

**In the Image of Me**  
*King Jesus, Pt. 3*  
*Genesis 3-11*

Allan McCullough  
*Grace Hill Church*  
*May 12, 2019*



# I. INTRODUCTION

**a. This morning, we are going to continue in our series King Jesus together.**

- i. This is a sermon series where we want to look through the Bible cover to cover to discover what it looks like to submit our lives to Jesus as our King.
- ii. And we said for a part of this series, we are going to build a theology together.
  - Theology is just the study of God.
  - And we want to put together a simple and memorable theology of who God is and who we are so that we can really talk substantively about what it really means to follow and submit to Jesus.
- iii. And last week, our first statement that we inserted in our theology was this:
  - In love, God created me not to be the center of my story.
    1. Allow me to catch us all up on what that means.

**b. I want you to imagine something with me for a second...imagine being in a relationship with someone where you are 100% known and you feel no shame.**

- i. You are completely exposed. Every thought of yours is known. Every desire. Every fantasy. Every weakness. Every motive is completely known by the other person.



- And you feel no shame. You feel there is nothing to hide. You feel no need to project a more favorable image of who you are.
  - ii. I am not sure this is possible in this world, today.
- c. But when we read about the creation of the world in Genesis 1-2, this is the picture we are given of relationships...both relationships between God and humanity. And our relationships with one another.**
- i. We are fully known, fully exposed and yet fully loved, accepted, and without shame.
    - **Read Genesis 2:25.**
  - ii. Now when the text says they were naked, it obviously means they were physically not clothed but this word has more meaning attached to it.
    - Another place this word is used is in Genesis 42.
      1. It's used as a military term where a spy would be sent to gather intelligence on the "nakedness" of the land they wanted to attack.
      2. They would spy out the parts of the land that were most vulnerable to attack.
    - Same word as in Genesis 2:25.
      1. So, this word naked doesn't just mean physically exposed but it also means vulnerable...open to attack...no defenses...no reason to have your guard up.
      2. I have nothing to hide and I have no fear that anyone will exploit me, take advantage of me, or harm me.



iii. This is the Jewish concept of shalom...peace...wholeness...harmony... everything working as it should...nothing to fear.

- This was God's Kingdom at creation.
  1. God, man, and the creation in perfect relationship with one another.
  2. No need for protection. No fear at all.

**d. If you remember from last week, we studied who God created us to be, what we are called to do, and why God created us.**

- If you missed that sermon, go listen to it online.
- i. But we learned that God made us in his image.
  - Meaning God created us to represent him with our lives.
- ii. And the way God wanted us to do that was by subduing the earth.
  - And we learned last week that this word subdue is an interesting word because it means to exert your will upon someone or something in order together something out of it.
    1. To subdue something, you have to have authority and a will to exert that authority.
    2. So, God creates us with a free will and delegates authority to us and commissions us to bear his image, to use our free will and authority to subdue the earth for his glory.
    3. To subdue the earth means to work the earth, advance in knowledge, create culture, build civilization...all to his glory.



iii. **And the reason why God created us is because He is love.**

- In love God creates us and his desire for us is joy. And our joy is found in bearing the image of God and living for his glory as we live our lives and subdue the earth.
- And that is our theology...
  1. In love, God created us not to be the center of our story but for Him to be the center. Because we bear his image.

iv. **And at creation, mankind was living out this purpose.**

- So, think about it this for a second...Eve being completely naked and exposed...sees Adam...one who has been given strength, power, and a free will to subdue the earth...one who could subdue her.
  1. And there is nothing in Adam that she fears. Nothing in Adam that makes her think he might take advantage of her.
  2. There is nothing she feels she needs to hide from Adam.
  3. She sees someone who represents the love of God with his freedom, his strength, and his purpose.
- Or Adam, being completely naked and exposed sees Eve...one who has been given strength, power, and a free will to subdue the earth...one who could subdue him.
  1. And there is nothing in Eve that he fears. Nothing in Eve that makes him think she might take advantage of him.
  2. There is nothing he feels he needs to hide from Eve.
  3. He sees someone who represents the love of God with her freedom, her strength, and her purpose.



