

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. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How We Were Created

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

Who did the creating? _____

What did He create? A. _____ B. _____

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

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

Who is speaking? _____

In whose image was man made? _____

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

In what way are we renewed "in the image of the Creator"? _____

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

_____ and _____

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 _____ God as He wishes to be known and were _____ in Him.

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

1. _____
2. _____

Now read Genesis 1:31.

What pronouncement did God make concerning His creation? _____

Was man created good or bad? _____

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.

According to Genesis 2:15-17, Where did God place man? _____

What was man to do? A. _____ B. _____

What one thing was man forbidden to do? _____

What would happen if man disobeyed? _____

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? _____

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

Do the man and woman disobey God? _____

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? _____

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 _____

Ecclesiastes 7:20 _____

Romans 3:9-20 _____

Romans 3:23 _____

Psalms 130:3 _____

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

Who is the "He"? _____

How do we sinners stand before God? _____

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

Psalms 51:17 _____

Luke 13:3 _____

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? _____

Is this the reaction of a person who is "perfectly happy" in God? _____

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

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"? _____

Why? _____

How often do you show your rebellion toward God? _____

Since we sin daily, what must we also do daily? _____