

Christian Fundamentals

Human Beings

We next need to 'discover' human beings, mankind may be a better word in these times. The Bible just uses the word 'man' which is the inclusive word for all human beings. This word is used repeatedly to describe humans through the Bible. Human beings, of course, are the pinnacle of God's creation, they were made last and, if we read our Bibles carefully, made in consultation between the three members of the Godhead to make mankind, human beings, in the image of God. *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"*. The word for God here is plural in the Hebrew language showing the Trinity to be involved in this decision. There was a need for God to give expression to His nature in a form, in a human form. So, 'made in our image' is a representative figure, and 'likeness' more firmly relates to the shape and the form. There was to be in man a shape and a form which could fully express the eternal nature of God. It is an amazing concept and yet in Hebrews chapter 1 we read of Our Lord Jesus 'being the brightness of the glory of God', which perhaps links to the image, the character, and the express image of the person/substance of God, which perhaps links, oddly because of the words used, to the more distinctive spiritual shape. Jesus fully expressed God and we are told *"In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead in a body"*; He was God manifest in the flesh.

Human beings have many qualities, they can think, they can feel, they can reason, they can love, they can hate, and they can care. These are attributes of God found even now within human beings, in spite of sin, - we would look at sin later, - having spoiled the image of the likeness that was originally in the first man. Again, we would look at it more later on, but in the Lord Jesus Christ we will find the image restored. When God formed Adam, the first man, in the beginning God walked with him, in what we are told was the cool of the day. There was communion/fellowship between them, and such was the nature of the first created man that he was fully able to communicate with the living God. We read in Genesis chapter 2, "God breathed into man and man became a living soul". The soul is the God breathed part, the eternal part of each human being. It will live for ever which is why we need a salvation that will give eternal life with God, and not separate from Him, to the living soul. Within each human being there is also a spirit, this had also to be imparted to the living soul for there to be life in that soul and to provide the capacity within humans to receive the life of God. The tree of life was in the garden and if it had been eaten life would have entered into the spirit of the living soul of the first man. As we have seen God is a Trinity, 3 parts to make the whole, and when God made human beings in his own likeness He made them three parts: they, indeed we, are body, soul, and spirit.

In the Garden of Eden, where God placed the first humans, there were trees for fruit of which they could eat, God always makes provision for His people. All the trees could be eaten for food with one exception, the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil. Human beings being made in the image and likeness of God also have to have free will as God has free will. God making humans without free will would have meant they were not fully in His image and likeness. That was the risk God had to take, but it was also totally honest of God to do such a thing. Humans could make choices, to obey or not to obey. They could choose, we still can, we are made in the image of God. The consequences of the choices which could be made were set out by God. God wanted humans to love Him, to choose Him and to walk with Him, to show His nature and fully

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declare the glory of God, not to turn away to independence. We shall see next how it all went wrong.