

One Bad Apple

The Nature of Man

Lesson 1

This study of doctrine begins with a look at the very nature of human beings. The study will include a look at man as he was created and man after the fall. The study also includes a section on the differences between the way Christians view their existence and the way non-believers view their existence.

To begin, consider three things which make up every human being.

1. *Body*
2. *Mind*
3. *Soul*

How We Were Created

This section begins, of course, in Genesis. Look up Genesis 1:1.

Who did the creating? God

What did He create? A. heaven B. earth

Scan Genesis 1:3-25. By what means did God make all these things?

by His word

To find out more about the creation of man, read Genesis 1:26,27.

Who is speaking? God

In whose image was man made? God's

What does being created in the image of God mean? Look up Colossians 3:10.

In what was are we renewed in the image of the Creator? knowledge

Now look up Ephesians 4:24. The new self is created to be like God in what two ways?

true righteousness and holiness

These two passages let us know that being created in the image of God meant two things. *Luther's Small Catechism* puts it this way (page 111).

Adam and Eve truly knew God as He wishes to be known and were
perfectly happy in Him.

Read Genesis 2:7. What is different about the way man was created?

2. _____

Now read Genesis 1:31.

What pronouncement did God make concerning His creation? It was good

Was man created good or bad? good

A Good Man Gone Bad

This condition of goodness and perfect harmony with the Father, sadly, did not last. Genesis contains the account of how it happened that man fell into sin and death.

Read Genesis 2:15-17.

Where did God place man? The Garden of Eden

What was man to do? A. Till the Garden B. keep it.

What one thing was man forbidden to do? eat of the tree of knowledge
of good and evil.

What would happen if man disobeyed? He would die

Genesis 3:2-13 tells the story of how man came to disobey God. Notice how easily it came about. Read this section of Scripture.

Who was the serpent? Satan

What does the serpent say will happen if the man and the woman eat the forbidden fruit?

They will be like God
Do the man and woman disobey God? yes

In that single instance of rebellion against God, the very nature of man was changed. We live in that changed and rebellious nature. In fact, we are born that way. Read Genesis 3:21-24 to see what happens next.

What happens to the man and the woman? expelled from the garden for their protection

What Does This Mean for Me?

Man went from a perfect, harmonious relationship with God to a willful rebellion against God. Sin is that willful rebellious nature. How serious is our rebellion? Look up the following:

1 John 1:8 we are filled with sin

Ecclesiastes 7:20 all sin - there is not a righteous man on earth.

Romans 3:9-20 no one does good, throats are open graves, tongues
practice deceit, mouthfuls of cursing. We are worthless spiritually

Romans 3:23 all have sinned

Psalms 130:3 cannot stand before God.

How can we sinful people stand before the holy and pure God? Look up 1 Peter 2:24.

Who is the "He"? Jesus

How do we sinners stand before God? through Jesus

In what way do we seek this forgiveness offered to us in Christ? Look up the following:

Psalms 51:17 contrite hearts, humbly aware of our many sins and our sinful, rebellious
nature

Luke 13:3 repentant

What does all of this mean in our daily lives? It means that once we trust in Jesus for our salvation from our sinful self, we have a basis of belief and an absolute against which we must measure all things. We look at things differently from non-believers because of what we believe

and know. We realize that what matters is the Word of God. Our opinion must always be measured by what God says.

When we see a beautiful sunset, we are inclined to thank God for the beauty of His creation. A non-believer will see that the sunset is beautiful but will give all the credit to a "chance happening in nature."

A believer will look at the death of a loved one with both sadness and joy - sadness from missing the person and joy from knowing that they are in paradise with Jesus and that they will be united with loved ones.

A non-believer will view the death of a loved one only with sadness, emptiness, hopelessness, and confusion.

Think of another situation which Christians will view differently from non-believers.

The simple truth is, Christians will see things differently than the rest of the world. We know that our sin puts us in opposition to God. We also know that Jesus sets things right again. That truth is a guiding principle in our lives.

There are two points to be made about what happened when Adam and Eve sinned. First, is mankind still created in the image of God? Look up Genesis 3:8-10.

What was the reaction Adam had when he heard God coming? *fear*

Is this the reaction of a person who is Aperfectly happy@ in God? *no*

Now look up Genesis 5:2,3. In whose image was Adam's son born? *Adam's*

It is only as Christians that God can work to restore His likeness within us. Because of sin, that restoration cannot be complete until we are united with Him in heaven.

Lastly, after Adam and Eve sinned, we know that they were cast out of the Garden of Eden; and sin entered all areas of their lives. But their sin in the garden also caused all of nature to be brought down. Read Romans 8:19-22.

When did creation become "subjected to frustration"? *At the fall of man*

Why? *so that sinful man might maintain some measure of dominion over creation*

How often do you show your rebellion toward God? *Daily*

Since we sin daily, what must we also do daily? repent, confess our sins.