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WHAT IS MAN?
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INTRODUCTION

God culminated six days creation of the world by the creation of man. All preceding days of creation were preparatory to the climax of creation, the creation of man. Man has always been the center or focal point of creation.

There have been many ideas and theories about man. Secular humanism is thought to be the theory which exalts mankind the most. It is interesting to observe just how high secular humanism exalts man. Secular humanism does exalt mankind all the way up to the level of the pig, or monkey, or any other animal. To the secular humanist man is just one among the animals.

In contrast to secular humanism, it is interesting to observe the level to which God and the Bible lifts man. As stated, man was created only after God had prepared a world for mans good. It is observable that man is the only "thing" in the world possessing intrinsic value -- value in and of itself. Every other "thing" in the world is valuable only to the extent to which it serves some need of mankind.

Man was the focal point of Satan's activity. After Adam's and Eve's fall into disobedience and sin, God's activity was man centered, toward his redemption. "God so loved the world (of mankind) that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever would believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life." Redemptive experiences of grace are only for mankind. Divine assistance and companionship are promised only to man. Heaven and the blessed afterlife are provided only for redeemed mankind.

In the light of all of the above, and in light of the fact that man is the most totally helpless creature at birth, it is no wonder that different ones in scripture ask the question: "What is man?" The scriptures present three quite bold portraits of man which we endeavor to present: I. Man as God made him; II. Man as sin marred him; and III. Man as grace can mend him.

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I. MAN AS GOD MADE HIM

For each act of creation in the first five days, the common expression was: "God said let there be" and there was. God simply bara-ed, caused to be. When He came to man's creation the terminology is different: "God said, 'let us make man'." When God had "made man, He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul." It is noteworthy that God created man "in His own image."

A. Man was created a spiritual being, in the image of God. Of no other species did God, "the Father of spirits", "breath into (their) nostrils the breath (spirit) of life." The wise man in Eccl. 12:7 declares that the dust part of man shall return to the earth, and "the spirit shall return to God who gave it." Man is essentially a spiritual being. The decaying of the body and it's returning to the earth will have no decaying, nor lessening effect upon the spirit.

B. Man was created in the moral image of God, which means he was created a person or personality. Dr A. M. Hills observes: "To be a moral being there must be the possession of moral faculties, which are INTELLECT, SENSIBILITY, and FREE WILL. These are the invariable attributes of personality." Fundamental Christian Theology, one vol. P.195. A free moral agent is considered to be; A rational being, with the ability to determine right and wrong and power to choose between right and wrong with the awareness that to choose right one will be rewarded and to choose wrong one will be punished. As God looked upon the first five days of creation He pronounced it "good". After the creation of man the appraisal was: "very good" or as the N. T. records: "in righteousness and true holiness." Eph.4:24. Man was to develop holiness of character by resisting Satan's onslaughts.

Adam and Eve possessed no proclivity or inclination contrary to obedience and holiness. They did possess natural, God given desires and appetites to which Satan could appeal in his endeavor to persuade them to seek to satisfy those desires and appetites contrary to God's instructions. The desires to which Satan appealed; for food, for beauty. and for knowledge were not evil desires, but natural, wholesome desires. They also possessed the ability to consider, and decide to obey God or submit to the temptation of Satan. They could not say: "the devil made me do it." God does not, will not, compel our choice, and Satan cannot compel our choice. Our freedom of will is a part of God's will. Adam and Eve were not only free to choose, they were not free to not choose. It was their free moral agency which constituted them responsible for their choice.

The intelligence of man was astonishingly great. Adam not only named all the different species of creation but did it according to their nature. Adam was created to be a social being: "it is not good that man should be alone, I will make him an help mate.' Adam walked in company with God in the cool of the day. The seasoned saint told Mr. Wesley, when he was contemplating the cloistered life style: "Son, God knows nothing of a solitary religion."

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II. MAN AS SIN MARRED HIM

Adam and Eve had their confidence in the truth and goodness of God challenged. "Has God said?" "You shall not surely die." "God is with-holding good from you. When you eat the beautiful fruit, it is good for food and will make you wise.' Eve was not made wise; she was deceived and was in the transgression. Adam was not deceived. He simply disobeyed. Dr. J.G. Morrison has expressed his opinion that Satan tempted Eve first because he knew that if he could get the woman to yield, she would get the man. His opinion is that womankind has historically been the gender which sets the moral tone for society.

When Adam and Eve sinned, they died spiritually. They were separated from God. They no longer sought the fellowship with God in the cool of the day. They sought to evade God and to hide from Him. Adam had forfeited the "righteousness and true holiness" with which he was created. Such loss was indeed an enormous deprivation, but the great deprivation was equaled by a terrible depravation. His sin resulted not just in being deprived of a state or condition of "righteousness and true holiness" but also in becoming depraved. Where there was formerly a state or condition of "righteousness and true holiness," there now came to be a state or condition of sin or sinfulness. Adam's holy heart now became "deceitful and desperately wicked." Jeremiah 17:9. Early after the "fall", "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually." Gen 5:5. Jesus declared that "from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts." Mark 7:21.

