

Doctrine for Dummies

Lesson 5

Anthropology – The Nature of Man

In the creation account of Genesis 1-2, God systematically created the world and after each step, we are told that He saw that it was good; but after God made man, He saw that it was very good. Man is distinguished from the rest of creation as being made in the image and likeness of God. God gave man a dominion mandate to rule over God's creation as His mediator. Part of the "image" concept is the ability to reason, communicate, and make moral choices. As God's mediators, man and woman were to share a loving intimacy with each other, but especially with God. Love, obedience, and trust is not real unless freely given, so God put a simple test in the garden. The results of that simple test have affected all of mankind ever since.

1. What was man made out of in Genesis 2:7? What set man apart from all other creatures (Gen 1:26)? What mandate did God give man (Gen 1:28; 2:15, Ps 8:3-8)?
2. What event would taint the moral ability of mankind from that point on (Gen 2:17; 3:1-7)? Was the entire creation affected by that act of disobedience (Romans 8:20-22)?
3. Genesis chapters 4-11 tell stories that illustrate the effects of sin upon the moral ability and the task God gave mankind. At what point did sin become so immense that God had to intervene (Genesis 6:5, 11-13)?
4. Did the judgment of God on mankind through the great flood have any effect on the sin nature of the remaining people and their descendants (Genesis 9:18-25)?
5. We have seen that God created man's physical fleshy body out of the elements of the earth, but is man also set apart as having an eternal spirit (Galatians 6:18, Hebrews 4:12, 1 Peter 3:4)? What internal organ is used in Scripture as an image of the soul/spirit of man (1 Peter 3:4, Acts 2:37, 16:14, 2 Cor 1:22)?

6. How does all of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation depict the base nature of mankind as it has existed since the original sin in Genesis 3 (Gen 6:5, Jeremiah 17:9, Ps 51:5, Eccl 7:20, Romans 3:23, Eph 2:1-3)? What kind of struggle goes on between the desires of our flesh and the Spirit which indwells us (Rom 8:6-7, Gal 5:17, 1 Jn 2:15-17)?

7. How does David, one of the greatest men in history, describe the burden of sin in Psalm 38:1-8? What is his only hope in Ps 32:1-2? At what point in his life was David a sinner according to Ps 51:5; 58:3?

8. What uncomplimentary adjectives are given to describe the mind of the unsaved man in the following passages: Rom 1:28, Eph 4:17, Titus 1:15, and 2 Cor 4:4? When we accept Jesus as our Savior, what can we begin to do (Rom 12:2, Matt 22:37, Eph 5:17, 1 Cor 14:15, Rom 6:18-19, 2 Peter 1:4, Eph 4:22-25)?

9. In the creation account of Genesis 1:26-27, it is clear that man was distinct from the rest of creation because he was made in the image of God. Man was created with the moral and intellectual capacity to make decisions, and thus God made a creature whom He could fellowship with, and who could return His love in all eternity. How will this eventually be accomplished according to Ephesians 2:4-7 and Titus 3:5-7 (Phil 3:21, 1 Jn 3:2)?

10. What important command did Jesus give His followers to begin the fulfillment of the restoration of man to his original state of being (Acts 1:8, Matt 28:19-20)?