

# Foundations Theological Training Course

## Week 4 – Humanity & Sin

*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 and crowned him with glory and honor. (Psalm 8:4-5)*

## 1) Why did God create man?

God did not **need** to create man; nevertheless, He created us for His own glory.

- God did not create us because He was **lonely** or needed **companionship**.
- God did not create us because He needed to be **worshipped** or had any other **unmet needs**.
- God created us for His own **glory**.

*...everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made. (Isaiah 43:7)*

*So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31)*

*...whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:11)*

*What is the chief end of man? Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.*

--□--□ *Westminster Shorter Catechism*

*"It's not about you."*

—□ *Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Life*

**God created us for a specific purpose.**

- To fulfill His **Cultural Mandate**
  - To be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth [bring forth godly offspring]
  - To manage and cultivate the earth in order to live off of it and sustain it [i.e. To utilize and be a steward of God's creation]

*Then 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 birds of the heavens and over the livestock and 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. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "**Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion** over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:26-28)*

*...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)*

*The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden **to work it and keep it.** (Genesis 2:15)*

- To fulfill the **Great Commission**

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. (Matthew 28: 19,20)*

*Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:20)*

- To live in fellowship with Him and share in His **glory**

*To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27)*

*...I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. (John 10:10)*

## **2) What does it mean that we are made in the image of God?**

### **The “image of God” (Imago Dei) defined:**

*The fact that man is in the image of God means that man is like God and represents God. (Grudem, Systematic Theology)*

*Then 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 birds of the heavens and over the livestock and 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. (Genesis 1:26,27)*

### **Nine\* specific aspects of our likeness to God:**

1. Personality – we are individual beings with unique mannerisms, preferences, and self-consciousness
2. Eternality – we will exist into eternity

3. Relationality – we have the capacity and drive for relationships with others and with God
4. Volitionality – we have the freedom and ability to make choices according to our will
5. Rationality – we have the capacity to think and reason and entertain abstract ideas and concepts
6. Spirituality – we have an immaterial spirit capable of relating to God through the spiritual dimension of prayer
7. Physicality – unlike God, we have material capacity (God is spirit), but the physical part of our essences reflects characteristics of God, such as his capacity to see and hear
8. Morality – we have an inner sense of right and wrong, an inner moral conscience that reflects God’s laws that are written in our heart
9. Dominionality – we have been given authority to rule over creation

Attribute*	God	Man	Animal
Personality	Yes	Yes	Some
Eternality	Yes	Yes	No
Relationality	Yes	Yes	Some
Volitionality	Yes	Yes	Maybe
Rationality	Yes	Yes	Some
Spirituality	Yes	Yes	No
Physicality	No	Yes	Yes
Morality	Yes	Yes	No
Dominionality	Yes	Yes	Some

\*Source: Credo House Ministries. *Theology*.

### 3) How were we affected by the fall?

As a result of the fall, the image of God within us is not lost, but it is now marred.

*Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image. (Genesis 9:6)*

Attribute*	Fully retained	Distorted	Fully lost
Personality	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Eternality	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Relationality		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Volitionality		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Rationality		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Spirituality		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Physicality		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Morality		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dominionality		<input type="checkbox"/>	

\*Source: Credo House Ministries. *Theology*.

### 4) What does it mean that we are dead?

*Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned— (Romans 5:12)*

*So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. (Romans 5:18,19)*

*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)*

### **Important terms\*:**

**Original Sin:** A broad term that refers to the effects that the first sin had on humanity or to the "origin" of sin.

**Imputed Sin:** Specifically refers to the guilt or condemnation of the first sin, which was imputed to humanity. (Also: original guilt)

**Inherited Sin:** Specifically refers to the transferal of the sinful nature. (Also: original corruption, original pollution, sinful nature)

**Personal Sin:** Specifically refers to the sins that are committed by individuals.

### **Three primary views\* on original sin and its consequences for humanity:**

#### 1. **Pelagianism:**

- Man is inherently good, or at worst neutral, and able to choose equally between good and evil.
- The Fall did not bring condemnation upon any but Adam.
- The disposition of the will is unaffected -- man is born like Adam with the same ability to choose between good and evil.
- Man sins as a result of bad examples that began with Adam.
- Adherents: Those generally considered theologically liberal

#### 2. **Arminianism:**

- Man is inherently corrupt.
- However, the Fall did not bring condemnation upon any but Adam.
- The disposition of the will is corrupted so that man has an inclination to sin, but God gives man prevenient grace to correct the sinful disposition.
- Now man is like Adam in the Garden, able to choose good or evil.
- Adherents: Roman Catholics, Methodists, Church of God, most Pentecostals

3. **Augustinianism/Calvinism:**

- Man is inherently corrupt.
- The Fall brought condemnation and guilt upon all men.
- The disposition of the will is totally corrupted and inclined toward evil. Man is unable to choose good without God’s sovereign grace.
- Man has free will, but that will is governed by his sinful nature. Man sins, therefore, because he is a sinner.
- Adherents: Luther, Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, R.C. Sproul, Charles Ryrie

<b>*View</b>	<b>Relation to Adam’s sin</b>	<b>Relation to Parent’s sin</b>	<b>Free will</b>
Pelagianism	Bad example	Bad example	Yes
Arminianism	Imputed sin: mediated through our own sin	Inherited sin: mediated through parents	Yes, restored by prevenient grace
Augustinianism/Calvinism	Imputed sin: immediate	Inherited sin: mediated through parents	Yes, but limited by our evil nature

