



*Man is what God says he is, and no more. What is a human being, but a being human according to God's word (both morally/ethically and ontologically/being)? You cannot have a proper anthropology (study of man) apart from a proper and orthodox (biblical!) theology. Though man doesn't acknowledge he is in covenant with God, he is, and this is why he so desperately needs to be restored to his God, to understand his meaning, purpose, and what true freedom is as defined for him by God in the covenant of creation.*

- **CHRIST:** When you see Jesus, you see the meaning of “Image of God”. Jesus is the faithful covenant-lord-son who realizes His purpose in accordance with God’s perfect will. Jesus is the man who perfectly realizes who God says he is (morally and ontologically, ethically/being human) and lives consistent with God’s reality.
- **CREATOR-creature Distinction** from the very beginning at creation and initial God’s self-revelation. Distinct, but never separate or confused.
- **Autonomy/Idolatry:** When man ceases to image God, he lives idolatrously. Idolatry is simply seeking to worship, honor, serve, and enjoy something created rather than our Creator with an intention of getting security and satisfaction. All humans long for safety and security.

Man was made to honor, worship, and serve God, and define himself, and enjoy satisfaction in Him; once estranged from God because of sin, man begins to honor, worship, serve the created rather than the Creator (Rom. 1), and redefine himself on his own terms, seeking satisfaction that is elusive and ultimately dissatisfying because man was made for God.

### *Man is God's Image*

- **Genesis 1:26-28:** Image and Likeness are synonymous.
- **Creator-creature distinction-** most important. Likeness is not identity (man is like God but is NOT God). Man is unlike God in that He is a finite creature, fully dependent upon God while God remains the Self-Existent One. Eugene Merrill writes, “...Humanity’s resemblance to God is analogous but not ontologically identical. To be like God is to be patterned after Him but, at the same time, to be qualitatively inferior to Him.”
- **The image of God (*imago dei*)** is not something *in us* as something that is *between us*.
- **Herman Bavinck:** “The whole being, the whole human person and not just ‘something’ in us is the image of God” ... “A human being does not bear or have the image of God but is the image of God.”
- **How is man like God?** He is a rational, moral being who is personal and relational. He is God’s covenant partner, His servant designed to reveal and enjoy God His Father.
  - **Man is image as personal possession.**
  - **Man is image as public vocation.**

- **Man and Woman:** Created for union and communion with their Creator, and in marriage, to one another. Both created with dignity and equality before God ontologically speaking (“consubstantial” in their humanity), but different in form, function, and calling.
  - **Man is King:** Viceregent- Servant King in submission to God in words, thoughts, and deeds. To be the image of God according to Gen. 1:26-28 is at the same time to be God’s vice-regent in the exercise of divine lordship.
  - **God placed man in the Garden:** To do what? “*To work and keep (oversee/guard) it*” (Gen. 2:15).
  - **Image and Identity were the same before the fall into sin.** Image and Functional Identity are not always the same in a fallen world. Our identities must ultimately be God-centric, not self-centered, and others focused. We get our identity from either God or others, it is either vertical or horizontal: What God says? What we say? What others say?
- **Because we are image-bearers, this should be our ultimate identity.**

**What are “Creation Ordinances”? Covenant blessings from God prior to the fall that continue to be enjoyed to some degree even after the fall because of God’s goodness.**

Sabbath

Labor

Marriage

**The Commandments are a revelation of God’s perfect and righteous character, they are also a revelation for the creature of how to live securely and satisfyingly, for every person made in God’s image.**

**Man → Marriage → Sabbath must be understood together as in the first table of the Decalogue:**

1. No idolatry
2. No images of God (man ‘IS’ His image)
3. No profanation of the character/being of God
4. Sabbath is holy, eschatological rest

What is revealed at creation in Genesis 1-2 is the very fabric of reality.

**Image of God: What does it mean? Simply: Reflecting, and relating to God. Unique of creation/creatures; relationship to God; reflection of the original; identity found in properly imaging/reflecting God (character, righteousness, etc).**

*“Humankind is not fashioned after a pre-existing image of God, since God has no image. Rather humankind is created as the image or reflection of God Himself. By*

*contrast to ancient Canaanite mythologies and their anthropomorphic deities, Genesis clearly asserts the transcendence of God from the physical order. Rather God created a visible reflection of Himself. The force then of adding that humankind is created in God's likeness is that humans bear some resemblance to God but are not God. They are merely like Him in some yet to be defined manner. Humans are not exact replicas of God. They relate to Him as their Creator, no as their equal" (Richard Lints, Identity and Idolatry).*

**Purpose of God for Man: Worship/Service/Fulfillment of God's Purpose Plan-** Dependent creatures upon the Creator for dignity, meaning, life, purpose, etc. Man was created for perfect, harmonious relationship to Creator, to others (mankind), and to the earth. Man was to live as image-bearer in perfect harmony with reality: life in sacred space, living on sacred time, according to sacred rule, through the means of sacred covenant with God and one another.

