

# THE INTRODUCTION TO MAN

## INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 of Biblical Doctrine covers *Man and Sin*, also known as Anthropology and Harmartiology.

This study and next I want to cover the discussion on *Man* and Lord-willing in the Spring we will cover on the topic of *Sin*.

It was King David who looked up at the night sky in **Psalm 8:3-4** –

<sup>3</sup> When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,  
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained;  
<sup>4</sup> **What is man** that You take thought of him,  
And the son of man that You care for him?

Here David uses a Hebrew term that describes man's weakness and frailty. *What is frail, weak, and mortal man that You take thought of him?*

You would be in awe of God's greatness too if were to look up at a starry sky and see the vast enormity of God's creation. How little we are!

*So why study Man? Why take the time to study anthropology?*

1. Anthropology helps us answer the great personal questions of life: *"Who am I? Why am I here? What is my purpose in life? Where am I headed?"*
2. Anthropology helps us understand our role in creation.
3. Anthropology helps us understand our relationship to God.
4. Anthropology helps us address the social issues of our day such as abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality, transgenderism, and environmentalism.
5. Anthropology helps us refute the wrong "speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God" (2 Cor. 10:5).

Q: *What then is our source? Where do we go to answer that profound question from the psalmist, "what is man?"*

A: Scripture, God's Holy Word.

Open your Bible, if you will, to Genesis 1. The Bible tells us plainly in **Genesis 1:27** –

<sup>27</sup> **God created man** in His own image,  
in the image of God He created him;  
male and female He created them.

All of creation up to this point has been a prelude to what would happen at the end of day six. *Everything* was created for man. It was to prepare a perfect home for man. **Louis Berkhoff** notes,

“Man is not only the crown of creation  
but also the object of God’s special care.”<sup>1</sup>

Consider for a moment, all of creation will go out of existence but man will remain. “The heavens will pass” **2 Peter 3:10** tells us, but a vast multitude of the redeemed human race will dwell in the presence of the Lord forever. Then in **Rev. 21:3** we read, “He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them.” **Wow!**

Turn back to **Gen. 1:26** for a moment. *Personal pronouns* appear for the first time in creation –

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let **Us** make man in **Our** image...

You don’t see this anywhere else. It establishes a personal relationship between God and man. It doesn’t exist with *light*, with *water*, *sun*, *moon*, or *stars*. Only with the creation of man. **Wow!**

Going back to **v. 27**: “*God created man*.” This is called in “an immediate act of God”<sup>2</sup> or “sudden creationism.”<sup>3</sup> This was *not* a long process. It was immediate/sudden.

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<sup>1</sup> L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1938), 181.

<sup>2</sup> Berkhof, 182.

<sup>3</sup> John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 402.

Jesus tells the Pharisees in **Mark 10:6** just how *immediate* it was –

<sup>6</sup> “But from the beginning of creation,  
*God* MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE.

“Beginning of creation,” and right into “God made them.” No long periods. Man was a part of the creation. Human species did not evolve from lower life forms. It was by *the divine order of the will of God*.

**Gen. 2:7** tells us more details concerning **the creation of Adam and Eve** –

<sup>7</sup> Then the LORD God **formed** [the term indicates that the act of creation was by *careful design*<sup>4</sup>] **man of dust from the ground**, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

The testimony of Scripture is summed up by the psalmist in **Ps. 100:3** –

<sup>3</sup> Know that the LORD Himself is God; **It is He who has made us**, and not we ourselves; *We are* His people and the sheep of His pasture.

As to man’s body, man was *formed/made/fashioned* of the dust of the ground. **Ps. 103:14** reminds us –

<sup>14</sup> For He Himself knows **our frame**;  
He is mindful that **we are *but* dust**.

But of the part of you that is not visible, God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became **a living being** [*nephesh*].”

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<sup>4</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 51.

The British OT scholar **Derek Kidner** (1913-2008) describes the intimacy here in *breathing into his nostrils* –

*Breathed* is warmly personal, with the face-to-face intimacy of a kiss and the significance that this was an act of giving as well as making; and self-giving at that<sup>5</sup>

God breathed life into him, making him unlike any other created being.

So let me stop here and ask you a question:

*How the world view man? Is it a high view or low view of man?*

Consider that at week 5, a baby's heart begins to beat. The baby is only the size of a sesame seed. Yet evolutionists will argue for similarities of a baby in the womb to an earthworm!<sup>6</sup> Earthworms have no heart!

By week 7, when your baby has grown to the size of a blueberry, the map of a baby's entire skeleton has been laid out. By week 10, the bones that had started as bendable tissue begin to become hardened through a process called *ossification*. By week 16, they start moving around in a coordinated way. An ultrasound can pick up their acrobatic techniques!

## C O N T E N T

For the remainder of our time I want to address two important facets of man:

1. Man is Created in God's Image
2. The Constitution of Man

The first one deals with man being made in the image and likeness of God (cf. **Gen. 1-26f**). The second one deals with the components *or* elements man possesses. The five common terms are *body, soul, spirit, heart, and conscience*.

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<sup>5</sup> Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 60.

<sup>6</sup> See "Arguments for the Evolutionary Hypothesis" in Henry Clarence Thiessen, *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, rev. by Vernon D. Doerksen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 152.

## MAN IS CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

Turn back to the **Gen. 1:26-27** –

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let Us make man in **Our image**, according to **Our likeness**; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

<sup>27</sup> God created man in His own **image, in the image of God** He created him; male and female He created them.

There are two terms that are *synonymous* with one another.

The Hebrew term for “**image**” signifies “copy” but also carries the idea of “representation.” In the ancient world, a king or ruler would place an image or idol of himself in his real to symbolize his sovereignty there.<sup>7</sup>

This is not the only place it appears. It appears in **Gen. 9:6** –

<sup>6</sup> “Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed,  
For **in the image of God He made man**.

