

The Doctrine Of Man And The Fall

Genesis 1:26-27

Pastor John Miller

Genesis 1:26-27 says, "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.' So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

I want to talk about the important doctrine of man and the Fall.

You ask, "Why, Pastor, is this so important? Aren't there other subjects or doctrines that are more practical for Christian living?"

Nothing is more important than a foundation when you build a house. It's the most important part of the structure. Genesis 1-11 forms the foundation of our faith, forms the foundation of our need for a redeemer. Yet it is under attack today. Even Christians believe these chapters are myth, allegory and not historically true. They don't really believe there was an Adam and Eve or the Garden of Eden or Noah and the Flood. But without this foundation, the structure crumbles.

Wayne Grudem, in his excellent book, Systematic Theology, said, "If ever we deny our unique status in creation as God's only image-bearers, we will soon begin to depreciate the value of human life. We will tend to see humans as merely a higher form of animal, and we will begin to treat others as such. We will also lose much of our sense of meaning in life." How true that is.

All the chaos, all the wickedness, all the evil that is going on in our culture today we can trace back to the Fall of man, to the sin of disobedience in the Garden of Eden. The death, sin, corruption, sorrow and all the suffering go back to that point.

So it is absolutely essential that we think Biblically about man and the Fall. Actually, we should think Biblically about all of life. Everything we view in life should be viewed through the lens of sacred Scripture.

Now I want to ask and answer a few questions. The first question is, "What does the Bible teach about the origin of man?" I first want to tell you what it does not teach. First, the Bible clearly does not teach atheistic evolution—certainly not theistic evolution. It is one of the greatest, damnable lies on our culture today. We have been taught in our public schools that we have accidentally evolved. It's Darwin's theory of evolution in Origin of the Species, including natural selection and the survival of the fittest.

Evolution teaches that there is no need for God, because there is no God. So there is no accountability to God. There are no higher moral standards; we can do whatever we want. "They sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind."

Secondly, the Bible does not teach theistic evolution. So we have atheistic evolution, and we have theistic evolution, both of which are not taught in the Bible. Theistic evolution teaches that God created matter, and matter evolved—some say over billions of years. But the Bible doesn't fit that picture. If we believe that Genesis 1-3 is historically true, then we also have to reject this concept of theistic evolution.

Third, the Bible also doesn't teach the day-age theory. This theory holds that the six days of creation are not actually 24-hour periods, but each day is millions or billions of years long.

So evolutionists need time and more time to believe in evolution, but they only need faith to believe that something came from nothing.

Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." If you believe this verse, you have no problem with the rest of the Bible—everything's smooth sailing. It's so very important that we receive the truth of God's Word on this subject.

The Bible doesn't teach atheistic evolution, it doesn't teach theistic evolution, it doesn't teach the day-age theory. Then what does the Bible teach? It teaches five things about creation. Number one, it teaches that God created out of nothing. It's called "ex nihilo." "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The word "created" here is the word "bara." Genesis 1:27 says, "So God created..."—that's the Hebrew word "bara"—"...man in His own image; in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them." The word "created" actually means "out of nothing" or "ex nihilo."

So this is what's known as "fiat creation." "God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light." God has the ability to speak with His mouth and create something out of nothing. We don't have that ability. If I'm going to create a painting, I have to have a paint brush and paints. I can only put together what exists—the brush and paints. But God can actually start with zero, and He can create out of nothing by just speaking it into existence. Seventeen times in Genesis 1 God is said to be the creator.

Number two, God created man directly. God actually created man. In Genesis 1:27, it says, "So God created man." Now all through the Genesis record, it says, "God created man." Yet you still find Christians who believe in theistic evolution, when the Bible is very clear that "God created man."

Other great verses are Genesis 5:1-2. "This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created." This is taking Adam as a historical figure and giving his generations. Here, again, it says that "God created man." It's the word "aw-dawm," in the phonetic spelling, which is a reference to both Adam and Eve. So God created both male and female. And this statement is repeated several times in our text.

