

“Milk and Meat” – Answering Questions on Christianity
Life Bible-Presbyterian Church Adult Sunday School

DOCTRINE OF MAN - part 1

1. What is man? [*Robert Reymond, Systematic Theology*]

- a. Man is a creature of God with body and soul, made in God’s image, the crowning work of His creative activity, worships God and enters into covenant with God.
- b. Adam fell from his original created integrity. As a result, all men find themselves in misery, a condition that can only be reversed by redemption through Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit.
- c. Westminster Confession of Faith 4.2. After God had made all other creatures, He created man, male and female, (Gen 1:27) with reasonable and immortal souls, (Gen 2:7; Eccl 12:7; Lk 23:43; Mt 10:28) endowed with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after His own image; (Gen 1:26; Col 3:10; Eph 4:24) having the law of God written in their hearts, (Rom 2:14-15) and power to fulfil it;(Eccl 7:29) and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. (Gen 3:6; Eccl 7:29) Beside this law written in their hearts, they received a command, not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; (Gen 2:18; 3:8-11, 23) which while they kept, they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures. (Gen 1:26-28)

2. How did God create man? [*Westminster Shorter Catechism*]

- a. **God created man male and female, after His own image.**
 - “man” in Hebrew, "adam" denotes the name of the human species. Gen 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. Gen 5:2 "male and female created He them ... and called their name Adam, in the day they were created." Man (male and female) is a species, pointing to the unity of the human race.
- b. **God created man as the crown of His entire creation.**
 - God created man at the end of the sixth day of His creation activities, after He has created everything else, by a special personal act.
 - The very pattern of expression introducing the details of the consecutive acts of creation was quite uniform until the account reaches the creation of man:
 - Creatures: “And God said, Let there be ...” formula (Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24)
 - Man: we see a new expression: “Let us make man” (Gen 1:26 “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”)
- c. **Man granted dominion over creation as God’s deputy ruler** (Gen 1:26-28; 2:19-20).
 - i. Gen. 1:28 “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”
 - ii. Ps 8:4-8 “What is man, ... thou hast made him (man) a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea...”
- d. **Man created to relate to his Creator through a covenant.** Under the covenant of works, reward was promised and conditioned upon man's obedience to God's command.

3. What is the image of God? [*Bible Doctrine, Beeke*]

- a. **“Image” means a reflection, resemblance or likeness.**
 - i. When God created man, He created him to reflect some of His qualities on earth. Man bore a likeness to God, a resemblance of His righteous Being.

- ii. Heidelberg Catechism says, “God created man good and after His own image, in true righteousness and holiness, that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love Him and live with Him in eternal happiness to glorify and praise Him.”
- b. ***Adam reflects the image of God in His knowledge, righteousness and holiness:***
 - i. Knowledge refers to man being created with a true knowledge of God, himself, others and creation. Adam, without sin, was able to understand God’s revelation of Himself in the world. Adam named his wife, Eve, the mother of all living (Gen 3:20). He possessed intellectual faculties and the power of speech, reasoning and thought, and gave names to the animals (Gen 2:20).
 - ii. Righteousness means man was created upright, in a right relationship with God, not guilty of breaking God’s law, in a condition of total innocence, and living in complete love to God and others. Adam had power to resist or yield to moral evil.
 - iii. Holiness signifies man being created pure. In thoughts, words and actions, he was entirely devoted to God and separated from evil.
- c. ***The image of God includes man being created with rationality, spirituality, immortality and a conscience:***
 - i. Rationality – the ability to reason, think on deep abstract matters & use language.
 - ii. Spirituality – a soul which enables man to spiritually worship and communicate with God, who is a Spirit. Job 32:8 “But *there is* a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.”
 - iii. Immortality – a never-dying soul, and after the resurrection, a never-dying body.
 - iv. Conscience – a deep awareness of and a moral sense of right and wrong. Prov 20:27 “The spirit (conscience) of man *is* the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.”
- d. ***A resembling image, not perfect likeness.***
 - i. Man was not created to be divine. Adam was not God, nor did he possess the same infinite depth of knowledge, righteousness and holiness as his infinite Creator.
 - ii. *The image of God does not denote physical likeness.* God is a Spirit; He does not have parts and passions as a man.
- e. ***When man fell into sin, the image of God was marred.***
 - i. All people are now born in sin. We are born knowing ourselves instead of God; guilty instead of righteous; and sinful instead of holy.
 - ii. Can this marred image be restored? No, each of us naturally desires to serve self, sin, the world and Satan and are hostile to the true God.
 - iii. But from God’s perspective, salvation is possible even with the greatest sinners. Through the Father’s electing grace, the Son’s meriting salvation and the Holy Spirit’s planting of new spiritual life in the sinner’s heart, the marred image of God can be restored in man.

4. What does the Bible teach about a man’s soul and body?

- a. ***God created man with two distinct parts – soul and body.***
 - i. No other creature was created with a living soul, only man. Gen 2:7 “And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”
 - ii. Apostle Paul taught that man has 2 constituent parts: body and soul, and that when man is absent from the body, he (i.e. his soul) is present with the Lord. 2 Cor 5:6 “Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.”
 - iii. John Calvin argued that “unless the soul is distinct from the body, the Scripture would not inform us that we dwell in houses of clay (Job 4:19), and at death quit the tabernacle of flesh (2 Cor 5:4); that we put off the corruptible (2 Pet 1:13, 14) to receive a reward at the last day (2 Cor 5:10).”

