

Dr. Ted Hildebrandt, OT History, Lit., and Theology, Lecture 6

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This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt teaching Old Testament History, Literature and Theology. Lecture number six on genealogy not equal to chronology, the image of God, and the two trees in the Garden of Eden.

A. Quiz Preview [00:00-3:26]

For this week, you guys are working on Exodus and you have to read 20 chapters or something up to the ten commandments. After that its select chapters so you don't have to read the whole thing. Basically, you are skipping a lot of the tabernacle descriptions. There are two articles for this week, one is by a guy named Bruce Waltke, who's a super-scholar on the archeological evidence from Palestine under Joshua. So I think you will find it interesting. Now, this is important because there are two articles this week: one article that you are going to be responsible for, the other one I'm simply going to ask you did you read the Waltke article. I'm not going to ask you details from the Waltke article, there are a lot of details there. I'm just going to ask you to read it. Now on the "Bloody Bridegroom" article, that's the one I want you to focus on. So on that one I will ask you specific questions? So the "Bloody Bridegroom," focus on that one, the other one just read. Then there are a couple of memory verses. I think the memory verses are real hard. What is it, Psalm 23? I think it starts out "the Lord is my shepherd," you may have heard it a few times. So I want you to know "the Lord is my shepherd." By the way, that's a really important Psalm and you should know that. It comes in really handy. It's a just a very good Psalm to learn.

One other thing on the materials for this course we are double now. Some of you still have not paid for the materials for the course and so its twenty bucks now. I don't want to chase you down. After Friday, you are done taking quizzes and exams. You have got to turn it into your grade or it starts cutting in, you know you can't take the quizzes and you can't take the exams. So you need to get it in

this week, it's not an option.

Alright, let's open with a word of prayer and then we will dive into the book of Genesis today and get down the road.

Father, we thank you for your kindness to us and we thank you for the beauty that comes to us in the fall in New England. For the refreshing weather and we just thank you for that. We thank you for your word, we thank you that you have spoken, you had it written down and now you give us the privilege of reading it. We pray that you might help us as we try to interpret it that we might understand it aright. We pray that it might guide us to you to glorify and honor you, to worship you more accurately and to appreciate your Son that you gave in our behalf. So help us in our explorations in your word today. Thank you that we can call you "Father" even this day. In Christ's precious name we pray, amen.

B. How old is the earth? Not a test of orthodoxy [3:27-4:58]

We want to start up by asking the question: how old does the Bible say the earth is? We have been discussing this quite a bit and the answer to the question: where in the Bible does it say how old the earth is? There is no verse anywhere in the Bible that says exactly how old the earth is. So you have to ask yourselves some questions about how much of a big deal you are going to make of this. We want to start out by saying, if the Bible doesn't say specifically how old the earth is, do you have to be careful about making that a test of orthodoxy? Now what I mean by "test of orthodoxy" is: are you going to split churches over this issue of how old the earth is? Now, by the way, have some churches split over that? Is that the wrong issue? It's the wrong issue because different people are going to have different opinions and it's only their opinions because the Bible does not tell us how old the earth is. So I want to say that the age of the earth should not be a test of orthodoxy since there is not one clear verse in the Bible that says how old the earth is. It's all conjecture. You can have your own conjecture, you can have all your reasons you want but it's still conjecture. You don't have a "Thus saith the

Lord” on this one. So you have got to back off and realize: can your own conjectures be wrong? I say, your conjectures can be wrong.

C. Science and the Bible [4:59-7:56]

I’m joking, of course, because I will show you things in the next class period where I have changed my opinion over the years. I have changed how I thought about things. So be careful about that. You have got to be careful about pushing science into and grabbing science out of the Bible. Here are some examples. I think we mentioned some of these last time. “Poison” in Psalm 140, verse 3. Psalm 140 is a beautiful. If you love the animals, Psalm 140 is your psalm. Psalms 140:3 talks about the poison of asps being under its tongue. Now that’s serpents, snakes, and asps. When a rattlesnake bites you, is it because the poison is under its tongue or is the poison in the fangs? It’s in the fangs. So this is a poetic description, is this meant to be taken scientifically that all of the asps, have got special poison under their tongues? That’s not the point. So you have got to be careful about pushing science into or out of the Bible. This is a poetic description, it’s not meant to be taken as a scientific description.

Here in Isaiah chapter 11, verse 12; it talks about the “four corners of the earth.” Again you can’t say: they all believed in a flat earth therefore the Bible teaches a flat earth. You’re getting the wrong point. What it is saying is all over the earth, the four corners of the earth. By the way, even in the twenty first century, we talk about the four corners of the earth. People came from the four corners of the earth to go to New York City for 9/11--from the four corners of the earth. All we’re taking about is north, south, east, west. We’re not making a statement that the earth is flat. So you have got to be careful with that.

Job 9:6 talks about the pillars of the earth. Again, it’s not a scientific description, it’s not an electromagnetic description of how the earth is balanced. Job doesn’t know about electromagnetism when he talks. It’s just a poetic way of saying that the earth is stable “set on pillars.” So you have got to be careful about taking some of this poetry and pushing science into the Bible or drawing science

out of the Bible.

The sun stands still, we are going to have to talk about that in Joshua 10. The problem there is understanding what it means by “stands still.” The word there actually may mean “silent” and so we’re going to have to talk about that and I’ll deal with that when we get to the book of Joshua. It’s about three weeks ahead of me here.

Now, my point is major on the majors, minor on the minors. The age of the earth is a minor point; don’t major on that and check your attitude. When someone disagrees with you, are you able to handle disagreements? It’s really important. How do you treat people when you disagree with them on some of these theological points?

D. Genealogy is not Chronology [7:57-10:00]

This is another big point: genealogy. How do some people come up with the date of the early earth is ten to twenty thousand years old. People use the genealogies and what they do is they start adding up the ages of--this guy lived nine hundred years, this guy lived nine or sixty nine years, this guy lived... and they add up all the genealogies. You end up determining how old the earth is by adding up the genealogies. Can you do that? Are genealogies meant to give us chronology? Chronology has to do with *chronos* which is “time” in Greek. What does genealogy have to do with that? Father-son, father-son or whatever in the family come down like that. Chronology and genealogy are two different things. You can’t mix them and I’ll show you how they are not the same. So the two big genealogies by which people try to establish the age of the earth are Genesis 5--the genealogy of Adam; and then Genesis 11 with the genealogy coming from Noah down to the time of Abraham. So they add up those numbers of how old these guys lived. The problem with that is if you add up the genealogy, you end up with 4004 BC as the date for the creation of the world. If you add up the genealogies as Bishop Usher did, you come up with the earth being created at 4004 BC. Why can’t that be? If the earth was created at 4004 BC, you need a flood at least a

thousand years later because many of these guys live 900 years at least. Now if you're from 4000 BC, you're down to when did the flood happen? 3000 BC or in the 2000 range. What's the problem with that? Do we have written records back in to the 3000 BC from both Mesopotamians and Egyptians? So it can't be. By the way, there's a tower probably as big as those two pillars at Jericho that's ten thousand years old. If that tower at Jericho is dated 8000 BC, how can the earth be created at 4000 BC? Do you know what I'm saying? Did God make the tower? I'm sorry, that was supposed to be a joke. God didn't make the tower. Human beings made the tower at 8000 BC so you have got to be real careful with it.

