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**The Missing Link
(& His School of Love)**

Genesis 2:5-7

June 17, 2007

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In 1831, Charles Darwin traveled to the South Seas in search of the so-called “missing link”—the evolutionary bridge between ape and man.

At the southern tip of South America, on the islands of Tierra Del Fuego, Darwin found a group of cannibals so primitive that he believed they were, in fact, the missing link.

Darwin predicted that nothing could lift them to a higher state except thousands or perhaps millions of years of evolution—the survival of the fittest.

Here are some photos of Darwin’s missing link¹:
The missing link, and yet within twenty years, something happened that destroyed Darwin’s discovery and sent scientists, once again, on their quest to find the missing link.

Some say we’ve found the missing link; some say we haven’t. I brought some actual photos of creatures that modern day scientists are proposing as the missing link. Now, some of these photos are very disturbing²:

Actual photos of the missing link:

That is disturbing.

That kind of looks like our youth pastor. It’s shocking to think we may have descended from that . . . or this . . .

How do you argue with scientific evidence like this?

These pictures show we descended from the beasts—

the missing link.

Scientists have been consumed with finding the last evolutionary step: pre-man³.

And some have been consumed with finding our next evolutionary step. Pre-man, modern man, and post-man. Now that's funny . . . but also serious as a heart attack.

If there's a missing link to our past, there must also be a missing link to our future. One explains where we've been, and one explains where we're going.

- Friedrich Nietzsche was one of the first to postulate our missing link with the future. He wrote that the next evolutionary step was the “super-man,” the “uber-man.”
- Adolph Hitler was a huge fan of Nietzsche. He believed that the next evolutionary step was the Aryan race.
- Karl Marx believed that the next evolutionary step was the Communist state.
- People are still postulating the next evolutionary step. These are actual photos of what some believe to be our missing links to the future⁴:

These are X-men; mutations; the next evolutionary step. This is what we could become.

Where or what is the missing link, the creature that reveals where we've been or where we're going or both?

Well, let's look at our text in Genesis 2:5-7:

When no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up--for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground . . .

When was it that “no plants were yet in the earth”? Well, that was the third day, right?

--then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

Man is created on Day 6, right? So God must have formed man's body—man's dust—over three days. Three is a significant number in the Bible. Three days, and we discovered that three of God's days may perhaps be billions of ours. Whatever the case, it's not the dust that matters but the breath of God.

So whether Adam's dust came by way of ape dust or whether God scooped up a batch of unused dust; whether my body evolved from primate stock or whether it didn't, doesn't matter to me. (There are some pretty handsome apes, you know.)

Every animal is made with dust of the earth. But it's the breath of God that makes me human, makes me "Adam."

And I believe there was a first Adam, yet we're all Adam. Adam means "mankind." Last time we talked about how God breathed His Spirit (something of Himself) into dust and made Adam.

God is I AM, and He gives me "I." God is Spirit, and He gives me my spirit. "I have this treasure in an earthen vessel"—spirit from God in clay, and I am still being made in the image of I AM, that is, God. And what is God?

Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning, God . . ." The word used for God is *Elohim*. That's fascinating, for the word is plural.

In Genesis 1:26, we read, "Then Elohim said, 'Let us [plural] make man [singular] in our [plural] image after our [plural] likeness.'" Well, that's a mystery for most Jews, and it's a mystery for most Christians. It's just that Christians have a name for the mystery. We believe that God is a "Trinity," that God is three persons and one substance. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bound together in love.

We are being made in God's image.

C. S. Lewis writes:

All sorts of people are fond of repeating the Christian statement that "God is love." But they seem not to notice that the words "God is love" have no real meaning unless God contains at least two Persons. Love is something that one person has for another person. If God was a single person, then before the world was made, He was not love. . . . And that, by the way, is perhaps the most important difference between Christianity and all other religions: that in Christianity God is not a static thing—not even a person—but a dynamic, pulsating activity, a life, almost a kind of drama. Almost, if you will not think me irreverent, a kind of dance. . . . And now, what does it all matter? It matters more than anything else in the world. The whole dance, or drama, or pattern of this three-Personal life is to be played out in each one of us: or (putting it the other way round) each one of us has got to enter that pattern, take his place in that dance.

