

Whose Image? Genesis 5:1-3

I. INTRODUCTION

A. *The First Human Clone*

1. On Thursday of this last week, a group with links to a millennial UFO cult announced the birth of the first human clone.
2. Clonaid, based in Las Vegas, NV has a total of 5 human clone pregnancies and the day after Christmas saw the birth of the first.
3. Delivered by caesarean section, the first baby is a little girl who's a genetic copy of her 30 year old mother.
4. The group responsible for these cloning experiments is called the *Raelians*.
 - a. they believe aliens started human life on the Earth 25,000 years ago by cloning.
 - b. their leader is French journalist, Claude Vorilhon who renamed himself *Rael* after supposedly being visited in 1973 by a member of the aliens
 - c. these aliens call themselves the "Elohim" taking the generic name for "God" out of the OT.
 - d. Rael describes his visitor as being about 3-feet tall with long black hair, almond-shaped eyes, olive-toned skin and exuding "harmony and humor"
 - e. he says he discovered through this meeting that his father was an alien,
 - f. and claims he was taken in a flying saucer to meet Jesus, Buddha and Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism.
 - g. the cult numbers some 55,000 & pursues the promise of cloning because they claim it will enable humanity to attain *eternal life*.
5. I remember when cloning experiments began some years ago how the scientific community responded to the howl & cry of the general public about the possibility of cloning humans.
 - a. public concerns were downplayed with strong statements by technicians that human cloning was *unthinkable!*
 - b. the scientists seemed *offended* that people would even *suggest* they might try this technology with human beings!
 - c. but here we are – with the birth of the first human clone.

- d. tests will be performed soon by groups outside Clonaid to verify that the baby is a genetic duplicate of the mother.
- 6. This only goes to prove the time-worn adage that whatever technology man thinks up inevitably gets used.
- 7. If the cloning of this baby girl has gone as hoped, then she'll indeed be a genetic *duplicate* of her mother.
 - a. if the environment she grows up in is similar to the one her mother grew up in then they ought to look exactly the same at each step of their development.
 - b. they'll resemble identical twins, *separated* by 30 years.
 - c. one will be the image of the other.

B. Image

- 1. While the cloning of the *physical body* is only a recent development, it turns out that *spiritual* cloning goes all the way back to the beginning.
- 2. While Man was originally created in the image of God, when he fell into sin, that image was marred and corrupted.
- 3. This broken image has been passed on to each of Adam's descendants.
- 4. Look here at Genesis 5:1 . . .

II. TEXT

A. Vs. 1-2

**This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.
²He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created.**

- 1. Ch. 5 charts the descendants of Adam through his third son, Seth.
 - a. you'll remember what happened to his first two sons.
 - b. Cain, the firstborn murdered Abel his younger brother and then was banished to a distant land
 - c. the birth of Seth marks a *new beginning* for the family of Adam's descendants.
- 2. Because it's a new chapter in history, the record goes back to the beginning and reviews the creation of man.
 - a. what we find here is a repeat of ch. 1:26 where God said -

Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness

- b. there's an emphasis in these passages which speak of man's original creation on how mankind bore the *image* of God –
- c. and the blessing this image accrued to man and woman.
3. God said, “***Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.***”
 - a. there's a slight but subtle difference between the words ‘image’ & ‘likeness.’
 - b. *image* refers to the *form*, the *shape*, or *outline*.
 - c. *likeness* speaks of the *details*.
 - 1) a *stick figure* is an *image* of a person but a full-length *portrait* is a *likeness*.
 - 2) a piece of aluminum foil gives a reflection that's an *image*; a mirror gives the *likeness*.
4. In man's original creation, he not only bore the *image* of God, he possessed that image in a *likeness*.
 - a. man *fellowshipped* with God – there was communication because they spoke the same language.
 - b. man was a *rational & intellectual* being – and his reason was such that he is able to grasp *truth*.
 - c. man was a *moral* being – and before the Fall his morality was in complete harmony with what is right and good.
6. It's difficult in the extreme for us to imagine what Adam and Eve were like prior to the Fall.
 - a. sin has so distorted what God originally created man to be, we find it hard to relate to what original man was like.
 - b. because of the influence of evolution, when people think about Adam and Eve, they tend to picture something rather Neanderthalish.
 - 1) they picture Adam and Eve as hairy, knuckle-dragging, big-boned, & brutish.
 - 2) they didn't talk, they grunted!
 - 3) and if they picture them living in a garden, it's in a *cave* in a garden.
 - 4) they tend to see Adam with a club in one hand and a fistful of Eve's hair in the other!
7. But that is not at all the picture these early accounts of creation paint for us.