E. Matthew 1: Genealogy not equal to chronology, names skipped [10:01-16:25]

Now let me just show you this. If you've got your Bibles, hop over to Mathew 1 and I will show you the genealogy of Jesus Christ. Are there holes in the genealogy of Jesus Christ? Yes. So you look at Mathew 1, verse 8, it says Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa, and then verse eight: Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram. Then it says Jehoram was the father of Uzziah in verse eight. Mathew 1:8 says Jehoram was the father of Uzziah, is that wrong? Was Jehoram the father of Uzziah? And the answer is "No," he was not. Jehoram was not the father of Uzziah. Now that's a fact, whether you agree with me or disagree, it doesn't make any difference. That's a fact. Jehoram was not the father of Uzziah, he was the great great grandfather. There are three names that are skipped between Jehoram and Uzziah. You say, "you're talking real dogmatic here Hildebrandt, how do you know that?" Well, I don't know anything. I go to the Bible. If you go to 1 Chronicles 3:11 it tells us the names of the three kings that were between Jehoram and Uzziah. It lists the three kings that are skipped and their names are: Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah. So three names are skipped.

Now why would Mathew skip three names? He's coming down the list of the kings of Israel, would most Jews know the kings of Israel? We don't memorize the kings in this class but most Jews would know all the kings and they would

know those three names were skipped. Why did Mathew do that? Let me read you, going down to verse 17. Check this out: Mathew 1:17. “There are fourteen generations from Abraham to David.” What was the date of Abraham approximately?—2000 BC. What’s David?—1000 BC. “There are fourteen generations from Abraham to David. There are fourteen generations from David until the exile to Babylon.” So from David, 1000 BC down to 586 BC the Babylonian captivity, there are fourteen generations. Then it says there are fourteen generations from the “exile to Babylon to Christ.” So there are fourteen generations Abraham to David, fourteen generations David to the Babylonian exile, and fourteen generations from the exile down to Jesus. How did Mathew make it come out to be fourteen, fourteen, and fourteen? Guess what, he did it by dropping three of the names. Do you guys know about fudge factors? I was in science and they call these fudge factors. It didn’t work out right, so we dropped three names to make it fourteen. Now you say, he didn’t really do that? Yes, he really did that. We know the three names that he skipped.

Now why did he do that? One suggestion, and I think it’s a good one, actually: in English we do what? Do you have letters that compose words? Are the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 different from the letters a, b, c? So we have two different systems--numbers and letters. Do you realize the Jews use their alphabet for their numbers? Now question: is that a problem? So “a” is 1, “b” is 2, “c” is 3, “d” is what 4, “e” whatever go on down. Their letters and their numbers can that at points create problems? Sometimes you don’t know whether you’re looking at a number or whether you’re looking at a word. It’s very interesting that if you take the Hebrew letter for “d” which is 4, “v” is 6, and you take d is 4 and you add those together: you’ve got 4 plus 6 plus 4, it’s what? Fourteen. Who is this DVD? David. So the suggestion here is that Mathew is saying: Jesus Christ is whose son? The son of David, fourteen, fourteen, fourteen, David, David, David.

Do you see what he’s doing? He drops those three to make it fourteen because that’s what his point was. If you didn’t get it, he says explicitly in verse

one: “a record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David.” Then he builds that genealogy to basically show that. Now, by the way, is it ok to drop three names like that? The word “father,” also means “ancestor.” Jesus Christ, son of David, is the word “son” used there? There’s how much from David to Jesus? Jesus was zero right? David is a 1000 BC. So there’s what a thousand years there. Jesus wasn’t really zero. I was just saying that to see if anybody smiled. So you got a thousand years down to the time of Jesus. So “Jesus Christ, the son of David,” he was the what? He was a “descendant” of David. Jesus Christ’s father was not David directly. His father was God and the Holy Spirit. But you know what I’m saying, David was his ancestor through Mary. So this is what I think is going on there.

So all I’m trying to say is: do we know for sure there are holes in genealogies? Yes. You can’t use genealogy to establish chronology. There may be holes. Who knows how long those holes can be? So that leaves you with the 4004 BC. Nobody accepts that today. This is something Bishop Usher did way back. No one holds that today because, for example, at Jericho we’ve got remains in Jericho that go back to 8000 BC and so 4004 BC can’t be right. We realize that in genealogies when it says “father/son,” that there may be huge gaps. He may be the great great great great grandfather of so and so. So be careful with that.

F. Literary Patterns in Genesis 1: Fiat-Fulfillment [16:26-18:54]

Now, in the book of Genesis, we are talking about chapter one. There are some patterns here and I want to show you two patterns. These are kind of interesting in terms of the patterns of Genesis 1, the days of creation. This is called the Fiat-Fulfillment Pattern and here it is. See if you recognize this. It happens over and over again. Here’s Genesis 1--the seven days of Genesis. Do you remember the seven days of Genesis? It always starts out: “And God said,” There’s an **announcement**. Then there’s a **command** “and God said let there be-- what? “Let there be light.” Day two, let there be a what? A firmament above separating the waters above and the waters below. Let there be dry ground coming

up, let the heavens bring forth sun, moon, and stars. So, “let there be.” God makes a command. “And God said,” there’s an announcement and then there’s a command—“let there be.” “Let there be light” and then what’s next? Then there is the **fulfillment**. God said, “let there be light and there was light.” God said let there be x, this may be another way to put it. X sounds too impersonal, sounds like algebra class. But anyway, “let there be x and there was X.” Whatever the day, there were the six days. Then God evaluates his own work. It’s interesting. Does God evaluate his own work? After he has created it, does he look back and evaluate it? He **evaluates** it—“and God saw that it (the light, the sun, moon, and stars) whatever he was working on, God evaluates his work--“and he saw that it was good.” Then there’s the end of the day. “And there was evening and there was morning day--what? Day 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7. On the seventh day, God rested. And God looked on the seventh day and he saw everything that he had made and that it was what? Very good (*tov me’od*) “it was very good.” So at the end God reflects on the whole thing. It’s very good. Do you remember seeing this pattern over and over again with every one of the days? So this is kind of a literary structure that each of the days is put into and it’s helpful to see the organization of it. It’s called the Fiat and Fulfillment Pattern.

G. Parallel Day Pattern [18:55-21:58]

Now the next one is actually how I remember the days of Genesis. If I asked you what was on day 5, would you know just like that what’s on day 5? Would you know what was done on day 4? This is how I remember it: What was created on day one? “Ok,” he said, “let there be light” on day one. Now what day was man created? Six. If you know the first and the sixth day then you get all the other days. In the second pattern I’ll show you how to do this. Psalm chapter 33, verse 6 says: “By the word of the Lord, the worlds were formed” and so it’s talking about the power of God’s word. It’s the spoken word, calling things into being. Psalm 33:6 and 9 describe the creation by the word of his mouth. So God created speaking and this is kind of an interesting thing with the Fiat-Fulfillment

pattern.

Now, here's the Parallel Day Scheme. Now this is really neat and don't kind of get all blown away. This is fairly easy. On day 1 "God said let there be light, there was light." On the parallel day, on day four, he makes the what? The light bearers. What would be an example of light bearers? Sun, moon and stars. So on day 1 he makes the light, on day 4 he makes the light bearers.

On day 2 he separates the water above from the waters below. Now what are the waters below? The oceans. What are the waters above? Clouds. So he separates the waters above and the waters below. On day 5 he makes the fish and the birds. Where did the fish inhabit? The waters below. Where did the birds inhabit? The waters above. So you got the birds and the fish going on in the waters above and the waters below.

On day 3 he makes the dry land and on day 6 he makes the inhabitants of the dry land. Who are some of the inhabitants of the dry land? Us, people. So he makes people and land animals. He makes land critters on the sixth day. So, by the way, if you know humans and land critters are made on day 6 and day 1 is the light. Do you know what day 4 is? Yes, it's the light bearers. If you know day 6 he makes the land critters, you know what day 3 is, the dry land. And then in the middle you have the what? The waters above and the waters below, the fish, and the birds. You see how all that works? I hope I'm not just dreaming here because this makes it really easy. If you know the first and last day, then you kind of can reconstruct the rest of it.