Genesis 1:26: "Then God said, 'Let us [plural] make man [singular] in our image [plural].'" Genesis 1:27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him [singular], male and female [plural] he created them [plural]."

God is a plurality in a singularity we call the Trinity. And a man (or woman) is a singularity called to live in a plurality—a plurality called a *family*. And it's more than just a family; it's a community.

So God lives in love, and we are called to live in love. But how do we love if we're only made of dirt?

Last week my friend John showed me a picture of something like this:

- God is a Trinity of love.
- And look—here’s some dirt, an earthen vessel, “Adam.” (If you’re worried that I’m only talking about “Adam” now, remember that Adam is still a “he-she.” He hasn’t yet been divided into male and female.)
- God breathes His breath into that vessel and makes man. (1)
- That breath—that Spirit—reveals the void in man and causes man to cry out for mercy. (2)
- God gives mercy by sending the Son. (3)
- The Son dies on our behalf and returns to the Father. (4)
- The Son sends His Spirit. (5)
- His Spirit cries, “Abba Father!” (6)
- The Apostle Paul writes that we are to be “filled with all the fullness of God.”

It’s utterly shocking when you reflect on it! But God is calling us into the dance that is Himself.⁵

And God is calling us to be the visible image of that dance in this world. As He loves us, so we are to love others.

Listen to Jesus’ prayer: “That they may all be one just as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they may also be in us, so that the world may believe.” Jesus said, “By this all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another.”

So God is love, and His image is love. God is three persons giving themselves to each other in love. And His image is *us persons* giving ourselves to each other in love. Together we are His image. And a person in His image is a person fully given to others in love. He gives us His person named Jesus to show us that love and fill us with that love.

- Because I have I-contact with Him, I can have I-contact with others.
- Because I have a personal relationship with Him, I can have a personal relationship with others.
- Because I have received love, I can give love. I love because He first loved me.

God is love, and we’re being made in His image. Love is our genesis, and love is our destination.

So God is love, we are being made in His image, and life is one, big school of love wherein all things work together for the good with those who have been enrolled. That means every moment is an invitation to join the Great Dance. Every moment is an invitation to enroll in the school of love.

However, the school of love is radically different from the way of the world.

- The world is about dust; the school of love is about Spirit.
- One is mechanical; the other is personal.
- One is about objects; the others is about subjects.
- One uses people to love things; the other uses things to love people.
- One is I-it relationships; the other is I-thou relationships: I-contact, person to person, spirit to spirit, deep calling to deep.
- One is possessing; the other is surrendering.
- One is taking; the other is giving.
- One is consuming; the other is creating.

- One is conquest; the other is service.
- One is about being first; the other is about the last and least.
- One is the survival of the fittest; the other is entirely about the sacrifice of the fittest.

So if you enroll your heart in the school of love, you will look **foolish to** this world. The kingdom of this world can't comprehend love. It doesn't even see persons.

The school of love is foolishness to this world, and it's **hidden** from this world. So the world can't judge your progress in the school of love. Neither can I.

I don't know what you're up against, and you don't know what I'm up against. We each have different stories, different handicaps, different gifts, and different demons with which we do battle.

So success is not measured on a curve in the school of love. And we're not enrolled to see if we have the "right stuff." We *don't* have the right stuff. But we're enrolled to get the right stuff.

We're learning to love, and love is unseen, so it's often hidden from this world.

I mean, you could "speak in the tongues of men and angels, have prophetic powers, understand all mysteries and knowledge, have all faith, move mountains, give away all you have, and deliver your body to be burned . . . and yet *not* have love" and utterly fail the school of love.

