

PRAYER



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Creator God, as we are made in your image, we give you thanks for the seed of creativity you planted within each person. We praise the clean lines of the sculpture, the complexity of the concerto, the beauty of the poet's words. Grant us, we pray, the capacity to appreciate creativity where we don't always notice it: the perfectly clean and useful lines of a row of coat hangers, say, or the complexity of a computer that crashes (some days), but most days does not, or the beauty in a text message carrying everyday news.

Forgive, us we pray, for those times we have squandered with aimless disregard our capacity to create, and for those times we have used our creativity as a force for destruction, rather than reparation. Help us truly to live in appreciative awe of the creativity that you have planted within. Give us the patience and courage to nourish that creativity, and the strength and persistence to express it. In your name we pray, Amen.

-Jennifer G. Brownell, re: Worship

WARM UP (OPTIONAL)

What is the most beautiful handmade thing you have ever witnessed being created?



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WORD

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." ²⁹ And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. ³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

[GENESIS 1:27-31](#)

"Cultural change will probably not be brought by revival, silver bullet, or a particularly charismatic individual. Nor will it be brought about by primarily passive stances towards the cultures of which we are a part. Instead it will be through positively contributing to culture – indeed, 'creativity is the only viable source of change.'

Christians cannot see culture as peripheral to the gospel. In fact, Christians have more reason to adopt this posture towards culture.

According to Genesis, to be a 'culture maker' – to create and to cultivate – is essential to human nature, meaning that to inhabit totally uncultivated wildernesses or ultra-cultivated theme parks rob us of our humanity. Human sin is also manifest in human culture – from our original parents' fig leaf clothing to the Tower of Babel to a Roman cross to contemporary pornography. And yet it is also through human culture that God brings redemption: first with Israel and ultimately through Christ, whose redemption has also caused millennia of Christians to pursue a new cultural vision.

...Revelation teaches about human culture in the new creation, when human culture will ultimately fulfil Genesis 1's mandate, and when 'humanity will ultimately comprehend and have our proper dominion over all of creation'.

Christians therefore cannot see human culture as something peripheral to the gospel; rather, 'the only story that can truly be named the "good news" is absolutely, completely saturated with culture.'

- Pete Dray, *Culture Making Review* (Andy Crouch)

GUIDE QUESTIONS

(NUMBERED ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF DEPTH AND READINESS TO SHARE)

1. On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 = completely incapable; 10 = fully capable), how would you rate your ability to create new things? Why would you rate yourself this way?
2. What does it mean to be created in the image of God? How might you personally reflect God's image?
3. When God calls Adam to be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, what do you think God meant? How might this apply to what he might be calling us to as humanity today?
4. Apart from the call to fruitfulness and multiplication, God also instructs Adam to cultivate and steward the earth. What do you think God might want you to take care of, and how might you steward and cultivate this well?

If you are not yet a worshiper of Jesus, would you choose today to trust him and to follow the one who sacrificed his all for you? Will you enable him to have all authority as the one who calls the shots in your life? Would you like to enter into a saving relationship with God through Jesus? Ask your Life Group leader to lead you in prayer to receive Christ. You can pray this prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe you died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite you to be the master of my life. I want to trust and follow you as my Lord and Saviour. I declare that I am yours, and you are mine. In Jesus' name, Amen.

NOTES