By the way, what day did I skip? On the Sabbath day, God rested. Question, did God rest because he was tired? No. He rested and so the Shabbat is set up not just because he was personally tired but God reflects on things.

H. Forming and Filling [21:59-23:14]

Now one other thing I need to point out about this chart: in Genesis, do you guys remember Genesis 1:2? "And the earth was darkness," and how should I say, the whole was formless and empty. Do you remember the earth was formless and

empty and darkness was *tohu vavohu*. The world was “formless and empty,” do you see what these days do? On days 1, 2 and 3--these are days of forming. In other words, the earth was formless and empty and what does God do? He takes the formless shape and he forms that which was formless. Then he does what? He fills that which was empty. So these first three days are days of forming and the second three days are days of filling. So that which was formless takes shape, takes form; and that which was empty gets filled.

By the way, even with human beings, he tells human beings we are to be “fruitful and multiply.” We are to do what to the earth? Fill the earth. So you get this forming and filling in the creation account. I don’t know but this just helps me put the whole thing together. If I know the first day and the sixth day I’ve got the rest of it. So this is the parallel day structure of the six days of creation.

I. Image of God in man [23:15-31:57]

Now, let’s jump over and what I want to do next is talk about the image of God in man. So we want to start out with these kind of questions on the image of God in man. What does it mean to be human? Is this a big question today? Are you folks in your lifetime going to face this big time? Let me just explain how it’s going to come about that this is going to be a major question for you. First of all, is man one or two parts or three parts? Is it man, body, soul, and spirit? Or is it just body, soul/spirit? Or some people just say all you are is body. You are just your brain that’s it. All you are is your physical body. So what is a human being? How are we composed? How are human beings different than the animals? We have got some people today who say: save the animals, kill all the people. Yes, to some, animals actually seem to be more important than the people. We’ve got some groups, I always get a kick out of PETA. I always tell people I’m a PETA person; I’m a Person who Eats Tasty Animals. That doesn’t usually go over too well on some of you but anyway. How does cloning fit in? Can they take now some of your cells and actually build another you? Do you remember they did that with a sheep? Dolly. What happens if they do that with a person? Is that really you or is

that really somebody different if you are cloned. What does it mean to be human at that point and what does it mean to be you?

Cyborgs--are human beings getting more parts from other places? In other words, all of a sudden what is it, Peter Stine gets a donated kidney. Do people donate kidneys to another person? Now you're walking around and you have a kidney from another person. Is that you or them? You've got what? Hearts being transplanted now between people. Livers, you think of Steve Jobs, I was told and I don't know whether it's true that he's got pancreatic cancer. This is a really, it's over kind of thing. Pancreatic cancer is fatal. But did Jobs get a liver, does anybody know? I think he got a liver didn't he? And the liver was transplanted. Is that really pretty cool that they transplanted a liver. In one sense, they transplant somebody else's heart into you, is that really you? My wife faces this problem, I call her my bionic woman. She just had a knee put in so she's titanium woman now. She's got this titanium knee. So you have got to stay away when she wants to kick you. She broke her ankle so she's got some plates in her foot and a few screws. So she always has a few screws lose there. I go to the airport with my wife and walk through the scanner and what happens? Take off all your metal. Now we don't go to the airport anymore because of the way you get groped when you go in there. By the way, I say that and you guys laugh, its not a laughing matter. My son has a 25 year old wife, 25 year old. Every time they go to the airport, her number gets called every time. Does that give you a clue? Does that get you angry? My son actually ended up driving out to his sister's wedding 22 hours so his wife wouldn't have to get checked out at the airport. I don't know. All I'm saying is some of the stuff the TSA is doing now really bothers me. They do it in the name of safety but it's a lot of bad stuff.

Let me talk about spiritual machines. So what I'm saying is, is it possible for body parts of people to be swapped? Different leg parts and arm parts and things like that. By the way is that good? Yes, it's good for some people. I mean, some of the guys have their legs blown off and they get put back on. What about

spiritual machines? Do you know anything about Moore's Law? Moore's Law basically says this: that computers double in intelligence every 18 to 24 months. It's about every 2 years computers double in intelligence. I want you to think about that. Now back when I was in high school just after the Civil War, they had a computer and our first school computer was this big by this big. It was huge and it had two memory units. So you did $A^2 + B^2 = C^2$, you could do the A^2 , you could do the B^2 but you didn't have a third place to put C^2 . There were two memory units and the whole computer cost 5000 dollars. Now what happened? In 18 to 24 months it went from 2 to what? 4. Then another it went from 4 to what? 8. Then from 8 to 16, 16 to 32, 32 to 64, and then all of a sudden it starts going up. So what happens after a period of time? Now it goes to one megabyte, it goes to 2 megabytes, it goes to 4 megabytes, 16, and now all of a sudden we're doing what? Gigabytes and it goes from 1 gigabyte to 2 gigabytes, to 4 gigabytes, 4 to 8, to 16, to 32. And now we get terabytes. One terabyte goes to 2 terabytes, 4 terabytes, and every 18 months it's doubling in intelligence.

Question, can a computer play a human being in chess? Can a computer win? Yes, so they can program a computer to win at chess. The computer keeps getting smarter and smarter; is it getting smarter more quickly than you guys are getting smarter? Yes. So what Ray Kurzweil down at MIT is saying is that this stuff here is carbon. This is carbon and this stuff here only works so well. The computers keep doubling in intelligence and what he's suggesting is by 2025 computers will be smarter than you guys. I'll be dead so, but it will be smarter than you guys. Why? A computer's intelligence doubles all the time. What he's saying is that carbon is history. What he's saying is that the future is silicon. What's going to happen is that computers will go by us in intelligence by 2020 or 2025. You guys will be alive, it's what? 10 to 15 years from now this kind of stuff is going to happen. Do you already have robots that you can talk to and tell to do activities? Now are they really pretty stupid at this point? Yes, and that is what he says, they are about the intelligence of a mosquito. But what's the benefit for

them? Every two years they double. Do you see where it's going? Eventually, will we have computer probably as robots that are able to talk to you in open conversation? Actually will they be smarter than you are? This is where we are going. So then what does it mean to be human when you have a machine that's smarter than a human being? What does it mean to be human?

So we look out at the technological landscape and we say, "Wow, there are some pretty big things happening. Now what does Scripture say about this. This is the verse that is critical for understanding what it means to be human. When God makes humans in Genesis chapter one this is what he says. This is a big verse that's very significant and meaningful. God says, "Let us," does he say "let me" make man? No. He says, "let us make man in our image and in our likeness. And let them" do what? "Rule." So is man designed to rule? "Let them rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. So God created man in his own image. In the image of God he created him, male and female he created them." Man is made in the image of God. Are the animals made in the image of God? No, man alone is made in the image of God.

J. 4 aspects of the Image of God in humankind [31:58-41:45]

The question is then: what does the image of God mean? What is it? So I want to go through four aspects of this image of God. These aspects combine and they are not mutually exclusive, they overlap. But just four aspects of the image of God. Let me run through the four of them first, then we will cover them in detail. First, human beings have **spiritual and moral qualities**. Human beings have spiritual and moral qualities. There was a grizzly bear up in Yellowstone Park just before we got there. A grizzly bear eats a human being, kills a human being. Is that grizzly bear immoral? A grizzly bear eats salmon, is the grizzly bear immoral? Do grizzly bears eat stuff? Is that what they do? Is it moral or immoral? It's what grizzly bears do. That's a good response, it's amoral. It's not moral. In other words, it doesn't work in that category. A grizzly bear, you can't give a grizzly

bear a lecture and put him in jail and say you are going to jail for five years for eating this guy. I don't mean to make light about it. Obviously the guy was killed and his wife was spared and it's really bad. But question: are you dealing with an animal? The animal doesn't have a sense of right and wrong. It's as he said, it's amoral.

