



SHARING SCRIPTURE

Discover • Jesus • Together

God Created...

For use: June 30 - July 6

Texts: Genesis 1-3, Acts 17:28, Psalms 148, 24:1, Genesis 4:1-9, Matthew 22:37-39, Revelation 14:7

Erin McCarthy never planned to be a sculptor. She worked for five years as a makeup artist and it gave her “confidence to delve more deeply into art.” As a makeup artist, she learned to pay “close attention to special effects” which helped her mold and sculpt her clients’ features in a realistic way. Last week, McCarthy, 26, was awarded first prize in the Portrait Society of America’s international juried fine art competition. Her creation, a bust of her father titled “Simple Man,” stood against more than 3,000 entries. [1]

In high school, Eric loved taking art classes and enjoyed ceramics and sculpting. She eventually “traveled to Europe to study for three years in Italy at the Florence Academy of Arts.” It increased her confidence and led her to open her own studio. Yet, she admits that creating the perfect piece of artwork is impossible; failure comes with every job. “The sculpture I just finished — I destroyed the first one. I wasn’t happy with how it turned out. ... You are never completely happy with the result.” [Ibid.]

When God created our world, everything was pronounced “good,” except for the creation of people, whom the Lord pronounced as “very good.” The Creator did not destroy the masterpiece of humanity several times before finally being satisfied with the result. The work of living art was perfect the first time around and the Lord was completely happy with the result, until an enemy destroyed the pièce de résistance.

Just as a master artist proudly displays a final work, born of imagination and sweat, so God made the human race as a great achievement, proudly displayed to the universe. Imagine the grief of seeing your best work, your magnum opus, dashed into a million pieces. The pain in the heart of the Lord was much greater. It compelled heaven’s highest authority to repair the damage and restore the living work of art.

Today we still see the effects of the devil, continuing to deface the Creator’s best.

Disfigured bodies, weakened minds, and broken hearts can be found everywhere ... yet, all of these have the utmost attention of the original Artist. Not one member of humanity is beneath the Maker’s notice, no matter how far a person has fallen from the original design.

If we would be like our Creator, reflecting the image of the Divine, we too will notice the damaged artwork and with tender care reach out with compassion to restore every child of God. Let us find our work as heavenly sculptors of beauty, seeing the best in every person we meet.

~Curtis Rittenour

[1] <https://www.metrowestdailynews.com/entertainmentlife/20190630/meet-artist-medway-sculptor-erin-mccarthy>

For Reflection

Connecting: Share an experience where you created something (a work of art, a delicious meal, a poem, a photograph) that made you feel extremely satisfied.

Sharing: Imagine what God must have felt when the enemy tempted our first parents to sin and deface the perfect image of the Creator. What emotions do you think were felt in heaven?

1. Anger
2. Disappointment
3. Sadness
4. Disbelief
5. Determination
6. Other...

Applying: A teen in your church runs away from home, and lives with a homeless group of other teens. One day she shows up with a 2-year-old child in Beginner's Sabbath school at your church, is not sure who the father is of her child, smells like drugs, alcohol, and smoke from vaping. Make a list of emotions you might see in your fellow church members. What feelings does God have for this girl?

Valuing: We must never forget that every single person on the planet is represented in the experience of this teen who ran away from home. We have all run away from God, no matter how good we think we are. Pray with one other person that you will have compassion toward all who turn from God, just as you would want others to have sympathy toward you.

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Three decades ago, we created this resource for small groups and Sabbath school classes, and it continues to bless so many people worldwide. Thank you for your continued interest in these biblical themes and what they mean to your life and those people with whom you share it.

Paul Richardson
Executive Director

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