

PART 5: THE CREATION OF MAN

Of all of God's creation nothing has been more mysterious and intriguing as man. On the six day of creation God said: *"Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."* So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (Gen 1:26-28).

There is something unique about man that separates him from the rest of God's handiwork: that is, humankind alone reflects the image of God.

It is usually agreed that bearing the image of God means we have qualities such as the ability to think, engage in moral reasoning, a will to make ethical choices, and most important a spiritual nature that desires to worship God and have fellowship with Him. Man was also gifted with emotional capacity that allows him express a wide range of emotions ranging from love, to sorrow, and to anger.

In addition to being spiritual and having reason, the image of God carries a moral responsibility to reflect God in righteousness and holiness which the apostle Paul spoke of when he wrote: *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of*

*God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. (Rom 12:1)*

Our moral ability and obligation includes a future judgment of reward or punishment based on the decisions we make. Paul warned: *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences. (2 Cor 5:10-11).*

This image and likeness of God is also expressed in the manifestation of male and female.

*And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."...And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said:*

*"This is now bone of my bones*

*And flesh of my flesh;*

*She shall be called Woman,*

*Because she was taken out of Man."*

*Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (Gen 2:18-25)*

The duality of the sexes is a great blessing from God because it gives us companionship and help with someone who possesses a different but complimentary sexual nature. Moreover, we are blessed with a union of the two sexes confined within the covenant of marriage with the inherited ability to propagate offspring in our likeness.

The creation of the sexes, male and female, does not imply that one is better or of more worth and value than the other. Both are equally in the image of God and delegated with the blessing of authority and dominion over earth. It is unfortunate that the introduction of sin brought a disruption into the harmony between the man and woman with a misunderstanding and misuse of the principles of leadership, submission, authority and the expression of love and sacrifice between the sexes. For married couples, it is a part of their Christian walk to do all they can in their relationships to heal what sin has harmed in this area.

When God created humankind He also blessed them saying: *"Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over*

*the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Gen 1:28). Here we see that man was endowed with stewardship over the earth and all its animals, which was specifically spelled out when God commanded man to care and look after the Garden of Eden: Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. (Gen 2:1)*

Man was created to practice stewardship over the earth under the authority and oversight of God. While man functions with a great deal of freedom and authority at present, he has never lived in complete independence from his Creator or had total control over his environment. Man is a creature—"created" by God and is, therefore, totally dependent upon his creator and will remain so for eternity, for as Paul said: *in Him we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28)*

Over the past few centuries the biblical origins of man have been challenged with Darwinian's evolutionist theory that no longer sees man as a special created being but simply part and product of the natural evolutionary forces that govern the universe, and finds his beginning not at the hands of God but from a primordial pool of protein.

Any teaching on evolution that relies on the impersonal forces of matter, energy, time and chance to explain the universe and the human race gives no real foundation for our value and purpose. Without God and the creation of man in

His image there are no real objective bases for morality other than a subjective, relative, self-imposed one.

One of the questions most asked is why God made man in the first place?

Certainly God did not need man for fellowship. God is absolutely self-sufficient.

Within the trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit there is a perfect relationship, a perfect fellowship and a full expression of perfect love. Jesus said in John 17:5: *And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.*

Neither was it because God needed man's help. Paul acknowledged God's independence when he said: *Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.( Acts 17:25)*

Scripture states that man was created simply because of God's good pleasure to do so that we might know Him, fellowship with Him, love Him, worship Him and glorify Him for His own glory.

*Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him." (Isa 43:7)*

Although we have only touched on the meaning of our lives in the briefest possible way, we hope that we have made it clear the foundation of our purpose.

Most of us at one time or another has pondered the meaning of our life, especially when the pressures of pain and sorrows seem to rob us of any reason for continuing. Scripture states that man was created simply because of God's good pleasure to do so that we might know Him, fellowship with Him, love Him, worship Him and glorify Him for His own glory. The very meaning of our existence--is to express God's image in holiness, truth and faith, and to fulfill the blessing of authority and dominion of this earth for His glory with love for Him, our fellow mate and each other.

As the Westminster Larger Catechism asks in its first question: What is the chief and highest end of man?

Answer: Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever.

*Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him." (Isa 43:7)*