- a. Adam and Eve were created in the image and likeness of God.
 - b. they enjoyed the full extent of all they were created to be and do.
 - c. it's said man uses about 10% of his brain capacity.
 - 1) Adam and Eve had full use of it!
 - 2) and every thought was in perfect harmony with God!
 - d. we see the incredible physical skill & prowess of an Olympic athlete.
 - 1) but even they utilize only a small part of their overall physical *potential*.
 - 2) Adam & Eve had unrestrained access to every ounce of strength & coordination.
 - 3) and every bit of it was spent for God's glory!
8. As I said, it's difficult for us to relate to what Adam & Eve were like prior to the Fall but can you imagine in even a small way what it would be like to be free of temptation and all of your thoughts to be in total harmony with God's will?
- a. in fact, what if God's will was *never* a mystery to you!?! – you knew every thought you had was a reflection of God's will?
 - b. you didn't need to read a Bible because every word was a part of your memory and thinking.
 - c. can you imagine living in such a way that worship and praise weren't *occasional events* but were a part of everything you did?
 - d. or how about a life with no shame, no guilt, no fear, nothing to dread or be worried about?
 - e. no sorrow, no envy, no distrust.
 - f. a life where the only rule was freedom, light, truth, love, peace, joy, delight.
9. That's what it meant to be created in the image and likeness of God.
10. No wonder He calls them blessed!
11. But all of that changed when they turned from God and ate of the forbidden tree.
12. Look at v. 3 . . .

B. V. 3

³And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot

a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.

1. Much happened in the 130 years mentioned here.
2. The Fall took place and the image and likeness of God Adam & Eve had been created in was *shattered*.
3. They had had two sons – Cain and Abel.
4. And carrying on in the tradition of sin Adam began, the elder son murdered the younger.
5. You'll remember that when Adam and Eve sinned, God came to them with the promise that one day the *seed of the woman* would come, *the Messiah*, Who would crush the serpent's head and restore man's lost heritage.
6. When Eve's firstborn arrived, she named him *Cain*, which means "*Acquired*" thinking he was the *fulfillment* of the Promised Savior.
7. But it didn't take Adam and Eve long to realize their hopes were misplaced.
8. When the second child was born, they named him *Abel*, which means "*Vanity/Empty*" because they'd come to see how living in a fallen world meant the frustration of their hopes and dreams.
9. Now, with the birth of the third son, they name him *Seth*, which means "*Appointed.*"
10. It's through the line of Seth's descendants that the Messiah would eventually come.
11. But notice the way verses 1&2 parallel v. 3 . . .

1 • In the day that God created man / 3 • Adam lived one hundred and thirty years

1 • [God] made him in [His] likeness / 3 • [Adam] begot a son in his own likeness, after his image

2 • [God] called them Mankind / 3 • [Adam] named him Seth.

12. The author's point here is obvious –
 - a. man was originally created in the untarnished image & likeness of God,
 - b. but since the fall, the descendants of Adam all bear *his image*.
 - c. and that image is of a once great king whose glory has been quenched, and now he stands as a *mockery* of his former self.

13. Man, as he was created to be, is no longer seen on the earth.
 - a. he is an extinct species
 - b. and the thing that walks the earth today we *call* ‘man’ is but a shadow.
 - c. he is the image of *fallen Adam*, not the Adam who bore the uncorrupted image and likeness of God.

C. The Image Restored

1. But here’s the point – God promised that one day, a descendant of Eve’s would come who would open the door for man to be restored to the image of God.
2. He would regain and reclaim what was lost in the Fall.
3. And so, Jesus Christ, the Seed of the Woman, has come and has opened to us the pathway to what Man was originally created for – to be the image-bearer of God.
4. All of us, as the *physical descendants* of the first Adam are born with the fallen, sinful image of Adam but Jesus Christ came as the *Second Adam* to make a way for fallen men and women *back* to what they were created for.
5. This is what Jesus was talking to Nicodemus about in that well known passage in John 3.
 - a. Jesus cut right through all the chit-chat and told Nicodemus he needed to be born-again.
 - c. but Nick played dumb and asked how a person could be born *physically*, TWICE!
 - d. that’s when Jesus made it clear that he wasn’t talking about a *physical* birth but a *spiritual* one.
 - 1) He said our first birth links us to Adam, and so to sin and death.
 - 2) but the second birth is *spiritual* and links us by faith to Christ who saves us from sin.
6. The Apostle Paul puts it this way in 1 Cor. 15 -

2¹Since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. 2²For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

D. Whose Image?

1. The point of all this is that we're left with a choice on *whose image* we're going to pattern ourselves after – Fallen Adam's we were born *in* or Christ's we were born-again *to*.
2. Whose image will we live in, for and out of?
 - a. the old man/woman we were by virtue of our membership in the human race?
 - b. or the new creation we are by virtue of our faith in Christ who died to free us and rose again from the dead to gives us a new life that bears that new image?
3. In Romans 8:29 we read this –

Who [God] foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

4. The challenge today is a simple one – who do you want to be like?
5. Whose image do you seek to pattern yourself after – the image of Fallen Adam or the Image of Jesus Christ?
6. We see the image of Fallen Adam in almost all that the world throws at us.
 - a. if you want to see what Adam is about, go to the mall and look in the store window displays
 - b. visit the magazine rack at the bookstore – look in the fashion periodicals
 - c. watch TV or listen to the radio.
 - 1) all around us are men and women who are duplicating the image of fallen Adam and Eve.
 - 2) they're spiritual clones of brokenness, corruption, sin, and death.
 - 3) they may look good, smell nice, dress fashionably, talk hip, and have minty-fresh breath – but they're lost!
7. The entire world-system is run by people who are sold-out to the image of Fallen Adam.
8. And since we all *start* there, it's easy for them to hawk their wares and distract us from the higher call to follow Christ and be conformed to His image.
9. The writers of the NT understood that the battle of whose image we would live for is a fierce one so they wrote many strong exhortations to encourage us to chose the image of Christ.

