



Section



LESSON OVERVIEW

In the “designed by God” lesson of each aspect, we will explore Scripture to understand the nature of femininity as God created it before sin and the Curse.

The question is ...

Who am I, and what am I doing here?

The answer is ...

You are created in God’s image to rule the earth for Him.

The basic text is ...

Genesis 1:26–28

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.²⁸ God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Getting Started

1. Whenever I want to know who I am and what I'm supposed to do, I

- Look in the mirror
- Go to the school counselor
- Read the Bible
- Get alone to look inside myself
- think about the Person of God
- Other

2. Right now, I would answer the big questions this way:

I have value because I am:

My purpose on earth is:

Me?!—A Model of God

The best place to begin the search for our basic identity is at the very beginning, at the creation of man and woman. God is the only eyewitness to this beginning, but, thankfully, He has given us a record of what happened. The book of Genesis is one of His greatest gifts to us because it tells us where we came from, who we are, and why we are here.

Let's step into Genesis, chapter 1, where day six of Creation is described. We find God explaining in simple phrases His design for man and woman. He talks about the image man and woman will reflect and the work they will do. Here are God's deep, soul satisfying, and unchanging answers to our questions "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?"

3. From Genesis 1:26–27 (p. 1), what model did God use when He created man and woman?

4. Read the definition of “image” in the sidebar. Each replica below is a model of something else. What does each model replicate? (what is it an image of?)

A GI Joe doll: _____

A doll in a wedding gown: _____

Monet’s painting of a lily pond: _____

The Statue of Liberty (what does it visually represent)? _____

Has someone ever told you, “You’re just like so-and-so!”? When someone said this, didn’t it make you curious about that person? God says, “You are like Me; you’re a little statue, an ‘action figure’ of Me.” Doesn’t that make you want to know more about God?! The best way to know more about ourselves is to know more about the God we reflect.

God—The Original Person

What does it mean to be in the image of God? The simple and most frequent answer given to this question is what we as human beings have a mind, a will, and emotions. That is, we think, we choose, and we feel. We relate as persons, not as machines or animals. In these ways we are like God Who thinks, chooses, and feels. He is a Person, not a machine or an animal.

The better we understand God’s specific characteristics, the better we will understand our human characteristics. Some of God’s divine characteristics (attributes) are listed below with simple definitions.

GOD IS:

Righteous: His character is the basis of all morality, law, and ethics
Just: He impartially punishes evil and rewards good.
Sovereign: God never loses control. His purposes are fulfilled.
Love: God always does the best for His creatures.
All knowing: God is omniscient. He knows everything.
All powerful: God is omnipotent. He is almighty.
Unchanging: God is immutable in character. He is always love, just, etc.
Eternal: God is without beginning or end.

Important Terms

Image: a reproduction; a tangible or visible representation (Webster’s)

Image of God: humans are little statues, replicas, or models of God. Our human characteristics are patterned after His divine characteristics.

Important Term

Attribute: an inherent characteristic; one basic to the nature of the one who possesses it (e.g. Palomino horses have golden coats.)

Important Terms

Divine attributes: the infinite characteristic which only God possesses such as: ultimate sovereignty, justice, love, knowledge, power, righteousness

Human attributes: the limited, but personal characteristics which are created in each human by God, such as:

Conscience: built-in sense of justice, or of right and wrong

Will: the ability to make decisions and choices

Personality/heart: capacity for love, grief, wonder, etc.

Power: capacity to change our world

Character stability: our character traits become more fixed as we mature

Immortality: with a beginning but without an end

Stop and look over the list of God's attributes. This is the amazing Person you are created to be like!

Studying a model or image of something helps us learn a lot about the actual thing, especially if the actual thing is unknown, majestic, or huge. If we were to study a museum model of the Grand Canyon, we could learn much about its shape, color, terrain, and proportions. But only when we stand at the edge of that one-mile-deep valley do we see its grandeur and awesomeness. In the same way, we are only small museum-quality models of God's limitless nature; yet we accurately represent Him because we are made in His image.

God patterned our human spirits after His divine Spirit. This is the core of our imagehood. God modeled our human characteristics after His own infinite characteristics.

5. Read the definitions of your human attributes in the sidebar to see how they are, in fact, little replicas of God's divine attributes. Beside each human attribute below, write the characteristic of God (listed on the previous page) which you think is the matching source for this characteristic. The first two are filled in to get you started.

