

This week's teaching explored "creation theology," that is, what we believe about our glorious, creative, sovereign God, truths which shape who we are.

Begin with Your HEART

Without question, parents shape the lives of their kids. The question is how? Some shaping is automatic; the characteristics of DNA are automatically programmed in. Yet beyond biology, conscientious parents shape environment and experience, imbedding values, reinforcing life-long lessons of wisdom.

- :: Think about the "automatic" [or creational] ways you were shaped by your parents. How are you just "naturally" like them?
- :: Follow that with the "intentional" shaping that came your way from them. What did mom, or dad, or both, insist you "become"?

Are you grateful for how they shaped you? Similarly, God has both created us to be like Him, and followed that up with revelation/training to shape us. Let's explore God's shaping work in our lives.

A Look at the WORD

Today's teaching: *No human person—male or female—can fully become what God created him/her to be [now and forever] without being shaped by "creation truth,"* that is, the truths about God's creating hand and overall plan. If "I am what I believe about God," explore the following beliefs that shape us.

FIRST – MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE. Someone read [Genesis 1:26-27](#) along with [Genesis 9:5-6](#) and [James 3:9-10](#). Explore the important "shaping" implications coming from being "made in God's image."

- :: Describe – simply – what it means to shine with the likeness of God's image?
- :: What "went along with" being made in God's image, according to [Genesis 1:26-27](#)?
- :: Following the Flood, how does God communicate to Noah about the unique value of human life [[Genesis 9](#)]?
- :: According to James, how should that God's likeness in others shape our behavior? {discuss the implications}

SECOND – CONFIDENT IN GOD'S PLAN. Read [Ephesians 1:11-12](#). Consider this: *Nothing has ever happened in the history of the world—events, circumstances, etc., outside the scope of God's plan and will.*

:: *Is that statement correct? Why might someone question this?*

- :: Why do some things happen [sinful acts, tragedies, evil rulers, etc.] that seem out of sync with "God's plan"?
- :: Scripture reveals that God and his plan are "sovereign" over these difficult things. How does trusting in God's sovereign control shape who you are and how you live? [How does [Isaiah 40:13-14](#) encourage you?]

THIRD - INVITED INTO GOD'S GLORY. Someone read [Isaiah 66:18-23](#). Isaiah envisions a time when redeemed humanity is invited to delight in the glory and worship of God.

- :: What keeps people today from looking forward to such an experience?
- :: John sees God's children stepping into a remarkable era. What does [Rev. 21:1-6, 22-25](#) tell us is coming?
- :: [Psalm 16:11](#) deserves some close attention. What does it say? Compare to what we experience in this life, do you think what's coming will be more, or less, full of joy?
- :: So, what are you looking forward to most in eternity? Does your "tomorrow" look shape you today? How so?

SUM UP: What's the best idea the Holy Spirit gave you in some of the Scripture you just considered?

My LIFE - our MISSION

MY LIFE | God values you highly because of how He made you, because you shine with His imprint through your unique personality. Your life is part of His eternal plan [[Eph 1:11](#)]. Any of us can easily forget how special I am to God. Do you know of anyone – going through a rough stretch right now -- who needs you to encourage him/her with God's estimate of his/her value? CCC's know...that's part of SHARING [the] TOUGH [and good!] STUFF.

YOUR FAMILY | Have some fun. Get some family pictures of grandparents, parents, and kids. Who looks like whom? Who acts like whom? Talk about who in the family has shaped whose life? Then make the connection – "We've been born of God? How are we like Him?"

OUR MISSION | Our "relationships in Christ" both inform and shape our lives over time. God uses His family to produce His Son's thinking, living, and character in each of us. The more we become like Christ, the more we shine with God's image. Take a moment and identify a couple of fellow Christians who are shaping your life in Christ. Say a sincere prayer of thanks for them! Write a note of encouragement, while you're at it!