**e. But, this kind of pure relationship. This purity of trust, goodness, and safety...shalom...is not something any of us have fully experienced.**

- i. We have not experienced this kind of peace in our souls.
  - And we long for it. Our world longs for it.
- ii. Two weeks ago, we talked about the importance of the church being a non-anxious presence in an anxious world...
  - Our world is anxious because something is wrong with the world and everyone is trying to figure out either how to fix it or how to escape it.
    1. And for those who don't believe in God and believe that all we are is biological matter with no true meaning...they have to come to grips with their belief that the suffering, the death, the brokenness and shame that we experience in this world is simply normal....and we need to get over it.
  - But the church, those who believe in Jesus, we know the beginning of the story and we know that this is completely abnormal.
    1. The world did not start this way.
    2. Something has happened and it's not normal. It's not okay. We shouldn't experience the brokenness that we do.
    3. Death is not normal. It's not a fact of life.
    4. Our anguish and despair is valid and it's not an option to simply get over it.
    5. We need to know what happened to God's creation.
  - And Genesis 3 is going to tell us what happened.



- iii. But before we get to Genesis 3, I want to give us our next statement that we will insert into our theology.
  - Here it is: **In sin, I have abused God, others, and creation in order to be the center of my story.**
  - Repeat both statements:
    1. **In love, God created me not to be the center of my story.**
    2. **In sin, I have abused God, creation, and others in order to be the center of my story.**
  - And let's read from Genesis 3 to discover what that means.

## II. GENESIS 3

### a. **Read Genesis 3:1-4**

- i. So, in the midst of this perfect Kingdom that God had created, this serpent appears and what we know about him is that he is crafty, and he wants to convince Eve that what God said to her is untrue.
  - Now, we know from the Scriptures that this wasn't just a normal snake...this was Satan, the Devil.
- ii. Now, we don't know much about Satan and how he was able to infiltrate God's Kingdom like this...but we have a few Scriptures that give us some clues...specifically Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28.
  - We know Satan was an angel. And angels were these heavenly beings created by God to serve God in His will...but these beings are not image bearers like we are.



- And at some point, between God’s creation and this encounter in Genesis 3 with Eve, Satan turns on God.
  1. And it seems like from Ezekiel 28, although there is debate about this, that what happened is Satan saw the grandeur of what God created...and jealousy began to flood in his heart...and he said I want to be King of all this...not God.
  2. And so, Satan developed a strategy. Because he could not overpower God and he could not overpower His image bearers...but he could try and deceive them.
- The word Devil means slanderer. The word Satan means accuser.
  1. Jesus says this about Satan in John 8:44 - *“He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies.”*
  2. Satan’s strategy is to deceive you and he is crafty at it.
- iii. **And so, as the serpent approaches Eve, he deceives her.**
  - He preys on her nakedness and vulnerability and plants the idea in Eve’s heart that what God has said is not true.
    1. See, in Genesis 1 and 2, God speaks to Adam and Eve. He reveals Himself to them. He tells them of their purpose, and he guides them on how to live.



2. He tells them to be fruitful and multiply, to subdue the earth, to have dominion over the earth, to enjoy the entire garden but they just could not eat of this one tree.
- And at first, this restriction did not bother Adam and Eve because they trusted God.
    1. God's revelation to them was their source of truth.
    2. God's revelation to us is our source of truth.
  - But the serpent planted a fear in their heart that God was withholding good from them, that God's Word was not reliable, that maybe they needed to start looking out for themselves and put their guard up.
    1. That maybe it would be better if they did not bear the image of God and let God be the center, but they started to bear the image themselves and they become the center.
    2. That maybe it would be better to be independent of God and his rule over their lives.
  - Remember what we said last week...God creates a Kingdom where He is the King, He is the center and His people are His Image Bearers who use their freedom and their power to voluntarily represent God.
    1. This was Satan's strategy...to trick God's image bearers to voluntarily revolt and use their freedom and power against God and for themselves instead.



## **b. And here is Satan's lie - Genesis**

### **3:5.**

#### **i. You will be like God.**

- You won't need God.
  1. You won't need to represent Him, you can represent yourself.
  2. You don't need God's Word, you have your own Word.
  3. You can be independent of God...the center of your own story.

