

CHILDREN AND GOD'S IMAGE

February 8, 2025

Pandemic, polarizing politics, and perilous prejudice—this decade might hold a record for being the most confusing, scary, stretching, and everything-in-between decade in this early century. We all need a healthy sense of self, to know that God loves us, and to show respect for others. Our job as parents is to make sure our children have a strong sense of each of these so that they will treat themselves and others with God-centered value.

The concept of being made in God's image, found in Genesis 1, provides three central ideas for instilling these necessary traits.



1. **Like God, the loving Creator, care and provide for people.** Genesis 1:1 begins with, "In the beginning, God created..." The creation account is the best tool to help our children see God as the Creator. It is a reminder that he created not only all the birds, trees, etc., but he created all human beings too—differences and all! In his great care and concern for us, God made sure everything we would need was already there when he created us. In the same way, we must reflect God's great care and concern for humanity in our thoughts and actions.
2. **See God's image in people at home.** Let's teach our children to see God's image in the people closest to them. Make it a fun activity! Give each family member a blank sheet of paper. Have them list three important strengths or gifts for each family member that differ from the rest. Then, take turns reading the lists while everyone else tries to guess who the list describes. Be sure to emphasize that the strengths and gifts differ from one person to the next, yet they are equally good!
3. **Live out God's image everywhere.** Next, use that list to point out how each family member uses their strengths and gifts to help around the house or how those things can be applied in other places. Using Genesis 1:26-31, explain how the game is similar to what God did in these verses. He made humankind in his image with different abilities meant to be used together to "rule" over the creation.

Recent social and political discord have emphasized great divisions, but that doesn't mean our children are destined to widen the gaps. It's important to lead our families in the mandate of Genesis 1. Think about it! God gave us power and dominion over everything, including over division! It all starts with knowing that *God loves all of us*.

Want to do a deeper dive? Check out these children's book recommendations:

ThoughtFull by Dorena Williamson

God Made Me AND You: Celebrating God's Design for Ethnic Diversity by Shai Linne

written by Brenda M. Croston