

Home- group notes: Sunday 24th September 2017

Beginnings: 'Humanity made in God's image'

Read Genesis 1: 26-31

1. This study is about the value and dignity of humanity. Before we look at this key text, do we think that human worth has eroded over the last twenty years or so? If we think so, then what would be our evidence and what do we think are some of the possible causes?
2. On Day 6 of Creation both animals and humans were created by God. In what ways are we both continuous with the animal kingdom and yet markedly different?
3. As you read this passage what are the key things that are said about the creation of humans. Notice the repetition of God *created* (three times in v.27). We are indeed the product of a special and gracious act of our Creator God.
4. What do you think is meant by the words 'God created humanity **in his image**'?
5. How are we to respond to those environmentalists who argue that this biblical mandate 'to subdue the earth' and rule over' the animal world (v.28) has been a major cause of a cavalier attitude to ecology?
6. Jesus Christ is the one human being who is the unmarred image of God (Colossians 1:15). Now read Colossians 3:9-11. What does v.10 teach us about ourselves, our hope and the 'image of God'?
7. Read Genesis 9:4-6. Without going into the issue of capital punishment, this verse (v.6) underlines how 'being made in God's image' gives an inviolable status to humanity. How does a humanist, who has no regard for this concept, defend the value and dignity of humanity? Is this enough to protect us from the many tragic forms of inhumanity that scar our society today?
8. Where, at the moment, do you most grieve the loss of human dignity in our culture? Use your answers in your prayers as a group.