



St. Michael's Church

CHARLESTON, SC

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2021
11AM

GENESIS 1:1-5, 26-31; LUKE 15: 11-24
PREACHER: THE REV. AL ZADIG, JR.

HELP US LORD TO BE SO CONNECTED TO YOU THAT WE MIGHT BECOME YOUR
DISCIPLES AND THE SERVANTS OF OTHERS.

TAKE OUR LIPS AND SPEAK THROUGH THEM,
OUR MINDS AND THINK THROUGH THEM,
AND TAKE OUR HEARTS, AND SET THEM ON FIRE.

If I were to ask you to find your birth certificate right now, would you be able too? Birth certificates are so important that state governments keep a copy when you lose yours! Without one, you can't:

- Get married
- Get a passport
- Or receive a driver's license!

Your birth certificate proves two things about you: Who you are, and Whose you are.

Here's mine: Who you are: Alfred Thomas Kurt Zadig, Jr
Whose You are: Born to Alfred and Ina Zadig in Fairfield, Connecticut!

This morning as we continue our dive into Genesis, I want you to visualize Genesis Chapter 1, as your true birth certificate. Let me explain. As you heard from Bill Hyer last week, Genesis is the book that describes not just the beginning of something, but the beginning of everything. Genesis proclaims that God created the universe out of NOTHING:

Creo-tio-Ex-Nuh-Hill-lo.

There was no pre-existent substance. God Created out of nothing:

- Light
- Darkness
- Land
- Water
- Time

- Space
- Animals
- Vegetation

Meaning, Genesis is not just the origin of creation, but the origin of everything in creation, The Origin of you and me. Genesis is even the origin of Science! Meaning Genesis couldn't possibly be in conflict with Science, because Science too was created by God. It was Louis Pasteur, that 19th century French Scientist who said: The more I Study nature, the more I stand amazed at the work of the creator! Science brings men nearer to God! I pray while I am engaged at my work in the laboratory." So, Genesis is not in conflict with Science, but Genesis is in Conflict with any worldview that starts WITHOUT GOD as its creator!

By the way, Genesis humorously proves God is a baseball fan. Genesis 1:1: In the Big-Inning...God... Well there is too much in the Big-Inning to cover every verse in today's sermon, so, I'm going to depend on Sunday School teachers today to explain all 31verses, No pressure! That gives me the luxury of being able to laser focus on just one verse: 7 words: Chapter 1, Verse 26: God Saying: Let us make man in our image. These words contain your birth certificate! You belong to HIM!

But At this point you're saying wait a minute! Foul Ball! God saying: Let US? Make man: In OUR Image? Who's the us? I thought it was just God way back then!

This is so cool. Many scholars believe the US God is referring to is the Trinity:

- God the Father
- Jesus Christ the Son who forgives and restores
- And the Holy Spirit! Who brings order out of Chaos

Colossians affirms this in Chapter 1, verse 16..."For by Jesus, all things were created, things in heaven and on earth. All things were created by Jesus and for Jesus!" So we're not talking here about the image of a formless God we can never know, but on our birth certificate: Your name...

But under whose you are...Created in the image of:

- God the Father
- God the Son
- and God the Holy Spirit.

Okay, what on earth does this mean?

Let me demonstrate being created in the image of God with clay. In Jeremiah 18 we read: "Like clay in the potter's hand, so we like clay..." are in the potter's hand, the potter being God. But...can the clay say to the potter, I have no need of you? When we realize we are the clay, created out of love in HIS IMAGE, Life JUST makes sense. But, more specifically, the image of God refers to the

- mental
- moral
- creative
- and social image of God.

In other words:

- your mind
- my mind
- our understanding of right and wrong
- our creativity
- our wisdom
- our gifts
- our passions
- our personalities...
- our PURPOSE

Come from being the image of Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

Meaning:

- Anytime you worship
- Anytime you praise God
- Anytime you hug
- Anytime you enjoy a symphony,
- a piece of art
- poetry

You are confirming you are made in God's Image..!

- Whenever you recoil from evil
- When you Make a friend
- Hug a child
- Bring another to Christ
- Anytime you live your purpose

You are demonstrating you are made in the image of God.

It means every bit of your:

- Self-worth
- Your value
- Your purpose is tied inextricably to very heart of God.

You are His essence...Meaning:

We have no:

- Being
- No true life
 - outside
 - Apart
 - or independent
 - of God!

As Dr. Peter Kreeft writes...Your relationship with God therefore is not an addition to your life, it is your life! To be a human being is to be the essence of God's daughter, God's son... Which means:

- not a second of time
- a cent of money
- a drop of our blood or sweat
- or a thought in our head
- can we truly call our own unless we first call it HIS.

