

Section 1

The Nature of Man



Mankind Was Created by God

Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. . . .

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." . . . So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

GENESIS 2:7, 18, 21-22

The first words in the Bible are, "*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*" The first thing God chose to tell us about Himself is that He is the Creator of everything.

God created everything we see in nature: the sun, the moon, the stars, the tallest tree, the smallest blade of grass, the biggest whale in the sea, and the smallest bug in the woods. God created them all.

When God was done creating all these amazing planets, plants, and animals, He finished off His creation with His greatest work of all—humans. After speaking everything else into existence, God bent down and formed man out of the dust of the ground.

The picture we get is of a potter taking a lump of clay and molding and shaping it into something beautiful and useful.

After God created Adam, the first man, He knew it was not good for Adam to be alone. Adam needed someone like him to live life with. Knowing this, God performed the first surgery in human history. He put Adam to sleep, opened his side, removed one of his ribs, and used it to create Eve—the first woman.

As amazing as all the things we see in nature are, none of them are as amazing as a human being. Humans are the most complex creatures God has created. They are the most intelligent. They are the most mysterious and beautiful. Of all of God's creation, humans are the most like God.

As amazing as humans are, what is most crucial for us to understand is that *God* created us. This is one of the most important truths in all the world. Since God created us, He is in authority over us.

We are His creatures, and He is our Creator and King. Since God is our Creator, He knows how we are designed to live. He has told us who we are and what our purpose is. If we want to live as we were meant to, we need to know what God says about how and why we were made.

As we continue our study, we will find the answers to both of these questions. We will learn who God has made us to be and why He created us. But the first and most important truth about mankind that we must never forget is that God is our Creator and King.



Prayer: Almighty God, You are the Creator of everything. You created the heavens and the earth by the power of Your word. We praise You for showing us Your power and glory through creation. Thank You for creating mankind. Thank You for creating us. Please help us to remember that You are Creator and King. Please help us to seek You to know how and why we exist. Please give us the grace we need to live in a way that honors You. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

Song: *How Great Thou Art* (SH 33)

Hymn: *All Things Bright and Beautiful*, refrain

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

Theology Question 1: Who created mankind?

Answer: God created mankind.

Mankind Was Created with a Body and Spirit

*Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground
and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,
and the man became a living creature.*

GENESIS 2:7

Our Scripture today shows us how God designed humans. It shows us the basic parts of a human. We are told that “*the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground.*” When it says that God formed the man, it is talking about the human body. God shaped and formed Adam’s body from the dust of the ground.

The first thing that we need to understand about how God created us is that He created us as physical beings—He created us with bodies. Colossians 1:16 tells us that God has created both visible (physical) and invisible (spiritual) things. For example, God created angels. Angels are spiritual beings that don’t have physical bodies like humans do.

But God has not only designed humans as physical beings with bodies, but He has also given us spirits. God “*breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.*”

A spirit is a non-physical, invisible part of a human. Being both physical and spiritual beings makes humans different than any of the other creatures God created.

Angels are spiritual beings only, with no physical bodies. Animals are physical beings only, with no spirits. But God chose to create humans with both bodies and spirits. One is not more important than the other, but both body and spirit are good and essential parts of what it means to be a human.

It is important to know that we have both bodies and spirits because God calls us to honor Him with every part of us. We can sin against God with our bodies and spirits. We can also honor God with our bodies and spirits with the help of the Holy Spirit. God commands that we love

Him with “*all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might*” (Deut. 6:5).

Because God created every part of us, He deserves to be worshiped with every part of us. Never forget that God has made you as a physical and spiritual being—with both a body and a spirit. In all that you do, seek to honor Him with both body and spirit.



Prayer: Father, we praise You for creating us as physical and spiritual beings. Thank You for designing us with bodies and spirits. Both body and spirit were created by You as good because all that You created is good. Please help us to remember that we are more than just our bodies. Please help us to remember that we have spirits. Give us the grace we need to honor You with every part of us—both body and spirit. Amen.

