

Series: God & Our Culture #1505

Title: Various Scripture

Jesus, Made in the Likeness of Men

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. It is good to have you here, and I want to talk with you about the wisdom of God in the way He created the man and the woman. In Genesis chapter 1 – the very first chapter in all of the Bible – and verses 26 and 27 we read this. **“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...’²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”** These really are stunning words, if you and I will sit back and read these thoughtfully. Oh, how much of what ails our society could be solved if men and women and boys and girls believed these words straight from the mouth of Almighty God. As the Psalmist later says, we are fearfully and wonderfully made. I hope you know this about yourself, dear friend. And I hope you will think of others in this way.

Human beings are made in the image of God. And in His eternal and perfect wisdom God made man in His image because He knew that approximately 4,000 years later God’s Son, Jesus Christ, would come to this earth as a man. The Bible says Jesus was made in the likeness of man, as man was made in the likeness of God. I will say this again now, and repeat it later, because I want us to really think about this truth. Jesus was made in the likeness of man, as man was made in the likeness of God. How forward thinking of our God, to create us as He did in Genesis 1, all in preparation for His Son whom He knew would need a human body all the way over in Matthew 1.

“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!” (Romans 11.33)

Listen, if you would, to the great and rightly famous description the Apostle Paul gives to Christ’s sacrificial and humble life with us. I am reading Philippians chapter 2 and verse 7, **“But [Christ] emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.”** This verse declares that Jesus was made in the likeness of men. He had a physical body, just like you and I do. Jesus was truly Man. He was simultaneously truly God. The God-Man. My point at this time is that God knew Jesus would need a body and so, from the beginning, God created us with bodies that reflect His image. Philippians 2, verse 7.

The New Testament Book of Hebrews sheds great light on this. The writer of Hebrews, whomever that was, writing about Christ’s sacrifice for our sin, quotes Psalm 40 with these words. I am reading Hebrews chapter 10 and verse 5. Hebrews 10.5, **“Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, ‘Sacrifice and offering You have not desired, but a body You have prepared for Me...’”** The words of the Lord, “a body You [meaning God the Father] have prepared for Me [meaning God the Son].” And why would Jesus need a body?

I appeal again to Hebrews and this time chapter 2. I am reading Hebrews 2, verse 14, **“Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil...”** What does this mean? The children is descriptive of us. As humans we share in flesh and blood. That’s what we are made of. He Himself is Jesus. He also “partook” of the same, the same being flesh and blood. This word “partook” in the Greek language means partnership, fellowship, and communion. And the word “share” in Greek means to take hold of something that is not related to one’s kind. By nature – being God – Jesus was not “flesh and blood,” but He became “flesh and blood” in order to save us from our many sins.

As the writer puts it, “that through death [Christ] might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil...” Oh what a statement *that* is! The Lord takes on flesh and blood, He becomes like us, in order to redeem us from death and the power of the devil. Christ crushed Satan for good on the cross. We who believe in Jesus no longer fear death. It has no power over us, because our Savior has saved us from it.

Death has no victory, it has no sting, all because Jesus came in His body and was nailed to the cross, paying in full the death penalty each person faces. To be the sacrifice for sin, Christ required a human, physical body and that is actually what He had.

Let's go even deeper. Jesus is the perfect image, the exact likeness of God. I am thinking of Colossians chapter 1 and verse 15, **"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation."** (Colossians 1.15.) "He is the image of the invisible God..." Christ makes God visible to us. Jesus is both the representation and the manifestation of God, is how one commentator put it. As I like to say, when we see Jesus, we see God. When we look to Jesus, we look to God. Jesus is God in human form, in the flesh. And how remarkable it is that, in the wisdom of God, Jesus was made in the likeness of man, as man was made in the likeness of God.

I also want to point out, that when God commanded the angels to appear to man, the angels took on the form of a human body. Here again, we see the *wisdom* of our Lord. Let me read a couple of passages to you. Back in Genesis, the eighteenth chapter, verses 1, 2, and 3. Here, God appears to Abraham via angels. This is Genesis 18.1-3, **"Now the Lord appeared to [Abraham] by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. ² When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw *them*, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth, ³ and said, 'My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by.'"**

Take note that the angels appeared as three men standing opposite Abraham. Surely God had this in mind when He made us in His image. Angels *do* visit among us, taking on human bodies. Going back to the New Testament, listen to Acts chapter 1, verses 9-11. This describes the beauty of the Lord Jesus' ascension from the earth and back to heaven. Acts 1, beginning in verse 9, **"And after [Jesus] had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And as they were gazing intently into the sky while [Jesus] was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. ¹¹ They also said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.'"**

Those two men in white clothing were angels, and the angels are identified as having human form (men) and even wearing white clothes. In the Scripture, when God appears to men He takes on the likeness of men. And in order to do that, He had to first create the human body. And that is exactly what He does in Genesis 1, verses 26 and 27 and, as given to us in greater detail, in Genesis chapter 2.

We have had a fair bit of Scripture today. And I am praying these verses will show you the importance and value attached to being made in the image of God. For biological evolution to so boldly state and assure us that "molecules to man" or "amoeba to man" or "apes to man" is the only credible way to account for the origin of human life and the development of our life, is totally contrary to the teaching of the Bible. After reading what Scripture clearly says, I almost cannot believe that anyone does believe in evolution. But they do. Maybe *you* do?

Let's get our foot in the door then on another verse I want to talk about in our ongoing dialogue about evolution, and that is Genesis 2, verse 7. The next time we are together, we will have much more to say about this, but let me get the verse on your mind so you can read it on your own time and think about it. The second chapter of Genesis, verse 7 says, **"Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."** *Wow!* This is a gem. And if you are looking for one verse, *just one verse*, that deals the death blow to biological evolution, it has to be this. Genesis 2, verse 7.

We've got to invest some time on this one. So, please stay with us at this same time on this same station or anytime on the God Is Podcast available from godisministry.org for God Is!

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