10. For instance in Eph. 4, Paul; says –

22 . . . put off . . . your former conduct, that old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴[instead] put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

- a. did you catch that? Paul urges us to “*put on the new man which was created according to God*”
- b. just as God created Adam in His image, so the moment you’re born-again, there’s a whole *new you* God has planned for you to become –
- c. and that new you is what you were originally intended to be all those years ago when you were in Adam *before* the Fall.

- d. unfortunately, lost in the translation to English is the intensity behind the verbs Paul uses here in Ephesians 4
 - 1) when he tells us to *put off the old man* and *put on the new*, he means *once and for all*.
 - 2) he’s calling for us to realize that being a Christian means turning our back, once and for all, on the image of Fallen Adam, and embracing our new identity in Christ.
- e. Christianity isn’t just fire insurance or a parachute.
 - 1) it isn’t something you *add* to the life of the world to make the ride safer
 - 2) it’s a whole new life – a radically different life!

11. Right now in many places in the world, to become a Christian means to turn one’s back on one’s family, religion, culture, and world.

- a. in Sudan, conversion to Christ means to taking a step across a line that could very well mean death!
- b. it for sure means lose of rank and privilege in the Muslim-controlled areas of northern Sudan.
- c. to become a Christian in many places in India means ostracism from one’s Hindu family, and in many places immediate martyrdom.
- d. the same is true in much of Southeast Asia, some places in the Philippines, most places in Indonesia, large parts of Asia and northern Africa.

12. And yet, despite the cost, thousands are coming to faith in these places EVERY DAY!
13. While here in the US, there are many who call themselves Christians but who pattern their life after the image of the World rather than Jesus.
 - a. why, there are even movements *within* the church which turn the gospel into a way to acquire the best the world has to offer!
 - b. they sanctify carnality and call it faith!
 - c. what's sickening is to see how in some places the church bends over backwards to accommodate itself to the world so Fallen Adam and Eve won't feel uncomfortable!
 - 1) they're given new names – *unchurched Harry and Mary* –
 - 2) but really, they are Fallen Adam & Eve;
 - 3) and church is turned from the sanctified community of the Redeemed into a religious mall of the Compromised & Carnal.

III. CONCLUSION

A. We Must Decide

1. I know this is harsh – and I don't intend to sound cynical.
2. What I long for, ache for, is a genuine revival that will sweep through the church in America.
3. But beloved, God will not send revival to a church that defines *success* by some worldly standard!
4. You and I must decide whose image we will bear – Fallen Adam's & Eve's or Christ's.
5. We must decide where we will stand – in the Kingdom of God or this world.
6. You and I, as the people of Christ's church called Calvary Chapel of Oxnard have to decide if we want to be *big* or be *holy*.
 - a. do we want to be *popular* or *pure*?
 - b. do we aim for market-share or God's glory?
 - c. are we going to focus on buildings or the Spirit's building us?
 - d. will we strive for political and economic clout, or depend solely on the power of the Spirit?
 - e. will we operate by the wisdom of man or the counsel & Word of God?

B. Success

1. There isn't a person here today who wants to be a failure – we all want to be successful!
2. The real question then is – how do we define success?
3. The answer to that question tells us whose image we're living in, the world's or God's.
4. Teenagers will often put posters on the walls of their rooms as a way of marking their space.
 - a. typically, those posters represent the people they would like to model their lives after.
 - b. whether they're musicians, movie stars, athletes; whatever the field of their celebrity, they are images of success they aspire to.
5. Adults may be a bit more sophisticated in that they don't put up posters on the walls of their house, but they do have mental and spiritual posters in their heart – the images of success they cling to and who they pattern their life after.
6. So let me end by asking this morning – who do you aspire to be like?
7. It's a simple question and one that has been a great challenge to me this week.
8. As the followers of Jesus, there is only One we ought to aspire to pattern ourselves after – Him!
9. Next week I have a special message to bring to inaugurate our emphasis in ministry for the new year.
 - a. but it begins here – with a choice
 - b. some would say this is THE choice – the perennial choice for the Christian
 - c. do you want to be a man of the world or a man of God?
 - d. do you want to be a woman of God or a woman of the world?
 - e. What's it going to be = Sophistication or Sanctification?