

WHAT EVERY CHRISTIAN NEEDS TO KNOW
LESSON 14
MAN: HIS CREATION

INTRODUCTION

Today we have the first of 2 lessons on man. Today's lesson is the creation of man; next week we will look at the fall of man and why he needs a Savior. [**TEACHERS:** Even though this lesson is just 3.5 pages, it is plenty of material especially when you look up and read all of the Scriptures.]

What is man? What is the nature of man? Did he come about by accident? Did he evolve from the lower animals? Is man basically good, evil or a combination of both? How we answer these & other questions about man will determine how we approach a host of other questions and problems: abortion, euthanasia (mercy killing), criminal behavior, to name a few, as well as how we do ministry.

The Baptist Faith and Message states, "Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation." (page 10)

The Westminster Confession of Faith states, "After God had made all other creatures, He created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness and true holiness, after His own image; having the law of God written in their hearts and power to fulfill it..." (from the *Center for Reformed Theology and Apologetics* website)

Outline for this lesson:

- I. Man is a created being.
- II. Man was created in the image of God.
- III. When does life begin?

I. MAN IS A CREATED BEING

Was Adam a real historical figure? Yes! See 1 Chronicles 1:1; Job 31:33; Matthew 19:4 quoting Genesis 1:27(he was created not evolved); Luke 3:38; Romans 5:14; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45; 1 Timothy 2:13-14 and Jude 14. All of these passages refer to Adam by name.

[**TEACHERS:** You may want to assign these passages to different class members before class and have them stand and read when you call on them – it can be a powerful experience for the class to simply listen to God's word!]

The reason that this is an important beginning point is that unbelievers and many liberal theologians state that the references to Adam refer to an allegorical figure and not a literal person. Or, they look at the entire creation story as just a myth or a legend, not to be taken literally. We take the Bible, including the creation narrative, literally.

Scripture very clearly states in Genesis 1:26-28(read) that God created man in His image and He created them male and female. Genesis 2:7(read) gives further details of the creation of man. The creation of man represents God's crowning act in creation. After He made the plants and animals, Genesis 1:25 says "...and God saw that it was good." After He made man, Genesis 1:31 says "God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good." (italics & underlining mine).

The theory of evolution basically says that man, along with all other living creatures, is the product of a blind, naturalistic process of evolutionary development. Now, this lesson is not going to turn into a creation-evolution debate. Suffice it to say that both cannot be true. In addition, I do not subscribe to the view that God used the evolutionary process to create man.

As Dr. Chafer states, "...the theory of so-called theistic evolution – that God used evolution as a method – depends for its support upon a denial of the literal meaning of the creation narratives." [Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, 1926, 1953, Revised edition 1974, Dallas Theological Seminary/Zondervan Publishers, page 166]

"The Bible affirms that humans are not accidents or mere animals living among animals. Human beings alone are made in God's image." (from the book *The Baptist Faith and Message* by Kelley, Land and Mohler, Lifeway Press, 2007, page 60)

The Bible is very clear that man was created, he did not evolve. Again, the approach of our church and this class is that we believe the Bible is the inspired word of God – all of it!

II. MAN WAS CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

Again, to refer to Genesis 1:26, "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;" Notice the use of the first person plural – "Us" and "Our". We were created by the Godhead, the Holy Trinity.

What does it mean that we were created in the image of God? [**TEACHERS**: This can be pretty heady & theological stuff; I have tried to make it as practical as possible!]

- A. It means that we are unique. We are the only part of God's creation made in His image (Genesis 1:26, Colossians 3:10). The animals were made "after their kind"(Genesis 1:25); God formed us and breathed life into us (Genesis 2:7).
- B. We have particular dignity, value and worth. Read Matthew 6:25-26. Jesus is giving us the cure for anxiety but in so doing He says that we are worth "much more" than the birds. We are not just part of the animal kingdom!
- C. Man is a personal, rational and moral being. We have the elements of personality similar to the Person of God: intellect, emotion and will.
- D. We are born with an inherent capacity to know God and to know about God. We are spiritual as well as physical beings (Romans 1:19-20).
- E. God created us to be reproductive and have children (Genesis 1:28).