#### **ii. Read Genesis 3:6.**

- And at the moment that Adam and Eve ate of that tree, rejected God's Word, believed the lies of Satan, and sought to be independent of God...everything broke.

#### **iii. Read Genesis 3:7.**

- In that moment, Adam and Eve felt fear, shame, and insecurity for the first time...and they run to cover their shame...to protect themselves...
- In this moment, something fundamentally changed about the nature of humanity.
  1. Our ability to bear the image of God was marred.
  2. We were turned in ourselves.
  3. We now had a nature and an instinct to subdue the earth and others for ourselves and not for God.
- That's why after Eve ate of that fruit, she looked at Adam and realized she was completely naked and exposed...she feared that Adam...one who has been given strength, power, and a free will to subdue the earth would now subdue her.
  1. And so, she runs and hides.



2. She sees someone who represents his own desires with his freedom, strength, and purpose and no longer the love of God.
  - That's why after Adam ate of that fruit, he looked at Eve and realized he was completely naked and exposed...he feared that Eve...being one who has been given strength, power, and a free will to subdue the earth would now subdue him.
    1. And so, he runs and hides.
    2. He sees someone who represents her own desires with her freedom, strength, and purpose and no longer the love of God.
- iv. **And not only did they run and hide from each other, they also ran and hid from God, their creator and the one who has always perfectly loved them.**
- **Read Genesis 3:8-10**
- v. **Our nature changed...**
- We are now people who will try and subdue God, other people, and the creation to be the center of our own story.
    1. We are people who are now instinctually selfish.
    2. We are now people who instinctually will look after ourselves before we ever think about God or others.
    3. We are now people who live to represent ourselves and no longer God.
  - And we see this new fallen nature starting in v.11.



### c. **Read Genesis 3:11-13.**

- i. We see Adam refuse to accept responsibility and out of a desire to protect himself and his ego, he blame-shifts to Eve.
  - We also see Adam refuse to repent before His creator and seek forgiveness but digs in his heels before almighty God.
    1. Because Adam has decided in his heart that it would be better for Him to be King and not for God to be King.
  - We see Eve do the same thing. Instead of repentance, instead of remorse, we see her seek to protect her ego and blame-shift to the serpent.
- ii. **The god that Adam and Eve now worship is no longer the One True God, their creator, but is themselves.**
  - God and His image bearers are now enemies...alienated from one another...and God refuses to be in their presence.
    1. **Read Genesis 3:23-24.**
    2. [The cherubim is God saying to us that there will be no way on our own that we would be able to get back to God's Kingdom. We were now banished from His Kingdom.]
  - And we are now a people who have been alienated from God, who now by nature see ourselves as god, and the creation is now broken.
  - And every human being who would be born after Adam and Eve would be born with a sinful nature...a nature that is turned in on self and against God.



### III. APPLICATION

- And so, having studied Genesis 3...there are two things I want you to take away from this.

#### a. #1 – This is the Definition of Sin.

i. In sin, we have abused God, others, and creation in order to be the center of our story.

- We see the abilities that God gave us, the people around us, the creation, and God Himself as existing for the purpose of serving me.
  1. This is sin. When we place ourselves at the center and not God.
- This is why Romans 14:23 says – *“...For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.”*
  1. Whatever we do that is not anchored in our faith in who God is and who we are in relation to God...is sin.
- This is why Romans 1:25 describes sin this way: *“they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator.”*
  1. We worship ourselves over God.

ii. So this is radical but its biblical...

- Anything that we touch, anything that we interact with, anything that we subdue, anything that we control...is to be to the glory of god...to represent Him and His rule on earth...
  1. Anything other than that is sin.
  2. Sin is not just a moral category. It's not just about right and wrong. It's not just about behavior.
  3. It is about who is central in your heart.



### iii. So, your money...

- God has entrusted you with money as His Image Bearer to use that money to represent and glorify Him.
  1. That means we take all of our money, every last penny, and put it before God and say, God how do I use this for your glory. It's all yours. I bear your image not mine.
- Anything other than that...is sin.
  1. And I know in our 21<sup>st</sup> century western and wealthy context, we say...o come on...God is not that radical.
  2. No, He is!
  3. Listen, our faith is not extracurricular. It's not an optional activity.
  4. It is everything.
- Are we using our money with God as the center of our story or are we abusing our money in order that we can be the center of our story?
  1. If God told you to sell the house, downsize, liquidate some assets, change your lifestyle and use the proceeds to advance your local church, or support mission work across the world, or to help a neighbor...does he have that kind of rule over you?

