



The Nature of the Human

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

He was a dirty old tramp. Socks poked through holes in his shoes. Patches on his pants hung loose. A threadbare coat afforded little protection from the cold. Elbows protruded through his sleeves. Weeks of beard clung matted to his chin. Tobacco stains showed clearly on his teeth.

He leaned heavily on a stick as he shuffled down the street, when suddenly a shiny, black limousine drew up. The richest man in the city called out, “Come here. I’ve got a question for you.”

The tramp came close.

“Would you like to wear fine clothes like mine? If so, jump into my car, and I’ll give it all to you.”

Overjoyed, the tramp got into the car. Off they went together to the finest residential district and the costliest house in town.

“Here we are,” said the host. “My servants will fix you up. I must leave, but they will carry out my instructions.”

The master left, and a smiling young man stepped up to the tramp. “My master has told me to give you the best of everything. Follow me. The first thing we will do will be to clean you up. You will need a bath. Please give me your coat.”

A bath! The words struck terror to the tramp. He hadn’t had a bath in years. Fear flashed in his eyes. “I’ve worn this coat for nine years. You can’t make me take it off now.”

The young man smiled kindly. “Please take off your rags. Then you can enjoy a nice, warm bath. After that I have some beautiful clothes for you.”

The tramp felt insulted. His face was livid with anger. The servant had called his precious possessions rags. What an insult! “How dare you call my clothes rags! Your master told me I could have new clothes. He didn’t say anything about throwing these away.”

“I have told you only what my master requires,” said the servant quietly. “If you refuse, you must leave this house. This fabulous opportunity may never be offered to you again. That is all.” His voice carried an air of finality.

That tramp is a lot like us. He typifies human nature. Before we can wear the garments of Christ’s righteousness, we must take off our rags, every one of them. We must be willing to receive a thorough cleansing.

God says, “No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly” (Psalm 84:11). God is waiting to give us the treasures of heaven—to transform us into His divine image. Are we willing to take off our filthy rags and let Him clean us up? Please, let’s get the rags off—quickly.

Preview

God didn’t speak Adam into existence as He did all other forms of life. No, like a master sculptor, He formed him with His loving hands and then breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Taking a rib from

Adam, God made the lovely woman. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:27).

So we are made in the image of God! What an honor! And God used the dust of the ground—not other forms of life like a sea creature or a monkey—to create us. There’s a clear distinction between us and other species of animals. We are called the sons of God (Luke 3:38).

God gave Adam and Eve dominion over everything on earth, including all animal life. As long as they depended on the Creator’s love, they would live in a perfect world.

Pause a moment to marvel at God’s tremendous creative genius. Take, for example, the design of our foot. It has 26 bones with 36 different joints tied together with tough tendons to a mass of about 50 muscles that act with split-second coordination. These bones form three arches—two running lengthwise and one across the instep—to provide a natural, elastic spring that absorbs severe jolts when we run, walk, or jump. We probably walk about eight miles a day. If a person weights 125 pounds, the total impact is about 594 tons a day on each foot. What punishment our feet have taken 365 days for each year we’ve been walking!

Evolutionists have difficulty explaining how human feet gradually changed from some animal, and how humans learned to walk on two feet instead of four, accomplishing the art of balancing on just one foot as we walk.

Points to Ponder

1. God created perfect people in His image and placed them in a perfect home. But now this earth is in a terrible mess with no perfect people in it. Why?

God chose to give these perfect beings the power of choice. They could love Him or turn away from Him. His love demanded that He take that risk.

Sadly, the highest angel, Lucifer, became proud. “Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty” (Ezekiel 28:17). Dissatisfied with his position, he coveted God’s own place. His discontent spread until finally, he and one-third of the angels rebelled, and God had to cast them out of heaven.

2. Under the guise of a serpent, how did Satan deceive Eve?
He lied to her—“Ye shall not surely die” (Genesis 3:4)—and she believed him. Unbelief in the Word of God led Eve to disobey God, share her doubts with Adam, and break the beautiful relationship they had known with God.

3. What are the consequences of sin?
Separation between God and human beings. Enmity between human beings. Death, not only of human beings, but in nature as well.

Nuts & Bolts

1. Instead of the marvelous experience the serpent had promised, Adam and Eve felt shame and fear.
Genesis 3:8: Adam and Eve “ _____ themselves from the _____ of the _____ amongst the trees of the garden.”
2. They blamed each other.
Sin always breaks the relationship with God and between people.

3. Adam and Eve lost their lovely home and their right to the Tree of Life.

Genesis 3:23: "The Lord God sent him forth from the _____ of _____."

