



For most Christians *anthropology* & *hamartiology* are not typical topics of study or conversation. However, a thoroughly biblical anthropology and thoroughly biblical hamartiology are vital to understanding who we are, how we got here, why we do what we do, how to relate to our fellow man, why all people have a God complex, and ultimately how to be right with the One True God.

Like every theological category, anthropology and hamartiology can be demonstrated from all over the Word of God. If you were to develop a comprehensive anthropology and hamartiology, you would need to do exegetical work in passages like Genesis 1-3, Romans 1-3, Romans 5, Psalm 51, 1 Corinthians 15, Colossians 1, Hebrews 9:27, Romans 13:1-7, Revelations 20-21, Matthew 25:46, James 4:1-10, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 6:1-6, & Ephesians 4:23-24 — just to name a few.

For this instruction, we are going to unpack a biblical anthropology and hamartiology primarily from Genesis 1-3. For in the very beginning of the Scriptures, the foundation is laid for understanding both the nature of humanity and the nature of sin.

A BIBLICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

#1: ALL PEOPLE ARE CREATED BY GOD

A. The God Who Created All Things Created Humanity in His Image

Genesis 1:26a-27 — *Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...so God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

Humanity then is created not self-existent (or self-sustaining for that matter — Colossians 1:17). Both our origin and our identity come from the One True God. We are not the product of nature or chance but the spontaneous creation of the One True God.

The Image of God: being made in the image and likeness of God (i.e. *the imago Dei*) is significant. For *the image of God in man* means that all humanity reflects (in some way) God’s moral, spiritual, rational, and relational nature. It is the image of God in man that gives all people dignity, value, and worth (not cultural constructs, achievements, etc.)

B. All Subsequent Created Beings are Created by God

For the sake of clarity — we must state that not only were Adam & Eve created by God to bear His image, but that every subsequent male and female have been created by God and bear His image. This image bearing is not limited to Adam & Eve due to the uniqueness of their creation or the pre-fall nature of their creation.



Psalm 139:13-16 — *For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.*

TABLE DISCUSSION: Why is it significant that not only were Adam & Eve created by God, but that every subsequent human being is created by God? What are the practical implications of all people being created by the One True God of the Bible?

#2: THE IMAGE OF GOD IN MAN SETS HUMANITY APART FROM CREATION

Since humanity is not the product of nature or chance, but rather all people are made uniquely in the image of the Creator God, then humanity is distinct in the created universe. There is something profound about each and every human being and it is this — they bear the image of God. This begs the question, what are the distinguishing marks of the image of God? What sets humanity apart from the rest of the created order?

i. Humanity will have Dominion

Genesis 1:28-31 — *And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.*

God is a God who works. He is diligent. He is creator. He is sustainer. In that sense — He created humanity to bear his image by exercising dominion over the created order. Humanity then is not ultimately in charge of creation, God is. But we do bear His image in creation by being stewards of His creation. This exercise of dominion is how we bear the image of God through work. By definition, all righteous labor then is the exercising of dominion and therefore bearing God's image.

ii. Humanity will be Relational

Unlike the rest of the created order, mankind is uniquely relational. They are not merely instinctive in relationships, but rather they emotional,



affectionate, intuitively relational creatures — precisely because we are made in the image of a relational God.

Genesis 1:26a — *Then God said, Let **us** make man in **our** image, after **our** likeness.*

The human race then is relational *because* we are made in the image of a relational God. The need for community is stamped on our souls. We wither in isolation but flourish in covenantal relationship. Therefore, God diagnosis Adam's aloneness in Genesis 2 and calls it *not good*.

Genesis 2:18a — *Then the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone.*

Due to mankind being intrinsically relational, it was fundamentally not good for man (i.e. Adam) to be alone. This is not a commentary on the male gender, but rather a diagnosis of humanity at large — aloneness is not good. Just as God has not existed in isolation for all eternity, those who bear His image will not flourish in isolation either. Being relationally needy is part of being made in God's image.

iii. Humanity will have Gender — Male & Female (both bearing God's image)

Genesis 1:27 — *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

Genesis 2:21-22 — *So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.*

This is theologically significant for both male and female are created in God's image — equal in value but distinct in role & function. For it was not good for *man* (*adam* in Hebrew) to be alone, so God made a helper fit for him (Genesis 2:18). Gender then is part of God's good design, where man and woman are distinct yet complementary — created for relationship & fruitfulness together.

Genesis 2:23-24 — *Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

Immediately — the covenant of marriage is instituted and becomes foundational to human relationship and societal structure. This marital covenant between a man and a woman (as biologically defined), reflects the kind of covenantal love that God has towards His creatures (i.e. another evidence of the image of God in man). No other created being has such an institution or covenantal love like this.