This creation is regarded as historical fact in many other passages of Scripture. This is what a lot of people don't think about—that the Bible validates the Bible. Exodus 20:11 is a reference

to God directly creating man. “For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day.” In Psalm 8:3-6, God created man. It says, “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet.”

Jesus referred to Adam and Eve, the first of God’s creation, in Matthew 19:4-5. “And He answered and said to them, ‘Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning “made them male and female,” and said, “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh”’?” And it’s referred to in 2 Corinthians 11:3. “But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” 1 Timothy 2:13-14 says, “For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.” And Jude 14 says, “Enoch, the seventh from Adam....” So all these verses speak of God directly having created man.

These verses in Exodus, Psalms, Jesus in Matthew 19, Paul in Corinthians, Timothy and Jude referencing God creating man, as first mentioned in the book of Genesis, support the idea that this is historical truth. These verses don’t say it’s allegory or myth; they say it’s historical fact and true. These writers believe in this report from the book of Genesis as history.

The Bible teaches that not only did God create out of nothing and create man directly, but number three, God created male and female. Jesus affirmed this truth in Matthew 19:4, where He said, “Have you not read...”—or “Have you not read your Bible?”—“...that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female’?” There are only two genders. And any attempt to blur those two distinctions is an attack on God Himself.

I’ve never seen so widespread an attack on our culture today as on the very existence of God. Evolution fuels transgenderism. If we’re just evolving, we’re evolving from a man to a woman, from a woman to an animal. You can be whatever you want to be. We don’t even know what a woman is or what a man is anymore in our culture. And if we don’t know that, we don’t know what marriage is. The Bible says, “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” Marriage is the building block of society. So it’s no surprise that we’re just falling apart morally, socially and spiritually. Romans 1 shows us the degeneration of mankind, ending with “a debased mind” in turning away from the true and living God. Knowing the truth so very important.

So God made male and female. And God does not make any mistakes. In Genesis 2:18-25, God actually looked at man by himself and said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.” Then God caused Adam to go asleep—Adam took a nap. He took from Adam’s rib and made the woman. When Adam woke up from his nap, he found out he was married. The first wedding ever performed was performed by God; marriage

is a divine institution. Adam had been looking at animals all day long, so when he looked at this woman, he said, “Wow-man!” So her name was “Woman.” 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.”

Both man and woman are made in the image of God, both equal before God, but given separate roles and functions as designed by God. And God said to the two, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it.”

It’s troubling that we’re seeing in the United States so many young people not getting married and not having children. Yet it’s encouraged. God said that He “made them male and female” and instructed them to “multiply.”

Number four, God created in six, 24-hour days. You ask, “Well, what does it matter?” It matters. When you begin to question the historicity of the book of Genesis to try to satisfy evolution, you have big problems. Genesis 1:31 says, “Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.” This is before the Fall. “So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.” When you see “the evening and the morning,” and you see “the sixth” and you see the word “day,” what do you think? Six days; right?

The Hebrew word for “day” is “yom.” It was used with a number and always designates a 24-hour period of time or a day. Any Hebrew reading this verse would assume the natural interpretation of six, 24-hour days. Exodus 20:11 supports this. “For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them.” That says that God made everything in six days. He used the word “yom” with a number. It was six, 24-hour days.

Evolutionists claim it takes billions of years for everything to evolve. We know that within a species, there are different kinds, such as different kinds of dogs. But no matter how long it takes, dogs can never become horses. The Bible teaches that God’s creation was complete in six, literal, 24-hour days. God didn’t need billions of years to create.

Number five, God created man, a unique being, in His image and in His likeness. We read about this in Genesis 1:26-27 and again in Genesis 5:1. “God created man [and] He made him in the likeness of God.” Human beings are created in God’s image and likeness. If we lose this Biblical truth, God have mercy on us! And no matter how marred the image of God is in mankind, every human being—no matter what age, what ethnicity, what race, what sex—is made in the image of God. This is a Biblical doctrine that needs to be believed. God created man unique; he is the crown of God’s creation.

