

# Out of the Box(es) : In the image of God

Sermon, Melville Junction Church

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- Rebecca summary
  - Creativity is inherent in the nature of scripture itself and in the character of God
  - God is creative
  - We are created in his image - therefore we have creativity within us already
  - We are ALL creative
- Creative expression: We serve a creative God and believe that each of us is empowered by the Holy Spirit to express ourselves creatively in worship and service
- After Rebecca's comment on decorating tracts... we decided to preach creatively
- Last week we gave some space to write a song.....(Rachel asking why Dean did not participate)
- leads us to title of our sermon - Out of the Box(es) : In the image of God

**Genesis 1:26-27** <sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." <sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

- What does it mean to be made in God's image?
- We know that God is everywhere, all the time and is in specific places at the same time. He is **omnipresent**.
- He was there before everything and will be there forever, He is **eternal**.
- We know that **He is creative**, all things were created by Him.
- He is **sovereign**; there is no power, force or substance that rules over Him.
- He is **3 in one**; let us make man in our image.
- **So how can we, finite created beings be made in this image?**
- We know that it is **not physical**; we have shape and form and are confined to one place at one time. These bodies have a beginning and an end with wear and tear along the way.
- **But we do see a bodily resemblance**....we are beings that are made up of body, mind and spirit but are one in substance.
- We serve a living God... and **we are alive**
- Our **mind and spirit** seem to reflect the character of God more though, we can be rational, logical and have the ability to assert our own will from a young age....(Gabriel)
- We are mostly intelligent, aware of our surroundings, capable of changing it. (not always for good)
- We are morally aware. C. S. Lewis: all cultures have a moral code and those codes are remarkably similar. People know what is right and wrong but tend to live outside of this moral code.
- We have an inbuilt need for justice, we appreciate beauty and have a need to form relationships.
- Aspects of our personality, creativity, a capacity to love and show emotion, our conscience and imagination all reflect characteristics of God.

- Does this continue after the fall though?
- Yes, it is mentioned that we have been made in God's image at several place throughout the bible including 1 Corinthians 11:7, Genesis 9:6 and James 3:9.
- BMW example...
- Thus, in humans the image of God is still there but it may be distorted and need repairing – Jesus

**So : you are made in the image of God, but who are you?**

- We say...
- R : I am a surgeon, procrastinator, mother with maternal guilt issues, average-looking, prophetic-type, straight-talking, not quite ideal weight

D: I am an elder, ex –occupational therapist, guys guy, father, short, fat and balding. I am caring, intuitive, people pleaser.

- God says “I am” – Ex 3:14
- accepting that we are made in God's image, we should also be able to say “I am” – not arrogant, all-wise, all-powerful sense; but “this is me, comfortable in own skin & aware of endless creative possibilities, secure in God and thus in myself”
- BUT very few get this right – WHY???
- because we define ourselves & let others define us, instead of letting God define us, instead of seeing ourselves as “mini-me”
- mini-me not arrogant – Ps 8:3-5

<sup>3</sup> When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, <sup>4</sup> what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? <sup>5</sup> You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.

- So : using ourselves as examples, going to look at who others say we are, who we say we are

*Who do others say you are?*

important to look at this – words have immense power even if we deny this : “sticks & stones...”, “I don't care what anyone else says about me” – NOT TRUE! (ships rudder, what comes out of a man...)

- Gen 1 – “God said...” 7 times
- words = primary mode of communication for humans
- D : not creative / artistic, clumsy; boys : safety
- R : medical personnel stereotypes; fierce re negative speaking – greater extent boys, lesser extent others
- Jas 3:9 – “made in God's likeness” – do our words show we believe this?

<sup>9</sup>With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness.

- Bottom line = what has been said about and over us has defined us – recognize. But then move on – so much more!

### Who do you say you are?

- R : surgeon – my take, others’ take i.e. never pure – always influenced by others’ perceptions
- D : I am calm, easy going but strong willed at the same time.
- I am a peace keeper; I like a comfortable uncomplicated life.
- I am not academic and tend towards practical things.
- I have less capacity than some people and tend to be single focussed -I read one book at a time, complete one task at a time etc.
- I am generally disorganised and have little interest in administrative things.
- I have endless capacity for people’s problems but limited capacity for people in a social setting.
- I am fairly conventional and don’t enjoy taking risks.
- R : mom & wife
- D : Youngest son – people pleaser
- No mother -spent a lot of my time looking for a mother figure
- boarding school - sporty, limited moral awareness (lots of grey areas)
- Leadership roles- pushed on me.
- No Christian background- feel less qualified to speak...
- Only member of extended family to get university education –try to make it count for something.

### What does your behaviour say about God?

- Is 54:2 <sup>2</sup> "Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes.
- but we don’t! – why?
- function using model we know – myself as defined by me & others
- usually unaware that how I define myself, what I say & do, how I behave, all reflects God, tells others how I see God, what I believe about God and who he is
- D : how we do mission
- by defining ourselves according to others’ and our views, we generally devalue ourselves and thus devalue God
- Job 38:5-7, 25-27, 36 – 38; 39:19-20, 26-27
- BIG God = BIG us, limitless God = limitless us (creatively)

### How does God see us?

- You are a good thing (Gen),
- Created in His image, creative, capable of more than you can imagine -limitless possibilities.
- John 10:10 – “life to the full” (not ½ life based on what we have been told)
- be aware : everything we do & say communicates what we believe about God and how we see Him
- can’t escape boxes of how we & others define us
- at least – not by ourselves – need HS to help us do this
- HS empowers us to express ourselves creatively – this means expressing ourselves creatively OUTSIDE those boxes of how we define ourselves and how others define us