We owe Him our all because we owe Him our very being. So faith is not a department within my life, it IS my life! Which is why you and I live for an audience of 1.

But why did God create us in His image? That's really the central question right!

Truth is, God didn't need to create the Universe and all of us. He chose to create it...WHY?

- God's character is love
- And love is best expressed toward something or someone else...
- So God created the world AND US as an expression of His love and Joy!

Let me give you an example of this love. Years ago, my wife and I took our children to the Isle of Skye in Scotland. But what was even better than the visual of Skye was watching our children discover Skye! Love is best expressed toward something or someone else. It gives God joy to create, like a master artist, creating beauty! Ohh, I think of the artists within St. Michael's,

- Rose Bryan
- Kit Coker
- Susannah Hubble
- Christian Snedeker
- And others..

Artists who begin with a white canvas have the freedom to paint anything they want: God with his open canvas **CHOSE TO** paint you!

You-Are-His out of LOVE!

- You are highest value to Him.
- You are precious
- You are the Apple of His eye!

It IS that love that propelled God not just to create us,

But to create us in His very image of:

- Father
- Son
- and Holy Spirit!

It means your life...YOU ARE not an accident.

- Some of you may be orphans
- Some of you were adopted
- Some of you never knew your dad, your mom
- Genesis 1 says...You are not an accident!

You are a created daughter, A created son of God who loves you, SO MUCH SO YOU BEAR HIS RESEMBLANCE FOR THE PURPOSE? TO LIVE OUT HIS PURPOSE IN YOUR LIFE!

And that means that any

- self-hate
- self-loathing,
- or hating others,
- is attacking God Himself-

And is evidence you've lost your birth certificate.

Logically you could say BUT Al, on Wednesday night we looked at all the violence and lostness in our culture. Where did we go wrong? It's called the fall, and we'll get to that in 2 weeks. Suffice it to say that the love of God is so great, He sends Jesus in person to remedy it. The fall also explains why we have a generation of young people who have thrown their birth certificate away and are really struggling with their identity!

- Why am I here?
- Do I need God?
- Do I need college?
- What's my gender
- Should I shun my lineage?

If this describes you, you're not alone! It's such a struggle that Jesus gave us the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15. Long story short, the younger son of an aging father thinks:

- I can throw my birth certificate away..
- I can Disconnect my life from my father...

And You and I know it would be a train wreck. It ends up with this guy feeding pigs-up to his eye balls in manure. But his life turns around with one sentence. It was this:

He came to his senses. HOW? He re-claimed his Birth Certificate: EMBRACING HIS LINEAGE BY Getting up and running to the arms of his Father. Does the father shun him? No, the father runs to the son, and kisses him....

My dear friends. Genesis is not ancient history! Genesis 1 is our birth certificate that puts our lives and purpose into Alignment with our creator! And there's more. God is not done creating.

God through Jesus Christ is here to re-make us,

- to daily give us course corrections
- to daily forgive us of our sin and temptations
- to want to ditch the birth certificate.

Jesus never gives up on us.

Genesis 1: ANCIENT BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Created in His very image of:

- Father
- Son
- and Holy Spirit!

OUR Birth Certificate:
Alfred Zadig
Born January 2, 1968
Son of the Living God
Purpose: To serve as Priest

YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Your Name, born on:
Son/Daughter of the living God
Purpose: To serve as...?

As John Piper loves to say: God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.

Let me get personal. The hardest part about being a priest is realizing that every generation has to come to the revelation of the Prodigal Son, it's never automatic. Every generation has to come to the discovery that their true birth certificate is the one born in Genesis: So: Let me finish with the story of one such guy: As a young man, this guy was hardly attracted to the Gospel, No,

- Guns
- Motorcycles
- Cigarettes
- and alcohol

Were his passions. He was thrown out of high school and college. His purpose for living was to be a hell raiser that lived his own life...

- independent of lineage,
- living as far from God as he could.

At age 22, his father had it. He sits him down, and this is what he says: Son: "Your mother and I sense there is a struggle for the soul of your life. There's no halfway. Either you accept Jesus Christ and what he says and obey and follow him, or you'll have to reject him. There's no middle ground."

In that encounter, Franklin Graham, aided by his father Billy Graham realized he had lived 22 years thinking he had no birth certificate, that he was an island. Like the prodigal, and through The Father, Son and Holy Spirit - Franklin embraced his birth certificate!

If I were to ask you to find your birth certificate right now, would you be able too?

And On that certificate:

- Who are you?
- Whose are you?

Let us pray.