### iv. Or your time...

- God has entrusted you with time as His Image Bearer to use your time to represent and glorify Him.
  1. That means we take our whole calendar and we put it before God and we say God, I want my time to glorify you, nothing is off the table.
  2. I bear your image not mine.



- Anything other than that, is sin.
    1. If God said to you, don't sign your kid up on that travel league because you've neglecting gathering with the church, and you're not being encouraged in the gospel and you're not encouraging anyone else in the gospel...does he have that kind of rule over you.
    2. If God said, get a different job so you have more availability for ministry...yeah that might mean less income...
    3. If God said, stop traveling so much and be present in your community and your church.
    4. Does he have that kind of rule over you?
  - Are we using our time with God at the center of our story or are we abusing our time in order that we can be the center of our story?
- v. **Think of anything in life.**
- Our careers...
  - Our sexuality...
  - Our relationships...
- vi. **Anything we withhold and say to God...this is for me and not you...that is sin.**
- And there is something in us that says...this is too radical...this is abnormal...this is socially awkward...this is not how normal Christians live their lives.



- vii. It's almost like someone is whispering in your ear..."Did God really say he wants you to bear his image with everything in life...I mean what is really going to happen if you just continued to live how your living and not worry about giving more over to God?"
- And that is Satan Himself whispering in your ear the same thing he said to Eve.
    1. And it robs us of our joy.
    2. There is joy and peace in submitting to God as King and bearing His image and there is brokenness, suffering, and death when we rebel against that.
  - And here is the second thing we need to know....

## **b. #2 - There is Nothing We Can Do.**

- i. Humanity has a fallen nature that is turned against God and we do not have the power to change our hearts.
- One of the reasons we might wrestle with the definition of sin that I laid out for us earlier is because it seems so big, so pervasive, so inescapable,
    1. It's not this small definition of sin like drinking too much or saying a cuss word.
    2. It's a big definition of sin, that infects all of our motives, all of our actions, all of who we are.
    3. We have a fallen nature and we can't do anything about it.
    4. Remember in Genesis 3 when God placed his cherubim to guard the Garden so we could never make our way back to His Kingdom.



- ii. But because God is love, and because God is glorified in our joy, although we can't do anything about it, He can, and He has.
- If you remember from last week, we read from Hebrews 1 and Colossians 1 and we learned that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the perfect image of God...He is the exact imprint of God's nature.
  - And Jesus came and he lived a life that perfectly represented God the Father.
    1. And there is not a more vivid picture of that than when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane hours before he was going to be arrested and crucified.
    2. Hours before he would experience the suffering and death that our sin has brought upon the world.
    3. And Jesus knew that it was the will of His Father and that it would be to the glory of His Father if He went to the cross.
    4. And this was Jesus' prayer in Mark 14:36 - *"Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."*
    5. And Jesus would be obedient to represent the love of His Father by going to the cross to pay off the debt of our sin...so that we could be welcomed back into the Kingdom of God.



- See, in Jesus, not only do we receive forgiveness and redemption from our sins, but in Jesus we also receive a new heart...a heart that is like Jesus's heart where the image of God is restored and we can begin to learn to live our life no longer for ourselves but with God at the center...where we say not my will God, your will, in everything, even when I struggle with it.
  1. I love how Paul says this in 2 Corinthians 5:15 - *"...[Jesus] died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised."*
- iii. We can finally begin to taste true joy again, true peace, true fellowship with God and with other people when we come to Jesus, receive his forgiveness, and let him begin to fix our hearts that have rebelled against God.
  - When we make ourselves the center of our story, we will only discover brokenness.
  - In love, God created us not to be the center of our story.
  - Because that is where true joy, peace, security, and shalom is found.
- iv. **So, what in your life are you withholding from God?**
  - Where do you refuse to bear God's image?
  - Are you believing Satan's most effective lie to American Christians...that God only wants a little bit of our lives and the rest of it we are free to have for ourselves?

## IV. SILENT REFLECTION THEN PRAYER

