

Anthropology—Doctrine of Man

The Origin of Man

Who am I? Why am I here?

I. Where did man come from?

A. In the beginning...

The Bible tells us that God created everything in this universe, including mankind (Gen 1:1–27; Matt 19:4; Rev 4:11).

B. How was it all created?

- “Let there be...and it was so.” At God’s word the world came into existence, immediately. Each act was accomplished by a divine decree.
- There was no “big bang” that brought the universe about. Furthermore, contra evolutionary (and theistic evolution) teaching, there was no “process” involved in man’s coming into existence.
 - Man was created by God supernaturally. God “formed” man immediately. No process or secondary causation occurred in the creative act.
 - Note Gen 3:19 (“to dust you shall return”): the meaning is ridiculous meaning if dust refers to an animal ancestry.
- Although God used previously existing material—dust—the act was no less “creative,” direct, and supernatural than those acts which were technically *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). The verbs for creating Adam (and Eve) are used interchangeably in the entire creation narrative.

II. Where did I come from?

A. An organic unity

There is an organic unity of the whole human race, stemming from Adam.

- Genesis 3:20 Eve is “the mother of all the living.”
- Acts. 17:26 God “made from one [Adam] every nation of mankind.”
- Genesis 9:19 From Noah’s three sons, “the whole earth was populated.” Noah, of course, descended from Adam and Eve (Gen 5:1, 28-29).

B. Eve’s unity

- In one sense Eve had a separate and direct creation in that God personally created her subsequent to Adam’s creation on Day 6 of the creation week.
- However, in another sense her creation as a separate act must not be pressed unduly or the organic unity of the race is lost.
- Therefore it is said that Eve was created “potentially” in Adam because from him she was taken by a special creative act of God and given individual existence.

III. Why is man here?

- God did not need to create. There was no lack in Him. Nothing was missing in His life that He needed something to help Him out.
- God created everything for His own glory (Is 43:7; Eph 1:11–12).
- Our purpose in life is to do all things to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31).
- We must also strive for fellowship with God and to enjoy Him forever (Ps 16:11; 73:25–26).

IV. What is man like?

A. The image of God in man

- Man was created in the image of God (Gen 1:27)—in his likeness (Gen 5:1).

B. The image of God in sinful man

- Though made in the image of God, the image of God in man has been marred / distorted (but not lost) due to sin. It has been defaced but not erased.

C. The image of God in man is universal

- Since he is made in God’s likeness (Gen 1:26,27) man has the knowledge of God indelibly stamped on his heart; therefore, he is without excuse (Rom 1:20). The knowledge of God is innate and universal.
- The most degraded unsaved man still bears God’s image and has the dignity of a human personality. There is a worth to human existence and a sacredness to man’s mere

personal composition that is the foundation for an orderly society and civil law. Human life is from God and God has commissioned mankind to protect its sanctity (Gen 9:6; Rom 13:1-7).

- Therefore, it is by nature of the very fact that man is made in the image of God that murder is wrong. To murder someone is to destroy the image of God in that person.

V. What is the image of God?

Since God does not have a body in what sense are we created like Him?

A. The image of God cannot be a physical likeness.

B. Man replicates the infinite God on a finite level in the following areas:

- 1. Personal likeness.** Man, like his God, is a personal being. This includes such factors as self-consciousness, self-determination, intelligence, emotion, volitional freedom, rationality, and world-consciousness. Inherent in this was the original use of language (able to speak and interpret human language).
- 2. Moral likeness.** God has given us an inner sense of right and wrong (Eccl 3:11; Rom 2:15). It is an innate sense of “oughtness” in man, an intuitive sense of moral factors; it is a constraining impetus (an “ought” not a desire) to do right. This conscience is intended to prompt us to act in a moral way such that, when we do, we reflect God’s moral likeness.
- 3. Spiritual likeness.** We have not only a physical body but also a spirit (John 19:30; Acts 7:59). It is our spirit that is our primary link to God—the ability to fellowship with him. We relate to God spiritually in prayer, in praise, and in worship (John 4:24). Since God is spirit, our spirit reflects His likeness.
- 4. Intellectual likeness.** Technically, this is a subset man’s personal likeness to God. We have the ability to reason and think logically and to learn in a way that sets us apart from the animal world. Only humans ponder the future; create

literature, music & art, and make scientific & technological advances. Only humans reflect the image of God.

VI. What is man composed of?

A. Man has a physical and spiritual part; a material and an immaterial part.

- Matt 10:28 — God can “destroy both body and soul in hell.”
- Acts 2:27 — “Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, nor allow thy Holy One to undergo decay.”
- James 2:26 — “The body without the spirit is dead.”
- 2 Cor 4:16 — The “inner man” [is being renewed] and the “outward man” [perishes].

B. What is the nature of the nonmaterial part of man?

The fact that man has a material part is without dispute, and it seems patently obvious that there is a spiritual, nonmaterial constitution.