Now if a human being eats somebody. Is that a problem? Is he going to hit me with this "it was an amoral act"? Now we would say it's immoral. Do we eat people? If you eat people is that a problem? That's a problem. Now by the way, is there a difference even in morality, is there a difference if somebody eats somebody else we say that's a problem.

Are there different levels of morality? My son, for example, when he was young, my son was supposed to be down at a Bible study with Child of Evangelism Fellowship. They were doing a neighborhood Bible study. I come home, my son is riding his bike around the neighborhood and I came in a different way. So he didn't know where I was coming from. He gets home and I say, "Hey, how was the Child of Evangelism?" He says, "Oh, yeah, it was great dad." I say, "Oh really? What kind of story did they tell?" And you see him roll his eyes like this. "It was Noah and the Flood, Noah and the Flood." So he starts telling me about Noah and the Flood. He makes up this story. Did my son lie to me? Basically, have all my kids lied to me? To be honest with you, yes. So I catch my son lying to me. Is that on the same level as cannibalism? Would you say, it's a little different. Some people say: all sins are the same. Well, then you can go to the cannibals first because if they are all the same then you shouldn't have any problem with that. But what I'm saying is, you know my son telling me a lie like that was it wrong that my son lied to me? Yes. There are things you have got to deal with but is that different than eating somebody? I would say there are some differences there so you have got to be careful and discerning.

[Student speaks] She's saying they are all the same but there are different consequences and I want to say, no. Yes, the consequences are different for sure.

She is right that the consequences are different. Yes, the consequences are majorly different. But I want to say that also. In other words, isn't there within you a different reaction if somebody is going to be a cannibal versus lying about attending a Bible study. What I'm saying is get a handle on that. Yes, they are both sins. First of all, they are both sins and that's where they are the same in that they are both sins. But I want to distinguish, how should I say; doesn't your gut tell you that cannibalism is worse than my son lying to me? Your gut should tell you something on that and if it doesn't, then I'd like salt and pepper when you take me down. Anyway, sorry... So there's a big debate on this and we will work on that.

Now, yes. (student speaks) Yes, and that's what she would be pushing that all sins are the same. But what I'm saying is you are going to see different reactions from people and from God on different sins. In other words, will God get really frosted over some sins versus other sins. By the way, they are all sins and they are all sins that can damn you to hell so to speak. But is God's reaction different to some of them in terms of when we go through the Old Testament you're going to see a real strong reaction for some sins and not for others. I want to try to come to grips with that. I want to try to understand that so I can understand God better, but excellent point.

Now **relational** simply means that part of the image of God is relational. That "let us make man in our image;" there is a plurality there and so part of the image is relational.

Dominion and rule, that the image of God has something to do with us as human beings ruling and having **dominion** over the earth. We want to look at that **rule aspect** and how that works. By the way, can you see the perversion of this, that people rule? Do people try to rule other people? Does power corrupt? Absolute power corrupts absolutely. So what you have here is humankind, sinful humankind, taking this rule and trying to use it to dominate and that's a real problem.

This one I'm going to have the hardest time selling to you guys. What I'm going to try to suggest is **we actually look like God physically**. There's physicality to God and we look like God. You say, "Hildebrandt, is God a bald old man?" No. We look like God I'm going to try to say as far as our humanity not in the particulars of being old and fat. Now let's work through this. Spiritual qualities--the ability to make moral choices. Human kind is made in the image of God. He is given the ability to make moral choices. Animals don't make the moral choices that we know man is capable of making. Where do we find proof for this? We go to the New Testament and it's really kind of interesting. Colossians in the New Testament parallels the book of Ephesians. There is a lot of overlap between Colossians and Ephesians in the New Testament. So we've got a parallel passage between Colossians 3:10 and Ephesians 4:24. It says: "And have put on the new self which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its creator." In the image of its creator, it's being renewed in what? "In knowledge," do human beings have the ability to know? We have the ability to know and we are being renewed in the image of Christ. Do you see what's happening here? Does the image need renewing? The image was damaged in the fall and the image then needs to be renewed. Here in Ephesians it says: "And to put on the new self, created to be like God." We are created to be like God. How are we like God—"in true righteousness and holiness." Can human beings be holy? Let me say it first this way: God is holy? "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty." God is holy. Do human beings have the capacity to be holy? Yes. "Be holy," God says, "because I the Lord your God am holy." Righteousness is opposed to wickedness. Are human beings moral beings? They have the capacity for righteousness; do they also have the capacity for wickedness? So he's saying be renewed in the image of Christ. The image of Christ is like being made like God "in true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness." I believe it's in the confession that way. So this is where we get that basically there is a spiritual-moral aspect. Human beings are made spiritually and morally like God: we can know, we can be

righteous or unrighteous, we can be holy, and we can be unholy. But we have the capacity to be holy, righteous, and to know. So this is the moral side of the image based on these verses.

Now, what happened in when the fall happens, when Adam and Eve fall into sin. Did we lose the image of God? James tells us—no, but the image may be marred. The image may be marred but we didn't lose it totally. So James 3:9 says: “with the tongue we praise our Lord and Father and with it we curse men who are made in God's likeness.” James is saying: human beings are still made in God's likeness therefore you shouldn't curse them because they are made in God's likeness and God's image. Does that mean that everyone in this class is made in God's image? Yes. Should that affect how we treat one another then? Yes. Does that affect how I treat you as students made in the image of God? Yes. Does that affect how you treat me as one made in the image of God? That should affect how you treat people in response to this. People are still made in the image of God but its marred and there are implications. We will talk about the implications more later.

K. Relational aspect of the Image of God [41:46-49:46]

Now, another aspect of the image of God is the “us-ness” of the image of God. The “us-ness” of it or the **relational aspect** of it is “Let us make man in our image.” The “us” is it singular or plural? Plural. “Let us make man in our image.” So we are made in the image of God as an “us.” Man is built for relationship and so how do you understand that plurality “Let us make man in our image”?

There are different ways you can understand it and this kind of goes through some of those. Let me just start out with the plural of majesty. Did your mother ever just say to you: “we have decided that you shouldn't be going to this place.” “We have decided” and the assumption is it's the father and the mother who decided but it was really the mother deciding and she says “we have decided.” But does she get to say that because she's the mother and the implication is the dad is in there. When the king says: “we have decided,” is it

really the king making the decision, but does the king get to use the “we” and we call it the “royal we”? Does the king get to do that? Yes. It’s like the king when he says, “we have decided,” it is really just himself but he’s the king. In Hebrew they have a thing called the plural of majesty. In English we’ve got the singular that means you got one item. Plural means what? Two or more. So we use plurality to assign? It is the number of something, whether it’s singular or whether it’s plural, multiple numbers. In Hebrew, they do singular and plural but they also when something is really really really big, they also use the plural. This is the plural of majesty. So you would have what? “Stuff” and if you want to say the stuff was like really really big you would say what? “Stuffs.” You would put an “s” on it to make it like that. Now for us, when we say “stuffs” that means many “stuff.” But when they say “stuffs” and “stuff” they may really mean this is “big stuff.” Sorry, I should have used probably a different word here. But anyway, do you know what I’m saying with the plural of majesty then? In other words, it’s so big that “let us make man”; God speaking in an “us” kind of way is a plural of greatness and majesty. That’s a possibility based on Hebrew grammar for why the plural “let us make man” is used.

