

This We Teach: Man

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[0 : 00] Psalm 8 verses 3 through 9 as you see it there displayed on the screen but you can look it up in your copy of God's Word if you'd like to.

This is the ESV version of the passage and so let's just kind of walk through this real quickly this morning. This great passage, great part of this psalm, David is the psalmist here and he writes, When I look at your heavens. So the psalm really is kind of speaking directly to God, isn't it? The Creator.

So here's David, you can kind of imagine that perhaps the impetus for this psalm was created while he was, say, out in the fields watching over his sheep.

Maybe he is sitting there, he'd been playing his harp, trying to put together a new psalm, you know. And he looks up into the sky and he sees the stars and so forth and just begins to pray.

He says, When I look to your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which you have set in place, what is man?

[1 : 40] That's an important question, isn't it? What is man that you are mindful of him? And the son of man that you care for him?

Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings, the angels, and crowned him with glory and honor.

And you have given him dominion over the works of your hands. You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

Oh, Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. I just love that psalm.

And David, of course, again, is the psalmist here and he asked the question. He asked, What is man? What is man?

[2 : 49] Now, I would say to you that David's intent, of course, is to inquire as to the significance of man in light of creation. The significance that is our significance to God himself, God the Father, the Creator.

And so it's when you consider the heavens and the earth, all the wonders of God's creation, the macro as well as the micro.

That is, when you consider the largest of the large and the smallest of the small, and everything in between, what is man? It's like he's praying, God, what is man?

And who am I that you care so much about me? Now, that's kind of what I get from this psalm. I think it's obvious that this is the intent of the psalm.

And so, what is man? What is man? What is the truth about man? What is the, if we could put it this way, the doctrine of man?

[3 : 59] Now, ladies, don't feel left out, okay? And don't go all PC on me, all right? When I use the term man, and in our doctrinal statement, the word man there is including all, male and female, okay?

So you're included in here, don't worry about that. It's humanity, humankind, it's mankind. And so, what is man? What is the doctrine of man?

And really, maybe we should ask, why is that important to know? I mean, what's so important? You know, you might think, well, I can understand how I need to look at the Bible and find out about God, and about Jesus, and about the Holy Spirit, and about the Trinity, but the doctrine of man, why is that important?

Well, because that's what we are. We're all mankind, part of mankind. We're part of humankind. We are all sons and daughters of Adam, the first man.

As someone has put it, we are all made from the same mold, only some of us are moldier than others. Or we might even say from the same lump, though some of us are lumpier than others, okay?

[5 : 16] Not singling anybody out, okay? Except for myself. And so, what is the truth about us? That's what we're getting at here.

About you, about me, what is the truth about us, the race of man? What should we believe? And therefore, what should we teach about man?

And as always, of course, the best place to go, the only place really to go, for the answer, is God's Word. And so, that brings us to our third doctrinal statement, the doctrine of man, or what we teach about man.

And so, let's just look at this statement. Kind of pick some of it apart. We teach that man was directly and immediately created by God in his image and likeness.

Now, that's a pretty big statement. We may look at that and say, well, you know, that all makes sense to me. This says a lot. This very first part of our statement. In the first place, directly.

[6 : 25] We teach that man was directly created by God. That is, God was directly involved creatively in every single part of his creation.

And especially man. Directly involved in that creation. We could say it this way. Man was directly created by God as opposed to indirectly.

That makes sense, doesn't it? Indirectly. You know, in the sense that God created all the necessary elements, you know, and then he just kind of sat back simply letting nature take its course.

That would be indirectly. And so, it could be said then that God created man, albeit indirectly. Or we could apply that to all of creation.

And some have applied that to the entire created order, all of the universe and everything on this planet. That God created it, but he created it indirectly.

[7 : 23] That is, he created all the necessary elements and then he just let it evolve. That is, by the way, the deistic evolutionary view. But we teach what?

That God directly created man and also immediately. Immediately. We were, man was created immediately by God.

That is, God created man immediately. He did that with every part of his creation, every element of the creation. He did it immediately. And so, man is immediately created by God as opposed to progressively.

