

## WHAT IS MAN, THAT THOU ART MINDFUL OF HIM?

Psalm 8:4<sup>4</sup> What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?

### The Creation of Man and Woman

Genesis 1:26–27<sup>26</sup> And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

### The Image of God (*Imago Dei*)

— Man is created in His own image.

— What is man as image of God? (Gen 1:26-27; 5:1-2; 9:6; 1 Cor 11:7; Col 3:10; James 3:9)

### Before the Fall of Adam

— God created everything “very good” in six days (Genesis 1:31).

— Implications:

1. All persons – male and female – are the image of God.
  - Signifies a copy and/or the idea of representation.
  - Signifies something patterned after an original.
  - Man functions as God’s representative – a son of God.
2. Explains the human’s need to live in relationship with others. Since God is Trinity and God is Love, they enjoyed perfect, personal communion with one another.
3. Connected with his task to rule and subdue the earth as representative of God. Psalm 8:4-8.

### After the Fall of Adam

— Adam’s sin, the original sin, caused his fall and imputed to all men.

— Was the *Imago Dei* lost in the fall?

— All persons, even after the fall, still possess the image of God though this image is distorted.

— It was marred but not obliterated; it was defaced but not erased; it was distorted but not destroyed.

— God’ image in man continues – Genesis 9:6; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9.

### Effects of the Fall on the Human Race

— Sin and the loss of original righteousness and holiness are passed on by inheritance to all the descendants of Adam and Eve.

— Condemnation also came upon all. (Romans 5:16-18)

— Two terms that describe the effects of sin on man:

1. **Total Depravity** – every part of our being is affected by sin – our intellects, emotions, hearts (center of our desires and decision-making process, motives, goals, and even our physical bodies).
2. **Total Inability** – not only lacking any spiritual good in ourselves, but also lacking the ability to do anything that will in itself please God and the ability to come to God in our own strength.

## Total Depravity of Man

### — Sinners by birth

Ephesians 2:1–3 <sup>1</sup> And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; <sup>2</sup> Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: <sup>3</sup> Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Psalms 51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; And in sin did my mother conceive me.

Psalms 58:3 The wicked are estranged from the womb: They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

### — Sinners by choice

Romans 3:12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

## Free Will and the Bible:

1. **People as created: true freedom & freedom of choice**

2. **People as fallen: lost true freedom and retained freedom of choice within limits (limited by sin nature)**

### — The fall reduces the *kinds* of choices they can make.

John 6:44 No man can come to me, **except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and** I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, **except it were given unto him of my Father.**

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

John 8:36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Romans 3:10–12 <sup>10</sup> As it is written, There is **none** righteous, **no, not one:** <sup>11</sup> There is **none** that understandeth, there is **none** that seeketh after God. <sup>12</sup> They are **all** gone out of the way, they are **together** become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, **no, not one.**

Romans 3:23 For **all** have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Romans 8:7–8 <sup>7</sup> Because the carnal mind *is* **enmity** against God: for it is **not subject** to the law of God, **neither indeed can be.** <sup>8</sup> So then they that are in the flesh **cannot** please God.

1 Corinthians 2:14–15 <sup>14</sup> But the natural man **receiveth not** the things of the Spirit of God: for they are **foolishness** unto him: **neither can he know them**, because they are spiritually discerned. <sup>15</sup> But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

2 Corinthians 4:3–4 <sup>3</sup> But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: <sup>4</sup> In whom the god of this world hath **blinded** the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

## Limited Human Freedom:

— **Man's freedom was never God's freedom and was limited even more after the fall!**

— **In that man is *finite*** – Many things we never had the freedom to do or even imagine!

— **In that man is now *fallen*.**

- He cannot not sin.
- He cannot please God.
- He can only choose according to his / her sinful nature.

— **According to divine fiat (decree/choice)**

1 Corinthians 4:7 For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

## Augustine vs. Pelagius

Your interpretation of **Romans 5:12** determines how you view imputation of sin.