My Human Attributes	God's Divine Attributes
Conscience (right/wrong)	<i>Righteousness</i>
Conscience (justice)	<i>Justice</i>
Will	
Personality/heart	
Mind	
Power	
Character Stability	
Immortality	

Wow! You have the opportunity to think, love, be wise, award good, punish evil, be trustworthy, and create even as God does. God possesses all these attributes infinitely. Yet, He allows us to model them in finite, human ways. You are modeled after God Himself.

6. What are simple ways in which the following attributes of God are like yours and yet are infinitely greater than yours?

Righteousness: _____

Knowledge: _____

7. Does knowing that God made you a replica of Himself change the way you see yourself? What does this say about your value?

God's creation of us is evaluated by the Artist Himself as "very good." We were made to reflect the Creator of the Universe, to be like Him. This incredible truth is the answer to our first question, "Who am I?"

Born to Rule

The Bible's answer to our first big question of identity is that we are models of God, made in His divine image. But the original question "Who am I?" leads to another question: "Why am I here?"

8. What is the first purpose for man and woman as revealed by God in Genesis 1:28?

God's first command to man and woman was not to love God or fulfill the Great Commission. His first command was to do something—to rule the earth for Him. God could have stayed and ruled the earth Himself. Instead, He commissioned man and woman to be His representatives. This commission given by God in Genesis 1:28 is often called the **World Mandate**.

According to the dictionary a "mandate" is "a formal order from a superior officer to a subordinate one, an authorization to act as given to a representative."

Look again at Genesis 1:28. In the World Mandate, God gives the man and woman three basic commands that can be expressed as the three verbs rule, subdue, and be fruitful.

Important Terms

World Mandate: The commission God gave Adam and Eve to rule the world for Him in Genesis 1:26. The World mandate has three parts:

to rule: to have authority over; to guide and make decisions regarding a matter's course and destiny

to subdue: to bring under control by conquest and to keep under control by diligent maintenance

to be fruitful: to create value by multiplying, filling, and expanding in every area of life.

9. With the help of the definitions in the sidebar, draw a line from each verb on the left to the best example of it on the right.

rule	Tracy cleaned up the huge mess in her room and then kept it straight by routinely picking up after herself.
subdue	Marie loved the ceramic pitcher she had made in art class, so she made four more to give to her aunts.
be fruitful	Lisa decided that her St. Bernard would not be allowed to jump on the sofa, so she taught him the meaning of "no."

By making us little models of Himself, God has equipped us to rule for Him. He makes big, sovereign decisions, and we can make little decisions because we have a will. He has a gigantic, unlimited mind, and we have limited minds that can think and understand, and so on with all our attributes.

10. The first human body was made directly from the earth. All of our bodies return to dust after death. Our spirits come from God and return to Him. How does our being a combination of earth and spirit help us rule the earth for God?

God created this amazing place, made us His representatives, and said: "Here. You rule it, subdue it, and make it fruitful." He gives us responsibility for our world. By creating us in His image, He has made us capable of making the choices and doing the work necessary to rule for Him.

There are over five billion people on earth today. Mankind has explored and mapped all the earth and has started on outer space. Vast knowledge about God's creation has been accumulated, and countless crafts, technologies, arts, and sciences have been refined to amazing levels. So, we can see that a lot of ruling, subduing, and producing has already gone on. However, history is not over. You have been born into the world with God's image.

You, too, are to rule, subdue, and be fruitful.

My World—My Realm—My Domain

We each have our own part of the world to rule. We will call that portion our **domain**.

Your domain is everything that God has given you responsibility for during your lifetime. It includes your relationship with God, the family God gave you, your friends, your time, your money, your body, your mind, your words, and the talents God has given you. All of these are valuable assets committed to you by God. He expects you to rule these for Him. This is the first basic answer the Bible gives to the question, “Why am I here?”

Knowing what you now know about God and His design for you, you have choices to make about how you will rule, subdue, and be fruitful. The choices start with your domain, your personal “garden.” Your domain is unique to you—no one else can rule it; no one else is responsible for it but you.

11. Read 2 Corinthians 5:10 in the sidebar. How seriously does God take the responsibility He’s given you?

My Domain Inventory

12. What is in your domain to rule? Here are some categories basic to everyone’s world. Below each, list parts of this area which are in your personal domain. A sample item is listed in each category to get you started.