- **“Let us make man in our image...”** (Gen. 1:26-27)
  - Mankind and Mission are to be understood together: Creation in God's image and creation mandate/mission/purpose for mankind as God's servant.
  - Federal Head (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 45-49)
  - Created by God, in His image, means created in covenant; thus, why God chose a covenant head or representative in Adam.
  - Morally upright: perfect, righteousness, holiness, but not confirmed through obedience in this state; very good, but not yet perfect (ed).
    - Leon Wood: A “noteworthy factor true of man at his formation was that he was susceptible to the control of the Spirit who had formed him, without the hindrance of sin's influence that exists for regenerated man today” (*The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament*, p. 37).
    - “*Humanity, as created, as endowed with conditional immortality, but the biblical expectation had in mind an inheritance ‘that can never perish, spoil, or fade’ (1 Pet. 1:4)*” (Dumbrell, *The Search for Order*, pg. 26)
  - Special relationship to Triune God
    - Beloved son, the object of God's love, though mutable

- Beloved son, inwardly filled with the supernatural presence of the Holy Spirit
- Special calling to serve the Triune God (Gen. 1:26-28) as Covenantal Prophet, Priest, and King over God’s Creation
- Michael Horton writes “Our identity is to be found less in *what* we are—something that distinguishes us from everything else in the world—than in *who* we are in the covenantal drama. The “image” has more to do with the vocation given to humanity in Adam than with a faculty that he possessed. To put it differently, the image consists less in something *in* us than in a relationship *between* us (that is, with both God and fellow creatures) (*Calvin on the Christian Life*, chap. 4).

**Plan of God for Man:** Have dominion/subdue the earth: rule over the earth on behalf of God

- God’s created righteous ambassador to the world / The relational, eschatological self / God’s servant: ethical/morally / The law and the image of God as two sides to one coin / Man is morally responsible, relational creature-agent-ambassador of YHWH, created in covenant with the Triune God / Adam is the one who responds to God: “Here I am, your holy and obedient servant”
- Christ will say “Here I am” in perfect obedience / Christ will fulfill the call to Covenant-Servant-Lord through His faithful life, death, resurrection, and ascension / He will secure the Holy Spirit for His people to enjoy a more fuller and deeper communion with the Triune God / a Reformation, Transformation, Renewal in Christ through the Spirit to be Covenant-Servant-Lords as God’s ambassadors to the world

### What Happened to Mankind?

**Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Gen. 2:8-17):** *Will man submit to God in faith or will he reject God and assert his own moral autonomy?*

- Adam and Eve lived “between two trees”: The Tree of Life (Obedience-Sabbath Consummation) and The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Autonomous Disobedience-Curse of Death).

- Westminster Confession of Faith, Chap. 7: “The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam; and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience” (7.2). If Adam had obeyed, he would have been granted the right for himself and his posterity to eat freely, then and there, of the Tree of Life (M. Horton):

*“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.**” (Rev. 2:7).*

- **Rebellion- Autonomy:** We who were made in the image of God, in whom God breathed the breath of life so that we could know and love God. / By using our own free-wills, we came under the sentence of death. / Mankind once led by the Spirit now “contended” against the Spirit. The Spirit now contended/strove with man, restraining sin and striving to convict us of our need of God’s grace: *“My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he is also flesh...”* (Gen. 6:3). / The Spirit sustains and restrains our sins, until we die: *“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it”* (Ecc. 12:7)
  - **Ridderbos:** *“What was lost in the first Adam is regained in the Second in a much more glorious way, since the second Adam is the Son of God both as human and divine”* (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 44-49).
- Rebellion brings the first distinction between Common and Special Grace as the work of the Spirit
  - The image of God is “effaced” (“erased”) but not “destroyed” (wiped out completely)- John Calvin (*Institutes*, 1.15.4).
  - Importance of Common Curse/Common Grace and the Spirit’s Work- Calvin: “All mankind reveal natural endowment of the Spirit as a gift of God” but also with regard to salvation and the knowledge of God fallen mankind are “blinder than moles”.
  - Man is completely (though not exhaustively) corrupt, and still have some glimmerings of natural light, but without regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, are they able nor willing to return to God, or to reform their natural corruption because of sin’s slavery and devil’s bondage.