TABLE DISCUSSION: Why is the image of God in man being connected to gender, both male & female, both necessary and good?

iv. Humanity will Partner with God in Procreation

If God is anything in Genesis 1-2, He is Creator. He creates mankind in His image so that they might display His image in His creation. Essential to displaying God's image well is the creative act called procreation. Notice the first words that are recorded to both male and female:

Genesis 1:28 — *And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth."*

The bearing of God's image must not be reduced to only this creative act of procreation, but procreation cannot be removed from bearing God's image.

As Genesis 2 provides more details for the creative account of woman, notice Adam's words:

Genesis 2:24 — *Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

This *leaving & cleaving* as it is often called, is more than sexual in nature but not less. This one flesh union implies obedience to the command given by the Creator in Genesis 1:28. What God commanded, Adam and Eve can now fulfill. And in *being fruitful and multiplying*, they are both bearing the image of the Creator God. Human sexuality and the marital covenant then are divine gifts for human flourishing and human fruitfulness.

v. Humanity will have Moral Freedom & Moral Responsibility

Implicit in the command given to mankind is moral freedom and moral responsibility. The rest of creation is not given such a command, just mankind.

Genesis 2:16-17 — *And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 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.*

Essential to being made in God's image is moral freedom and moral responsibility. God loves that which is truly righteous and truly good. God delights in truth and holiness. God, of his own volition, chooses to do that which is right and good — never that which is contrary to His nature.

Humanity then is not robotic or merely instinctive. To be made in God's image is to be made rational. To think. To choose. Therefore, if mankind was not given the ability to reason, think, and choose — we would not be made in God's image. Even though this quality is what opened the door for the



temptation to sin, it is also the quality that enables mankind to actually glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

It is important to notice that this command to obey the Lord God means that God is God. Even though humanity is made in God's image, humanity is not God. Humanity will never be God. Humanity is subservient to the God in who's image they are made.

vi. Humanity is Fundamentally Spiritual

Relating to God was at the very essence of what it meant to be made in His image. Unlike the rest of the Created order — humanity actually knew the joy of having real, continual, rational, relationship with God.

Genesis 3:8a — *And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.*

God would *walk and talk* in the Garden day after day with Adam & Eve. This was not a physical walking, but none-the-less a real walking (John 4:24). And in that sense, Adam & Eve knew the joy of relating spiritually to God.

TABLE DISCUSSION: What one aspect of *the image of God in man* encouraged you the most and why?

A BIBLICAL HAMARTIOLOGY

#1: MANKIND CHOSE TO GO THEIR OWN WAY

A. The Temptation to Be Like God

i. The Devil is Crafty (i.e. Deceptive)

Genesis 3:1 — *Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.*

The very nature of the Devil is deceit. He is the *father of lies* (John 8:44). In order for anyone to go against the One True — always good, always kind — God of Heaven, they must be deceived.

ii. The Devil Begins with Questioning God

Genesis 3:2-3 — *He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"*



The question has been asked and the conversation has begun. We are not sure if this is the first time Eve was tempted by the serpent, but we know she does not resist the Devil (James 4:7), she engages in conversation with the Devil. Questioning God's good instructions is at the heart of all temptation — *did God actually say*. This is where the Devil begins every time.

iii. The Devil Continues with Attacking God

Genesis 3:4-5 — *But the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*

There are no more questions, just attacks. Attacks on the very words and character of God. Essentially, God's words are not true and God's character is not good. Satan's lie hasn't changed — God is holding out on you. God does not want what is good for you.

TABLE DISCUSSION: How does Satan use questions and doubts today to get us to go our own way.

B. The Choice to Not Bear God's Image

To *bear God's image* is to reflect God in every respect. To represent Him well. The very essence of sin then is to stop bearing God's image. To go our own way, to bear our own image. For the first time in the history of the world — Genesis 3 tells the story of when humanity chose to not bear the image of God that they were created in.

i. Sin Always Appears to be Enticing

Genesis 3:6a — *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise.*

The nature of sin has not changed — it is pleasurable for a moment (Hebrews 11:25). There is an immediate allurements that is always more tantalizing than trusting God and walking by faith. Eve succumbed to the attractive nature of sin. *Delighted the eyes* = sin looks good. *Desired to make one wise* = sin promises good.

ii. Adam & Eve Chose to Go Their Own Way

Genesis 3:6b — *She took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.*

Man and woman were both there and they both ate. They both chose to go against the good words of their Good Creator: *And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 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 (Genesis 2:16-17).