Paul reiterates this in the *NT* when he says concerning man, “*he is the image and glory of God*” in **1 Cor. 11:7**.

**Biblical Doctrine** adds this about image bearers –

They should operate as God’s representatives and mediators on the earth. Thus, “image” has implications for kingship. While God is *the* King, God created man as *a* king, a vice-regent and mediator over the creation on God’s behalf.<sup>8</sup>

The other Hebrew term is translated as “**likeness**” and it can refer to “pattern,” “shape,” or “form.” It signifies something patterned after an original. Seth, for example, was a son in the “likeness” of his father, Adam, according to **Gen. 5:3**.

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<sup>7</sup> MacArthur and Mayhue, 410.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

Rightly does C.S. Lewis call Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy as “sons of Adam and daughters of Eve.”

Humans are sons of God in the sense that they are made in the “*likeness*” of God.” Not only that but they are to function as God’s representatives here on earth, thus made in His “*image*.”

So let stop again ask you all a question:

- *What do you suppose are some of the implications of you being made in the image and likeness of God?*
- *What does it mean for man to be in the image of God?*

Here are some implications of man being made in the image and likeness of God, four (4) to be exact:

1. **The image of God is affirmed for all person** – male and female alike. Male and female He created them. Two distinct genders with differing roles, but both male and female are equal as persons and equal in value.

Much of the modern feminism we see today tries to obliterate this truth. There was a time when women could not vote and did not possess certain rights as men, but today feminists want to destroy another image-bearer, man. They say they don’t need a man and yet we know that is not true.

We need to continually remind the conscience that both male and female are created in the image of God. Both are equal as person and equal in value.

2. **Even after the fall, all people still possess the image and likeness of God.** *Where can we go to see this in Scripture?*

Turn to **Gen. 5:1-3** –

<sup>1</sup> This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.

<sup>2</sup> He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created.

<sup>3</sup> When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of *a son* in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.

This would remind all the seed of Adam that the fall had not obliterated the image of God in them.

In addition, we read in **Gen. 9:6** that the capital punishment is the appropriate penalty for murder since man is still the image of God.

<sup>6</sup> “Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed, **For in the image of God He made man.**

You are not to shed man’s blood, nor are you to curse man.

Regarding the use of our tongue, James 3:9 tells us –

<sup>9</sup> With it we bless *our* Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God;

To curse men is to wish evil on them. *Do you believe it is Christ-like to wish evil on men?* God says in **Ezek. 33:11** –

<sup>11</sup> “Say to them, ‘As I live!’ declares the Lord GOD, ‘I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?’

*Would it not be a mighty deed of God to witness, to see Gov. Newsom repent of sin, turn from his way and live? Even the worse of men still possess the image and likeness of God, yet the message to them is: turn from your way and live, turn back from your evil ways!*

**3. The image of God explains man's need to live in relationship with others.**

For example, we see the relationship within the Godhead. The triune God; Three Persons in One, have enjoyed a perfect, personal communion with one another.

Notice what is written in **John 5:20** –

<sup>20</sup> **“For the Father loves** [φιλέω] **the Son,** and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and *the Father* will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel.

This should be a surprise to us since God's essence is love. What you see here though is eternal love being expressed by the Son of the Father.

The word translated as “love” is *phileō* includes *affection*. *Did you know that the Father's love includes affection for believers?*

In **John 16:27** we read –

<sup>27</sup> for **the Father Himself loves** [φιλέω] **you,** because you have loved [φιλέω] Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father.

It is no wonder that you are a relational being. Not only that but you were meant to love God with affection and love others with affection.

It is not wonder that God says *“It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him” (Gen. 2:18).*



4. **The image of God is connected with man's task to "rule" and "subdue" the earth on God's behalf.** Right after declaring that man is made in the image and likeness of God, we read the following:

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and **let them rule over** the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and **subdue it**; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

To "rule" means to have "dominion over."<sup>9</sup>

To "subdue" means to "bring into bondage."

Man was intended by God to be the sovereign of the planet. He was literally instructed to bring it into bondage.

This was not just for Adam but for the whole human race. It says "so that **they** will have dominion over the fish of the sea..." (v. 26).

Another responsibility given to Adam was to cultivate and keep the Garden. **Gen. 2:15** tells us –

<sup>15</sup> Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden **to cultivate it and keep it**.

This was a God-given assignment. Man was created to work. We were intended to *be productive* in our service to God.

For Adam it included picking the food to eat. It involved watching over the trees and plants in a protective kind of a way as they grew.

Interestingly, David addresses this point in **Psalms 8:4-8** –

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<sup>9</sup> Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 922.

<sup>4</sup> What is man that You take thought of him,  
And the son of man that You care for him?  
<sup>5</sup> Yet You have made him a little lower than God,  
And **You crown him with glory and majesty!**  
<sup>6</sup> **You make him to rule over the works of Your hands;**  
**You have put all things under his feet,**  
<sup>7</sup> All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field,  
<sup>8</sup> The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea,  
Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.

## CONCLUSION

My beloved, we come full circle with David in Psalm 8. We have asked as he did, “what is man?”

God’s Word has provided the answer in that we are crowned with glory and majesty, “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Ps. 139:14), in the image and likeness of God.

So let stop again ask you all a question:

*What then is our response?*

Notice how the psalmist begins and ends in **Psalm 8**:

<sup>1</sup> O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth,  
Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!

<sup>9</sup> O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth!

With praise to God! *How do you praise the Lord in your life?*

You praise Him with every facet of your life. Do remember our Lord’s words in **John 15:5** –

<sup>5</sup> “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.