

IMAGO DEI

Earth as Gods Temple: Man as God's Image

For the week of September 14th, 2025.

Life

How would you describe your self-image lately?



How would you describe the way God sees you?

What is the first thing you think of when you hear you are made in God's image?

Theology

Read Exodus 20:4-6. Why do you think God's people are prohibited from making an "image" (tselem) or idol of Him, in spite of the fact that every other culture at this time routinely crafted idols of their gods and kings?

Read Genesis 1:27 & 2:7, 8, 15. What do we learn here about God's unique and revolutionary take on "images" (tselem), and their proper function on the earth?

In the ancient near east, temples were typically inaugurated in a seven-day ceremony. At the climax, or end of the ceremony, an image, or idol, of a particular god or deity would be placed in the temple as the actual physical embodiment of that deity. And it was then the responsibility of the people in the temple to care for the deity's image through various sacrifices and rituals. Compare this to what we read in Genesis 2:1-9. If God is inaugurating the earth as his "temple" here (cf. Isaiah 66:1-2), and we humans are now his "images" (tselem) within the temple, what does it mean for us now to take care of his image and take responsibility for it? (cf. Mt 22:35-40; 25:44-45; 1 John 4:19-21)

Why do you think the "imago dei" (the image of God) is such a crucial and indispensable part of the Salvation Story that God is writing, and why is it so important for us to understand our specific part in this Story?



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In Practice

What do you think our world would be like if, instead of continuing to distrust and demonize all those who oppose us and differ from us, we saw everyone as made in the glorious image of God, and we treated them accordingly? What changes do you think we would see in the church and in our surrounding culture?

This week, try asking yourself the following questions as soon as you wake up every morning:

- 1) What is good in this world that I can publicly acknowledge and affirm and uphold?
- 2) What evil in this world can I confront and resist through the gracious mercy and truth of Jesus?
- 3) What is broken that God wants to restore, and how can he use me to help accomplish that?