We know for sure that man is at least two parts: he has a body, and he has an immaterial part called soul and spirit, which are eternal. Theologians argue—and I don’t have an opinion on this—whether or not man has two parts, a dichotomy, body and spirit; or man has three parts, a trichotomy, body, spirit and soul. But what we are clear about Biblically is that we have at least two parts: a physical body and a spiritual part, which makes us like God or eternal.

In Genesis 2:7, we have a record of how God created man. “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.” So every human being—I believe from the moment of conception—is an eternal being. Every human being exists for all eternity. We know from the doctrine of salvation they will exist either in heaven with God, or in hell separated from God. So the Bible teaches we will all exist forever.

Why did God create man? God didn't need to create man. Sometimes you hear the idea that God needed fellowship, so He created man. That's why I preached on the Trinity. You have God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The Godhead had gotten along fine for all eternity without mankind. They had love within the Godhead. God didn't need human beings. He didn't create man because He needed man.

But God did create man for His glory. In Isaiah 43:6-7, it says, “Bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the ends of the earth—everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory.” Man's purpose in life is to know God, to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. You could reduce this down: what is our purpose in life? To glorify God. We do that by knowing Him, by loving Him, by serving Him and by enjoying Him. So the purpose of mankind is to glorify God, his Creator, and to enjoy Him forever.

Now what does it mean that we are made in God's image? First, it means that man is like God and that man represents God. “Image” and “likeness” mean that we are like God in order to represent God. We are not divine; we will never be God, we can't become God and we're not little gods. But there are ways in which we are like God, and we can reflect God so we can bring glory to God.

Let me put it in three categories. Number one, we are like God in that we have a personality. God is a personal being and so are we. That means we have self-consciousness, self-determination, self-awareness and we have a mind, emotions, a will and we can think abstractly. Humans are the only species that blush, become embarrassed and can enjoy abstract art.

Have you ever seen a squirrel sitting on the limb of a tree in the forest enjoying the beauty of a sunset? No; they're just animals doing things instinctively. Humans are spiritual beings. We're made like God. We have creativity, can create things and think abstractly. We have a mind, a will and emotions. We're personal beings. So we can have fellowship with God, because we are made like God in that sense.

Number two, we are spiritual beings; we have spirituality. “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.” Man has an eternal spirit or soul.

Number three, we are moral beings. God is holy. He says to us, “Be holy, for I am holy.” When we study the attributes of God, we discover that some of God's attributes are communicable. That means we can have them. But I can't have all-power or all-knowledge or be present everywhere, but I can have God's love in my heart and in my life. I can be holy like God—I can

be patient.

Is God's patience reflected in me? When you're a dad, you want to be a reflection of God the Father in heaven to your children. You want to show your wife the love that Jesus Christ has for the church. "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her." So whoever you are, whatever your role in life is, you should reflect the love of God, the grace of God, the mercy of God, the holiness of God and the righteousness of God, because we are made in the image of God.

Second, something has gone horribly wrong in reflecting the image of God. What has happened to mankind in the world today? It's called the Fall of man or the original sin in the Garden of Eden. You need to understand that man is made in God's image and likeness, but that image is marred. That image hasn't been erased; even non-Christians are made in the image and likeness of God. It has nothing to do with whether or not you're a Christian. Every human being is made in the image and likeness of God. Even though the image is marred, it still exists. And all your study of anthropology is of no avail if don't understand that man is a sinful human being.

Genesis 3:1-7 says, "Now the serpent was more cunning..."—or "subtle" or "crafty" or "wise"—"...than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, 'Has God indeed said, "You shall not eat of every tree of the garden"?' " The first recorded words out of the mouth of the devil in the Bible were questioning God's Word. "Did God really say that?" Those are the first recorded words from Satan.

The serpent was a representation of the devil and was an actual animal. The word "serpent" could be translated "dragon," which could be some kind of lizard or a being that had legs. It didn't have to be without legs, because it would be cursed and have no legs. So it wasn't necessarily a snake. When you see a picture of a snake in a tree telling Eve to eat the apple, it's not anywhere near what the story says in the Bible. And poor apples!—they got a bad rap. We don't know that the forbidden fruit was an apple. It might have been a cumquat or a banana. We just don't know.