See, that would be the opposite. Progressively. That is, in the sense that God created all the necessary elements, then he kind of sat back, observed, and at some point intervened, tweaked his creation a little bit, then sat back and let it go, and then kind of in and out, tweaking this part and that part, especially when it comes to man, just kind of moving it along as he willed, as he desired. Okay? That would be progressive. You know, like he saw a fish. He said, you know, I think I'll give that fish legs.

[8 : 49] So the fish can walk on the dry ground. And so he did that, and then he waited for a few million years, and he said, you know, I think I'll give that fish arms.

You know, arms so that he can climb a tree. And then he waited a few more million years, and then he gave that created thing, a tail and hands with opposable thumbs so that he could swing from limb to limb, you know.

And then waiting again, and then eventually stepping in, saying, you know, I think I'll let him stand upright so that he can walk on two feet. And then on and on and on it goes, and he tweaked it until man was created, albeit progressively.

Is that the right idea according to Scripture? No. This would be really a description of theistic evolution.

There's a little difference between deistic evolution and theistic evolution. Deists, the deistic evolutionary people, they say, God just created all the necessary elements, and then it just evolved from there by natural selection and so forth.

[10 : 06] God hasn't been involved since. The theistic evolution people, they say, well, God, yeah, I created everything to begin with, all the necessary elements, and then he just kind of let it go and then observed and from time to time would step in and make a little change here, a little addition there, and he had a plan, you know, eventually he wants man to come on the scene.

That's theistic evolution, but no. You see, now, if you believe the Bible, you do believe the Bible, don't you? May I tell you that if you believe the Bible and, as we talked about a few weeks ago, interpret it literally, the plain meaning of it, and take it as the truth, if you believe the Bible, then you have to know that the Bible leaves absolutely no room for any evolutionary view of creation whatsoever, be it deistic or theistic or any other brand that they've come up with, because the Bible very clearly makes no, it's not vague in any way that man was directly and immediately created by God.

Genesis chapter 2, verse 7, 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.

None of that gives you any sense of progress. Okay? That man just simply evolved over time and there's no sense here of anything being done indirectly or progressively.

It is clear that he created man directly and immediately. By the way, man was created on which day? the sixth day.

[11 : 58] And on the sixth day he was the last thing created. And so you have a very short statement there about the creation of man, but then you get on into chapter 2 and then what?

We have kind of an expanded narration or all the details, some of the details are given about the creation of man on that sixth day.

And so chapter 2 is all about man. Now there were other things created on the sixth day. The animal kingdom was created on the sixth day. But when we get into chapter 2 it's just man. Man is just the focus which is another testimony I think to the importance of mankind in God's eternal plan. That's why we ought to be studying about what the Bible says about man. And the point being that God did not spend an entire chapter or chapters for each individual part of his animal kingdom. I mean aren't you glad we don't have an entire chapter on the creation of the aardvark or the slug or better yet the cockroach.

[13 : 04] Can you imagine an entire chapter on the creation of the cockroach? That might be interesting but it doesn't fulfill God's purpose in his revelation.

He starts with the creation of all things in chapter 1 and then starting with chapter 2 we leave all the other things created and focus entirely on man because the Bible is all about God's plan for you and me.

His eternal plan. And so after chapter 2 chapter 1 rather the creation of all things then the Bible focuses on man in chapter 2 and all the way to the end of the book.

And it's God's account of his unfolding plan for the redemption of man. So now let's bring in a couple more words here from our statement.

Man was directly immediately created by God in his image and likeness. So that makes us different from all other animals that were created the animal kingdom.

[14 : 20] It's only man who was created in the image and likeness of God. I mean in chapter 2 or 1 rather you have the creation of the animal kingdom and then we get to the near the end of the chapter and the focus is on man and it's only there that God says let us make man in our image according to our likeness.

That makes us unique. Makes us different. We're not part of the animal kingdom. We're not just a more advanced part of the animal kingdom. We're intelligent part of the animal kingdom.

We're not just an evolved more evolved species within the overall animal kingdom. We're created in the image and likeness of God.

God. James chapter 3 and verse 9 also. With it now James talked about the tongue with it the tongue we bless our God and Father and with it with the tongue we curse men men who have been what?

