

THE TRIUNE GOD AND MAN
(SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2015)

Scripture Reading: 10 Words; Genesis 1:26-2:25

INTRODUCTION

Rushdoony in his book *The One and the Many* writes about how the sharp difference between the Christian perspective and non-Christian perspective is based extensively on the doctrine of creation.

Let me quote in part from his excellent comments on page 143.

[In a non-Christian view] Because being is in process, and being is seen as one and undivided, truth itself is tentative, evolving, and without finality. Since being has not yet assumed a final form, since the universe is in process and is continually changing. A new movement or “leap in being” can give man a new truth and render yesterday’s truth a lie. But, in an order created by a perfect, omnipotent, and totally self-conscious Being, God, truth is both final, specific, and authoritative. God’s word can then be, and is inevitably, infallible, because there is nothing tentative about God himself. Moreover, truth is ultimately personal, because the source, God, is personal, and truth becomes incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ and is communicated to those who believe in Him. Jesus Christ, as Lord and Savior, as the way, the truth, and the life, is also the Christian principle of continuity.¹

These insightful comments help explain the rapid change in view of many politicians and others in our nation in just a few years.

The perverse more and more is celebrated and embraced as new truth.

Now fascinatingly, Rushdoony in this same book quotes a scholar who analyzed Roman life in the second century A.D. Listen to how similar views in the Roman Empire were 1900 years ago to today.

1. Considering its annoyances, marriage and rearing a family is exceedingly difficult and only the religious or strong-minded man has the strength necessary to do so.
2. Children are judging the reasonableness of a parent request in a frame of reference in which obedience is purely the individual prerogative of youth.

¹ R. J. Rushdoony, *The One and the Many*, 143.

3. The general use of the plural of child [children] is amusing.
4. Divorce is laughable and not to be taken seriously.
5. Sexual abnormalities are the subject of everyday conversation.
6. The practices of abortion, having children nursed and reared by slaves, and general neglect of children by parents were common.²

Rushdoony later then commented:

The Christian family in the Roman Empire was clearly an alien institution. Living with a totalitarian, unitary state, it moved in terms of a law which had no standing in Rome, God's Law as revealed in the Old and New Testaments.

Friends, the doctrine of creation is given to us to humble us before our great God. We are to always marvel at our Triune God's power, wisdom, and goodness.

The doctrine of creation is also given so that we do not have to be shaped by the evolving thoughts of men and women in their rebellion.

We will consider four points related to God's creation of man – male and female.

- 1) God created man – male and female – as the capstone of His creation.
- 2) God created man in His own image.
- 3) God gave Adam a law written on his heart and a special external revelation of His will.
- 4) Adam and Eve were holy and capable of obedience but also capable of falling.

Praise God for His creation of man in His image and His redemption of man in the incarnate Son of God.

1) GOD CREATED MAN – MALE AND FEMALE – AS THE CAPSTONE OF HIS CREATION.

Consider again the evolutionary time perspective.

- Big Bang – 14 billion years ago
- Earth coming into being – 4.54 b.y.a.

² Ibid., 130-131.

- Man, *Homo sapiens* – 200,000 y.a.

- Compress 14 billion years into one day. Man has been around for about 1 second.

For over 99.99% of the earth's history according to evolution, man has had no place.

Why would you try to reconcile such a ridiculous worldview with God's truth or think it is anyway compatible?

What did Jesus say about the creation of man in relationship to the beginning?

Mark 10:6 But from the beginning of the creation, God "*made them male and female.*"

We must consider also how the NT looks carefully to the account of creation in terms of making important doctrinal statements.

Both in 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy Paul discusses the creation of Adam and Eve and makes important points based on this.

Well, maybe the Apostle Paul inspired by the Holy Spirit, was just not as smart as we are today.

Listen to 1 Timothy 2 for an example of how Paul looked to the account of creation.

1 Timothy 2:11 Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. **12** And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. **13** For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

The Bible speaks of the creation of Adam and Eve with much greater detail than the rest of creation.

In Genesis 1 we have a beautiful overview.

Gen. 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." **27** So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. **28** Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Genesis 2 shows the details of God's work of creation, with the man first being created and then the woman.

Gen. 2:7 And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

Gen. 2:21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. **22** Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.
Gen. 2:23 And Adam said:

“This *is* now bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called Woman,
Because she was taken out of Man.”

The word translated deep sleep is not a commonly used word. Most of the time it is used for God placing men into a supernatural sleep indicating God’s divine work or revelation.

Here is the first time that man slept. What a profound sleep this would be!

God took one of Adam’s ribs. This is how most translations read.

The NET translation notes that the word rib is actually the word side.

What God took was part of Adam’s side – both flesh and bone we can say from what we read in verse 23.

It is interesting that the only other places where the word translated as rib or side is used is found in connection with side chambers of the temple in Kings and Ezekiel.

Should we see something significant that God took from Adam’s side rather than from another place?

It is possible that this taking from the side is significant.

Matthew Henry probably has the most famous statement based on this observation.

“Not made out of his head to top him, not out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.”³

The side or rib that God took from Adam, God built into a woman.

How God did this is clearly not described nor is it critical to know.

The final phrase of verse 22 is also important.

³ Cited by G. Wenham, 69.

God brought the woman to the man.

Just as God had earlier brought the animals to Adam so now God brought the woman to him.

Significantly we find the first poetry in all of Scripture in verse 23.