**Symptoms of mankind’s fall: Two main symptoms we observe and experience:**

1. **Symptoms of Autonomy:** Living according to one's own law; doing one's own thing; living according to one's own dictates. God created reality; God defines what is woven into the fabric of reality by and through His Word. To live as if God doesn't exist or that one can live any way one pleases, is to defy God and reality at the same time. To be redeemed is to "get real" and to have true substance in a fading world of people and dreams.
2. **Symptoms of Idolatry:** Seeking satisfaction and security in created things, something other than the living and true God.

More specifically: Seeking to hide from God, breakdown of harmonious relationships, shame, blame; pain, disease, disasters, and death; Chaos rather than creation order now: struggles between animals and animals, animals and humans, husband and wife, nature and humans, and especially humans and God (idolatry).

**Application of this to modern culture: Sexual identity, homosexuality, LGBTQ community, feminism, etc.**

**From Image-Bearer to Idolater- Richard Lints writes:** *"The imago Dei was crafted in the cosmic temple of Genesis 1. The graven image was crafted by the human heart to supplement (or replace) the God whose reign was supreme over all."*

*"The canon began with God's creation of a self-image. The plot was greatly complicated when His self-image became a maker of self-images."*

**Exiled East of Eden (Gen. 3:21-24): 1. Man in the image of the idol. 2. Man the image-bearer who becomes the maker of images of sinful self. Man who becomes like the idol he worships, honors, and serves (Exodus 32; Isaiah 44).**

### **Conclusion:**

Fallen mankind seeks security in substitutes, satisfaction in idols. Sexual identity confusion, reversal of roles that God has created us to enjoy, transgenderism, all of these are examples of the consequences of autonomy and idolatry from the Creator.

These "modern" problems are not merely **moral** problems (they are wrong), but they are **ontological** problems (they defy the very nature of reality) because man is creature, and God is Creator.

**\*\*\*What should we remember about the Fall of Humanity?** (Four things primarily as we do the work of Biblical-theology in interpreting the Old Testament)\*\*\*:

- 1) Two Trees: Principle of Life is symbolized by the Tree of Life (an OT sacramental sign).
- 2) Probation/Testing: Symbolized by tree of knowledge of good and evil.
- 3) Serpent: Principle of temptation and sin symbolized by the serpent.
- 4) Death/Chaos: Principle of death in dissolution of body, the separation of soul and body in death, etc.
- 5) Salvation Hope (Gen. 3:15): Principle of God's faithfulness to save in the midst of human rebellion (next week for more on "Redemption").

<sup>ESV</sup> **2 Timothy 2:11-14:** The saying is trustworthy, for: *If we have died with him, we will also live with him; <sup>12</sup> if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; <sup>13</sup> if we are faithless, he remains faithful- for he cannot deny himself.* <sup>14</sup> Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers.

### **God's Call and Curse upon Humanity**

Upon childbirth

Upon work

Upon life (sentence of mortality)

### **God's Challenge and Enmity Fixed Upon the Serpent-Dragon**

Genesis 3:15-18; Revelation 12

### **The Universality and Trajectory of Sin and its Consequences and Effects through the Flood and Babel (Read: Gen. 6:5-6; 8:21-22; Eccl. 7:20, 29; Job 14:4; Psalm 14)**

**Murder**

**Hatred/Vengeance**

**Polygamy**

**Pride**

**Disorder/chaos in relationships:**

- 1) With God
- 2) With one another/humanity
- 3) With the earth/creation (cf. Rom. 8:18-25)

**Rebellious human nature at all levels:**

- 1) Theological: Autonomy and Idolatry
- 2) Individual: Lonely
- 3) Familial: Broken relationships and unfaithfulness
- 4) Societal: Hatred, envy, sinful competitiveness, serving self, living doing what is right in one's own eyes, etc.
- 5) National: Disunity, civil unrest, strife and wars and rumors of war

**Ultimate Questions based on Creation/Fall Theme:**

**Remember Covenantal and Eschatological (relationship and purpose):**

- Who are YOU? (Deity/deities- cosmogonies/theogonies)
- Who am I? Significance
- How did I get here?
- What is my purpose/destiny?
- What went wrong?

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