Man's spirit, or self, or personality became the center, or seat of sinfulness, but not sinfulness per se. Man's heart, spirit, self, or personality became sinful and morally corrupt, but did not become sinfulness or moral corruption itself. The state or condition of sinfulness or moral corruption displaces the state or condition of "righteousness and true holiness." Dr. D. Shelby Corlett wrote: "The moral or spiritual deficiency of the natural man makes him sinful in nature, corrupt in heart, unholy in the very center of his life." *The Meaning of Holiness*, p 53.

Dr. J.B. Chapman has written: "There has been, on the part of some, an effort to identify the word and idea of self with the flesh or carnal mind. But such a tendency is evidence of unsound philosophy and a careless use of terms. Sound holiness teachers have never used the word self in this sense. Self Means "one's own individual identity," "one's own person." "personality," "individuality," "personal identity," and any claim that this is to be eradicated is of course pure nonsense. John says: "Every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." This indicates that it is an abnormal condition from which self needs to be purified. and then that self shall be pure as Jesus is pure." *The Terminology of Holiness*, p. 68.

Dr Donald S. Metz wrote: "Original sin and inherited depravity are identical... Original sin, or inherited depravity, according to the Bible, is a quality, predisposition, bias, twist. or state of the human personality from which arise all actual transgressions and all unchristian attitudes such as pride, selfishness, self-will, and enmity against God... Sin is both an act and a state." *Studies in Biblical Holiness* p 85.

It is from the cess-pool or fountain of sin or depravity, as a state or condition, from which all sinful, wicked actions flow. Jesus declared that: "For from within, out of the heart of men,

proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within." Mark 7:21-23. It is because men are sinful or wicked that they call good evil, and evil good, love darkness rather than light, love to hate and hate to love, enjoy hurting and even killing those whom "natural affection" would cause them to love, even their own flesh and blood; derive pleasure not just from their own wickedness, but have pleasure in the wickedness of others.

Some have seemed to indicate that man in his fallen state of sinfulness or depravity has become less, or of less value. Dr. Paul Rees has observed that some would liken fallen man to a "chicken shack." Dr Rees characterizes man more as a cathedral than a "chicken shack"; a bombed out cathedral perhaps, but a cathedral never the less. It was the world of fallen mankind. which "God so loved" as to give His only begotten Son. Man's unworthiness in no way lessens his worth. Nothing sinful man has done has caused God to love him less, and nothing redeemed man has done causes God to love him more. St. Paul observed that the poets (philosophers) of his day called man "the offspring of God," and he responded: "forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God."

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III. MAN AS GRACE CAN MEND HIM

Adam's and Eve's fall into disobedience and sin had hardly occurred until God proclaimed the remedy. In Genesis 3:15 God told the serpent: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." It is interesting to observe that in this one verse God declares three events in history in advance; the virgin birth of Jesus, "the woman... her seed"; Christ's sacrificial atonement. "he shall bruise thy head", the resurrection, "thou shalt bruise his heel." The serpent would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, (would inflict a wound from which the seed of the woman would recover).

In the act the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head, (would inflict a wound to the serpent from which he would never recover). In Isaiah 7:14, God promised "A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isaiah ch. 53 prophesied of him who would be brought like a lamb to the slaughter, where he would be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.

The ceremonial law, with its types and symbols, had been a schoolmaster, teacher or truant officer, intended to bring the worshippers to Christ, that they might be justified by faith. When Christ came, John pointed the people to Him as the lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world. John 1:29. On the cross Jesus declared that He had finished the work which the Father had given Him to do, declaring "it is finished." It is striking to observe what the scripture states as the accomplishments of Christ on the Cross. He "bore our sins in His own body on the tree." I Peter 2:24. "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Eph. 1:7. "He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." . Heb. 2:9. "Christ also... suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to god." I Pet. 3:18. Christ suffered outside the gate of the city that He might sanctify the people with His own blood. Hebrews 13:12. Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. Eph 5:25

The state and status of unredeemed man is indeed tragic and serious. The scripture is certain that: "the wrath of God comes upon the children of disobedience" Eph. 5:6, Col. 3:6. God is not angry with people for weakness. He sympathizes with our weaknesses and infirmities. "God is angry with the wicked every day." Psalm 7:11. While this is true, God is not willing that any should perish.. II Peter 3:9. He is a God ready to pardon Neh. 9:17.

