

Toward Understanding Ourselves as a Christian

Lesson # II -- Understanding Ourselves from the Perspective of Creation.

Introduction

- A. We know from the Bible, as well as science, the power of truth and error. One of the most important truths that we must know, if we are to be successful Christians, is to understand the truth about ourselves.
- B. Many of our problems, failures, and sins are largely due to a misunderstanding of the kind of person we are. And, we cannot solve this problem by looking at ourselves, nor by investigating our feelings. The Bible is our only authority.

I. We have been Created in the Image of God -- as a Person.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them. Gen 1:27

- A. As a person God has given to us great abilities and responsibilities.
  - 1. We possess self-consciousness and self-determination with the ability and freedom to make profound powerful decisions. As an individual we have clearly defined boundries and rights.
  - 2. Our worth and rights are reflected in the persons of Adam and Eve. They had the following rights given to them by God. (They also belong to us).

Gen 1:27 -- the right to know they were created by God.  
Gen 1:28 -- the right to be fruitful and have dominion.  
Gen 1:29,30 -- the right to have needs and have the needs met.  
Gen 1:31 -- the right to know that they were created good.  
Gen 2:7 -- the right to be alive and a entity separate from all else.  
Gen 2:15 -- the right to work, make decisions, assume responsibility.  
Gen 2:16 -- the right to hear God and the freedom to obey Him.  
Gen 2:17 -- the right to choose to obey or disobey God.  
Gen 2:18 -- the right to companionship, acceptance, and equality.  
Gen 2:19,20 -- the right to cooperate with God, to be treated with respect.  
Gen 2:21-24 -- the right to love, to be loved, to enjoy intimacy.  
Gen 2:25 -- the right to be unashamed and to enjoy dignity.  
Gen 3:8 -- the right to have fellowsip with God.  
Gen 3:9,10 -- the right to be heard when they spoke.  
Gen 3:15,21 -- the right to receive redemption as given by God.

B. Because we have been created by God as a person --

- 1. We may not look upon ourselves as a thing -- without rights.
- 2. We may not refuse our rights and responsibilities without dire consequences.
- 3. We may not demand our rights but have been commanded to give these right to one another in the context of love.
- 4. While perhaps never treated as a person, we can be assured that God understands our personhood, and gives us our created rights.

II. We have been Created in the Image of God -- as a Spiritual Person.

- A. By "spiritual" I am referring to the kind of a person we are -- the quality of our personhood.
1. We are basically spirit -- not primarily mind, or will, or emotions, or body, or a social creature.
  2. As spirit we were created to know God, to be able to hear Him, understand Him, ourselves and the universe, to receive His love and love Him, to obey Him, worship Him, and glorify Him.
  3. Our greatest potential and value is found in the spiritual. God made us "for Himself" (Is 43:21).
- B. Because we are spiritual, all the values, understanding and development related to mind, will, emotions, body, and social relationships can never bring us fulfillment. God made us so only He can satisfy us through loving fellowship and obedience. Jer 2:13; 9:23,24; Matt 11:28-30

III. We have been Created in the Image of God -- as a Spiritual Person of Great Ability, Potential, and Responsibility.

- A. We have great rational functions: to know truth, draw conclusions, develop principles, integrate and interpret life, and glorify God by exercising our rights to have dominion.
- B. We have great moral functions: we know right and wrong, and can make personal choices of profound consequence. God wrote His law on our hearts. Rom 2:14,15
- C. We have great emotional functions: we can understand and express such feelings as love, hate, fear, courage, joy, grief etc. God made us to feel very deeply about both good and bad.
- D. We have great volitional functions: we can make personal choices, even making choices to disobey God. He has chosen to respect our free will. We are held responsible for our choices.
- C. We have great social functions: we can relate to one another in fellowship, develop relationships, unite for common goals and pleasures, and contribute to the well-being of one another. We can find fulfillment in loving and being loved.
- D. We have great physical functions: we can unite much of our potential in acts that develop beauty, value, benefit, pleasure, protection, and dominion over living creatures and life itself.
- E. We have great representative functions: we have been given the office of prophet to speak God's truth, of priest to dispense God's grace, and of king to rule for God. The goal of our office is to glorify Him. Is 43:7

Conclusion:

- A. Summary: The priority in life is on the spiritual.
- B. Question: How are you treating yourself?

Recommended Assignment (Preparation for the Next Lesson)

Monday: Read Romans 1:21. State what is said to have been a contributing factor as to why Adam and Eve sinned against God. \_\_\_\_\_

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Tuesday: Read Romans 1:21-32. List the effects of the Fall. \_\_\_\_\_

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Wednesday: Read Genesis 3:1-6. In what three areas of life did Satan appeal to Eve?

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Thursday: Read I John 2:15-17. List the ways in which people are tempted today.

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Friday: Read Gal 1:4; 2:20. Explain why the believer can resist temptation. \_\_\_\_\_

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Saturday: Read Eph 4:17-24. Explain how the believer is to resist temptation.

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