4. Sin involves both inward thoughts and outward disobedience.

Romans 6:12: "Let not _____ therefore _____ in your mortal _____, that ye should obey it in the _____ thereof."

Romans 3:19: "All the world may become _____ before God." Sin begins with an inward thought and motivation, and then it leads a person to disobedience. This disobedience affects the entire human being (Romans 3:23) and produces guilt that destroys physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

5. Is sinfulness inherited or acquired?

Psalms 51:5: "Behold, I was shapen in _____, and in _____ did my _____ me."

Ephesians 2:3: We are "by nature the _____ of _____."

Romans 8:8: "So then they that are in the _____ cannot _____ God."

By nature we have the tendency toward sin, but God does not hold our tendencies as sin—only our disobedience is sin.

6. In the face of sin we are helpless and hopeless in ourselves.

John 15:5: "Without _____ ye can do _____."

John 15:4: "Abide in _____, and I in you. As the _____ cannot bear fruit of itself, except it _____ in the vine; no more can ye, except ye _____ in me."

7. Evolution does not require a Saviour.

Evolution projects life as progressive and hence does not recognize sin.

8. As soon as Adam and Eve sinned, God gave them a covenant of grace whereby He would save them from sin.

Revelation 13:8: Jesus is the "Lamb _____ from the _____ of the world."

John 6:40: "And this is the will of him that _____ me, that everyone which _____ the Son, and _____ on Him, may have _____ life: and I will _____ him up at the _____ day."

9. Throughout history God continually renewed this promise or covenant of grace with Abraham and his descendants.

Genesis 15:6: Abraham believed God, and He “counted it to him for _____.”

(Genesis 15:6)

10. Does that mean that all of Israel will receive the blessings of this promise?

Galatians 3:7: “They which are of _____ the same are the children of Abraham.”

Galatians 3:29: “If ye be in Christ’s, then are ye _____ seed, and _____ according to the _____.”

11. Because Israel forsook God’s covenant of grace and sought salvation in their own works, God chose the spiritual Israel and gave them a new or better covenant.

Hebrews 10:16, 17: “Saith the Lord: I will put my _____ into their hearts, and in their _____ will I write them; And their _____ and _____ will I remember no more.”

Words to Remember

To understand better the nature of the human, we need to know that the Bible portrays humans as a whole—not as separate parts, as so many believe.

Genesis 2:7 explains how God made Adam. God used earth’s elements. The dust of the ground + the breath of life = a human being, a living soul. Death is the reverse of that equation.

“Breath of life” translates the Hebrew word *ruach*. Used 377 times in the Old Testament, it is also translated “spirit,” “wind,” “breath,” but most frequently, “breath of life” or “spirit of God.” In the New Testament the Greek word is *pneuma*, meaning “spirit,” “to blow, to breathe.” Never is it used to denote a conscious existence or spirit apart from the body. It is the power of life God put in Adam to make him alive, or a living soul.

Soul: Living soul, living being, living person—all mean the same. Nothing in the Bible indicates that the soul is a separate entity that was united with the human body. A human being is the soul. At death there is nothing like a surviving soul.

Covenant: God’s basis of relating to human beings and saving them from sin.

Grace: Unmerited favor and love of God toward sinners.

The Difference Between

Body, soul, and spirit: The Bible uses these terms to signify the unity of the human being as a whole person: May “Your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

“Body” refers to the physical dimension of a person.

“Spirit” may be understood as intelligence and thought through which God communicates with a person.

“Soul” finds expression through emotions and desires. We cannot separate one from another. All were created by God, and all must come under the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit.

I Truly Believe

While I was a sinner, God loved me and sent His Son, so that by believing, I might be saved. This covenant of His grace will make me a new creature, born again to walk with Him.

Think carefully about each statement below. If, in your heart, you agree with the statement place a check in the box.

- I choose to experience peace and forgiveness by allowing Jesus to transform me in the image of God.
- I am a sinner. My only hope is to accept God's invitation to enter the covenant of grace.
- Through faith, I choose to allow Jesus to come into my heart, cleanse me from sin, and cover me with His perfect life.
- I no longer want to be ruled by Satan and sin, but today I give my all to Jesus, knowing I am a child of God and an heir of His kingdom.

My Prayer

Dear Father,

I thank You for making me in Your image and giving me the freedom of choice. I thank You for the promise of eternal life through Jesus and for the covenant of grace that will restore me in the image of my Maker. May I live to give glory to Your name now and for all eternity. Amen.