I think there are some other better possibilities here—“heavenly court.” Does anybody remember Isaiah chapter 6? God is in his heavenly court and God asks the question: “who will go for us?” The plural is used there. God is speaking to these heavenly beings, “who will go for us”? Isaiah says: “here am I Lord, send me.” Does anybody remember Job? In the book of Job, the first chapter, God is up there and he basically says: “Have you guys considered my servant Job?” And he’s talking to the group in the heavenly court. There is an “us” there and “the satan” says, “Well, Job is good but he’s only this good because you bless him with all this stuff. Let me take that away and he will curse you to your face.” So this “us” is of the heavenly court, does that make sense? “Let us make man in our image,” that God is talking in the heavenly court. I think there’s confirmation of this both in Job 1 and Isaiah chapter 6. I want to put a plus sign here indicating

that I think this view has a good shot at it.

Now maybe God is talking to himself. Did you ever talk to yourself? “What are we going to do?” “Should we do this or that? If we do this, then there’s going to be all these consequences. If we do that, there’s going to be all of these consequences. What should we do?” Do you ever talk to yourself? Ok, you guys don’t talk to yourselves. Anyway, I talk to myself. So you can use **self-deliberation**, “what should we do” within yourself. By the way, does the Bible have very much self-deliberation like that? Almost never, to be honest I couldn’t tell you right now a passage where you get this with God talking to himself. So the self-deliberation I think is bogus. This is wrong. It rarely ever occurs in Scripture so I don’t think you want to go that way.

Some people say the “let us make man in our image” is the trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is a discussion among the Godhead: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. “Let us make man in our image” that’s the trinity. A lot of people suggest this and I’m not ready to say it’s wrong but I ask you: would Moses have understood the trinity? Would Moses have understood Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? As a matter of fact, in the time of Jesus, this is 1400-1200 years later, did they understand Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? When Jesus said he was the Son of God, did they want to stone and kill him. So what I’m saying is, how well was the trinity understood back then? I don’t think Moses had a clue on the trinity. Yes, he could have but the problem is nobody would have known that. Suppose God showed Moses the trinity, but when Moses comes down from the mount none of those people are going to have a clue of what he’s talking about because God in the Old Testament is one. The Lord our God is one and they really push that. So I’m not sure how well he knew the trinity. So what I’m saying is: would Moses have understood this very much? By the way, did it take the church 300 years to figure out the trinity? The early church really wrestled over the trinity. So what I’m saying is I don’t know how well Moses understood the trinity in “let us make man in our image.” It could be. I don’t want to eliminate it but all I’m saying is I

have got to get back into Moses's shoes. What I'm wanting to suggest is that if you start saying Moses is writing down things that he has no clue of, you have got to be careful with that because it's possible he wrote better than he knew. But I have got to have some good reason for that. In other words, if he's telling you something in the future, it's possible he wrote better than he knew. I don't want to eliminate that possibility. I'm just saying I don't think he understood the trinity. Would he have understood the heavenly court? Yes, because the other cultures also had heavenly court ideas. So the heavenly court idea seems more natural to me given the historical framework into which he would have been writing.

Now, by the way, is it possible that's wrong too. I wasn't there, I mean I'm old but not that old. So what I'm saying is: I wasn't there, I don't know. So I want to keep the trinity, but put it on the back burner, however. I want to bring forward the heavenly court. But either of these are going to be options. Can we do that, say we don't know, but that those are two valid options. This one thumbs down to, this one here is possible but I doubt it; I think it's too specific.

By the way, does the "us" shape us? Is it "me" or is it "us" that shapes us? Does your culture shape who you are? Does your family background shape who you are? To quote somebody, does it take a village to make a person? Does it take a "we" to make a "me"? So what happens is your background shapes who you are. We are relationally built is what I'm saying. Does the "us" build the "I"? Just look around. All you guys are from different areas. You all come from different backgrounds and each shaped you in a different way than other people, which is really neat because we are all unique in that sense. So the "us" is shaping the "I". Human beings are built for relationship. I guess that's the point I want to make. Are human beings built for an "us" context? Yes. We are built from an "us" context to an "us" context. So relationships can be really important for the image of God and the shaping of that.

L. Ruling/Dominion aspect of the Image [49:46-54:48]

Now, this thing with ruling let's look at this: the image of God is ruling.

“Let us make man in our image in order to rule.” In the Old Testament God is the sovereign. Now if I say “sovereign,” what do I mean by “sovereign”? God is the king. God rules, he is the great King. Let me just say, God is the great king. He puts humankind on earth to do what? To rule. Do we rule in place of God? Are we like, the term I want is “vice-regents.” The president of the United States rules the United States but can he really rule everything? No. So you have governors in different states ruling. By the way, are almost all great kingdoms set up like this where you have the great king and then you have people ruling under him--ruling little areas under him. So what you have in this creation account is that God creates humankind in his image to rule over the fish of the air, the birds of the sea, and the creatures that crawl around. We are actually in God’s place ruling over the creation. We are little “gods” in one sense ruling over part of his creation. That’s a terrible way of saying it but do you see the point? Has God given some of his rule over for us to administer? Maybe that’s a better way of saying it. Has God given over some of his rule and we, as vice-regents, rule in behalf of the great King.

Now, how does this get established. It’s very interesting. The kings of the ancient world would have representatives who would rule in their place. In other words, you would have the great king and the great king would have sub-kings over various areas that the king had conquered. So your kings would have representatives and they would rule in the king’s place. Does anybody remember Cyrus, Darius and those Persian rulers? They basically had this huge kingdom and they ruled through the various satraps who ruled under them in the name of Cyrus or in the name of Darius. It happens in almost every kingdom where you have a big king who rules over the whole thing. Then there are these governors, diplomats who will rule over the other thing and that’s the way it was back in the Assyrian times. Notice the emphasis in Genesis 1:26 is on ruling.

Now what are the implications for this in terms of meaning and destiny? Is humankind built to rule? We are God’s vice-regents representing his rule on this

earth. Does it matter how we rule the creation? Humankind is given to rule over the birds of the air and fish of the sea. Humankind is given to rule over the earth. God has given his rule over to us. Therefore, do human beings need to take care of, for example, the environment? Are we ruling in God's place over God's good earth? Does it make a difference how we rule in terms of the environment? Therefore, should Christian people be involved in environmentalist type efforts? Now, I'm not a real big tree hugger or anything like that. But do we have a stewardship for ruling over the animals and over the earth? So there is a basis for environmentalism. Is there a basis in environmentalism right back in the image of God and this rule that we have that God has committed to us over the world? Yes. You have got to work with that. God controls everything. But he's committed some of the control and movement to humans. Now, he still controls us too, but with that ability to rule comes certain responsibilities for us that we are to rule in his place. Therefore, we have certain responsibilities on how we manifest the rule of God on this earth. It should reflect the glory and goodness of God but not usurp his power because he is the great King. He rules everything.

M. Physical Resemblance as part of the image [54:49-61:47]

Now, this one is going to be the hardest to sell. What I'm going to try to suggest here is that we actually look like God physically. Now you say, how did you get this? Well, there are two Hebrew terms: likeness and image. The terms for likeness and image are *tselem* and *demut*. If you do a word study on these two words *tselem* and *deumt*, "image" and "likeness," they are both very physical terms. They are not moral terms. They are very physical terms. So, for example, let me just give you one example from 1 Samuel 6:5, it says that the Philistines made images, *tselem* or *demut*. They made these physical images of rats out of gold. Now question: did these gold rats look like rats? Yes, but they were made of gold so they weren't real rats. They looked like rats though. Could you look at that gold rat and say that's a rat but it's in gold. So what I'm saying is that there's a physical resemblance and we see that here.

