

Why Did God Create Humanity in the First Place?

- A. As an act of His love:

- B. Metaphors for man:

- C. We were created for God as Trinity.

- D. God's love is relational and dynamic. Love always has an object. (John 1:1; 1 Corinthians 2:10b):

- E. Fresh look at creation (The Trinity):
 - 1. Created for the Son: Bride

 - 2. Created for God: Children

 - 3. Created for the Holy Spirit: Temple

- F. God created man in His own image as a love gift to Himself (Gen. 1:26a)

Questions

1. What is the most important truth you learned in this video?

2. Have you ever considered humanity as being lovely to God because they are the image of God? What does this mean about the pleasure God takes in humanity in the course of “normal life”? (Think about ways you might be imagining God as you go through a normal day: *What do you see there? How does God feel about His image in you at those times?*)

3. Can you think of other aspects of the image of God in humanity which can be found in scripture?

Spiritual Exercises

1. Please read Psalm 149:4a:

For the Lord takes pleasure in His people.

Have you ever clearly recognized the Lord taking pleasure in you? If so, describe that experience. If not, what do you imagine this experience would be like?

2. Another way we image God is when we offer ourselves to the Lord as a love-gift. This act is described in Romans 12:1:

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

How do you think the Lord feels about this?

For more information, read pages 132-151 in *God's True Love* by David Harwood

Session 3: Video 2

Metaphors of Sons, Bride and Temple (Psalm 94:9)

- A. The Father receives children (1 John 3:1a-2a):

- B. The Son receives a bride (Ephesians 5:25) :

- C. The Spirit receives a temple (2 Corinthians 6:16b; 1 Corinthians 6:19a):

- D. We were created to enjoy being loved by Him forever.

Questions

1. Take one of these metaphors about humanity's destiny: **children, bride, temple, priests**, and apply the concept of God ideally forming us to be suited to Himself. What does it mean that we are God's ideal children; God's ideal bride?

2. The concept of being created as a love gift for the Trinity is an immense idea. Setting aside issues like our sin, fallen nature, and inability to appropriately respond, describe how you think God feels about this love gift for Himself?

Spiritual Exercises

1. Pick one of the above metaphors and prayerfully ask God to bring more depth in your awareness of God's love through the metaphor.

Session 3: Video 3

Our Current Condition (Romans 3:10-12)

- A. Though fallen, man still reflects God's image (Romans 3:10-12; Genesis 9:6; James 3:9):

- B. God's Bride - adulteress (Hosea 1:2; Ezekiel 16:30):

- C. God's Children - rebellious (2 Samuel 15:6; 2 Samuel 18:33):

- D. God's House - defiled (2 Kings 21:6-7; John 2:16b):

- E. What is God's Response? (John 3:16):
John 3:16 Reexamined:
 - 1. John 3:16 is not:

 - 2. God's heart in John 3:16

- F. Who will enter into God's passion for the lost? -The Great Commission (Matthew 18:20)

Questions

1. Is our theology reflected in John 3:16? Reexamine the verse in light of what you have learned about “agape”.
2. Who will enter in God’s passion for the lost? Look at the Great Commission from this perspective.
3. What is the most important truth you learned in session 3?
4. What did you struggle with the most in this session? Consider taking further time to study the Scriptures about this topic, and commit it to prayer.

Spiritual Exercises

1. Please paraphrase, personalize and pray through John 3:16.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

2. Ask the Holy Spirit to give His eyes and heart for the lost around you. Ask Him to use you in the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18,19).

Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

For more information, read pages 156-167 in God’s True Love by David Harwood