- b. ***Our bodies are gifts of God and must be valued and cared for.*** God formed man of the dust of the earth. To reflect this truth, the name “Adam” meaning “red earth”, was given to the first man.
- c. ***What is a person’s soul or spirit?***
 - i. Gen 2:7 “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”
 - ii. One’s soul is his inner being, will, core, and internal personhood. It is, in the deepest sense, who he is. It is the essence of his being from which his deepest motives, desires, affections, and thoughts arise. One’s soul reasons, feels and wills.
 - iii. A person’s spirit is the faculty through which he can worship and commune with God who is a Spirit. Animals are not created with souls. Therefore, they cannot spiritually worship and commune with God. Man is created with a soul for communing with and worshipping His Creator.
 - iv. One’s soul is immortal. When physical death takes place, a person’s body dies and returns to the earth, but his soul returns to God and is sent to continue its life in heaven or hell, without its body, unto the Resurrection Day.
 - Eccl 12:7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. Lk 23:43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Mt 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.
- d. ***One’s soul is valuable and must be cared for.***
 - i. Be concerned about your spiritual state and place heart matters first in your life.
 - ii. Mt 16:26a “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” Prov. 4:23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life.
 - iii. Mt 6:33 “But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”
 - iv. In Luke 12:16-21, Jesus spoke a parable of the rich fool. Who wanted to pull down his barns and build bigger barns so that he may store his increased harvest. God said, “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” (Lk 12:20-21).

5. **Where did our souls come from?** [Robert Reymond, *Systematic Theology*]

- a. ***Creationism***
 - i. *The soul of each human being is immediately created by God* and united to the body *either at conception, at birth* or at some time between these two events.
 - ii. Gen 2:7, Eccl 12:7, Isa 57:16, Zech 12:1, Heb 12:9.
 - iii. *Weakness of this view:* it does not explain how human souls, immediately created by God and not by biological parents, become evil, whereas traducianism views the individual soul guilty in Adam’s sin and is thus corrupt: Adam’s sin was imputed; and the same death in sin, and corrupt nature was conveyed to all his posterity descending from him by ordinary generation (WCF 4.3).
- b. ***Traducianism*** (“branch/shoot”)
 - i. *Scripture assumes that through conception, human parents not just a physical body but the entire person – body and soul.* After the creation of Adam, both body and soul of each individual are immediately formed and propagated by the natural generation effected by the sexual union of the human male and female.
 - ii. *Levi paid tithes while he was “in the loins of Abraham”.* Heb 7:9-10 “And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.” Imputation of Adam’s sin and transmission of his sin to all mankind. Romans 5:12 – Adam sinned and death passed upon all men because “all sinned” in Adam. Gen 2:2, 21 (interpreted by 1 Cor 11:8), Rom 5:12. Gen 2:21-23 records the creation of Eve. Gen 5:3, etc –

“begat” and “begotten”. Gen 9:9 the force of “seed”; Acts 17:28 the force of “offspring” (genos). Gen 2:1-3 etc witnesses to a *finished* creation.

iii. Argument against traducianism: the sinlessness of Christ.

6. Man was created male & female. [*Alan Cairns, Systematic Theology notes*]

- a. ***Male and female are one in Christ*** (Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” Both bear the curse; Christ came to remove the curse.
- b. ***Wrong ideas of male & female order:***
 - i. *Jewish male chauvinism* marked by demeaning of female in Jewish society.
 - ii. *Feminism* - Feminists reject Bible teachings as "socially and historically conditioned", while claiming, erroneously, Scriptural support for liberating women from all gender-based roles in society, church and home.
 - iii. *Egalitarianism* - within Christianity, is a movement based on the theological view that not only are all people equal before God in their personhood, but there are no gender-based limitations of what functions or roles each can fulfill in the home, the church, and the society. The term Egalitarian is derived from the French word égal, meaning "equal." It should not be confused with secular political, economic, social egalitarianism. Egalitarians understand the Bible as teaching the fundamental equality of women and men of all racial and ethnic groups, all economic classes, and all age groups, based on the teachings and example of Jesus Christ.
- c. ***Equality of sexes within a divinely created hierarchy.***
 - i. *Complementarianism* holds the view that although men and women are created equal in their being and personhood, they are created to complement each other through different roles in life and in the church.
 - ii. *Creation order*: Adam was created first, then Eve.
 - iii. *Roles*: Eve created for the man as his helpmeet. 1 Cor 11:8-9: man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.
 - iv. *Male headship* – is important for the Christian home & church. It will protect both home and church from the twin evils of male domination and feminist denials of male headship. It provides a truly satisfying and Biblical relationship between husbands and wives (Ephesians 5). It will safeguard the church’s government and worship from the suppression of woman’s permissible activity and from the assertion of their “right” to offices and activities barred by the New Testament.
- d. ***Human sexuality***
 - i. *The inviolable rule established by God in creation – marriage is between one man and one woman.* They received God’s command to “Be fruitful and multiply and replenish [fill] the earth.” (Gen 1:28). Thus the Creator sanctified the act of procreation in the context of a legitimate marriage (Heb 13:4). All human sexual activity belongs within the marriage union, outside of which becomes fornication.
 - ii. *Testimony of history.* Anthropologist J.D. Unwin studied eighty-six different cultures throughout history to investigate the effects on social groups of the observance and rejection of monogamy and premarital continence, “The whole of human history does not contain a single instance of a group becoming civilized unless it has become absolutely monogamous, nor is there any example of a group retaining its culture after it has adopted less rigorous customs.” The breach of God’s creation law limiting all sexual activity to the marriage union carries bitter consequences for the nation just as certainly as for the individual.
 - iii. *Homosexuality is sin.* God created man as male and female whom He joined in a marriage union with the mandate to procreate. Scripture denounces homosexuality as an “abomination”, “unnatural”, a heinous sin and rebellion against God’s created order that deserves the severest judgments of God (Romans 1).