#2: MANKIND SUFFERS THE CONSEQUENCES FOR SIN

A. The Immediate Awareness of Guilt & Shame

Before this moment — Adam & Eve had lived with no guilt, no shame, and no awareness of any negative consequence for choices (internally or externally). Everything was truly and perfectly good.

i. Everything Was No Longer As It Should Be

Genesis 3:7a — *Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.*

For the first time, there was the presence of guilt and shame. Those internal emotions that God created to inform us that something is not right. Adam & Eve knew God's good instructions (from Genesis 2:16-17). There was only one, simple command. One instruction to remind Adam & Eve that even though they bore the image of God, they were not God. God had indeed given them *everything else in the garden*, because He is that good. But there was one reminder for Adam & Eve to remember that they were image bearers not the image.

ii. For the First Time — Humanity Covered Sin

Genesis 3:7b — *And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.*

It has been well said that sin always leads to running, covering, and hiding. Sin's pathology has not changed. When guilt and shame set in, covering and hiding are close at hand. This is exactly what Adam & Eve did after the first sin — they had to cover themselves up. They had to hide. The world immediately went from a place of transparent beauty with nothing to hide, to a place of shameful hiding because of guilt and shame.

TABLE DISCUSSION: How does Adam & Eve's response to sin help you understand your own response to sin?

B. The Kind Presence of God

i. Humanity was Created to Enjoy the Creator's Presence

Genesis 3:8 — *And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*

Notice the obvious — *they heard the sound* — this was not unusual for Adam & Eve. The Lord God's presence in the Garden of Eden was a normal rhythm



of life. What a God! He created all things and then He is regularly with His creation. This is the heart of God. He loves His creation and He longs to be with His creation.

Don't miss it though — for the first time — humanity hid from the Creator.

ii. The Creator is Kind to Sinners

Genesis 3:9 — *But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"*

The Lord does not come down and immediately call judgment upon Adam & Eve. He immediately displays His character — a character that has yet to be displayed to humanity *for* until this point, there was no need for God's mercy and grace.

TABLE DISCUSSION: What "gospel glimpses" do we begin to see right here in Genesis 3:8-9? What "gospel promises" are coming into view here?

C. Sin Always Leads to More Sin

i. Adam Blames God (and Eve)

Genesis 3:10-12 — *And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."*

ii. Eve Blames the Serpent

Genesis 3:13 — *Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."*

Neither Adam or Eve own their sin. Neither Adam or Eve confess their sin. They both immediately shift the blame. They don't take responsibility for going their own way. Until sin is seen for what it actually is — a volitional choice (regardless of circumstances) to go your own way — the sinner has no other choice than to blame someone or something else.

D. The Enduring Consequences for Sin

i. The Judgment of God on the Devil

Genesis 3:14-15 — *The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."*



Practically — the serpent — the animal that the Devil possessed to deceive Eve, was cursed.

Spiritually — there will be hostility between the offspring of the women and the offspring of the devil. They will fight. They will war. But ultimately, the offspring of the woman will win. He will crush the head of the serpent, that is the devil.

ii. The Judgment of God on Woman

Genesis 3:16 — *To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.”*

Physically — God’s good plan of procreation will now be a reminder that Eve sinned. Instead of procreation being an immensely joyful process, there will be pain in the actual bearing and delivery of children.

Relationally — instead of embracing God’s good role for the wife in a marriage, the wife will want to usurp her husband’s role. She will want to rule over him with desires that are contrary to his.

iii. The Judgment of God on Man

Genesis 3:17-19 — *And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”*

Physically — work will no longer be easy. Work will be hard. The very ground will resist you.

Ultimately — you will die. Instead of living forever as God’s friends in God’s world, all humanity will now go to the grave. The ultimate curse upon all people because of sin is death. And even though Adam & Eve did not immediately die in that moment — in every way, death was upon them. They died **spiritually** — they no longer related to God as they should. They died **eternally** — they would no longer live with God forever simply by nature of being image bearers. They died **physically** — the process of physical decay began immediately that would lead to death.

#3: DEATH SPREAD TO ALL PEOPLE FOR ALL HAVE SINNED

A. In Adam & Eve — The Penalty for Death is Upon All People



Romans 5:12 — *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.*

Ephesians 2:1-2 — *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.*

We are all born dead in our sins. Born corrupted by sin. From birth, we no longer relate to God as we should. Even though we are alive physically, we are dead spiritually. This spiritual death will give way to eternal death (unless we repent and believe in the person & work of Christ). And physical death is the constant reminder that we do indeed live in a world broken by sin.

B. Because We All Sin — The Penalty of Death is Upon All People

Romans 5:12 — *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.*

We are not victims in this predicament, for we actively engage in sin ourselves. We are dead therefore we sin. And because we sin, the promised consequence for sin (Genesis 2:17) is upon us as well.

PRACTICALLY APPLYING DOCTRINE:

#1: How should anthropology & hamartiology affect our view of mission & evangelism?

#2: How should anthropology speak into matters of justice, compassion, racism, etc.?

#3: How should the biblical doctrine of sin speak into parenting & grand-parenting?

TABLE DISCUSSION:

#1: Give one way that a biblical anthropology could be practical in your life?

#2: How does understanding the nature of sin help you navigate your own Christian life?

#3: How do God's consequences for sin (given in Genesis 3:16-19) help us make sense of the world today?