Song: *All Creatures of Our God and King* (SH 67)

Hymn: *Who Are These Like Stars Appearing*, verse 5

These, like priests, have watched and waited,
 Off'ring up to Christ their will;
 Soul and body consecrated,
 Day and night to serve Him still:
 Now in God's most holy place
 Blest they stand before His face.

Theology Question 2: What does it mean that a human is both a physical and spiritual being?

Answer: It means that God created us with bodies and spirits.

Mankind Was Created Male and Female

*So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.*

GENESIS 1:27

Humans were not only created with bodies and souls, but they were also created “*male and female*.” When Scripture tells us that God created humans male and female, it is pointing out that there are differences between men and women.

God didn’t create men and women the same, and that is a good thing. Even though God created men and women differently, both are important, and both are equally valuable in God’s eyes.

The reason God made men and women differently is that He designed them for each other. After God created the animals and Adam, Scripture tells us that there was no one to live with and help Adam (Gen. 2:18). God saw that it was not good for Adam to be alone, so He designed and created Eve to help Adam and be with him.

Even though God created men and women differently, Scripture shows us that when men and women come together in marriage, their differences complement each other. To complement something is to make it better or to help it fulfill its purpose.

For example, think about the way a glove fits on your hand. The glove matches the way that your hand was designed so that it fits perfectly. Each finger has a hole to match it.

The gloves complement your hands because the gloves were designed for your hands. The gloves help you do the work you need to do, like pulling prickly weeds in the garden.

In a similar way, God created men and women with differences that complement each other. Like a glove that was designed for your hand,

God designed men and women for each other. God created woman as a helper for man (Gen. 2:18; 1 Cor. 11:9). When men and women come together in marriage, they can better fulfill the purposes that God created them for.

The way that God created men and women to complement each other shows us the great wisdom of God. He knows us best, and He knows what is best for us because He formed us in our mothers' wombs (Ps. 139:13). Whenever you see differences between men and women, remember that God created them differently, and praise Him for His wisdom!



Prayer: Our wise God, thank You for showing Your wisdom in the way You created humans male and female. We praise You for creating us male and female. Thank You for creating men and women differently but designing us for each other. Please give us strength to live according to the way You have designed us. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

Song: *Doxology* (SH 334)

Hymn: *Blest the Man That Feels Jehovah*, verses 1–2

Blest the man that fears Jehovah,
Walking ever in His ways;
By thy toil thou shalt be prospered
And be happy all thy days.
In thy wife thou shalt have gladness,
She shall fill thy home with good,
Happy in her loving service
And the joys of motherhood.

Theology Question 3: How did God create mankind?

Answer: God created mankind male and female.

Mankind Was Created in the Image of God

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . ."

*So God created man in his own image, in the image
of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

GENESIS 1:26-27

God created humans in His image and likeness. That means we were created to be like God. We were created to reflect Him. Think about looking into a mirror. When you look into a mirror, you see an image of yourself. You aren't in the mirror, but the mirror reflects who you are. In a similar way to how a mirror reflects your image, God created us to reflect Him.

Because humans were created in the image of God, they are different than the rest of creation. God displayed much of who He is through His creation of the world and everything in it. Romans 1:20 tells us that we can see God's *"eternal power and divine nature"* through the things He has made.

But humans are different. God created them specifically to reflect who He is. This sets humans apart in the eyes of God from everything else He has created.

Because humans are made in the image of God, they are more valuable and precious in God's sight than the rest of creation. Because God created you in His image, you are valuable in God's sight. Every other human has the same value that you do because we were all created in the likeness of God.

Knowing this should impact the way we view ourselves and the people around us. Because other humans were created in the image of God, we should value their lives and seek to treat them with respect. Knowing that we were created in the image of God helps us to understand why we exist and how God wants us live.