of our humanity that, though violently torn from the soul by sin, it will be reunited with it in the resurrection of the dead." – Herman Bavinck, Reformed Dogmatics, 2:559

C. Rejoice that as the image of God, you were made to know and enjoy God forever!