By the way, you guys all know this. In the ancient world in Israel did the Israelites ever make “images” for themselves? If I say “images” to you, would those images be physical images. Did they make physical images of Dagan, Baal and Chemosh and some of the ancient gods. They made these physical images of them. They were physical images and then the people bowed down to those images. What were the images made out of by the way? We know what they were made out of? Yes, someone said “gold,”--those were the rich ones. What did most people make them out of? Stone and wood. Generally, you made your images out of stone and wood.

But anyway, let’s get out of there. But what I’m saying is the images were things that were physical. So what I’m trying to suggest is that these two terms here are both very physical terms. “Images” usually were something very very physical. So what I’m suggesting then is that we actually physically we look like God.

Now let me push that one step further. Suppose I’m an Assyrian king, you’re lucky I’m not. The Assyrians were very very cruel. They were the Hitlers of the ancient world. You had the great Assyrian king and when he conquered a new territory, guess what he did? When the Assyrian king would conquer a new territory, he would put up a statue of himself. What did that statue mean? It meant that “I the great king, my statue is in say Zophar or Damascus; that means then that I am king in Damascus and Zophar.” So the king would put up a physical image of himself made out of stone. That kind of reminds me of, who’s that guy? There was a guy in Iraq that had this big statue of himself? Do you remember they pulled down Saddam Hussein’s image. In other words, the image meant what? I am king of this territory. Now look at what God does. God makes an image of himself and puts it on the earth. Is that a way that God is declaring his sovereignty, his kingship, over the earth? We are that image of God. He puts us down here to rule in his place and so that there is a physical resemblance. We resemble God. As the Assyrian king makes a statue, an image and puts it over the territory that he

rules, now God also puts his image in us and put us on the earth to symbolize and implement his rule.

Now let me just push this a little bit further. Somebody may say, “wait a minute Hildebrandt, Jesus said ‘God is a spirit and a spirit hath not have flesh and bones as you see me have.’ So if God is a spirit and does not have flesh and bones, how are we made in the physical image of God? You said you have been really camping on this thing about physicality. But God’s a spirit, he’s not made, he does not have flesh and bones.” I want you to think about Jesus. Did Jesus take on human form? Yes, he did. Did he only appear as a human or was he physically human? He was a human. When Jesus got killed, did he really die as a human being? He died. When he comes back to life after he’s been dead, did Jesus just rise as a spirit or did Jesus rise physically. As a matter of fact, he goes up to what was that guy’s name? He says, “Hey, check it out, put your fingers here. Put your fingers in my side. It’s me, this is me, I was crucified.” Do you remember doubting Thomas? So he says to Thomas... By the way did Jesus after the resurrection, did he sit down and eat food with his disciples? Yes. So was Jesus physical after the resurrection? Was the resurrection physical? Is Jesus going to be in a human body for eternity? Did Jesus rise from the dead and is he alive forevermore in a human body? Jesus, in the future, and it’s been a couple thousand years now, he’s still in a human body for eternity. Is it possible that Jesus was in a human body or like a human body before the creation and that we were made in the image of Christ, the physicality that we were made in was the image of Christ. Therefore, can Christ become a human being because we are compatible. Can Jesus become a dog? Would Jesus become a dog? You know what I’m saying? Is a dog incompatible? Can he become a human being? Yes. He can because there is compatibility there. So what I’m saying is that Christ, from eternity, had a “human form” and we as human beings are made in that image. When Jesus comes down, he can morph himself into a human being. Is he compatible so that he can be that way for the rest of eternity? Yes, he’s compatible

with that. Does that make sense? So I'm arguing that we actually look like God. The terms *tselem* and *demut* are physical terms. What I'm suggesting is that we are made like Christ. We are made in the image of Christ.

After the fall, do we have some problems with being immoral and sinful. Are we being recreated in the image of Christ? Is being like Christ our destiny? So that's where we're going and so we are going back to the garden in a certain sense. The image of God is in us, it's been marred because of sin. We are going back to becoming like Christ. Now we are built in the image of Christ is what I'm suggesting. Therefore there is compatibility.

O. Implications of the Image of God in humankind [61:48-64:22]

Now I want to raise a couple of other things here. There are some implications to this that are really wonderful. Look into the future. 1 John 3:2 talks about the image going in the future. "But we know that when he [that is, Jesus], appears, we shall be like him." When Jesus appears, will there be a transformation in our bodies? "We shall be like him for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him" does what?--"purifies himself." Does the hope of Christ's return purify us? Do we purify ourselves waiting in the hope of Christ's return?

Do you know someone who has lived in light of the coming of Christ? My father was old; I remember him when I was young going to the window and he would go to the window almost on a daily basis. He would go to the window, he would look out the window and he'd say: "You know Jesus may be coming back today." Did that shape his life? You better believe it did. Did he love my mother because Christ may be coming back today? He probably loved my mother for other reasons too. Did he love my mother? Yes. Did my father try to be the best father he could be because what? Christ may be coming back today and I have to face my Maker. So you got a really beautiful thing there that transforms and gives hope. What I'm trying to suggest is does hope transform who you are?

Let's suppose my wife is a CPA now. Suppose you guys are going to

become CPAs. If you start to become a CPA at Gordon College and you take all these courses, will your hope of becoming a CPA shape how you learn and what you learn because of your hope? You hope that you are going to be able to do something or have this kind of vocation or career. So you shape your studies to do that. Does hope shape who you become? What he's saying is we have this hope that Christ will come back and when we see him we will be like him. The image of God in us will be renewed and we will be made right, we will be purified in his sight when Jesus comes back. Is that a big hope? That's a big hope, someday we're going to see Jesus and he's going to transform us into his image.

P. Image in Others [64:23-72:42]

Now, there are some other things here too. C.S Lewis's book *Weight of Glory* I think deals with this. Can you see the image of God in other people? Can you see the image of God in people you dislike? Are they made in the image of God? Is there goodness? Is God's goodness embedded in every individual in one way or another? Is it possible they can be a really evil person? But are they still made in the image of God.

I want to give two examples of this and I'm going to walk over here because I want to get away from the Bible on these examples because they bring back bad memories for me. Once upon a time I went to a place called Grand Island High School. There was a girl in Grand Island High School called Mabeline. Mabeline was, I don't know how to say this, she was the most homely girl at the high school. It was like you didn't want to sit or be by her because you would get whatever she's got and you don't want that. It's like cooties or whatever it was. So everybody abstained from Mabeline because she's one of the untouchables. Did everybody in the school mock this poor girl out? Actually it was so pathetic that after a while they didn't even mock her out. But nobody wanted to be around Mabeline. Question: was Mabeline made in the image of God? Yes. To treat her like that, was that appropriate? I wish I was sharper. I was not. I didn't do any of the cruel stuff to Mabeline but I didn't do anything to reverse it either. What

should I have done as a Christian? Is it possible I should have befriended her and made her feel the image of God in her and brought that out. I was not smart enough to do that when I was a young kid and I'm ashamed of that, it was bad. We had a reunion at Grand Island High School. This was many years later. Kevin Carr, a guy who I went to high school with said: "Hey ,Ted, do you remember Mabeline?" Who could forget Mabeline? There was only one Mabeline in the school. "Mabeline has become a Christian. She's a sister in Christ now." When Kevin told me, I thought "holy cow." Christian people should treat all people with dignity and respect.