Made in the similitude of God or the image of God. Now what does that mean exactly? Well man was created free of sin with a rational nature intelligence which may be a stretch for some I don't know volition self-determination and a moral responsibility to God.

[15 : 53] Now this is not attempting to be an entire exhaustive list of all that makes us in the describes us as the image of God. These are the high spots important parts.

And so man was created free of sin to begin with. Free of sin Genesis chapter 1 and verse 31 then God saw everything that he had made and indeed it was what?

Very good. There's anything good about sin. So as man was created there in chapter 1 and when we get to the end of chapter 1 we have the end of the creation and the six days and God says he

looked at everything and it's all very good.

Very good. No sin. So no sin in the created order whatsoever. Adam and Eve were made without sin. They were free of sin.

We could also cite Romans chapter 5 verse 12 through one man who is that? That's Adam. Through one man through Adam's sin entered the world.

[17 : 06] So the implication is that Adam was created without sin free of sin and then at some point he sinned and in that very act sin entered into the world and as the passage goes on to say and death through sin and thus death spread to all men to all of us.

Thank you very much Adam. Although we're pretty good at sin ourselves. Okay. So we're sin by nature but also by choice. So sin entered the world through Adam but before it entered the world Adam was free of sin.

Eve was free of sin and in addition to that he was created with a rational nature. That is we don't operate according to instinct.

We don't conduct our lives, eat and drink and live our lives and do the things we do because we do those things because we've been imprinted in our brain that this is what we do and we do it this way every single time.

Now we do have some habits of course. Some of them are not good but we choose. We choose. So we're not guided by instinct. We have a rational nature.

[18 : 18] We're rational beings. We can use our minds and we can think and we can make decisions and we use rational facts to make rational decisions and so forth.

So we're rational. Rational nature. Intelligence also. Volition. We'll talk more about these here in a little bit.

Volition and self-determination. I kind of put those together because basically they're kind of synonymous. Volition, self-determination. That is we make our own choices and we determine our own destinies.

At least we have the power to do that whether it works out the way we want or not. But we have self-determination that makes us different from the animal kingdom. and I would add moral responsibility to God.

Genesis chapter 2 verse 17 of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. We're familiar with that aren't we?

[19 : 23] God put a tree in the garden and he said don't eat of it. Now he wouldn't give that command if Adam did not have the ability to choose. choose to obey or choose to disobey.

So a man was created without sin and yet he was not created without volition that is the ability to choose the power to choose.

We have that. He was not created without self-determination to determine our own destiny. he was not created without morality.

The animal kingdom does not have morality. We have it. We're free moral agents. That's how God created us originally. And so God placed a tree in the garden to prove him.

Some of you might have wondered why would God put a tree like that in the garden? Well what is Adam and Eve just robots? They're without sin and no potential for sin.

[20 : 37] They can't make any choices. They love God because they're just made to love God and they don't have any choice in the matter. No, God put a tree there to prove them. And it was a, we could call it a probation time, a probation tree.

And so the garden was perfect in absolutely every single way. And God placed Adam and Eve in paradise and he gave them two things to do basically, cultivate it and guard it.

And then he gave them one law, just one law, only one law. And then he gave them the ability to choose. God said to Adam and Eve, he said, eat from every tree you like, any tree you like.

I'm paraphrasing. Eat from any tree you like except one particular tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. All right?

So Adam and Eve were put on probation. Will they obey or will they disobey? Will they obey the one law that they have?

[21 : 52] One command. Now think about this. Suppose, just theoretically, suppose there were 200 fruit trees in the garden. I don't know how many there were.

I don't know how many there are today. I'm talking about fruit trees and nuts and all those kinds of those. Those trees that bear fruit that we eat. Now let's just suppose that God placed 200 fruit trees

in the garden and if that's the case, then the command really means this.

Adam, I have given you 199 trees to enjoy. You can eat a pear, an apple, orange.

By the way, the tree that was forbidden wasn't necessary in an apple tree. The Bible doesn't tell us that, okay? I'm glad because I like apples. And so God says, you want an apple?

