

From Your Pastor

A Study of the Shorter Catechism

Question: How did God create man?

Answer: God created man male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures

Scripture memory: *"God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion... over all the earth... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female..."Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over..." – Genesis 1:26-28 (Also see Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24).*

An explanation:

Man was the climax and great masterpiece of God's creation work. As Image-Bearer of the Triune God, man was a mirror reflection of God's glory on earth (J. Calvin). Man was created to be a covenant creature completely dependent upon God and His Word. Man was made to be God's vice-gerent (or vice-regent) over creation to serve God as a Servant-Son over the whole earth, having rule or dominion as prophet, priest and king before the face of God.

As the Westminster Larger Catechism, Question 17 summarizes the Biblical teaching: *"After God had made all other creatures, he created man male and female; formed the body of the man of the dust of the ground, and the woman of the rib of the man, endued them with living, reasonable and immortal souls;(Gen. 2:7; Job 35:11) made them after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness;(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 dominion over the creatures; yet subject to fall."*

Man was made in God's image, both male and female. God's image and likeness means that man had God's knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures. Man and woman were to subdue the creation in their proper roles under God's Covenant Lordship, filling the earth with more image bearers ("godly offspring", Mal. 2:15), and glorifying God and enjoying their service to Him as their Heavenly Father. Man and woman were to serve God with perfect knowledge of God in their understandings, righteousness in their wills, and holiness in their affections.

Man in His rebellion against God caused sin and death to come into the world (Rom. 5:12), terribly marring and deforming the image of God, and giving himself over to slavery to satan (Eph. 2:1-3). This terrible rebellion and fall into sin caused man's mind to be darkened in His knowledge of God (Rom. 1:18ff), and sinful in His will and disposition towards God and others (Eph. 4:18-22). Although man was made a little lower than the angels, and was created to be confirmed in righteousness and holiness, and crowned with glory and honor (Psa. 8), because of man's sin, this glory and honor was not fully realized.

In God's good and gracious plan of redemption, the Eternal Son of God took upon Himself a human nature, yet without sin, to perfectly attain this glory and honor through obedience to God's Word (Heb. 2:6-18). Jesus Christ succeeded perfectly in keeping God's holy commandments, where Adam failed. Jesus is the image of the invisible God; He is the perfect and righteous Servant-Son, the Second Adam, the Prophet, Priest and King, who was crowned with glory and honor in His resurrection and exaltation, who remakes and reforms sinners through the powerful work of the Holy Spirit.

A prayer: Father, thank you for not leaving us in our sins under the penalty of the death and the curse. Thank you for sending Jesus Christ to redeem mankind. Grant us righteousness, holiness, and dominion as we serve you as your sons in Jesus. Let us put on the new man, created in Christ Jesus in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24).

**In Christ's love,
Pastor Biggs**

What is Baptism? *A. Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to be a sign and seal of ingrafting into himself, of remission of sins by his blood, and regeneration by his Spirit; of adoption, and resurrection unto everlasting life; and whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church, and enter into an open and professed engagement to be wholly and only the Lord's. – Larger Catechism, Q&A 165*