### Pelagius (ca. 350 – 425)

- A British monk of even temperament, strong ascetic conviction, and passion for promoting holiness.
- He was said to be highly honored because of his learning and purity of his life.
- To him it seemed easy to live uprightly since man is equipped by nature for living a life of righteousness by availing himself of the help graciously provided by God.
- He came to Rome in the 380s and was shocked by the lack of moral discipline by the Roman Christians so he began preaching moral reform and pursuit of “real” Christianity. He believed that this was the result of the theology of *divine grace* preached by Augustine and others.

### Augustine (354 – 430)

- Born in 354, at Tagasta in Numidia (Tunisia), in North Africa. He was baptized in 387, and became bishop of Hippo in 395.
- More concerned with the facts of experience than with any theory of them.
- “Freedom” to him is as much of a fact as the Exodus to the Israelites.
- His idea of God’s grace and human depravity was informed by his own experience and primarily determined by his study of the Epistle to the Romans.

Some elements of their ideas were already present in the writings of the Church Fathers. The most important questions in the debate were those of *free will* and *original sin*.

### Pelagian View of Sin

- Adam’s original condition was *neutral*, neither holy nor sinful.
- He was *capable* of choosing good or evil.
- He had a free and undetermined will.
- He could either sin or refrain from sinning.
- He was created mortal and already subject to the law of *death*.
- He taught that God created every soul directly therefore every soul was innocent, unstained and no direct relation to the sin of Adam.
- His fall injured no one but himself, so there is no hereditary transmission of sinful nature or of guilt. Therefore, there is no such thing as *original sin*.
- The fact that God commands man to do what is good is proof positive that he is *able* to live without sin. (Matthew 5:48)
- Leviticus 11:44 <sup>44</sup> For I *am* the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I *am* holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.
- Matthew 5:48 <sup>48</sup> Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

### Augustinian View of Sin

- The entire human race fell in Adam according to Romans 5:12.
- Man is depraved in *all* of his being – mind, will, and emotions.

- Adam’s guilt is transmitted biologically to all his descendants, in all generations, in the act of procreation. Human beings, thus conceived in sin (Psalm 51:5), are naturally helpless.

Psalm 51:5 <sup>5</sup> Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; And in sin did my mother conceive me.

Romans 7:14–20 <sup>14</sup> For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. <sup>15</sup> For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. <sup>16</sup> If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is* good. <sup>17</sup> Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. <sup>18</sup> For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. <sup>19</sup> For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. <sup>20</sup> Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

### **Pelagian View of Grace**

- Man does not depend on God’s grace to turn from evil to good, though this could be an advantage for him.
- God’s grace is not the inward influence of the Holy Spirit but external gifts and natural endowments such as his rational ability, the Scriptures, and the example of Jesus Christ.
- *Salvation* is possible without law or gospel and was attained by some before the giving of the law, and easier to attain under the law.

### **Augustinian View of Grace**

- Man is utterly dependent on *grace* for salvation.
- Since it is clear that some are saved and others are not, on what basis is this so?
- Augustine argues that God chooses or “*elects*” certain individuals and not others. All justly deserve damnation in hell, but some are elected for salvation while others are passed by and left to what their guilt warrants.
- God chose people before the foundation of the world not because God foresaw anything of superior value in them but simply because God was pleased to be gracious to them. Since all are undeserving, God shows mercy if even one is spared. (Ephesians 1)
- A theology of divine-human cooperation, in the final analysis, is a theology of human *merit*. The glory of salvation, Augustine insisted, is that it is from first to last an undeserved gift.

Pelagianism was finally condemned in the Council of Ephesus in 431. Although the Western Church embraced Augustinianism as Pelagianism had been discredited, it did not become the dominant theology of the age. Augustine place too much stress on the inner Christian life and too little stress on the external ceremonies to suit the spirit of the age. His teachings were radically opposed to the sacramentalism and to the idea of salvation by external works that more and more dominated the Christian thought at the time.

*Semi*-Pelagianism developed as a middle ground between these two views. Since the Eastern Church emphasized the element of freedom in human nature in opposition to the pagan idea of fate or destiny, it held on the grace of God and free will together which led to *Semi*-Pelagianism that taught predestination was based on foreseen faith and obedience. The West soon followed.

Augustinianism will rise again when *Luther* and *Calvin* succeed Augustine.