

## Chapter 7 - What is Man?

### Introduction

- 1. We were not created because God is lonely.
- 2. He did not create us because He needed glory, but we are created to give Him glory.

### 1. We were Created for God's Glory

- "Our ultimate goal in life should be to live for His glory."
- "Giving God glory will give our lives purpose and meaning: it will give us the joy in our life we long for."
- "One of the ways we glorify God is by enjoying Him."
- *You reveal the path of life to me; in your presence is abundant joy; at your right hand are eternal pleasures. (Psalm 16:11)*

### 2. We were Created in God's Image

- Being made in God's image is part of what makes us unique among God's creation.
- "We were made to be like Him."
- "The more we understand about God, the more we understand about ourselves. And the more we understand about ourselves, the more we understand about God."

We are **moral** creatures - We are given a sense of right and wrong as a reflection of God's perfect sense of right and wrong.

We are **spiritual** creatures - We are somewhat like God, who is spirit. "Our spirit is a reflection of God's nature and allows us to relate to Him personally."

We are **intellectual** creatures - "Our ability to think about and process information is a reflection of God's knowledge."

We are **relational** creatures - "Our ability to relate to others, as well as our desire for community, is a reflection of God's perfect community within the Trinity."

### 3. God's image is being restored through the gospel.

- "God redeems His children through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus so that they can be '*conformed to the image of His Son.*'" (Romans 8:29)

- Christians have a new nature, “which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator.” (Colossians 3:10)
- “At the end of time, all of God’s children will become like His Son, Jesus Christ.”
- “In Jesus we see God’s likeness as it was intended to be.”

#### **4. We have Responsibilities as Image-Bearers**

- *God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth.” (Genesis 1:28)*

A) We are commanded to fill the earth with other image-bearers.

B) We are called to respect and take care of His land.

C) We are called to have respect for all people.

- “They are the culmination of God’s infinitely wise and skilled creation.”
- “They have the potential to return to the beauty of Jesus Christ by turning away from their sin and turning to their Creator.”

CS Lewis *It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree helping each other to one or the other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all of our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit - immortal horrors or everlasting splendors.*

#### **Discussion Questions**

1. If we were created to glorify God, not ourselves, how might that reshape the way we think about success, purpose, or identity in our daily lives?

(Follow-up: Can you think of an area in your life where you're tempted to live like the main character instead of living for God's glory?)

2. If the image of God in people is distorted but not destroyed, how should that affect how we engage with people who are hostile to God or far from Him?

(Follow-up: How might remembering their dignity change the way we talk, post online, or pray?)

3. What are some ordinary, everyday ways we can live out our responsibilities as image-bearers, both in how we care for God's creation and how we reflect His character?

(Follow-up: Where do you see an opportunity this week to intentionally reflect God's image?)

4. C.S. Lewis said, "You have never talked to a mere mortal." How would your interactions change if you remembered that the people around you are eternal souls?

(Follow-up: Who comes to mind that you tend to overlook, devalue, or avoid, and how might God be calling you to see them differently?)

## **Chapter 8 - What is Sin?**

"Sin disrupts everything. We don't live the lives we were originally designed to live, and we don't live in the world we were originally designed to live in. Sin mars the image of God in us; we no longer reflect the perfection God created us to reflect. Because of sin, things simply aren't the way they were originally meant to be. The story of the human race, as presented in the Bible, is the story of God fixing broken people living in a broken world. It is the story of God's victory over the many results of sin in the world."

### **What Sin Is**

"Sin is any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature."

#### **1. Act**

#### **2. Attitude**

- 21 "You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, *Do not murder,, and whoever murders will be subject to judgment.* 22 But I tell you, everyone who is angry with his brother or sister will be subject to judgment. (Matthew 5:21-22)
- Coveting is an internal sin (Exodus 20:17)

#### **3. Nature** - "The internal character that is the essence of who we are"

- "We were by nature children under wrath" (Ephesians 2:3)
- It's not just that we make bad choices. We make those choices because we have a heart that naturally drifts away from God.

God's Character - "God is eternally good in His character; all that He is conforms perfectly to His moral law. Therefore, anything contrary to His moral law is contrary to His character, that is, contrary to God Himself. God hates sin because it directly contradicts everything He is."

### **Where Sin Comes From**

#### 1. Sin does not come from God.

- "We should never blame God for sin or think that He bears the responsibility for sin."
- *3 For I will proclaim the LORD's name. Declare the greatness of our God! 4 The Rock—his work is perfect; all his ways are just. A faithful God, without bias, he is righteous and true. (Deut. 32:3-4)*
- "It is impossible for God even to desire to do wrong, 'for God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempts no one.'" (James 1:13)
- God's interaction with sin:
  - A) Sin did not surprise God.
  - B) God ordained that sin would come into the world.
  - C) Sin did not overpower Him.
- "God decided that He would allow moral creatures to willfully and voluntarily choose sin."
- "How we put these two truths together is one of the most difficult questions in theology, and it is healthy for us to allow a substantial element of mystery, admitting that a full understanding is beyond anyone's ability in this age."