Now let me go on to another example. Once upon a time, my wife and I went to a concert. It was a Michael Card concert. He was a guy after the Civil War, who used to sing Bible songs. So we got some free tickets because Lanita, a girl who stayed at our house all the time, and she ate our food, she lived with us basically. She was with this WDCX, a Christian radio station. So she got free tickets. We got to sit in the booth with all the privileged people. So it was all, this red rope and roped off section. So we pranced down and she lifted up the rope and we got to sit right in front. Michael Card was doing a concert here and there was a big old speaker here. My wife hates loud music and I'm sitting in front of the speaker. I like it loud because I can't hear. Anyway, so I'm sitting in front of the speaker and I'm saying this is going to be a great concert. He's about I'm talking 15 feet from us. So we are sitting down there and I'm thinking, "man, these are special seats." Whenever I go to a concert, I'm usually am way in the back and I have to use binoculars. So this time we're right on top.

So I'm sitting there in the seats right basically about there and all of a sudden this guy comes walking in. He lifts up the rope and he sits down next to me. I think, "This guy is a big shot, you know they're all big shots down here where we were sitting. He then proceeds to take off his shoes and with his stalking feet, he puts his foot right here. They were theater seats, he puts one of his feet there on the seat in front of him and one of his feet there. There is this lady, her

hair is all done up and she's really all decked out, and this lady's got this guy's two stalking feet like six inches from her nose either way she turns. Everybody starts going: this is getting a little weird, I've never seen it that bad before. So anyways, Lanita pops up then because she knows the guy shouldn't have been sitting there. So she runs around and comes down the side. She comes in and starts talking to the guy. Now Lanita you'd have to know this girl is tough. I don't know how to describe her. This girl has seen a lot of life. I'm talking a lot of major stuff. She's a tough girl. She comes down, talks to the guy. I don't know what the guy said to her but all of a sudden she just starts backing up like this and she walked away. I thought, "Holy cow, I had never seen her act like that before." I don't know what he said but I have never seen her back off like that before. She's a pretty aggressive young woman. So she comes back around, sits down.

Then I start talking to the guy and the guy starts telling me his story. He was in this laundry mat and 40 guys jumped him. He's got a third degree black belt and he just blew all 40 guys away. So I'm talking with this guy and my wife meanwhile leans over to Anita and says: "It's ok, Ted talks real well with people like this." So I was thinking: ok 40 guys, third degree black belt. Turns out my son and I were at that time working on our black belts. He's third degree, this should be interesting and so he continues talking. He runs computers out of his head. He did 20 computers at a time. He doesn't use a keyboard, mouse or anything or even speech. He runs them out of his head, 20 computers at a time. So he's going off and the stories are getting a little stranger and stranger.

So meanwhile, intermission, what happens, all the people take off, they are all gone. I stayed there and talked to the guy through intermission. They come back, we sit down and finish the concert out.

At the end of the concert, obviously, does this guy have problems? Yes. So I stand up and I said, "I want to feel your power" because he was telling me about all his power. So I said, "I want to feel your power." So this guy gives me a bear hug and starts squeezing me. I'm figuring out what I'm going to do if it gets bad. I

can take care of myself, I'm a big boy. He starts squeezing me and I said, "I want to feel your power." So he starts really squeezing down on me. Then he made a mistake, he tried to pick me up. He picks me up off the ground and his back goes out. He goes, "Oh, my back, my back." Just like that, all of a sudden all the mythology of this grandiose fantasy was gone. Poor dude hurt his back. I mean, I didn't try to do that.

I ask you this, was he made in the image of God? Should I have treated him with dignity and respect? Yes. Did you know that night God showed me in small ways what I should be doing with my life. God used that guy to communicate his will for my life. What's God's will? That guy helped me sort that out. What I want to say is I praise God for that guy. What I'm saying is be careful, God speaks through all different types of people. Somebody I know now that they are around homeless people all the time and it's kind of like they walk around homeless people all yucky all these homeless people. You know one of those homeless people could be Jesus? They could be an angel for all you know. So what I'm saying is, when you see people do you look at them with dignity and respect even though they are in the plights of life. God can use those people to speak through you and to you. What I'm saying is: treat all people with honor and dignity.

The image of God by the way, is this a little thing or is this a big thing? This is a big idea. What I'm saying is the image should allow us to connect to others across all sorts of boundaries for we look and we see the glory of God in other people. And even, by the way, is it possible that another person can't even see it in themselves? Can you bring that out? This is our gift.

God told us, we are made in God's image and that we can become more like God when we see that image in other people by giving them the glory and dignity that they may never have had from their father, their mother, anybody. We can give them the dignity and respect for being made in the image of God. It's wonderful. This is really important stuff. This is a big deal. People are made in the image of God, that's a big thing.

Q. Tree of Life [72:43-77:32]

Now, let me jump over to one more topic we want to hit here: the tree of life. Let's try to go through this quickly. I'll tell you what, do you guys want to stand up? Why don't we run thorough the Bible-robics just to get some breath in you guys.

Ok, I just want to cover the two trees and we will be done for the day. The tree of life, what is the function of this tree of life in the Garden of Eden? You have the tree of life described there. How would they have known what the tree of life was? Would they have known what death was? If you understand death, than you know life is the contrast to that. But what if you never really experienced death?

Is it possible that there was death before the fall into sin? Is it possible that the animals died before there was sin, before the fall? Now this is something to think about. I don't have an answer on this but I had a professor once who spun my head with it and I still don't know the answer. Is it possible that before the fall? Did amoebas eat other things? Did little critters, did bacteria eat things? Did lions eat stuff before the fall? Did lions eat other animals? So what I'm suggesting is: is it possible that there was animal death before the fall and that Adam and Eve knew what death was because they saw it in the animal world although they had experienced it? I don't know. So anyway just put that in the back of your minds, it's possible maybe. Some people think that there was animal death before the fall of Adam and Eve and that's how they would have known this. Then with the fall you get human death. Yes, did you have a question? (student speaks) Ok, does everybody see that she's taking a different tact? It's interesting. She's saying they would have known dust, to dust you should return because you came from the dust. But when did that dust return? When were they told that? Later in chapter three, but maybe they knew that earlier, but we have to project that back.

Now let's think about some other things here with this tree. Does Genesis 2:16 imply that they could eat of the tree of life before the fall? In Genesis 2:16 it

says, “and the Lord commanded man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden.’” Except how many, one or two? One. “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” Does that imply then that they could actually eat from the tree of life? Yes. It implies that they could eat from the tree of life. The one tree that they couldn’t eat was the tree of knowledge of good and evil. So this is interesting.

By the way, what happens when they sin? They get kicked out of the garden. God throws them out of the garden after they sin. In chapter 3 verse 22 it says this: “and the Lord said, the man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take from the tree of life and eat and live forever.” So Adam and Eve are kicked out of the garden so they would not have access to what tree? The tree of life. So the tree of life is removed from humankind at this point when they get kicked out of the garden.

Now what’s really interesting to me is Revelation 22. When New Jerusalem comes down and the waters go out, guess what tree reappears in the New Jerusalem? The tree of life reappears on both sides of the river giving fruit in twelve seasons. There are twelve so it’s giving fruit every month of the year and the leaves were for the healing of the nations. Is the tree of life still around? Somewhere, not here. When the New Jerusalem comes down the tree of life is there and we get to participate in it. So, in other words, the tree of life is still there and the book of Revelation has it. By the way, does the Bible begin with this tree of life, and after the fall we are cut off from the tree of life. You see that the rest of the Bible basically gets us back to the tree of life. That’s kind of interesting. The Bible begins and ends with this tree of life.

R. 3 Views of the Tree of Life [77:33-80:12]

Now, here are three views of the tree of life. Some people think that the tree of life was a magical thing. You chomp on the fruit and you live forever. Does the Bible do much with magic? No, actually there are miracles in the Bible. But the miracles are usually there for a purpose. There is a reason, it’s not just magic. So

this magical view I think is down the tubes.

