

Growing Deeper
A New Way to Be Human

Week One: Finding Our Place Again
Genesis 1:1-27

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. How would you describe what it means to be human?
2. What characteristics would you use to differentiate humanity from the rest of creation?
3. Read Genesis 1:1-27. What does God create? How does he describe all he created?
4. Reread verses 26-27. How does God describe the uniqueness of humanity?
5. How does God's description line up with your definition of humanity?
6. How does God's description impact your feelings about yourself?
7. End your FIFTEEN thanking your Creator for the goodness of all he has made, including you.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

8. How would you answer the question, "Who are you?"
9. Read Genesis 1:26-27. How does God answer the question, "Who are you?"
10. How would you define "the image of God"?
11. One Bible commentator states, "The word image is an interesting word. In the Hebrew language that word image means "shadow"...The shadow is dependent upon the reality...And it is a general outline without any details." How does being made in the "shadow" of God broaden your understanding?
12. This image was imparted only to humans. Humans share (imperfectly and finitely) God's communicable attributes such as personality, truth, wisdom, love, holiness, and justice. How do these qualities give us the capacity for an ongoing relationship with our Creator?

13. Another commentator says knowing who you are (the image of God) is a gift. How does knowing you are God's image help you? How does it humble you?

14. Finish your FIFTEEN making a list of ways you see God's image in yourself. Confess to God the ways you have fallen short of his image. Thank him for Jesus' work to forgive your shortcomings and restore his image.

Spend FIFTEEN: Day Three

15. Did God have to create?

16. Why do you think God created the world? Why did he create people?

17. Reread Genesis 1:27. How many times is the word "created" used?

18. With the repetition of the word created, it is as though God put exclamation points here to indicate that there is something special about the creation of man. What does Genesis 1:26 say about the purpose of man?

19. Read Psalm 8. How does David describe God's plans for man? What does it cause David to do?

20. How can technology help humanity accomplish God's purposes? How can it hinder?

21. Take time to consider how you are accomplishing God's purposes. Ask God to show you how he is using you to bless his creation. Finish your FIFTEEN by thanking him for the ways he has crowned you with honor and glory.

Spend FIFTEEN: Day Four

22. Read Genesis 1:1-27 again. What characteristics of God do you see in this passage?

23. What differences are there between what God creates and what man makes?

24. While God can create something out of nothing, humans take what God has already created to make something. How do humanity's "creations" reflect God?

25. How do humanity's "creations" confuse the reflection of God?

26. The Apostle's Creed states, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." What would it look like to live as if you believed this? What things would you do or not do?
27. Believing God is the Creator gives a reliability and steadfastness to life. Natural processes go on because God is faithful. God not only called the world into being, but he sustains it. How does this help you when life seems out of control?
28. End your FIFTEEN praising God for each attribute you saw in the passage. Thank him for the ways these attributes help you in your current circumstances. Ask him to help you live like he IS the Creator of heaven and earth.

Spend FIFTEEN: Day Five

29. Genesis 1 teaches us that God is necessary for life. Would you say most people live as if this were true? How is it reflected in your own life?
30. Each of us struggles with living as we were originally created to live, in loving relationship with our Creator, in his image. What threatens your ability to live as you were intended to live?
31. Read John 1:4. What does that mean to you personally?
32. How does Jesus bring life into the places you struggle?
33. Even before he created, God intended to restore the world that sin broke. Read Ephesians 1:3-10. How is God working to restore his creation in you? How will you cooperate?
34. How is God working to restore his creation through you? How will you cooperate?
35. End your FIFTEEN by praying Psalm 8. Put your name in place of the words "mankind" and "human beings." Put "me" in place of "them."