



Pause. Listen. Act. be You.

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MONDAY 7.25.22

Made like Me

Scripture: Genesis 1:26-28, 2:1-3

It's a pretty simple concept – God made human beings in the image of God and asked them to make more human beings to spread around the image of God. And yet, we make it more and more complicated. Does that make God look physically like a human person? If so, which one? Or is it a metaphor saying *in personality* we are like God? What about all this dominion of the creation language? One thing is true, humans are made in God's image. All of them.

- I wonder why God handed creation over to humans to care for and rule it? What do you wonder?
- If humans, all humans, are made in God's image, how should that shape how we relate to other people?

Prayer: Creator God, thank you for making us in your image. Thank you for making us good and giving us the good work of caring for the earth and all living creatures. Please help us remember each person bears your image, and you made us to take care of your world. Amen.

TUESDAY 7.26.22

The Story of the World

Scripture: Genesis 2:4-15

This is a slightly different version of the creation story than may be familiar to us. There are no days or separations of activities. It simply tells us God created the world, first springs, then plants, then humanity. Here, humanity isn't given "dominion" but asked to tend the earth. The relationship here seems more nurturing and caring, both between God and people, and between people and earth.

- If Jesus were the one portrayed as speaking these words to you, how might it change your understanding of the passage?
- What would you like to ask God about this passage?

Prayer: Living God, you give life to all living things. And you love your creation. You formed us; you knit us together in our mother's womb. We are fearfully and wonderfully made, and we praise you! Amen.

WEDNESDAY 7.27.22

A Helper

Scripture: Genesis 2:19-25

The imagery of woman being created from man's rib has caused a lot of problems throughout history, as has the label, "helper". But, in the scripture itself, there isn't any hierarchy implied. Instead, the story emphasizes how the two of them become one unit.

- I wonder how Adam felt when he was the only human being in the garden?
- If Adam needed a helper to make it through life, then so do you. How do you seek help?

Prayer: God of love and wonder, you made us and every living thing. Help us to take delight in one another and in the world you have made; just like you take delight in us and in the rest of your creation. Amen.

THURSDAY 7.28.22

Trick or Treat

Scripture: Genesis 3:1-5

The human's circumstances have not changed. They were naked before eating of the tree of good and evil and remain so after eating thereof. The only change thus far is their understanding of their circumstances. Their understanding prompts them to use fig leaves, ineffective as they may be, to cover their nakedness.

- Why do you believe the serpent wanted to trick the women?
- Is there a time, like Adam, where you have been tempted to not trust God?

Prayer: Lord, have mercy on us sinners. Forgive us for believing the lie you can't be trusted. Grow our trust in you and in your goodness and help us not to seek happiness apart from you. Amen.

FRIDAY 7.29.22

Fully Human

Scripture: Genesis 3:6-9

Being, or becoming "fully human," thus implies that one is willing and able to embrace one's vulnerability. Failure to do so has led all too often to individuals to think and act stronger than they really are. However, being or becoming a responsible and mature human being also implies that one takes responsibility for one's actions.

- Have you ever done something you know you shouldn't do?
- What does it feel like to hide a part of yourself from other people?

Prayer: Lord, have mercy on us. God, when we do wrong things, it's easy to try to hide from you and other people instead of admitting what we've done and saying we're sorry. Forgive us for doing wrong and for hiding. Amen.

SATURDAY 7.30.22

Judge Not

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:1-19

The letter writer prescribes hospitality as a Christian practices. In the context of 1 Peter, hospitality is not merely a courtesy but an extension of Christian identity. The writer reminds readers to extend welcome to all members of the community. The letter commands readers to practice "stranger love." Practices of providing welcome, in the form of room and board, resources, and even resettlement—for strangers within a group kinship were common. In the logic of 1 Peter, hospitality and welcome takes on the form of mutuality, support, and affirmation (1 Peter 3:8; 4:8–10; 4:14). It is a mechanism for supporting the diverse and dispersed Christian membership. It welcomes Christian strangers from elsewhere among them. It serves the purpose of maintenance and preservation, linking scattered Christian communities (1:1; 5:9, 12–13) to each other.

- How does hospitality have a place in your life? What are some of your practices of welcome?

Prayer: Lord, help us to open our doors to others, creating a place where all feel welcome and know God's presence in their lives. Give us courage. Amen.