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**Genesis 1:26-31, 2:4-25**  
*The Genesis of God's People:*  
*What does it Mean to be human?*  
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\*See slides on [CornerstoneWestford.com/sermons](http://CornerstoneWestford.com/sermons)

Introduction:

1. **\*Open with 1:05 Liberty Mutual Insurance “Humans” Commercial (London Olympics 2012 Ad)**
  2. What does it mean to be human? Is it about funny mistakes? Is it about helping each other? (S#1)
  3. Last week we looked at Genesis chapter one, the very beginning of the Bible, it introduced us to God.
  4. This week we're finishing chapter one and studying two—it introduces us to people, to humans, to us.
  5. If you've ever asked, “What does it mean to be human?” today's message is for you. (The Bible says...)
- I. To be human is to be made in God's image. (Gen 1:26-31) (S#2)

(God created us to be like him, like a child looks and acts like her parents, so we do this with God.)  
(We are so like God the word image actually means idol, we're God's best representation.)  
(So what does it mean to be made in God's image, to be his idol, to be like him?)

- A. God is relational so we are relational. (1:26) (S#3)
1. Moses taught the Israelites there is only one God, not gods, so why does God say "us" in v. 26?
  2. We don't believe in a strict monotheistic God like Islam—but one God existing in three persons.
  3. God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have known and loved each other for eternity past.
  4. We can experience love, friendship, and community because God experiences them.
  5. Part of being human is not being a hermit, but seeking community (moving to new area).
- B. God is diverse so we are diverse (1:27) (S#4)
1. Each person of the Trinity has his own mind and will but they're all one God.
  2. God created lots of different races, ethnicities, and people, but we're all humans.
  3. We see the birds, fish, and animals are made “according to their kinds” but we're not.
  4. We're created male and female and together we reflect the image of God (“he created them”).
  5. In Ancient Near Eastern culture, women and children were devalued and races were enslaved.
  6. In the first chapter of the Bible, God outlaws racism, sexism, and abortion (we all have value!).
  7. As men and women, unborn, elderly, americans, africans, and asians, we reflect God (Rev 7:9).
- C. God is a ruler so we are rulers. (1:28) (S#5)
1. God is the King of Kings who gives little scepters to you and me to rule over his creation.
  2. He tells us to populate the world and “subdue it” which means conquer or dominate it (not neg).
  3. In Egypt the Jews were told Pharaoh represented god (one named “the living image of Amon”).
  4. We all have value and inherent status no matter our riches, smarts, health, or looks.
  5. We rule by taking care of creation (environment, recycle, pollution, farming, gardening, bugs).
  6. God rules with his words so we rule with ours (love languages = words of affirmation).
- D. God is spiritual so we are spiritual. (1:2, 26) (S#6)

1. When God made creation, the Holy Spirit hovered like a mother bird over it (John 4:24).
2. God is spiritual and so too we have spirits or souls that are intangible but apart of us.
3. Your small group leaders are like fitness instructors for your souls (we help you get in shape).
4. This doesn't mean our bodies are bad; God became a human in Jesus (Ex 24:9-11).

**Foundation Verse** “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”). Matthew 1:23 (NIV®) **(S#7)**

5. Because of Jesus, we're not only like God spiritually, but now God is like us physically.
6. This means you can have a real relationship with God through Jesus Christ (pray, know him).
7. If you trust in him, one day you'll see him like you see me right now. (leads to last point...)

E. God is holy so we were made holy. (1:31) **(S#8)**

1. When God creates the light, water, sky, sun, moon, stars, birds, fish, and animals, “it was good.”
2. When God creates humans he says “It was very good”, we’re more b/c we reflect God’s holiness.
3. We’re made in God’s image to have relationship with him, but it’s only possible if we’re pure.
4. When the first people sinned, we lost that purity and broke the image (cracked iPhone screen).
5. Now the thing we need the most is to restore the image, to fix what's broken. (Gen 3)

(We find our humanity when we find God.)

F. Some would say that Tom Hank's son Colin Hanks looks exactly like his father. **(S#9-pic)**

1. Some might even say that he is the "spitting image" of his dad.
2. The idea for that phrase originates in a 17th century play.
3. A child is said to be so like his father it's as if he's been spit out of his father's mouth.
4. Genesis tells us we aren't spit from God's mouth but that God breathed life into us.

