

God and His Ways

Question. Who are we and why are we like we are?

Answer. 1) God created man as a pure and holy being with exceptionally high honor. 2) Man rebelled against God, ruining his holiness and losing himself to the power of sin.

God Created Man to Reflect His Glory

Genesis 1:26-28 and 2:4-25 record the creation of man. Man was to be a perfect reflection of God's glory. Of course, God's glory is greater than man can reflect.

The Image of God

In Genesis 1:26, God was speaking in the plural to express His majesty.

<i>And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. Genesis 1:26 KJV</i>	<i>Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our own 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." Genesis 1:26 NASB</i>
---	---

Defining the image of God is one area in which some scholars have made more conclusions than the Bible warrants. The image of God:

- **is not** that man reflects the Trinity of God by being a little trinity of his own.
- **is not** an indication that God imparted some of Himself to make us, and now we are all a little bit God. (this is pantheism, which is unscriptural)
- **is not** equivalent to the physical body of man, for God is Spirit. (John 4:24)

We should consider dominion a major component of the image of God, per Genesis 1:26. Dominion means the right to rule. God gave man, both male and female, the right to rule all other living creatures. We mirror God's function as a ruler, although we don't rule the same things He does.

Man is distinguished from animals by being created in the image of God. The image includes man's dominion over nature, his intelligence, his will, and his spiritual/moral being.

The image of God is what gives man his humanity, personhood, and essential spirituality in contradiction to beasts, plants, and rocks. We are not bodies inhabited by spirits; we are *spirits* clothed with bodies. There is a difference.

The Constitution of the Human Race

We can survey the Bible for indications of the subdivision of man.

- Genesis 2:7 – dust, breath of life
- Ecclesiastes 12:7 – dust, spirit
- Luke 10:27 – Heart, soul, strength, mind
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23 – Spirit, soul, body
- Hebrews 4:12 – Soul, spirit, joints, and marrow

Every human being is a fusion of both physical and spiritual being. Your body is bound to your soul, it is good, and you will have a body for eternity.

Neither asceticism nor hedonism is scriptural. *Asceticism* is the idea that the physical body is evil and therefore it is right to abstain from physical pleasure. *Hedonism* is the idea that pleasure is inherently good and that therefore people should indulge in as much physical pleasure as possible.

Sickness, injury, and disability can affect your spiritual state. Likewise, you may suffer from frequent headaches and stomach pain as a result of stress caused by worry over things you cannot control, which is a sin.

Human beings are not meant to live alone. Marriage is the normal state of human society. Marriage and family are not results of sin but are righteous and wholesome.

The second human was not a copy of Adam but a complement to him. A *complement* is a completer. A family is supposed to be one man, one woman, bonded by love, for life.

Have you ever thought about what God wants of your family? As a parent, you will have power to do great good or great harm to your children.

Nations are living conglomerates of people with various values, morals, occupations, and desires. Christians are to be salt and light in the world (Matt. 5:13-16). God renders mercy and kindness to nations because His people dwell in them. Christians have a tremendous potential to do good to the surrounding society through evangelism and discipleship, public stands for righteousness, social benevolence, and through intercessory prayer.

Legislating Morality. It is true that external laws cannot change people internally. But that has never been the purpose of law. Law has always served to curb and restrain behavior that harms not only the individual but also the community. Virtually every law legislates someone's morality.

God and His Ways

Reference

God and His Ways Teacher's Edition, by Layton Talbert, Ph.D., BJU Press 2001.

Fill in the Blanks