So Satan is using this wise creature to speak to Eve. It could have been before the Fall that this creature had the ability to speak; it was wiser than any other creature. So Eve wasn't surprised when the serpent said, "Has God indeed said...." The number one thing Satan does is to question God's Word. He is always attacking the validity of God's Word or the historicity of God's Word.

Verse 2, "And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, "You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" That command of God is given in Genesis 2:16-17. God said nothing about not touching the fruit. So here Eve is adding to the Word of God. That's a dangerous thing to do.

Verse 4, “Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die.’” So Satan first questions God’s Word, then he blatantly denies God’s Word. He tells a lie. God said that if they ate of the fruit of this tree they would die. They would die in two ways: they would die spiritually—they were separated from God and driven out of the Garden of Eden—and they died physically.

In verse 5, Satan says, “For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So Satan said she would be like God, but not God. He gives Adam and Eve a partial truth. But Satan also questions the goodness of God here. Satan was saying that God knows something good will happen to you when you eat the fruit, but He’s keeping it from you. So Satan denies the Word of God and questions the goodness of God.

Verse 6, “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her...”—evidently Adam was hanging out there with her and should have been protecting her—“...and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.”

These are some of the saddest verses in the Bible. All of the sin, sorrow, suffering, sickness and tragedies of all human history started in the Garden of Eden with sin. Eve disobeyed God and ate of the fruit.

Think about this beautiful garden with all these trees they could eat from, and there was only one tree they couldn’t eat of, but that’s the tree Eve ate of. She had all these trees, but she was standing by the tree she shouldn’t eat from. What Eve did plunged the human race into sin, death, condemnation and judgment, the Fall of man.

I know you look at this and say, “Man, if I were there, I would never have done that!” Yeah, right! You would have been the first one to eat of the forbidden fruit.

Verse 6 says that “The woman saw that the tree was good for food.” In 1 John 2:16-17, we see that Satan tempts us with “the lust of the flesh”—it was good for food. He tempts us with “the lust of the eyes”—it was pleasant to look at. He tempts us with “the pride of life.” The Bible says, “For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.” Our passions are “the lust of the flesh”; our possessions are “the lust of the eyes”; and “the pride of life” is our pride. Satan said, “If you eat this, you will be wise.”

So Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together and covered themselves. Then they hid from God. In the evening, they heard God walking in the garden calling Adam saying, “Where are you?” But God knew where Adam was. God wanted Adam to know where he was. This is the cry of a broken-hearted Father.

Adam said, "I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." Fear and estrangement are the results of sin.

God said to Adam, "Who told you that you were naked?" The serpent. "Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

Then Adam said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." This is the first, original pass-the-buck—husbands blaming their wives for all their problems.

So this is what's called the Fall of man. The text of the original sin and the fall of Adam is historically true. There really was an Adam, an Eve, the Garden of Eden, the devil. He really came to Eve and tempted her to eat the forbidden fruit, and he plunged the world into sin and death. It's not myth or allegory; it's true history, just as Jesus affirmed in Matthew 19:4-5.

What were the results of man's fall? There was judgment on the serpent, Genesis 3:14. "So the Lord God said to the serpent: 'Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.'"

Then there is the judgment on Satan, verse 15: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." This is the first prophetic, Gospel message of the coming of Jesus the Messiah. He was the Seed of the woman. Jesus would bruise the head, or authority, of Satan, and Satan would bruise Jesus' heel on the Cross at the Crucifixion. So this is a prophecy of the Gospel of Christ coming to die on the Cross for our sins.

Then there is the judgment on the woman, verse 16. "To the woman He said: 'I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.'" Pain in childbearing is the result of the curse.

When I complain about my aches and pains—and I do a lot of that—my wife will often say, "Well, I've had four kids—you talk about pain!" Then I shut up.

Then it says, "Your desire shall be for your husband." I believe that indicates that she'll want to control or dominate her husband, but "He shall rule over you." My belief is based on the Hebrew word and some other insight we get from the next chapter of Genesis.

There also is a judgment on man, verses 17-19. "Then to Adam He said, 'Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, "You shall not eat of it": Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.'" So we see the labor, the thorns, the sweating and the curse on man.