#### 2. Sin existed before people did.

- "Sin existed in Satan and his demons before the disobedience of Adam and Eve, and then it entered the world of humans through their decisions."
- "Neither God nor Satan forced them to eat from the tree; they did so willingly and thus willingly sinned against God."

#### 3. Adam's nature became sinful.

- "Adam's sin caused us to inherit a sinful nature, one that is naturally opposed to God and His moral law."
- *18 For I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh. For the desire to do what is good is with me, but there is no ability to do it. (Romans 7:18)*
- *The heart is more deceitful than anything else, and incurable—who can understand it? (Jeremiah 17:9)*
- *Indeed, I was guilty when I was born; I was sinful when my mother conceived me. (Psalm 51:5)*
- *The wicked go astray from the womb; liars wander about from birth. (Psalm 58:3)*

4. Having a sinful nature “does not mean we are as bad as we could be.”

- We are “unable on our own to do anything that pleases God. We lack any spiritual good in ourselves.”
- *All of us have become like something unclean, and all our righteous acts are like a polluted garment; all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities carry us away like the wind. (Isaiah 64:6)*

5. Every part of our being is affected by sin

- Intellect - We rationalize sin and call evil good.
- Emotions - We feel the wrong things, or feel the right things in disordered ways.
- Desires - We long for things that are harmful or forbidden.
- Hearts - Our affections drift from God to idols.
- Goals - We aim our lives at self-fulfillment, not God’s glory.
- Motives - Even good actions are often driven by pride or fear.
- Physical Bodies - Our bodies decay, break down, and are prone to addiction or sickness.

6. “We received not only Adam’s sinful nature, but also his sin-produced guilt.”

- *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all people, because all sinned. (Romans 5:12)*
- *For just as through one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so also through the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous. (Romans 5:19)*
- “Even if we have a hard time accepting that we inherited Adam’s sin, we must accept that we have all contradicted God’s moral law in either attitude or action.”

7. We become right through vicarious obedience.

- “God has designed the world in such a way that our individual failings can be redeemed through the work of another.”
- “Our individual obedience can be made right by the obedience of another. Our individual sin can be removed by the sinlessness of another.”
- *So then, as through one trespass there is condemnation for everyone, so also through one righteous act there is justification leading to life for everyone. (Romans 5:18)*

## **How Sin Affects Us**

1. We have all sinned.

- *...for there is no one who does not sin (1 Kings 8:46)*

- *All have turned away; all alike have become corrupt. There is no one who does good, not even one.* (Psalm 14:3)
- *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23)
- *If we say, “We have no sin,” we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.* (1 John 1:8)

2. Death is the penalty for all sin.

- *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Romans 6:23)

3. “Through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, God offers us freedom from the condemnation sin brings.”

- *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree; so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness.* (1 Peter 2:24)
- *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus* (Romans 8:1)

4. When forgiven Christians sin, our legal standing before God is not affected.

- *For I passed on to you as most important what I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures* (1 Cor. 15:3)
- *And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself just as he is pure.* (1 John 3:2)

5. Sin still affects our fellowship with God even if it doesn’t affect our standing with Him, because our sin grieves God.

- *And you have forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons: My son, do not take the Lord’s discipline lightly or lose heart when you are reproved by him, for the Lord disciplines the one he loves and punishes every son he receives.* (Hebrews 12:5-6)
- *For they disciplined us for a short time based on what seemed good to them, but he does it for our benefit, so that we can share his holiness.* (Hebrews 12:10)

6. Sin can result in broken relationships, even between Christians.

7. Anyone who is truly a Christian will live a life of ongoing repentance, and will not deliberately go on developing a practice of sin without fighting it.

- *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* (1 John 1:9)

## **Summary**

So how does sin affect us?

- It infects us all
- It separates us from God
- It brings death and judgment
- It hinders our joy and fellowship
- It damages our relationships

But for those who are in Christ:

- Sin is paid for
- Condemnation is gone
- Repentance leads to restoration
- God disciplines not to destroy but to renew
- And confession leads to cleansing

### Discussion Questions

1. Which aspect of sin's definition (act, attitude, or nature) do you find most convicting or personally relevant right now, and why?

(Follow-up: How does seeing sin as part of our nature deepen your understanding of your need for Jesus?)

2. We often minimize or rename sin in today's culture. What are some common examples of that, and how can we respond with both truth and grace?

(Follow-up: Why is it loving to call sin what it is?)

3. How have you seen the effects of sin, either your own or someone else's, break fellowship with God or damage relationships?

(Follow-up: What does genuine restoration look like when that happens?)

4. What does it mean to you personally that your standing before God doesn't change when you sin, but your closeness with Him can?

(Follow-up: How have you experienced both God's discipline and His mercy in your walk with Him?)

5. In light of what we've learned, how does the obedience of Jesus give you hope in your fight against sin?

(Follow-up: What does ongoing repentance look like for you right now?)