



Lecture #11, Part 4

Course Information

1. Course Description

A study of the persons of The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit and their unified teaching of the doctrines of the Bible.

Survey of the Doctrines of the Bible

V-The Doctrine of Man

1-Creation of Man

Gen. 1:27

2-Soul

Gen. 2:7

3-Image and Likeness of God

Gen. 1:26

4-Immaterial Part of Man

Heb. 4:12

5-Heart

Prov. 4:23

6-Conscience

Rom. 2:15

7-Temptation

1 John 2:16

8-Headship of Adam

Rom. 5:12

9-Marriage

Gen. 2:24

10-Divorce

Matt. 19:13

Introduction to Doctrinal Footnotes

These theological footnotes are divided into three sections **(1) explanation**, **(2) illustration**, and **(3) application**. When you have absorbed all the notes within one topic area, you will have completed a total survey of that doctrine.

V-The Doctrine of Man

10-Divorce

Matt. 19:13

Explanation: Divorce was never part of God's perfect plan for human experience, but every generation has engaged to some degree in this practice. Because of the hardness of men's hearts, divorce was permitted under the law in cases of fornication, which would include all deviant sexual practices, that is adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, and so on. While divorce is permitted, it is not necessarily prescribed.

Illustration: God used the experience of Hosea, a prophet with an unfaithful wife, to teach a spiritual lesson to the people of that day.

Application: A person should be very careful in taking any action to dissolve a marriage, fully understanding the extreme seriousness of such a move.



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The Doctrines of Humanity and Sin

God made man to be somebody—not just to have things.—Brotherhood Journal

Sin is man's declaration of independence of God.—Anonymous

What It Means to Be Human

Read [Genesis 1-3](#)

The biblical teaching on humanity begins with a right notion concerning God. The biblical perspective of anthropology (i.e., the study of humanity) is centrally displayed in the context of an elevated theology (i.e., the study of God). A high and reverent view of God leads to a noble and dignified view of humanity, whereas a poorly developed concept of God often produces a distorted perspective on humanity. Hence, human beings may be viewed more importantly than they ought, or less importantly than is biblical. Either view is sub-biblical. The place to begin a study of man, then, is with a high view of God, his Creator.

The Origin of Humanity

Against the naturalistic, materialistic theories of origins, the biblical view starts with the assertion that the eternal God has created humanity, the most significant of all his created works. It is not necessary for one to subscribe to a particular chronological scenario for God's work in humanity's creation. Some Christians believe the Bible teaches a closed chronology in [Genesis 1](#) made of six literal twenty-four-hour days (cf. [vv. 5, 8, 13, etc.](#)), with the stunning, sudden appearance of Adam and Eve coming perhaps just some six thousand years ago (cf. the chronologies associated with but not limited to Archbishop James Ussher, *Annales*, 1650-58).

[Genesis 1:5 \(NASB\)](#)

⁵ God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

[Genesis 1:8 \(NASB\)](#)

⁸ God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

[Genesis 1:13 \(NASB\)](#)

¹³ There was evening and there was morning, a third day.

Some who hold this general viewpoint (sometimes called creation science) extend the creation of man to about ten thousand years ago, based on a view of some elasticity in the chronologies of [Genesis 5](#) and [11](#).



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Others believe the texts of [Genesis 1](#) and [2](#) may be interpreted far more broadly to speak of a most remote antiquity for the creation of humanity (extending to millions of years). They argue that process (under God’s control and direction) may have played a significant role in God’s creative work. This viewpoint is best termed progressive creationism and is to be contrasted with theistic evolution, in which God is usually viewed as initiating the process but having little involvement once the processes are in motion. In the former approach, the Hebrew term *day (yom)* in [Genesis 1](#) may refer to an extended period of time (e.g., the “day-age” theory); the phrasing “**an evening and a morning, the xth day**” may be a literary device to present successive scenes in God’s creative works through the processes of time.

Many Christians find themselves somewhere between a conservative and a broad chronology for humanity’s origin. Yet in spite of individual preferences, one must give assent to God’s creative work in producing humanity in order to think biblically about humanity. The essence of faith begins in the words “**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.**”

Humanity is not only God’s creation but the pinnacle of his creative effort. Long before modern precision in such things, the ancients were aware of human beings’ anatomical similarities with members of the animal kingdom. But despite these similarities, the biblical viewpoint was never to confuse humans with animals—human beings are distinct, the high point of God’s creative work, the apex of his handicraft. The progression of the created things in [Genesis 1](#) is climactic; all of God’s created work culminated in his fashioning of human beings.

Sociologically, the distinct behavior characteristics of human beings include language, tool making, and culture. Distinct experiential characteristics include reflective awareness, ethical concern, aesthetic urges, historical awareness, and metaphysical concern. These factors individually and collectively separate humans from other forms of animate life. Humanity is far more than the “**naked ape**” of some modern evolutionary theories. But sociology alone does not suffice to explain the full nature of humankind. That is the subject of divine revelation.

While humanity bears a continuity with God’s creation (assumed in the words of [Genesis 2:7](#), being fashioned from the dust of the ground), human beings are also distinct from all that preceded them, as it was into a new creature that God breathed the breath of life so that he became a living being.

Genesis 2:7 (NASB)

⁷Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

The wording of this text deals a blow to the theory of gradualism in man’s development. It was not into one of the developing creatures that God gave an extra boost or a distinctive nature but into a fully fashioned yet inanimate creature that he breathed the breath of life. The animating principle of humanity comes directly as a gift from God.



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Human beings were created by God as male and female ([Genesis 1:27](#)), meaning that what is said generally of humanity must be said of both the male and the female, and that the truest picture of what it means to be human is to be found in the context of man and woman together.

[Genesis 1:27 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

The commands to multiply and exercise sovereignty over the earth were given to both sexes as shared responsibility. Similarly, it is both male and female that have rebelled against God and bear the consequences of that primeval sin in the post-fall world, and both male and female that Christ came to redeem (cf. [Galatians 3:28](#)).

[Galatians 3:28 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

At the same time, the words *male* and *female* denote true distinctions. Many perceived gender differences may be culturally conditioned, yet the prime sexual distinctions between male (Hebrew *zakar*, “the piercer”) and female (Hebrew *neqeba*, “the pierced”) are divinely intended. It may be too much to argue as did Karl Barth that it was in the male and female relationship that the image of God is to be found; yet the male and female relationship is at least a part of what the image of God means (see [Genesis 1:27](#)).

[Genesis 1:27 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

The most stunning biblical assertion respecting humanity is that God made human beings *in his image*. Of no other creature, not even the angels, is such a statement found. The words “in God’s image” in [Genesis 1:20-28](#) are the basis for the psalmist’s paraphrase in [Psalm 8:5](#), “for you have made him to lack but little of God” (lit. trans, “lower than the angels,” [Septuagint](#)).

[Genesis 1:20-28 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁰ Then God said, "Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens."

²¹ God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good.

²² God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."

²³ There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

²⁴ Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind"; and it was so.

²⁵ God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle



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after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.

²⁶ 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."

²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

²⁸ 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."

Psalm 8:5 (NASB)

⁵ Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty!

The meaning of the phrase “**the image of God**” (Latin *imago Dei*) has been the subject of much debate. Some have thought the phrase to refer to a physical representation of God, but this is doubtful in that God is spirit (cf. [John 4:24](#)).

John 4:24 (NASB)

²⁴ "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Others think the phrase refers to personhood, which corresponds to God’s personality (having intellect, sensibilities, and will). Such qualities may be found in God’s image; however, these varied aspects of personality are also shared by other members of the animal kingdom and are not unique to the human species.