- F. God gave us dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:28). This relates to environmental issues. We are to enjoy and use the things of the earth but not resort to abuse and waste.
- G. God gave us meaningful work to do (Genesis 2:15). God is infinitely creative; we are to be working and creative. Please note that work is not a curse because man sinned. Work is good and God made man to work before he sinned.
- H. We are a “trinity” – body, soul and spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 4:12). Our soul/spirit is eternal, surviving beyond physical death.
- I. We are created male and female (Genesis 1:27). We are to celebrate true masculinity and femininity as gifts of God! This, of course, is in direct conflict with our culture which sees gender differences as nothing more than a form of oppression by society. Again, to quote from the book *The Baptist Faith and Message*, “Movements for normalizing transsexualism and transgender procedures represent forms of rebellion against God’s purpose in creation. Gender chaos now prevails in much of our culture, leading to confusion and harm in the lives of individuals, families and even churches.”(page 62)
- J. Finally, we are to live *coram Deo*. This Latin phrase was used by John Calvin and others throughout church history to explain the Christian life. It means to live “before the face of God”. All that we do is lived before Him (Hebrews 4:13). APPLICATION: Why is this important? We tend to compartmentalize our lives into the sacred and the secular. Sacred: church, Bible Study Class, volunteering at the church, etc. Secular: work, free time, chores around the house, school, etc. No – all of life is sacred. As Mark Driscoll states, “We were created to live all of life before the face of God, knowing that nothing in our life is secular or separated from the sight of God because all of life is sacred. To live otherwise is sacrilege.”[from *Doctrine* by Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears, Crossway, 2010, page 116]

III. WHEN DOES LIFE BEGIN?

Because we are made in the image of God with dignity, value and worth – this question of when life begins is incredibly important. This, of course, has direct bearing on the widespread practice of abortion and is it, in fact, the taking of a human life.

First, a quote from Robert P. George, Princeton professor and former member of the President’s Council on Bioethics:

“Human embryos are not...some other type of animal organism, like a dog or cat. Neither are they a part of an organism, like a heart, a kidney, or a skin cell. Nor again are they a disorganized aggregate, a mere clump of cells awaiting some magical transformation. Rather, a human embryo is a whole living member of the species *Homo sapiens* in the earliest stage of his or her natural development.”
[from *Embryo: A Defense of Human Life* by Robert P. George and Christopher Tollefsen, New York Doubleday, 2008, pages 3-4; quoted in *Doctrine*, page 134-5]

The following scriptures will confirm that life does, in fact, begin at conception...

Psalm 51:5 – David says, “And in sin my mother conceived me.” The *Keil-Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament* remarks on this verse: “The declaration moves backwards from his birth to conception, it consequently penetrates even to the most remote point of life’s beginning.” (Volume VI, page 136). It makes the connection between conception and life’s beginning.

Isaiah 49:1 and Jeremiah 1:5 – these Scriptures state that God called both Isaiah and Jeremiah to prophetic ministry from their mothers’ wombs.

Psalm 139:13-16 – this is the most extensive section of Scripture on human life in the womb; a beautiful passage!

Luke 1:41, 44 – The baby in Elizabeth’s womb was John the Baptist.

So, clearly, human life begins at conception.

CONCLUSION

W.T. Conner was a professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary who went to be with the Lord in 1952. In his book, *Christian Doctrine*, he gives us a perfect quote to end this lesson on man... “There is something in man that will not be satisfied with the seen and the temporal. Something in him cries out for the spiritual and the eternal. Man thirsts for God. In the midst of the visible and the transient, he reaches out after the invisible and the abiding. Wherever men have been found they have had some form of religion...All men of all races have cried out for God.” (W.T. Conner, *Christian Doctrine*, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1937, p. 22)

TEASER FOR NEXT WEEK...As moral beings, Adam & Eve had the power of choice; they could choose whether to obey or disobey God. What did they do and how did their choice affect us?