

Question #7: What Is Man?*

I. Created for God's Glory

- A. God did not create people because He was lacking something or needed anything (Acts 17:25). He didn't need us to bring praise to Him or glorify Him. Rather, He chose to create us for His glory. As humans we do bring glory to God (Isa. 43:7).
- B. We glorify God by giving him honor and praise in a variety of ways.
 - 1. We glorify God by living in accordance with His word. Our lives should be dedicated to the purpose of living in such a way that God is pleased (1 Cor. 10:31). When we are committed to this, our lives take on greater meaning and real significance (John 10:10).
 - 2. We glorify God by enjoying Him (Ps. 16:11). God is pleased when his children delight in Him and seek to know Him (Zeph. 3:17).

II. Created in God's Image

- A. While we were created to give God glory, this truth is not what distinguishes us from the rest of creation. All of creation ultimately declares the glory of God (Ps. 19:1).
- B. The distinguishing feature of humanity that sets it apart as the pinnacle of God's creation lies in the fact that God chose to make people in His "image" (Gen. 1:27). What does the fact that we were created in the "image of God" entail?
 - 1. We were created to be like Him: The more we understand about God, the more we understand about ourselves. The more we understand about ourselves, the more we understand about God.
 - 2. We are moral creatures: we possess an innate sense of right and wrong (Rom. 2:14-15). We are made with the ability to make choices.
 - 3. We are spiritual creatures: Our spirit is a reflection of God's nature and allows us to relate to him personally.
 - 4. We are intellectual creatures: Just as God has perfect knowledge, He has allowed people to think and process information.
 - 5. We are relational creatures: The perfect communion within the Trinity serves as the basis for our desire to commune with one another.

* The material in this handout is a summary of chapter three, "What is the Trinity?" in Wayne Grudem, *Christian Beliefs: Twenty Basics Every Christian Should Know*, ed. by Elliot Grudem (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 58-61.

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- C. The image of God has been distorted in us by sin.
 - 1. Although we sin, the likeness of God is still within us (James 3:9).
 - 2. Yet, sin has distorted our moral choices, thinking, and community (Rom. 1-3).
- D. While sin has marred the image, God through Christ has redeemed his children and is in the process of restoring and conforming the image back to the likeness of Himself (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15; Col. 3:10; 2 Cor. 3:18).
- E. In the end, God's true children will become like Jesus Christ.
 - 1. Jesus Christ is the perfect representation of the "image of God" (2 Cor. 4:4). He displayed God's likeness exactly as it was intended to be.
 - 2. Ultimately, we will bear this image of Christ and reflect God's image as we were initially intended to do (1 Cor. 15:49).

III. Responsibilities as Creatures in God's Image

- A. As creatures created in God's image, we serve as God's representatives here on earth. Following the statement that God created us in his image, He gave people the command to "be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth" (Gen. 1:28). As we do so, we fill the earth with God's image bearers that can bring further glory to our Maker.
- B. As God's image bearers, we also have been given the responsibility to take care of God's creation (Gen. 1:28). Thus, we should show respect for every aspect of God's creation and take seriously our responsibility to tend to his creation.
- C. As God's image bearers, we have the responsibility to restore God's creatures to the way they were initially intended.
 - 1. All people possess God's image and are potential objects of God's mercy. We should treat everyone with such respect.
 - 2. Further, the ultimate restoration of the physical world is dependent on our salvation. It groans for and eagerly awaits the day of our salvation because it will then be freed from its curse and frustration (Rom. 8:18-22).

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