Some people think it was more like health food. In other words, it was the perfect kind of food that was balanced. If you ate from this tree of life, it was the perfect food combination. It was like walnuts, a lot of omega 3s. So eat a lot of walnuts and you will live forever. I'm just kidding. Walnuts are good for you. Perfect health food, does it really seem like the perfect health food when you're reading the Genesis context on this? No, again it doesn't seem correct.

Here's a suggestion, it's the one that I buy and that I think is interesting. The tree of life was a sacrament. That is by eating the fruit it didn't give you the nourishment to live forever but the tree of life was like a sacrament. When I say sacrament, what comes to your mind? Sacrament is the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist. In the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist, you take a cup and this cup is my what? It's my blood of the New Covenant. Question, is it really his blood? No, you drink it, it's grape juice or wine or I've had apple juice sometimes, even Kool-Aid one time. I don't recommend the Kool-Aid as there are enough Kool-Aid drinkers in this world. Let me get back. The cup stands for the blood of Christ. The cracker, you break the cracker (unleavened bread). "This is my body, which was broken for you," that kind of thing. So the bread stands for his body, which is broken, the blood from the cup of juice. So they stand for something. By the way, can you violate those images? Remember in 1 Corinthians he says: "don't eat the Lord's Supper unworthily." He doesn't want the images violated. So I wonder if the tree of life stands for right life and right relationship with God and that it is taken as a sacrament. Now you have life with God forever and so it's taken like a sacrament. Rather than the food that actually nourishes your body to live forever, it's taken in a sacramental way. Does that make sense? I like that. It makes a lot of sense of a lot of things. So I take it as sacrament.

S. Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil [80:13-84:17]

Now, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is a little tricky. How would Adam and Eve know what evil was? If somebody has experienced only

good and never evil, what do we call that kind of a person? Blessed, right? Ok, we would actually have used the term “naïve”? What were you going to say? (student speaks) Ignorant. I want to put a better face on this. Actually, that’s probably what went through my head too but I want to use the word “naïve.” Is naïve a little better? In other words, a person is naïve, if they have never experienced evil and you know how that goes.

So what did “evil” mean for Adam and Eve before the fall? Why would God put this tree in the garden? This is tree of knowledge of good and evil. Why was it put in the garden anyway? I’ve got a couple of suggestions here. One is that I think choice is necessary for one to be a moral agent. If a moral agent never makes a choice, are they really a moral agent? Do you see the importance of making a choice? So the tree is put there because human beings needed to make a choice.

Is that one of the problems of college? Is it possible to study all sorts of things theoretically in college? Is it a very different thing to actually make a choice? To choose something, it’s very different. Is it possible to talk about war at Gordon College? Is it possible to talk about killing someone else at Gordon College in a theoretical way? Is it very different for my son to go to Afghanistan and have to decide whether he’s going to pull the trigger to end somebody’s life? What I’m saying is: all this college stuff kind of fades away when there is an actual decision to do something. Be careful that you don’t start thinking: because you know how to deal with things theoretically, you know life and what I’m saying is “no.” College is built for this and it’s good but you have to know when you actually make decisions in real life it’s very different. You have the consequences; you’ll have all sorts of things going on. So be careful about college, it can go to your head sometimes and that’s bad.

But making choices, do you need to make actual choices to determine your moral agency? Yes. Here’s another one that I think is important in terms of choice and love. Did God make us so that we had to love him or did God give us a

choice? God gave us a choice. What I'm saying is: would you like to marry somebody who is forced to marry you and they didn't have a choice. They had to marry you. Do you want to love someone who chooses to love you? Does that choice of someone to choose to love you, does that mean a whole lot? Yes. So my guess is that God says, "I'm not going to force them to love me. They get to make that choice. Will they love me or not?" What did human kind do? Now you say, "I don't want to love you." By the way, has anybody ever told you that? Have you ever gone out with a girl and she dumps you? Does that hurt bad? Have you ever been out, girl's been out with a guy and the guy just dumps the girl? How does that make you feel? Do those rejections hurt at the core of your being? Now God basically is told by man what? "Hey, we don't want you. We're going to choose our own way."

Question, does that hurt God? By the way, does the Bible describe God being hurt like that? Yes, Isaiah chapter one. Ezekiel is the worst. In Ezekiel 16, God describes his own hurt being rejected by Israel after having helped them and helped them and nurtured them and loved them and all they do is kick him between the legs. That's kind of a summary of the imagery there. So choice and love seem to be involved.

T. The Serpent speaks the truth?—Genesis 3 [84:18-88:40]

Does the serpent speak the truth? What I'm going to suggest to you is that the serpent speaks the truth. Now you say, "Wait a minute Hildebrandt." Let's read this. It says, "Now the serpent," Genesis chapter 3, verses 1 and following: "Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord had made." The word "crafty" can be translated as "shrewd." I like "shrewd" better. "He said to the woman: did God really say you must not eat from any tree of the garden? The woman said to the serpent: we may eat of the fruit from the trees in the garden but God did say you must not eat from the fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden. You must not touch it or you will die. You will not surely die, the serpent said. For God knows that when you eat it, your eyes will be

opened.” Question, when they ate it, does it say that their eyes were opened? Yes it does. Is Satan telling the truth? Yes, the serpent is telling the truth. Let me finish this: “your eyes will be opened and you will be like God.” Does God in chapter 3 verse 22 say: ”the man has now become like one of us.” “Your eyes will be opened, you will become like God and you will know good and evil.” God says, “man is now become like us, knowing good and evil.” Does Satan tell the truth?

Let me just tell you a story: once upon a time my daughter played basketball in sixth grade, she played with this other girl. This other girl lied all the time. No, seriously, she lied to everybody about things that didn’t even matter. Did everybody in the school know that this girl was a liar? Everybody knew it. Question, did she ever fake anybody out or did everybody expect her to lie? Everybody expected it out of her. The only person she really fooled was who? Herself. She thought she had everybody faked out. Everybody knew what she was up to. Is Satan always a liar?

Does Satan quote Scripture? When Satan comes after Jesus in the temptation in the wilderness, does Satan quote scripture? He takes Christ up to the pinnacle and says, “throw yourself down, for the Psalm says, ‘His angels will bear you up.’” Satan is quoting Scripture. Are scriptures true? Yes, does Satan speak the truth? Now let me just tell you a secret about rat poison. When you put out rat poison, you put it in good hamburger. Now is that hamburger good hamburger that you could eat? Ninety-nine percent of it is good hamburger. But what’s the problem? It’s one percent poison, the rat eats it and what gets it? The one percent. The other ninety nine percent is that good healthy hamburger? Yes.

What I’m saying is a person that tells the truth, tells the truth, tells the truth and with a small lie, is that the one that fools people? With Satan, he tells the truth, the truth, the truth. Question, in the midst of the truth, does he have embedded a wicked lie that will destroy them? So what I’m saying is be careful. Is Satan an angel of light or is he Darth Vader that’s always evil? Is Satan an angel of light? Does he deceive people by telling them the truth but then amidst that truth is

embedded this lie. So what I'm saying is Satan is really subtle, shrewd, and tricky. He is very evil because what happens is he embeds evil in things like the truth. He embeds evil in things like righteousness, goodness, and all those things but in the inside there's this thing that's devastating.

So with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Satan comes in this positive way. I'll tell you what we'll do next time: how did Adam and Eve become more like God in their experience of evil? Then how did they get destroyed and cursed by it? So we'll look at that next time. So take care and we'll see you on Thursday.

This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt teaching Old Testament History Literature and Theology. Lecture number six on genealogy not equal to chronology, the image of God, and the two trees in the Garden of Eden.

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