On the other hand, you could give a cup of water to a child and graduate with honors from the school of love. You could be a dying thief and say, "Remember me in your kingdom" and be the first to graduate after the Lord Himself.

The school of love is **foolish** to this world,
hidden from this world,
and **painful** in this world.

Do you ever say, "God, just tell me what to do!" and He doesn't? Maybe He doesn't care *what* you do so much as *who* you be . . . like He's not worried about your dust but the disposition of your heart. Love is not something we only think and do; love is something we feel. To be made in the image of love is to feel the passions of Yahweh—the Lord God.

Enroll in the school of love and you'll look foolish. Your progress will be hidden, and your heart will be wrung out time and time again. Yet you'll be made in the image of God.

God is love, and that love is life.

In 1980, Ron Heagy was 17 years old, 6'2" tall, blond, handsome, and well-muscled. He had a football scholarship to Oregon State and planned on going pro. He was a "super-man" . . . prize Aryan stock, a brilliant candidate for the next evolutionary step.

Many of you know Ron, because he's preached here at Lookout two times. He's the guy in the wheelchair. See, in 1980, he dove into the surf and broke his neck. He's a quadriplegic.

A few months after his accident and several weeks of intensive therapy, Ron lay in the dark in a hospital bed sobbing uncontrollably. He had just found out that his

paralysis was permanent. His parents had left for the evening, and now he was alone . . . except, of course, for an eight-year-old boy named Jimmy. The doctors thought Jimmy was brain dead. He'd been hit by a car while riding his bike.

Ron resented being put in a room with him. And now he sobbed:

Lord, I don't want to live like this. Please let me die. I can't take care of myself, can't dig a ditch, can't play football, can't hug my girl or hold her hand. What kind of man is that? I'll only be a burden to my family, Lord. Please . . . please just let me die.

Then in the darkness of that room, Ron says he heard a small, faltering voice whisper his name: "R-o-n." Ron held his breath and listened. At first he couldn't figure out who it was. It was Jimmy. He hadn't spoken a word since he was hit by the car, and he'd never spoken to Ron.

Ron had thought Jimmy was worthless—only a heap of dust and ashes. And now in the darkness, across a sea of despair, like deep calling to deep, he heard a word: "Ron . . ." Then the little voice whispered again, "I . . . I love you."

These are the only words Ron ever heard Jimmy speak. But they changed his life.

That night Ron prayed, "God, forgive me. Remind me I'm created in your image, and help me to be like Jimmy." Today Ron Heagy speaks the Word to hundreds of thousands. But, you see, that Word in dust named Jimmy was the link—the missing link that connected Ron to his genesis and his destination.

In 1831, Darwin thought he found the missing link. But by 1865 he was proved wrong. In 1865, Darwin returned to Tierra Del Fuego and found churches, schools, and homes . . . and those same cannibals dressed in clothes, happy and gathering to sing hymns.

This is a picture of some of their descendants:

They belong to the Cape Horn Foursquare Gospel Church.

You see, in 1851, fourteen missionaries arrived from London. When the Indians would attack, the missionaries would only flee. All fourteen died that first year. They starved to death. They died so they could whisper into those dark hearts, "In the name of Jesus, I love you."

Their death inspired others who came and preached the Gospel, so that by 1865, the change in these people so impressed Darwin that he made a generous donation to the missionaries and became a subscriber to the South American Missionary Society for the remainder of his life.

Darwin thought he had found the missing link . . . and thirty-four years later, he did.

This is the missing link. This is the Word of God:

He is the Word of God spoken into the void of creation.
He is the breath of God breathed into the clay.

He is “the light that enlightens all men.”

So He is the missing link between the animals and man . . . and the missing link between man and God. He is our genesis, and He is our destination.

He is the revelation of the love of God.

He is the lesson learned in the school of love.

He is the first graduate; “first born of all creation.”

