

Session Three Handout: Made in God's Image and Likeness

Opening Prayer

God of Creation, God of Light and Love, you created us in your image and blessed us all to be a part of this magnificent world. Help us to live more fully into your image that we may care for the world around us, love all the people and diversity you have created, and work toward a world where all are loved, all are equal, and all are free. Amen.

God Blessed Them

Genesis 1: 26-28

²⁶ Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

²⁷ So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them.

Reflection:

- What does it mean to you to be created in the image of God?
- How does it make you feel that the person who is vastly different from you is also created in the image of God?
- Since all of us on this earth are created in the image of God, how do we reconcile our differences?

Made in God's Image

WE BELIEVE each human being is made in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). That image and likeness confers a divinely decreed dignity, worth, and God-given equality to all of us as children of the one God who is the Creator of all things. Racial bigotry is a brutal denial of the image of God (the imago dei) in some of the children of God. Our participation in the global community of Christ absolutely prevents any toleration of racial bigotry. Racial justice and healing are biblical and theological issues for us, and are central to the mission of the body of Christ in the world. We give thanks for the prophetic role of the historic black churches in America when they have called for a more faithful gospel.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT the resurgence of white nationalism and racism in our nation on many fronts, including the highest levels of political leadership. We, as followers of Jesus, must clearly reject the use of racial bigotry for political gain that we have seen. In the face of such bigotry, silence is complicity. In particular, we reject white supremacy and commit ourselves to help dismantle the systems and structures that perpetuate white preference and advantage. Further, any doctrines or political strategies that use racist resentments, fears, or language must be named as public sin—one that goes back to the foundation of our nation and lingers on. Racial bigotry must be antithetical for those belonging to the body of Christ, because it denies the truth of the gospel we profess.

Closing Prayer

Leader: Let us pray.

Leader: God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness.

Participants: **And it was good.**

Leader: God created humankind, in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

Participants: **And it was good.**

Leader: God blessed them.

Participants: **And it was good.**

Leader: God blesses each individual up on this earth.

Participants: **And it IS good.**

Leader: God calls us to turn toward God and become the body of Christ together.

Participants: **And it IS good.**

Leader: In the name of Christ, let us go into the world in God's image loving one another, making amends, working toward reconciliation, and creating with God the world God wants us to live in together.

Participants: **And it IS good. Amen.**