

# INTERSECT

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## *College Chat Discussion Starters*

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COLLEGE CHAT: **Life Dynamics**

### SESSION 1: THE NATURE OF HUMAN NATURE

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## Intersect the Word

- Read Genesis 1:1—3:24; Romans 5:12-21

Let us suppose that a great artist made a statue of you. That statue is made in your image, but it is not you. It cannot do all of the things that you yourself can do. It cannot talk, walk, or hear, yet the statue shares some of your characteristics. When those who know you look at that statue, they recognize it as a representation of you, a mirror image.

That somewhat describes the relationship of humanity to God. We are not God, but there is something about us that can be recognized as divine and reflects God's nature.

- List ways, based on what you find in the Genesis passage above, that humanity reflects the image of God.

- How has the image of God been marred in humanity?
- Do you think that referring to a statue is an adequate analogy for the image of God in us? Why? Why not?
- Compare and contrast Jesus and Adam, according to what Paul said in the Romans passage.
- According to Romans, how does Jesus heal the broken image? What is the result of this restoration?

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## Free to Be

God created humans to be free moral beings. We are endowed with the capacity and responsibility to make our own decisions.

- Do you think that this freedom is an inherent part of each person?
- If it is an inherent part of each person, did Adam in the

garden need God to make his decisions, or was he already self-sufficient?

- If freedom is not an inherent part of humankind but rather the result of one's relationship with God, how does that affect the way we view freedom, salvation, and relationship to God today?

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# Childish Behavior

The Early Church father Irenaeus taught that Adam and Eve were created as children. Because of this, he said that their fall was not as much like a deliberate rebellion by an adult, as it was like three-year-olds who puts their hands on a hot stove after their mother tells them not to. The children knew it was wrong, but they did it anyway because they did not realize the full consequences of their action.

- Is this a good way to conceptualize the story of Adam and Eve? Why? Why not?
- Does this idea affect the way we understand our own bad choices and sins?
- This way of thinking makes God out to be a parent who is trying to raise His children properly. Is this a good way to look at God? Why? Why not?

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# Human Ingenuity

Even though humans have fallen, the fact that we are created in God's image means that there are still many things about us that are awesome. Consider the following thought:

Think about the creative nature of the human being. Not that long ago, we traveled on land by horse and buggy. We traveled on the ocean by wooden boats, many of which are now on the ocean floor between continents. And we communicated by letter and telegraph.

But now we can travel by hurtling through the air, crossing an ocean in a matter of hours instead of months. We can launch ourselves into outer space, walk on the moon, send expeditions to Mars, communicate by telephone, computer, fax, and satellite.

How is it possible that finite and fallible people like us could accomplish so much so rapidly? What is the secret to the incredible capacity of our minds? Are there any limits to our discoveries, and can this creativity and ingenuity continue until the end of time?\*

- Do you think that human ingenuity comes from being made in God's image?
- How would you answer the author's question: "How is it possible that finite and fallible people like us could accomplish so much so rapidly?"
- Do you think there are limits to our discoveries?
- What are some ways we can use our creative abilities to glorify God?

\*Everett Leedingham, ed., *I Believe, Now Tell Me Why* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1994), 15-16.