Each of us is being created in His image. He is the Superman, the Eschatos Man, the Perfected Man. On His cross, He cried, “It is perfected.” The firstborn of all creation. He is the self-sacrifice of the fittest, the revelation of God. This is the person of God given to us to teach us to love. He shows us who God is and what man is to become.

He is the link to our past
and the link to our future.

So life is a school of love, and Jesus is the perfection of love, and all things work for the good of them that are enrolled. Every moment you can call on Him and get an “A.”

So I’ve found there’s one little prayer that can change every situation from a failure to a success. This is the prayer: “Lord Jesus, teach me your love.” You see, He wants to teach you His love in every situation. Those situations aren’t coming at you by accident. They’re on purpose.

So when you’ve failed and lost everything, pray, “Lord Jesus, teach me your love.” He wants your heart to know His love is unconditional. When I fail, my heart sees I don’t earn His love.

When you realize you’ve sinned, pray, “Lord Jesus, teach me your love.” Do you realize that you’ve been allowed to sin so that you can experience the depths of God’s mercy in Jesus? We come to know Jesus not by getting it right but through getting it wrong.⁶ And then “we love because He first loved us.”

When your love is spurned and rejected by others, pray, “Lord Jesus, teach me your love.” His love was spurned and rejected, and He loved even more.

When people misunderstand you, slander you, and malign you, pray, “Lord Jesus, teach me your love.” Sometimes people will misunderstand me and say I said things I didn’t say. They gossip about me, malign me . . . I can get bitter, or I can pray, “Lord Jesus, teach me your love.” You know, *He* was misunderstood, slandered, and maligned, yet He loved His enemies. And now He’s shaping me in His image. Suddenly a curse has been turned into a blessing. I’m enrolled in His school of love.

When people revile you, persecute you, and mutter all kinds of evil against you; when they strip you naked, flog you, and nail you to a cross, pray, “Lord Jesus, teach me your love.”

To the world, the cross is a sign of abject failure. But in the school of love, it is the ultimate success. It is graduation day.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled

himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name . . . (Phil. 2:5-9)

He is our missing link. He is your genesis and your destination. And life is His school of love, that you would be made in His image.

When you believe that, it changes everything.

Would you bow your heads? Let's pray responsively. When I say, "Lord Jesus," you pray, "Teach me your love." OK? Ready? "Lord Jesus," "teach me your love."

When I'm rich and prosperous,
 Lord Jesus, teach me your love.
When I'm poor and out of options,
 Lord Jesus, teach me your love.
When I'm guilty and ashamed,
 Lord Jesus, teach me your love.
When I'm falsely accused,
 Lord Jesus, teach me your love.
When I'm used and rejected,
 Lord Jesus, teach me your love.
When I'm denied and betrayed,
 Lord Jesus, teach me your love.
When I'm stripped, flogged, and nailed to a cross,
 Lord Jesus, teach me your love.
When I breathe my last breath,
 Lord Jesus, teach me your love.

In plenty and hunger, in abundance and want, in joy and sorrow, in sickness and health, in life and death:

Lord Jesus, teach me your love.

So on the night He was betrayed, He took bread and broke it saying, "This is my body given to you." In the same way after supper, He took the cup and said, "This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood shed for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it, all of you."

Lord Jesus, teach me to love.

Do you wonder why life gets so crazy at times? You're learning to love. But don't fear. He will finish what He started. You will be made in His image. He is love, and love is life.

[Communion]

So is this a sad message? No, I think it's the happiest message. We all fail at

times. We all are rejected at times. We all struggle at times.

But this is your situation: You're like a junior high kid at his first dance. You're standing on the edge of the dance. Remember how painful that was? You're stuck in yourself.

You pray, "Lord Jesus, teach me to love. Teach me to dance." And Jesus comes out of the dance, takes you by the hand, and leads you in. Yes, it's frightening, painful, and embarrassing. You're dying to yourself and joining the dance.