You want an apple? Go ahead. Pick you an apple, as many as you want. Pick a bushel of them. Eat them. Love them. Grapefruit, orange, mango, whatever it is.

[22 : 58] You want that? Go ahead. You want a fruit cocktail? Go ahead. Have it. Make it up for yourself. Enjoy it. Would you like some peach cobbler? Hey, I would.

A little ice cream on top. Is that what you want, Adam? It's yours. I've given you all these things to enjoy. How about some fresh coconut milk?

Well, go ahead. Just climb up that tree, grab you one. If you can get it open, drink all that you want. All right. Drink until you're full.

Maybe you'd like one of those fancy fruit pizzas. Hmm? Go ahead. Dull yourself. Eat from any of the trees or from all of the trees.

Eat as much as you like, whenever you like, but remember this, there is one tree, just one tree that you must avoid, and if you eat from that tree, you will certainly die.

[24 : 05] Now, when you put it in that perspective, it's a pretty loving test, isn't it? I mean, like 199 trees to enjoy, but just one, you must keep your hands off of it.

Just one. Okay. Pretty good deal. So you see, it's a probationary period for Adam and Eve, and Adam was created sinless, Eve was created sinless, but Adam and Eve were created with the potential to sin.

They had the potential, the ability to sin. Adam and Eve were created to choose, either to love, trust, obey their creator, or to reject him, disobey him, trust themselves, which, of course, we know is what they did.

And when they did, then they received the promised consequences, the curse. Because they were created with a moral responsibility to God, and that's part of his grace that he would do that.

They weren't mindless automatons. They could choose. And so let's get back to the original question that I posed earlier.

[25 : 31] What does it mean that man was created in the image and likeness of God? And it's a big, big subject. We could name a number of things, but maybe we could boil it down to a few categories. First of all, man is a person.

Man has personhood. I'm sorry, all you pet owners and pet lovers. You may think that your dog has a personality.

But not in the same way, okay. A dog, a cat, other animals may express, you know, what looks like personhood, things that go along with personhood, but they're not personhood.

If you have a dog, you love your dog, I understand that. You have a cat, you love your cat, no problem. You may have a hamster, you may have, you know, a rabbit, you may have a snake, God forbid.

You might have a frog. Pretty boring to have a pet frog. But you might have a frog. Even worse yet, you might have a rock. Okay. Pet rock.

[26 : 38] And you love your pets, but your pets are not made in the image of God. You are. You say, well, that's just because you don't have a pet, pastor. You're right, I don't.

My son has one, it's enough for me. And so you're not a pet lover, so that's why you, no, I'm saying this because of what the Bible teaches. You can go back and look at chapter 1 and the sixth day.

And God created all the animals on the earth, but when they got to man, when he got to man, he breathed his breath, his air into him to make him a living soul.

Nothing like that is said about any of the animal kingdom, just man, just man. So he's a person. And this is a very important distinction.

Man has intellect. Again, you know, that's somewhat subjective. Some waste the intellect that God has given them or the potential for it.

[27 : 44] Man can express emotion, love, hate, joy, sadness, anger, etc., etc.

Man can exercise volition, can make a choice about everything. Man understands moral realities and responsibilities.

Man can appreciate beauty. Man, all of man's conduct is with intelligence, that is, he thinks it out and purpose and, you know, again, might be a little bit too gracious for some.

So, first, man is a person. Second, man is a spiritual person. That goes a little bit deeper, doesn't it? I mean, you might be able to look at your pets and say, well, they have all of those kind of things. At least they seem to. But they're not spiritual persons. And even some pet lovers would argue with me on that point too.

[29 : 04] You know, like the Disney movie several years ago, All Dogs Go to Heaven. kind of thing. A man is a spiritual person.

It enables him to know God personally. That's how man was created. We can communicate with God. Your dog does not pray.

I'm sorry. Neither does your cat. I know we've all seen praying mantises, but they're not praying really, okay?

Okay? Okay? A dog is a dog, a cat is a cat, and the same is true of horses and hippos and bobcats and alligators and earthworms and everything.

