

God's Many-Splendored Imaged Chapter 5

- 1) Definition of DIGNITY
- 2) : the quality or state of being [worthy](#), honored, or [esteemed](#)
- 3) This chapter asks the question "Do I have real dignity as a human person?" And "Does my neighbor have real dignity as a human person?"
- 4) The author answers in the affirmative.
 - i) "Because everyone is made in the image of God and because this image defines what it means to be human, people are fundamentally equal, regardless of the differences in wealth, education, and social status. The Church preached this countercultural message in the ancient world and still preaches it now.
- 5) The early Christian affirmed that all men, women, slaves and lepers are made in God's image. This has not kept them from being discriminated against.
- 6) Women:
 - i) In ancient Roman Society, the children of wealthy families were cared for by slaves called Pedagogues, slave who supervised children and took them to and from school and who taught them manners. a lowly figure.
- 7) The Christian Scholar Clement looked at the pedagogue and gave the pedagogue's task a spiritual understanding by seeing Christ as the true pedagogue and Christians as children who first are taught an ethical life and then further learning from the same Christ who is the teacher.
- 8) Clement of Alexandria looked at it in this manner.
 - i) Christ guides us as children; men and women.
 - ii) Women are called to the same spiritual journey as men, since we are all created in His Image.
- 9) The Church is full of women who fought the same fight as men. Antiquity did not put women on the athletic field or on the battlefield, but in Christianity men and women fight the same fight, side by side.
- 10) St. Basil:
 - i) The woman also possesses creation according to the image of God. As indeed does the man. The natures are alike equal honor, the virtues are equal, the struggles equal, the judgment alike, Let her not say, I am weak. The weakness is in the flesh, in the soul is the power.

- 11) Basil recognizes that the royal dignity of the human condition involves responsibilities as well as privileges and asserts that women do live up to these responsibilities.
 - i) These responsibilities many times lead to Martyrdom.
 - (a) Thekla, Barbara, Anastasia, Katherine, Kyriaki, Fotini, Marina, Paraskevi and Irene.
- 12) Slavery:
 - a) There are 27 million slaves in the world and half of those are children. This is more than at any other time in history.
- 13) Gregory of Nyssa; the brother of Basil the Great, attacked slavery as an institution. In his homily, he lays out a philosophical argument based on the premise that masters and slaves are equal in the eyes of God... the practice of one human enslaving another is immoral in the eyes of God.
- 14) In Genesis God gave man dominion over the animals not of other humans.
- 15) Illness:
 - i) Leprosy was a grave illness but today whether it be Aids or any other illness many want to forget that they are made in the Image of God.
- 16) Gregory of Nyssa in speaking about those ravaged by Leprosy states.
 - i) Even if I must speak of greater things, Lepers have been made in the image of God in the same way you and I have and perhaps preserved that image better than we, even if their bodies are corrupted. They have put on the same Christ as the inner person”
- 17) The problem we face today is that people are not only mistreated but there are those who work to eradicate their awareness of the dignity and identity that go with being human.
- 18) We need to work to free people whether they are slaves, disabled the homeless the poor.
- 19) The fact that the Lord Jesus Christ assumed human nature in its fullness except for sin (cf. Heb. 4:15) shows that this dignity does not apply to the distortions, resulting from the fall. the dignity and ultimate worth of every human person are derived from the image of God,
- 20) We have lived in a time of unrelenting assaults on human life and dignity.
- 21) “The value of an individual human life, once the crown of Creation, is now measured by age, health, material possessions and the perceived ability to "contribute" to society.”
- 22) It is time to look at ourselves and each other to see our brothers and sisters as the image of God and to treat them with the Royal Dignity in which they were created.