The text again confirms that Adam was not created as a brute, barely able to think or communicate. No, just the opposite is the case.

There are four lines of poetic response in verse 23. This poem is a beautiful response emphasizing unity and diversity. The first two lines speak of unity.

This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.

The final two lines speak of diversity.

She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of Man.

Consider the picture presented here in Genesis. God takes something from Adam, forms something new but related, and then brings this new creation back to Adam.

So very clear is the truth of Scripture. God created man male and female. There are just two sexes and two genders!

Now, what about those who are born with specific birth defects that call into question whether the child was born male or female?

We must admit that because of the curse, there are cases that call into question at least immediately the sex of the child.

About 1/2000 children are born intersex, meaning their biological sex is not immediately apparent because of birth defects.

Obviously this is a sad situation that must be treated appropriately, but for 99.9% of people this is not an issue.

Sin does not change ultimate reality but affects how people perceive reality properly.

There are people who think they are cats. Do we have to add a new species of cat-human to our scientific categories?

So no doubt, there are confused and sinful people. They need to know and hear the gospel and the truth of God's Word. They need the truth, not tolerance.

God created man and woman in His image – male and female. This they share in common.

They were first created in different ways, reflecting God's ordering of life. There is a unity and a diversity.

2) GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE.

There are two key words used in verse Gen. 1:26: image and likeness.

It is best to understand these two words are synonyms.

Gen. 5:1 This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.

Gen. 5:3 And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot *a son* in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.

What does it mean that we are created in God's image?

Theologians and commentaries have given extensive answers, not always in agreement.

What would Genesis 1 and 2 indicate?

Dominion over creation which means intelligence, creativity, discovery, rule, and appreciation of what God has made.

Unity and Diversity – male and female, yet in marriage one flesh.

Fellowship with the living God

Since God is spirit, it is not simply that we look like God.

Our physical body has been created in such a way that it gives testimony to the truth – man is created in God's image.

Henry Morris well observes:

There is something about the human body therefore, which is uniquely appropriate to God's manifestation of Himself, and (since God knows all His works from the beginning of the world—Acts 15:18), He must have designed man's body with this in mind.

Accordingly He designed it, not like the animals, but with an erect posture, with an upward gazing countenance, capable of facial expressions corresponding with emotional feelings, and with a brain and tongue capable of articulate, symbolic speech.⁴

⁴ Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 74.

The word dominion is a verb that could also be translated as rule over.

Verb is used in Leviticus to speak of not ruling over your fellow Israelite with rigor.

Solomon's great dominion is described in 1 Kings 4:24

Psalms 72:8 speaks of the dominion of Jesus Christ as being from sea to sea.

God has given to man rule over that which God has created.

Under God's authority, you are able to enjoy proper authority over what God has made.

Basis for the proper use and development of resources for man's blessing and enjoyment.

It calls you to appreciate what God has made.

There is no place for laziness, ignorance, and lack of care.

3) GOD GAVE ADAM A LAW WRITTEN ON HIS HEART AND A SPECIAL EXTERNAL REVELATION OF HIS WILL.

Genesis 1 and 2 do not speak directly of the law written on the heart of man.

We learn this only later in Scripture.

Rom. 2:14 for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, **15** who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*)

This law written on the heart we can say is also part of man being created in the image of God.

This witness is part of man's conscience. It is a very important reality.

Very significantly, this is not all that man was given.

God gave to man very clear instructions related to food and especially to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Gen. 2:15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. **16** And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; **17** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

We need both the internal witness and the revealed, written truth of God's Word.

These two witnesses are to work together.

We don't just depend on the internal witness, because sin confuses and perverts this inner witness.

From the beginning God has given both an internal and external witness to His truth and will.

4) ADAM AND EVE WERE HOLY AND CAPABLE OF OBEDIENCE BUT ALSO CAPABLE OF FALLING.

Listen to Ecclesiastes 7:29.

Ecc. 7:29 Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes.”

The truth of man created originally by God is important for understanding who man is now after the fall into sin.

Before the fall into sin, man was perfectly holy, righteous, and filled with knowledge of God and His will.

Eph. 4:24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Col. 3:10 and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

Adam and Eve were not robots but rather had wills that could perfectly conform to God's Will.

However, Adam and Eve also could choose to disobey.

The warning that God gave to Adam was real.

Gen. 2:16b “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; **17** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Legitimately we speak of man's freedom or what is sometimes confusingly called free will.

Adam truly had a free will. He was free to obey but also to disobey.

With the fall of Adam and Eve, there is a massive change.

Men and women still have freedom in that we are all responsible for our actions.

But Scripture portrays unregenerate men and women as slaves, not as free.

Fallen and unregenerate men no longer have the same freewill as did Adam and Eve.

Why? Because with the fall into sin is the reality of spiritual death.

Only in regeneration is there a restoration of man's true free will.

And yet we are all well aware that with our free-will we still choose many, many times to sin rather than fully please God.

Oh, what a change redemption has brought about, but we do not yet enjoy the fullness of our redemption that will only come in the age to come!

We will deal again with the will of man in a later series on the WCF.

CONCLUSION

Praise God for His creation of man in His image and His redemption of man in the incarnate Son of God.

Creation of Eve – Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh.

Redemption -

Eph. 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord *does* the church. **30** For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. **31** "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." **32** This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Prayer

Hymn: 357

Benediction – Hebrews 12:1-3

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.