Remember the cross is a door. It's a door to *something*. It's the door to *life*. You haven't really even begun to live. So have courage. In Jesus' name, believe the gospel. Amen.

Endnotes

¹ www.victory-cruises.com

² www.worth1000.com

³ www.cartoonstock.com

⁴ www.imdb.com

⁵ The members of the Trinity are loving each other through us.

⁶ Richard Rohr

Relevant Texts and Quotations (from bulletin)

The evolutionists seem to know everything about the missing link except the fact that it is missing.

~ G. K. Chesterton

. . . the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

~ *Colossians 1:26-27*

In the beginning God [*'ēlohîm*]. . .

~ *Genesis 1:1a (RSV)*

This word [*'ēlohîm*], which is generally viewed as the plural of *'ēloah*, is found far more frequently in Scripture than either *'ēl* or *'ēloah* for the true God. The plural ending is usually described as a plural of majesty and not intended as a true plural when used of God. This is seen in the fact that the noun *'ēlohîm* is consistently used with singular verb forms and with adjectives and pronouns in the singular. But a better reason can be seen in Scripture itself where, in the very first chapter of Genesis, the necessity of a term conveying both the unity of the one God and yet allowing for a plurality of persons is found (Gen. 1:2, 26). This is further borne out by the fact that the form *'ēlohîm* occurs only in Hebrew and in no other Semitic language, not even in Biblical Aramaic.

~ *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

~ *Genesis 1:26-27 (RSV)*

To be *imago Dei* means designation to a common, shared humanity. According to Genesis 1:26, Adam, human

being, is a singular who corresponds to a divine plural. According to Genesis 1:27, men and women are a plural that corresponds to a divine singular. This grammatical shift between singular and plural is intentional and important. . . . Sexual difference and community belong to the very image of God itself, they are not merely related to human fertility. So this community already corresponds to God, because in this community God finds his own correspondence. It represents God on earth, and God 'appears' on earth in this male-female image. Likeness to God cannot be lived in isolation. It can be lived only in human community.

~ *Jurgen Moltmann, God in Creation*

We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made. . . . And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.

~ *The Nicene Creed*

In order for charity to be true, it demands a plurality of persons; in order for charity to be perfected, it requires a trinity of persons.

~ *Richard of St. Victor, De trinitate*

All sorts of people are fond of repeating the Christian statement that "God is love." But they seem not to notice that the words "God is love" have no real meaning unless God contains at least two Persons. Love is something that one person has for another person. If God was a single person, then before the world was made, He was not love. . . . And that, by the way, is perhaps the most important difference between Christianity and all other religions: that in Christianity God is not a static thing—not even a person—but a dynamic, pulsating activity, a life, almost a kind of drama. Almost, if you will not think me irreverent, a kind of dance. . . . And now, what does it all matter? It matters more than anything else in the world. The whole dance, or drama, or pattern of this three-Personal life is to be played out in each one of us: or (putting it the other way round) each one of us has got to enter that pattern, take his place in that dance. There is no other way to the happiness for which we were made.