II. To be human is to be given life by God. (Gen 2:4-17) **(S#10)**

(Chapter two of Genesis is a second re-telling of the creation story—second camera angle.)  
(In this version God wants us to see how he creates people and gives them a life and purpose.)

A. To be human is to be given life by God. (2:4-14)

1. God takes a piece of dirt and forms that into a man—Adam is play on “ground” (dama > adam).
2. God tenderly and intimately breathes life into Adam (less like CPR, more like wedding kiss).
3. This face to face intimate relationship between God and humans is how it was supposed to be.
4. When we talk about Christianity not being a religion but a relationship, this is what we mean.
5. To become a Christian is to realize you can't live without God, you need him everyday.
6. Adam too was entirely dependent on God—he wasn’t intrinsically immortal.
7. This is why God planted “the tree of life” in the garden (only need a tree of life if you can die).
8. When Adam and Eve sin, they are cut off from the tree of life (Gen 3:22, Rom 5:12).<sup>1</sup>
9. Adam and Eve continued to live b/c they were sustained by God, just like you and me today.
10. To be human is to be given life by God, and that includes the capacity for eternal life.

<sup>1</sup> Phil Visher Podcast 146 + 160 w/ Dr. Walton

B. God gives us life for a purpose (2:15-17)

1. God is a gardener and he sets Adam in the garden of Eden to be a gardener too.
2. Part of being human is having purpose—careers and work are good (not a result of fall)
3. Do you treat your job like a desert or a garden? (foster relationships, do a good job, IV/FCA)
4. Man's ultimate purpose is not just work but a relationship with God, and it begins with a choice.
5. God gives Adam a choice, to eat or not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.
6. To be truly human is to choose a relationship with God.

(We find our humanity when we find God.)

(Just like God is a community, we can't do this alone...)

III. To be human is to experience relationship with God and others. (Gen 2:18-25) (S#11)

A. God wants us to experience relationship as he does. (2:20)

1. Adam is all alone at the beginning, so God makes "a helper suitable for him."
2. The Hebrew word for helper is 'ezer and isn't negative but like "indispensable companion."
3. The Bible uses this word to describe "God" helping his people (Ex 18:4, Deut 33:7).

**Genesis 2:18** The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion for him who corresponds to him." (NET) (S#12)

4. God takes one of Adam's ribs or "part of the man's side"(NET) to show equality of worth.
5. Men and women were intentionally designed by God to complement each other (team!).
6. When you're really in-sync with your spouse, loving each other, that's a taste of what God has.
7. God wants us to experience relationship as he does.

B. I love that God ends this creation account with a wedding. (2:23)

1. There's something special about that moment the bride and groom see each other.
2. If we were following the Biblical pattern, we would make our grooms sing solos.
3. When God walks Eve down the aisle, Adam bursts into a song describing Eve.
4. "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh!" (2:23)
5. Husband and wife are presented as the pinnacle of God's creation.
6. Together, male and female reflect the relationship God experiences.

(A quick encouragement if you're single... God gives us the church for community.)

(You don't have to get married to experience real relationship as God intends.)

(We find our humanity when we find God.) (S#13)

C. We can only experience relationship with God through one man.

1. Adam and Eve were good humans, but an even better human came along, the second Adam.
2. The Bible tells us this human was the "exact representation" of God, the perfect image (Heb 1:3).
3. He not only had a loving relationship with God, he loved children, women, the poor, and broken.
4. Although he lived as a carpenter, and was once mistaken for a gardener, he's a king in disguise.
5. He cared for people's physical needs so he could help them with their spiritual ones (holiness).
6. He lived the kind of life we should live and died the death we all deserve.
7. If you invite him into your life, he'll change you into the type of human you're meant to be.

8. You get his perfect life record on your account and he removes all the sins you've ever made.
9. In Adam and Eve, humanity was good, but in the second Adam, Jesus, humanity is best.
10. We find our humanity when we find God... When we find Jesus. **(S#14)**

Conclusion:

1. Paul Giamatti's narrated the insurance commercial I opened us with.
2. He says "Humans, we mean well, but we're imperfect creatures living in a beautifully imperfect world."
3. Apart from Christ, we're imperfect creatures who are made in God's image.
4. But in Christ, we become beautiful and perfect, made for something more.
5. We find our humanity when we find God.

Preview: What are the **4Cs**? Come back next week to learn more.

### **Numbers 6:24-26**

The LORD bless you and keep you;  
the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. (ESV)