

LIFENET HERALD // November 10, 2019

Ice Breaker

Did you have a diary or a journal when you were younger? Do you still have one now?

Announcements

- Nov 24th - Operation Christmas Child: The amazing journey of a shoebox gift begins with you and results in evangelism, discipleship, and multiplication. Northgate will be collecting shoeboxes by November 24th. Visit samaritanspurse.org for more information
- Dec 7th 5:30 pm - Christmas Party: Sign up online to bring a dish. We are asking that each LifeNet would have a part in either food or clean up. More details to come.

Title: Imago Dei

Speaker: Roy Van Der Westhuizen

Roy shared this week about the Imago Dei or “The image of God”. This comes from Genesis 1:16-27 “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth,’ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” Chris broke down this passage line by line in his message “Remember Who You Are.” Roy specifically talked about the interpretations of what it means to be in the image of God.

Based on the way the passage is written in the original Hebrew, there can be a number of ways the Genesis passage can be read. He then broke down the biggest versions. The first was the “Substantialistic” interpretation which means we are in the image of God because we have a mind. Emotions are a key part of this view. We have them and experience them because God does.

The next interpretation is the “Ethical” one. This states that we are in the “image” of God because we have free will and can act and think rationally, but we are in the likeness of God in our moral similarity. We are always in the image of God but we are working to move towards being in His likeness.

The Relational Interpretation states that we are in the likeness of God because we have relationship with Him and because we have similar relationships with other people. This means we can love and care for others because God loved and cared for us first. The example Roy used was when he was driving home thinking about his unborn baby. He cried and sang to them and he could only do this because God cried and sang to Roy first.

The “Royal-functional” interpretation rises from an ancient near east understanding. It boils down to the fact that kings had images and statues made as symbols of their rule and authority. In a similar fashion kings were believed to be the conduit for pagan gods. In this interpretation, all of humanity is a representation of God on earth. Meaning humans are meant to rule as God’s authority on earth.

Lastly, “Cultic-Priestly” is based off the previous interpretation, stating that as representatives of God we also have a responsibility to mediate between heaven and earth.

Not all of these perspectives fit together well and as such there has been significant disagreement over the issue. Roy continued that despite the differences, all humans bear the image of God. But believers are different because they have the Holy Spirit and are effectively a new humanity. There is no better representation of God’s love on earth than when we love others. Conversely when we harm other people, we are slandering the image of God that we bear.

Discussion Points

- Discuss which interpretation you find the most interesting.
- Is there a view that you find particularly difficult to accept or disagree with? Explain.
- How do you see yourself in the image of God? Do you struggle to see yourself bearing that image?
- How well do you think you are doing in bearing the image of God? How can you improve?
- Discuss a specific step you can take to better reflect the Imago Dei this week.

Small Groups Vision - To be a Christ centered community of all ages mentoring students to change the world.

Small Groups Mission - To know Christ and make Him known