~ *C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity*

As to its fellow-creatures, each soul, we suppose, will be eternally engaged in giving away to all the rest that which it receives. And as to God, we must remember that the soul is but a hollow which God fills. Its union with God is, almost by definition, a continual self-abandonment—an opening, an unveiling, a surrender, of itself. A blessed spirit is a mould even more and more patient of the bright metal poured into it, a body ever more completely uncovered to the meridian blaze of the spiritual sun. We need not suppose that the necessity for something analogous to self-conquest will ever be ended, or that eternal life will not also be eternal dying. . . . For in self-giving, if anywhere, we touch a rhythm not only of all creation but of all being. For the Eternal Word also gives Himself in sacrifice; and that not only on Calvary. For when He was crucified He "did that in the wild weather of His outlying provinces which He had done at home in glory and gladness." From before the foundation of the world He surrenders begotten Deity back to begetting Deity in obedience. And as the Son glorifies the Father, so also the Father glorifies the Son. From the highest to the lowest, self exists to be abdicated and, by that abdication, becomes the more truly self, to be thereupon yet the more abdicated, and so forever. This is not a heavenly law which we can escape by remaining earthly, nor an earthly law which we can escape by being saved. What is outside the system of self-giving is not earth, nor nature, nor "ordinary life," but simply and solely Hell. Yet even Hell derives from this law such reality as it has. That fierce imprisonment in the self is but the obverse of the self-giving which is absolute reality; the negative shape which the outer darkness takes by surrounding and defining the shape of the real, or which the real imposes on the darkness by having a shape and positive nature of its own. The golden apple of selfhood, thrown among the false gods, became an apple of discord because they scrambled for it. They did not know the first rule of the holy game, which is that every player must by all means touch the ball and then immediately pass it on. To be found with it in your hands is a fault; to cling to it, death. But when it flies to and fro among the players too swift for eye to follow, and the great master Himself leads the revelry, giving Himself eternally to His creatures in the generation, and back to Himself in the sacrifice, of the Word, then indeed the eternal dance "makes heaven drowsy with the harmony." All pains and pleasures we have known on earth are early initiations in the movements of that dance; but it does not exist for the sake of joy. It does not even exist for the sake of good, or of love. It is Love Himself, and Good Himself, and therefore happy.

~ *C. S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain*

I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. . . . I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.

~ *John 17:20-21, 26*

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

~ *1 John 4:7-10*

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

~ *1 Corinthians 13:1-3*

When no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground—then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

~ *Genesis 2:5-7 (RSV)*

And I saw no difference between God and our essential being, it seemed to be all God, and yet my understanding took it that our essential being is in God: that is to say that God is God, and our essential being is a creation within God; for the almighty truth of the Trinity is our father, he who made us and keeps us within him....Because of the great, eternal love that God has for all humankind, he makes no distinction in love between the blessed soul of Christ and the least soul that shall be saved. It is very easy to believe and to trust that the blessed soul of Christ has a place of honour within the glorious Godhead. But it is also true, as I have understood from what our Lord has shown me, that where the blessed soul of Christ is, there too is the essence of all the souls that shall be saved by him.

~ *Julian of Norwich, Revelations of Divine Love*

To man the world is twofold, in accordance with his twofold attitude. The attitude of man is twofold, in accordance with the twofold nature of the primary words which he speaks. The primary words are not isolated words, but combined words. The one primary word is the combination I-Thou. The other primary word is the combination I-It.

~ *Martin Buber, I and Thou*

On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

~ *Matthew 7:22-23*

Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

~ *1 Corinthians 15:45-49*

Man is God appearing in the universe, appearing visibly in the midst of all he created. That changes the meaning of man, doesn't it. . . ? I say to you Masai; you have not known man, you have never seen a man. Creation is not yet finished. What you see is creation groaning and moaning even until now, yearning to be finished and completed, to be the body of God. But suppose the fullness of time had come and the work of God was perfect, and there appeared a man who was perfectly a man, according to the plan of God, a man completely human. If, once upon a time, there was such a man who was so completely a man, so perfectly human, then there would be no other way to describe him than to say; this man is God—God appearing in the universe. Isn't that so? Jesus was that man. Perhaps the really surprising thing that the man Jesus did in his lifetime was to show us, not only what God is, but what man is.

~ *Vincent J. Donovan, Rediscovering Christianity*

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

~ *Colossians 1:15*

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

~ *Romans 8:28*

Is life just a great school of love? I believe it is. Love is the lesson, and God's love is so great that God will finally teach it to all of us. We'll finally surrender, and God will finally win. That will be God's "justice," which will swallow up our lesser versions.

~ *Richard Rohr, Everything Belongs*

The Missing Link (& His School of Love)

Genesis 2:5-7

Pastor Peter Hiatt

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