- 1. Are the soul and the spirit distinct** (trichotomy—body, soul, spirit), **or are they the same** (dichotomy—body & soul)?
 - i. The trichotomist position:** The soul and spirit are said to be different both in function and in substance. The soul is seen as self-conscious and the spirit as God-conscious. The spirit is the seat of personality (consisting of reason, conscience, and will) and the soul is the expression of the person’s unique individuality (consisting of man’s imagination, memory, and understanding).
 - 1 Thess 5:23 May your spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless.
 - Heb 4:12 Piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit.
 - ii. The dichotomist position:** The nonmaterial part of man is the soul and spirit, which are of the same substance; however, they have a different function.
 - iii. Nuanced dichotomist position:** Although soul and spirit are common terms used to describe the nonmaterial nature of man, there are a number of additional terms that describe man’s non-physical

nature (consider the use of the term's heart, mind, conscience, and will in the OT and NT). Hence, man's nonmaterial nature can be understood as multi-faceted, primarily referred to using the terms soul and spirit.

VII. Where did my soul come from?

- A. **Three views: pre-existence, immediately created, traducianism** (from the Lat. *tradux*: sprout, shoot)
- B. **Pre-existence:** the soul exists prior to birth but placed in the body at birth.
 - No Scripture support (contradicts Rom 5:14-19), cannot account for origin of sin in individuals, man has no recall of pre-existence
- C. **Immediately created:** the soul of each human being as immediately created by God and joined to the body either at conception, at birth, or at some time between these two.
 - Makes God the author of sinful souls, destroys unity of the race
- D. **Traducianism:** the parents procreate the total child—the body, soul (and spirit?) are transmitted from the parents. Adam was the “sprout” of all people; all mankind was created potentially in Adam.
 - Supports the unity of race (Acts 17:26, Heb 7:9-10, Gen 5:3); inherited depravity (Ps 51:5, Eph 2:3, Job 15:14); God ceased from any program of creation on Day 6 (Gen 2:2)

Anthropology—Doctrine of Man

The Original State of Man

What is the result of sin?

I. Was Adam created innocent?

A. A holy disposition

Although Adam and Eve's condition in the garden was not one of innocence. Innocence is too neutral, for Adam and Eve were created with a holy disposition, not moral neutrality.

1. Apparently their wills and affections were already inclined to good (inherent tendency to do right).

- Adam was created in the image of God (Gen 1:26).
- Man was pronounced “very good” by God (Gen 1:31). Creation was all that God expected it to be at that point. It fully answered the purpose for which He had made it. There were no flaws, no imperfections, no taint of sin or moral evil in any form. The implications concerning Adam here are all positive, not neutral, much less negative.
- Man was originally upright (Eccl 7:29).
- Man was treated as morally responsible (Gen 2:17)

2. This holy disposition enabled Adam to have face-to-face communication with God.

II. Was Adam created holy?

It depends on what you mean by “holy.”

A. Experience holiness

Adam and Eve did not possess a holy character, for that involves experience.

B. Unconfirmed holiness

- At creation, man's disposition was that of “unconfirmed creaturely holiness” Adam and Eve had a holy nature that was favorably disposed toward God.
- Adam and Eve enjoyed fellowship with God, and they obeyed God by cultivating the Garden of Eden.

C. Testing holiness

The only way for man's favorable disposition to be confirmed was for him to be confronted with an alternative (a test) and then for him to choose to remain favorably disposed.

III. Was Adam intelligent?

A. Free from the noetic effects of sin

Adam was highly intelligent; he was totally free of the debilitating effects of sin (cf. Gen 2:19-20).

- Adam had the ability to perceive and name animals after their kind.
- Notice the effects of sin: Today the noetic effects of sin (the depravity of the mind) prevent the kind of abilities that unfallen Adam had in this realm (Rom 8:7; Eph 2:3).

B. Made in the image of God

- Man/Adam possessed a language system and a vocabulary received at creation that enabled him to communicate with his God and with fellow man. This was given as part of being made in the image of God.

C. Ability to invent

- Man/Adam had the ability to invent, manufacture, and use various tools for cultivating the Garden (Gen 2:15).

IV. What was Adam's purpose?

A. Fill the earth...

Fill the earth (Gen 1:28) with people created in the image of God

B. Subdue the earth (1:28)

- Man is to learn about and unlock the secrets of the earth that God has given him.
- Man is to make the earth serve him, the only creation created in the image of God.
- This is an ongoing responsibility of man.

C. Cultivate the garden

Cultivate the garden (2:15). Work is part of the image of God in man.

D. Glorify God

Chiefly man was created to glorify God and enjoy Him forever (Is 43:7).

E. Obey God

Adam was to obey God, recognize His authority and rule by keeping His commands, and thus develop a holy character.

- Man was to develop a holy character through the exercise of his will in making moral choices that pleased God.
- A holy character is developed through obedience to God.

V. The Fall—a test

- The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was an ordinary, literal tree.
- The tree had no special, sacramental powers.
- The power of the tree rested with God alone. The damage he would inflict would come via disobedience.
- An experiential knowledge would result from eating of the tree. The resulting knowledge of eating would be from a depraved, spiritually dead standpoint.

VI. What was the purpose of the test?

A. Develop a holy character

- The purpose was to gain the experiential knowledge between good and evil by obeying and thus develop a holy character. God wanted to develop their holy nature into a holy character, which comes by experience.

B. To sin or not to sin...that is the question

Note the formula:

- Adam and Eve were *able not to sin* because of their natures.
- God wanted them to be *not able to sin*—confirmed in holiness.
- After failing the test, man is *not able not to sin*.