**\*Source:** Credo House Ministries. *Theology*.

**Conclusion:**

*The effects of sin are extensive, both on the human race overall and on individuals in particular (Rom. 3:23). The entire human race is fallen and irredeemable, except by God’s grace (Titus 3:5-7; Eph. 2:8-9). Furthermore, each individual is totally depraved, for sin has extended to every part of his being. He is a fallen person, including mind, emotions, will, and body. While this depravity, however, does not mean that everyone is as evil as they are able to be, it does mean that they are not as good as they need to be. Hence, God’s grace is the only force in the universe that can overcome the natural irredeemability of human beings. “Grace alone” (Lat: sola gratia) is the only cure for humankind’s total depravity. Grace, and only grace, can overcome the vast and devastating effects of sin (Titus 2:11-13). ¶ Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology in One Volume**

## 5) How do you reconcile predestination and free will, since both concepts seem to be taught in the Bible?

*For everyone except extreme Calvinists who deny free will in this matter, or extreme Arminians, who deny God's infallible foreknowledge, there is a seeming paradox between God's predetermination and human free choice. -- Norman Geisler, Systematic Theology in One Volume*

### Some verses that support **predestination**:

*All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. (Matthew 11:27)*

*I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. (John 17:9)*

*For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. (Romans 8:29,30)*

*But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?" Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— (Romans 9:20-23)*

*Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. (Ephesians 1:4-6)*

*In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:11-12)*

*...And by implication from numerous verses that state that He created all thing, knows all things, and is sovereign over all things.*

### Some verses that emphasize **free choice**:

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned,... (John 3:16-18)*

*The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)*

*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. (Revelation 3:20)*

**If God is truly sovereign, how can man have free will, and if man has no capacity for free choice, how can a just God condemn him to spend eternity in hell?**

**Some additional thoughts to consider...**

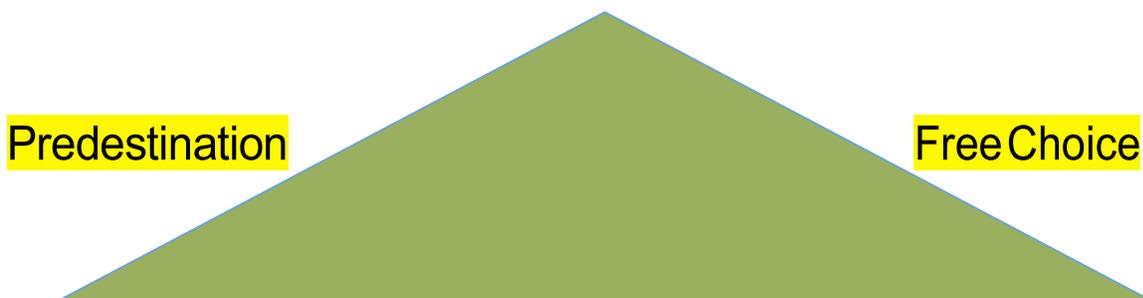
1. We perceive the world through limited knowledge and highly finite understanding.

*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8,9)*

2. If God created us for His own glory, it is doubtful that He would feel glorified by the worship of a robot that was programmed to love him.

**Some illustrations that may be helpful...**

1. God knows all things; we only know what we have been told or otherwise experience or believe to be true.



2. God is outside of space, and therefore He sees everything at once (Example of a car crash that is being watched from a helicopter).
3. God is outside of time, and, therefore, foreknowledge is not the same to Him as it is to us. So, the same event can be both determined and free at the same time, without any contradiction (Example of horse races on T.V.)

4. Consider the argument below, based on God's omniscience\*:
- God is all-knowing.
  - An all-knowing Being knows everything, including the future.
  - What an all-knowing Being knows will come to pass – it must come to pass. (If it did not, then God would have been wrong about what He foreknew. An all-knowing God, however, cannot be wrong about anything He knows.)
  - God knows all future free acts.
  - Therefore, these free acts must come to pass. (If they didn't, then an all-knowing God would have been wrong.)
  - But what must come to pass is determined.
  - Therefore, our free acts are determined by God.

\*Source: Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology in One Volume*

### **Some concluding thoughts...**

- It's really not about us, but about God.  
*"It's not about you."*  
*Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Life*
- If God were small enough for me to understand Him and put Him in a box, it is likely that He would not be big enough to command my worship and awe.
- I think of this debate much the same way I think of the debate of the age of the universe and the 6 days of creation – there is a way that my mind tells me that it should be, which may be correct and may not be correct. But we serve an All-mighty God who is not constrained by our feeble understanding.

## **6) What does Foundations Church believe about man's condition?**

### **The Human Condition**

We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His own Image and that they were tempted by Satan and fell into sin. Because of the sin of Adam, all human beings are sinners, both by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and subject to His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can man be redeemed and restored to good standing with God.

## **7) Discussion Questions:**

1. What degree of freedom of choice do the unbelievers whom you know actually have? Apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, do you think that they are capable of desiring God above the other things they value and turning to Him?
2. Do you feel that most Christians today have a healthy respect for the sovereignty of God?
3. Do you think that God would feel glorified by programmed worship, and how does that shape your thoughts on free choice?
4. What are the spiritual hazards of extreme views either of predestination or free choice?
5. How has this discussion shaped your thoughts about God's grace?