God is so ready to pardon that whosoever will repent and believe, or trust in the substitutional death of Jesus, His suffering and death upon the cross will substitute for the penalty of all one's sins. It is not a small thing to be pardoned or forgiven of sin. Pardon and forgiveness mean to restore to favor and fellowship as though offence had never occurred. He has promised never to remember one's sins against him any more.

The new birth consists not only of the judicial act of God whereby sins are pardoned but the quickening, regenerating act of God whereby acquired depravity is removed by the washing of regeneration, and new spiritual life is begun by the renewing of the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:5. The conversion experience results in the believer being in Christ, II Cor. 5:17, and Christ being in the believer. Rev. 3:20.

Since sin exists in two forms, acts of transgression and a moral and spiritual state or condition, redemption was provided for the correction of both of those forms of sin. Pardon or forgiveness is provided for all who will repent and believe. Forgiveness, being a judicial act of God, does not deal with sinfulness of nature, or original sin with which all are born.

Sinfulness of nature or original sin is not a thing which is possessed, which may be contained in a vessel, weighed with a scale, or measured with a ruler, but a state or condition in which we, our self, spirit, or personality exists. This may be illustrated by darkness and light. Darkness is not a thing which may be accumulated in a container, weighed in a balance, or measured by a rule, Darkness is real, but is a real condition which condition is changed by the introduction of light. Infection in the body is not a thing which may be weighed in a balance, or measured by a rule. Infection in the body is a real condition which condition is changed, or destroyed by the introduction of an antibiotic. Holiness is presented in the scripture as a state of light or wholeness.

Many figures of speech are presented in the scriptures to illustrate depravity or original sin, the corruption of spirit or nature with which all are born.. "Corruption", "the old man". "the body of sin", are figures of speech, but the moral and spiritual state or condition which they illustrate is not a figure of speech. It is real .Figures of speech are employed to illustrate the work of entire sanctification, such as: "crucifixion", "death", "destroyed", "circumcision" and others. The act of sanctification is not a figure of speech. It is a glorious and wonderful reality, by which the "heart", or spiritual nature is made free from, cleansed from all moral and spiritual uncleanness, contamination, or corruption.

Simultaneous with the Spirit's cleansing of the heart, the heart is filled by the Spirit, the love of God is shed abroad in the heart and one is sealed by the Spirit for identity and protection.

Before Pentecost, when the disciples hearts were purified by faith, Acts 15:8&9, the disciples had forsaken all to follow Christ, had followed him in regeneration, their names were written in heaven, they belonged to him, had received His word and kept it, He was glorified in them (they caused Him to be well spoken of), were not of the world, had preached in His name and done many wonderful things. They also possessed a man fearing spirit, were carnally sectarian, carnally ambitious and jealous, and vindictive in spirit.

When the disciples returned from a mission and reported to Jesus that they had not been accepted in a certain village, they inquired of Jesus if they should call fire down from heaven, as Elijah had done, and consume the resisters. Jesus' response to them was: "Ye know not what manner of spirit you are of." Luke 9:54. Describing the inner struggle one with the law of sin in him encounters, a number of current translators render Romans 7:15 as: "I do not understand my own actions." I am baffled, bewildered." Amplified Bible. "I do not understand myself at all" Living Bible.

Jesus urged His disciples that they not undertake their commission until they had tarried for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which they should receive "not many days hence" Acts 1:5. Peter rose up and reported that God had purified the Gentile Christians hearts by faith, just as He had the Christians at Pentecost, Acts 15:8&9. They had been assured by Jesus that when they were thus baptized by the Holy Spirit they would be empowered. After Pentecost the fearful became fearless. The carnally ambitious were changed to an attitude of "in honor preferring one another" and had all in common. The vindictive became longsuffering. The prejudiced Jews became Gentile lovers.

Peter, the denier, became the mighty defender who, it is reported, when facing death for Christ, requested that he be crucified upside down because he was not worthy to be crucified like his Lord. Stephen, when being slain for Christ, prayed for his murderers: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" Acts 7:60. St. Paul, after a long life of sacrifice, service, and suffering, when facing the chop block for his Lord, was able to declare:

"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also who love His appearing" II Timothy 4:6-8.

On foreign mission fields, war zones, in class rooms, on job sites, in friendly and hostile circumstances, in hunger and in plenty, learned and illiterate, rich and poor, young and old, in war and in peace, at home and abroad men have discovered God's grace to be present and powerful for any situation. "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" Psalm 23. Rev John Wesley after many years of travel by horseback in all kinds of weather, in labors abundant, till on his death bed he could say: "Best of all, God is with us." Of Wesley and his Methodists it was said: "They die well."

Man as God made him was indeed a beautiful and exciting person and possibility. Man as sin marred him became a sad, sinful, and sinning personality, almost helpless, and almost

hopeless. Man as only grace can mend him is a happy, healthy, holy, enabled, and ennobled personality.

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THE END