Walk with God (for example: prayer life)

Relationships (for example: with parents, siblings)

Talents/Abilities (for example: musical aptitude)

Body (for example: cleanliness)

(continued on next page)

2 Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Important Terms

Domain: all that an individual is responsible for before God including body, soul, time, money, relationships, talents, words, actions, thoughts—everything one will answer for at judgement.

My personal domain: everything God gives me responsibility for during my lifetime and for which I will answer at the judgement.

School (for example: promptness with assignments)

Words (for example: truthfulness)

Time (for example: scheduling)

“Goals are access lines to the future. They allow us to run the race with the finish line firmly established.”

Emily Barnes

As you complete this list, does it surprise you how much is in your domain? God has made you a ruler in His image with authority from Him to make decisions, to rule, subdue, and be fruitful. This includes everything from cleaning out your closet, to choosing your friends, to deciding Who will be your God or gods.

Because this is true, what should I do?

One of the biggest areas young women need to rule is time management. Some girls try to do so many things, they stay exhausted and do nothing well.

13. Ruling time means choosing what you will and will not do. These are your priorities. What are your **priorities** right now—the things you have chosen to accomplish this semester or this year?

14. Subduing in the area of time means bringing it under control so that you match what you have to do with the time you have. This is called **scheduling**. Do you have a schedule? Does it match your priorities? In other words, do you set aside time to accomplish the goals you have chosen?

15. Being productive with your time means actually **accomplishing your priorities** during the scheduled time. For example, if passing English is one of your priorities (and it should be!), when the time scheduled for English comes, you should apply yourself to that (and not to talking on the phone or watching TV). There is a modern proverb, “Plan the work and work the plan.” Are you being productive this year? Are you accomplishing the priorities that you have set for yourself?

One day you will stand face to face with the One who created you, loved you, and gave His life for you. You will answer not only for what you did with this semester, but you will give an account for what you did with your whole life.

16. What is one gift that you want to be able to give God as a fruit of your life?

Responding to God

Use the following PRAISE acrostic to help you pray to God as a young woman created to be a Daughter of the King. Consider His attributes, the way He made you, and the significance and purpose He’s designed for you.

Praise God for making you in His image.

Repent of any areas in your life you are not ruling for Him.

Acknowledge the authority God has given you.

Intercede for friends who need to know God’s attributes.

Supplication—pour out your heart to God, confident that you are like Him (everything you say will make perfect sense to Him).

Equipping—ask God to help you use your talents to serve Him.

Thanking the Creator

God has designed you and this whole world. Sometimes we have so much to thank God for, we don’t thank Him for anything. Write just one thing you are thankful for in each of the following categories:

one of God’s characteristics:

one of my own characteristics:

one animal:

one plant:

one person:

one book:

one song:

one tool:

one food:

Psalm 8:3–6, 9

*When I consider Thy heavens,
the work of Thy fingers, the
moon and the stars, which
Thou hast ordained; ⁴What
is man, that Thou dost take
thought of him? And the son of
man, that Thou dost care for
him? ⁵Yet Thou hast made him
a little lower than God, and
dost crown him with glory and
majesty! ⁶Thou dost make him
to rule over the works of Thy
hands; Thou hast put all things
under his feet, ... ⁹O LORD,
our Lord, how majestic is Thy
name in all the earth!*

Visualize it this way ...

My Image: Imagine a beautiful porcelain statue of a lovely girl that looks like you. This is an image of you. It is not you, but it is like you. You are an image of God. You are like God, but you are not God.

My Domain: Imagine a shopping bag. Put an item in it for each of the areas of your life—perhaps a watch to represent your time, a book to represent school, a picture of your mother to represent your relationship with her. If you could fill it with something to represent every area of your life, the whole bag would picture your domain.

The big ideas are ...

1. I am created in God's image.
2. I am created to rule on this earth.
3. I have a personal domain to rule for God.

The important words are ...

image of God
divine attributes
human attributes
World Mandate
ruling
subduing
being fruitful
my personal domain

Summing up ...

When we responsibly accept our image from God and fruitfully rule in our domain, God's reflection shines in us. He gets the ultimate glory, and in our deepest part we find ourselves in Him.