Creation is waiting for Christ to come back and establish his kingdom, because creation is also under the curse. In Romans 8:19 and 22, Paul says, "The earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God....For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now." We see the storms, animals eating animals and all the violence in nature. All of nature is groaning, because it is under the curse.

The last judgment God meted out was brought on the whole, human race. This is the main point of all that we are covering. Man was created by God in His image and likeness, Adam disobeyed God and fell, and in doing that, he plunged the whole, human race into sin, death and destruction. All of it came from Adam's fall.

Romans 5:12 is an amazing passage in the theological book of Romans, in which God describes how He saves sinners. Romans is Paul's last "theological will and testament"; he puts all he knows into one book. It tells how God justifies the unjust.

If there was no Adam, no Eve, no Garden of Eden and no Fall, you would have a difficult time understanding Romans 5:12-19. In verses 12-14, we have a description of man's ruin. Paul believed that Adam was a historical figure, because he said, "Therefore, just as through one man..."—that's a reference to Adam—"...sin entered the world."

This is a clear statement. One man, Adam, brought sin into the world. Sin started in the heart of the devil, but it came into the world through one man, Adam. This is why Jesus is called "the last Adam." We have two Adams: the first Adam, and the last Adam, Jesus Christ. The first Adam brought sin, death and judgment; the last Adam, Christ, brought salvation, righteousness and justification. Verse 12, "...and [the first Adam brought] death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned." So we all inherit a sinful, Adamic nature bringing death.

Verses 13-17 is one, long, parenthetical statement. Verses 13-14 say, "(For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of..."—or "the same way as"—"...the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come." So even though the law had not yet come on the scene, men still died, indicating that Adam's sin had entered the human race. Adam acted as "a federal head" affecting the entire, human race.

From verses 15-17, we have the rescue. "But the free gift is not like the offense." So we have Adam's sin—offense—and the free gift—the last Adam, Jesus Christ. "For if by the one man's offense..."—Adam's—"...many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many."

A lot of people get upset when they hear that Adam's sin brought death, sin and condemnation on the whole, human race. They say it isn't fair. But know this: God designed His plan to allow man to sin and bring death on the whole, human race so that one man, Christ the Redeemer, could come to bring righteousness to the entire, human race. If we were all individually put into the garden and tested like Adam and Eve, we would also have sinned.

So we all inherit a sin nature and we all actually sin. Not only do we have a fallen, sinful, Adamic nature—yet we still have the image of God—but we have a propensity to rebel and run from God, we're at war with God and we all sin. "There is none righteous, no, not one....All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Verse 16, "And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)"

Now verses 18-19 show us the plan of righteousness brought by Jesus, the last Adam. This is the conclusion. "Therefore, as through one man's offense judgement came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous."

So you see the danger of denying the historicity of the story of Adam and Eve or rejecting it as myth or allegory. It has theological, doctrinal implications. One man, Adam, brought sin, death and judgment on the human race, and then one man, Jesus Christ came. Like Adam, Jesus was tempted but resisted temptation. Adam was tempted in the garden surrounded by beauty and failed, but Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness surrounded by desert and was victorious. Then Jesus went to the Cross and conquered sin, death and the grave by rising from the dead. Jesus now brings righteousness to all who believe and trust in Him.

So Adam acted as our "federal head," and we have imputed guilt and sin on the entire, human race. We also have transmitted depravity; man is a sinner, depraved. We have personal sin; we disobey God's law. So we have what's called "a sinful nature," or sometimes called "the flesh" in Scripture. Theologians call it "the Adamic nature."

In Romans 1:10-31, we see the downward fall of man. And in Ephesians 2:1-3, it says, "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others." These Scriptures say that we were doomed, we were dead, we were depraved and we were disobedient.

You say, "Well, this is a really lovely message, Pastor John. I'm so glad I came to church."

It's reality. "There is none righteous, no, not one....All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." We're dead, spiritually separated from God, we're disobedient, we're depraved and we're doomed. But in Ephesians 2:4-5, Paul says this: "But God..."—when God comes back, how marvelous it is!—"...who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).” Amen.