

Toward Understanding Ourselves as a Christian

Lesson # III -- Understanding Ourselves from the Perspective of the Fall.

Introduction

- A. In considering the greatness of our creation we are led to agree with the Psalmist in his statement in Psalm 139:14.

I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.

- B. It is overwhelming to realize that we have been created by God, in His image, to have fellowship with Him, to represent Him, and to glorify Him by having dominion over the universe. The implications stagger our imagination.
- C. As we look at ourselves and the world today we cry out, "What has happened to us?" We are creatures of sickness and death, selfishness and sensuality, hatred and violence, weakness and pride -- and yet all the while conscious of a lost greatness and aware of a deep loneliness.
- D. The answer is found in the Bible: we are fallen people. We have turned away from our Creator Who was the very source of life and of all good. The effects of our choice are seen in our death, depravity, selfishness, and pride.

I. The Biblical Position Stated.

- A. The representative position of Adam.

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

1. God, in His infinite wisdom, created the human race in our first parents. Adam was placed in a probationary position whereby he represented whole human race. When he chose to sin -- the entire race fell in him.
2. Today we are born into the world with all of the effects of that Fall.

- B. The immediate effects of the Fall.

1. Shame and fear. Gen 3:7,10
2. Loss of fellowship. Gen 3:8-10
3. Hiding from God, Gen 3:8-10
4. Perverting truth, Gen 3:11-14
5. Cursing the serpent, Gen 3:14
6. Bearing children in sorrow, Gen 3:16
7. Women subject to men, Gen 3:16
8. Cursing the ground, Gen 3:17-19
9. Sentence of physical death, Gen 3:19
10. Expulsion from Eden, Gen 3:24

## II. The Biblical Position Explained.

### A. The Fall produced a state of alienation from God.

1. We are now guilty before God -- transgressors of His will.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Rom 3:23

- a. The word "sinned" means "missing the mark." We failed to glorify God.
- b. The thought here is referring to all we do. We are now sinners in every thought, desire, word, and deed. Our state is one of hopelessness.

2. We are now unrighteous before God -- defaulters before His will.

As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one. Rom 3:10

- a. By disobedience we lost our state of innocency/acceptance before God.
- b. Becoming unrighteous meant there was nothing we could do to regain it.

3. We are now separated from God -- deprived of many spiritual benefits.

Without Christ, ... aliens from Israel, ... strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. Eph 2:12

- a. Separation from God caused meaninglessness and disappointment. Jer 2:13
- b. Choosing to live apart from God brought enslavement by Satan. John 8:44

### B. The Fall produced a state of alienation from ourselves.

For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving different lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. Titus 3:3

1. Instead of loving and accepting ourselves as God intended, we now vacillate between making ourselves and idol through self-love or an enemy through hatred. Whatever the case, we are basically self-centered.
2. Instead of intuitively seeking God and good, we now are self-seeking and finding it much easier to believe error and do evil.

### C. The Fall produced a state of alienation from one another.

...Hating one another. Titus 3:3

1. While on a cultural level we can be loving and kind, personally we are suspicious, jealous, and manipulative of one another.
2. Our self-centeredness leads to the opposite of love -- we "use" one another.

### D. The Fall produced a state of alienation from the Kosmos, Gen 3:17-19

Victor Matthews

Recommended Assignment (Preparation for the Next Lesson)

Monday: Read Psalm 19. From Vs 1-6 state what we know from observing creation.

\_\_\_\_\_

From Vs 7-14 state what we learn from the Bible. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tuesday: Read Rom 1:18-20. State how the natural man responds to the truths seen in creation. \_\_\_\_\_

Why is mankind without excuse? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Wednesday: Read Rom 2:14,15. What function does a person possess due to creation?

\_\_\_\_\_

How are we aware of this function? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thursday: Read Isaiah 8:19,20. What was the authority for faith and action in the Old Testament days? \_\_\_\_\_

Friday: Read Heb 1:1-3; 2:1-3. How did God make Himself known in the New Testament days?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Saturday: Read II Tim 3:16,17. How does God describe the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_