I can't communicate with God. Only humans have a God consciousness. consciousness. And not as a result of evolution, okay? But rather as a result of divine, purposeful creation.

[30 : 12] Direct and immediate. And we can also have fellowship with God. We'll talk more about that here in a minute. Fellowship with God. So man is a person, man is a spiritual person, and third, man is a social person.

A social creature who can interact with other human beings on multiple, many different levels, and to do so with self-determination.

We're free to bless others, we're free to curse others, and we do both those things. And we're free to love, or we're free to hate, and on and on we could go.

A man has been created with a self-consciousness, self-awareness, unlike the animal kingdom. That is, we're concerned with our actions, hopefully. Concerned with our appearance. How much time did you spend in front of the mirror this morning, guys?

[31 : 20] us? We're concerned about it, and we're concerned about what others think about us. For many of us, we're concerned about that a little bit too much.

That's how we're created. Makes us different from the animal kingdom. Animals are not created with a self-awareness, they are not inhibited by their actions, that they are never embarrassed by their appearance.

It is not. Fourth, I would add that man is an immortal being.

In this sense, means that we will never cease to exist. Never. You were made to enjoy.

Adam was made, man was made, to enjoy everlasting life with God in heaven. Now, because of Adam's sin, we can now also suffer everlasting punishment in hell.

[32 : 33] But either destination, there will never be a time when you will cease to exist as a person. Never. That makes us different. And guess what?

We were all made with an awareness of that reality. Every single one of us. Ecclesiastes 3.11 says, He has set eternity in our hearts.

All right, so let's get back to our statement on man. We teach that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, relationship, live his life in the will of God, and by this, accomplish God's purpose for man in the world.

So let's look at this. First of all, God's intention in the creation of man. By the way, for our purposes, what we're talking about here is how Adam was created originally.

When he sinned, it wrecked most of this, okay? which is something we'll talk about next time when we look at the doctrine of salvation. And so God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify him.

[33 : 54] Isaiah chapter 43 verse 7, everyone who is called by my name, whom I have created, what? For my glory, created for my glory, I have formed him, yes, I have made him.

Again, that includes her too. All right, ladies are in this too. All of us. What else did God intend? God's intention in the creation of man was that man should enjoy God's fellowship, enjoy his fellowship.

You know, it's interesting when you think about it, and I'm always, when I reread passages that I've read many, many times before, something new just reveals itself.

And it's not new revelation, okay, it's just a new perspective or understanding of the depth of the truth of the passage. And so I would say to you that in the midst of the sin, Adam and Eve's sin, that's revealed to us in Genesis chapter 3, after all that happens, right there in the chapter, there's

something very tender there.

Now, I don't know if you've ever noticed this before, but in Genesis chapter 3 and verse 8, and they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.

[35 : 21] Let me stop right there for just a minute. This is after Adam and Eve's sin, right? They had just one command and they disobeyed it. Eight of the tree.

And so, after that, then God's walking, they hear him coming, he's walking in the garden, in the cool of the day, and it's a very interesting word, this word cool.

It really is the same word that is used to express the idea of breath, or spirit. And so, it could read, walking in the garden in the spiritual time of the day.

And maybe this is early in the morning, maybe it's some other time, maybe just before sundown, we're not given the timing, it's just the cool of the day, or the spiritual time of the day.

And the implication is that this may have been something that happened every day. And God would just walk through the garden, and Adam and Eve would walk with him, and it would be a spiritual time of the day, kind of their quiet time.

[36 : 30] Okay, communion time with God. Now, I'm not trying to read into the text, but it does suggest a kind of regular occurrence between Adam and Eve and God.

So they hear him coming. At that time of the day that they are used to spending time with him, and what did they do? Adam and Eve, Adam and his wife, hid themselves for the very first time.

Very first time since God created them. they hid themselves from God, from the presence of the Lord, among the trees of the garden. They're hiding out. Here comes God.

They hear him coming. But remember they've sinned now. They're filled with guilt because sin brings guilt. They couldn't face God. But this is the part that is just so tender to me.

then the Lord God called Adam and said to him, where are you? Don't you love that? Where are you?

[37 : 35] Now God, of course, knows everything. It's not minimizing the omniscience of God. I mean, he knows all things. He's calling out to them.

this is an important time of the day. Where are you? It's such a tender thing. You see, God, we were made, originally made to enjoy God's fellowship, to enjoy communion with him.

And if you don't enjoy that, then there's something wrong. Something wrong because you were created to enjoy fellowship with him. God's intention in the creation of man was that man should live his life in the will of God.

That's how Adam was created, Adam and Eve, to live their lives every day, every moment, in the will of God. Hebrews chapter 10 verse 7 reveals, I think, how, and the implication is how God intended for his first Adam to live, even though the passage is about the second Adam, actually. And so, God is revealing his intention for his first Adam, how man should live, how we should all live, originally created to live.

[39 : 07] He's revealing that through the second Adam, who said, behold, I've come, the volume of the book it is written of me, to do your will, O God.

The second Adam epitomized the original intent that God had created man to fulfill, something that was lost to man when Adam sinned, continues to be lost to every one of, all of us, and would have been lost to all of us if we had not come to Christ.

Second Adam, live his life in the will of God. One last thing this morning.

And by this, that is by living his life in the will of God, accomplish God's purpose for man in the world. And we're talking about his original purpose, which is still his purpose.

But sin has wrecked that purpose in the majority of people on this planet today. So what is the purpose for man?

[40 : 25] To worship him. That's the purpose. To worship God. I love this passage, and especially in the King James, so I've displayed it here in the King James.

Revelation chapter 4, verse 11, thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are.

That is, are created, and were created for God's pleasure. You see, the very first question in the Westminster Shorter Catechism, if you've ever read that, some of you might have even memorized it at some point, here's the very first question.

What is the chief end of man? And the answer is, man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. That's a good definition of worship, okay?

Now what is God's purpose for man in the world? To worship him. And we could go to dozens of passages of scripture that deal with this, that reveal this.

[41 : 36] Psalm 67, verses 3 and 4, let the peoples praise thee, O God, let all the peoples praise thee, let the nations, all the nations, be glad and sing for joy.

This is God's intent, God's desire. Psalm 97, verse 1, the Lord reigns, let the earth, the whole earth, rejoice. Let many, many coastlands be glad.

And Psalm 117, verse 1, praise the Lord, all nations. I mean, this just seems unreal, doesn't it? Because this is not the reality today, is it?

But it reveals God's intent for the creation of man, something that will be fully realized by him one day.

so praise the Lord, all nations, all nations. China, praise the Lord. India, praise the Lord.

[42 : 47] Yemen, praise the Lord. Let all the nations praise the Lord. Extol, that's just an old word for worship.

worship him, all peoples, all peoples. All right, so if God's purpose for man in the world is that man would worship him, and since the vast majority, you'd have to admit this, the vast majority of the people in this world today do not worship him, and they don't, then what does that tell us about the church?

What does that inform us about our priority, the priority of the church in the world? What does it tell us about that?

If God's intent is that all worship him, and if all are not worshiping him, what does that tell us? Well, how does one become a worshiper?

through salvation, through salvation. How does one become saved?

[44 : 05] Through believing the gospel, and how does one believe the gospel? By hearing it, by hearing it, and how shall they hear without a preacher?

I don't mean a preacher like me, I mean a preacher like all of us. Jesus said to the Samaritan woman in John 4, 23, the hour is coming, he said to her, and now is.

when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

So it's a spiritual thing governed by the truth. And then he said, for the Father is seeking, continually seeking, such to worship him.

that's his intent when he created us. Now, we lost that ability to worship, didn't we?

[45 : 27] Because of Adam. And that sin was passed on to all those who came out of Adam, and we were all in Adam when he sinned.

So we lost the ability to be worshipers of God because of sin. But the good news is, what we lost in Adam, we can gain in Christ, second Adam.

That's why he came. We gain it in Christ through salvation, through salvation. salvation. Next time we'll talk about salvation.

You can't talk about man, and how he was originally created, and the intent of God when he created him, and the purpose for which he created him.

You can't talk about that without talking about what the second Adam did. Salvation. is moment.