

Systematic Theology – “Thinking God’s Thoughts After Him” Class 7 – The Creation of Mankind

2024–2025

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I. Hello...and Catechism Quiz (Questions 14, 15, or 16)

Writing assignment: What are key things we need to understand about mankind?

II. The Special Creation of Mankind in the Garden

- A. The verb “create” (*bārah*) in Gen 1:1, 21, 27 (also Gen 2:3–4).
- B. Man is created last
- C. Man is created following “a solemn divine counsel” in Gen 1:26.³²
- D. Man is made in the image of God.
 1. An image is LIKE something (photograph).
 2. An image is UNLIKE something (it’s only a photograph!).

III. Man in the Image of God

- A. **Our Soul—the non-physical part of us—that is “the principle of life”³³ in us.**

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. (Gen 2:7)

- B. **The Abilities of Our Soul—emotions, thinking, determining. This is what the Bible calls our “heart.”**

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. (Prov 4:23)

³² Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 182.

³³ Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: God and Creation*, 2:555.

- C. **Our Virtues**—the “knowledge, righteousness, and holiness” we had when we first created. Not morally neutral beings but an original righteousness that gave us “knowledge in the mind, righteousness in the will, holiness in the heart.”³⁴
- D. **Our Body**—Just as God’s being is expressed in his Creation and he accomplishes his work using the means of the Creation (Ps 19:1), so our bodies reflect our soul and our bodies enable us to “be fruitful and multiply” and to exercise dominion over the creation (Gen 1:28).
- E. **Our Home in Paradise**— The way pre-fallen man lives in paradise and fallen man must live in a cursed world images the way our holy God dwells in a realm of holiness and glory.
- F. **Our Relationships**—We were made “male and female” even to become “one flesh,” reflecting our God who is Three-in-One.
- G. **Our Dominion**—God called humanity to have dominion (Gen 1:28), something that reflects our God who is King and Lord over all things.

Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle! (Ps 24:8)

- H. **Our Sonship**—A final idea to consider is that being made in God’s image is a reminder that we are God’s children. Just as Seth was made in Adam’s “image,” so this is true of us:

When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. (Gen 5:3)

- I. **Is there anything else YOU would include? Ways you are LIKE God and yet UNLIKE God**

IV. **Man is Made for the Glory of God**

“I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Do not withhold; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, ⁷ everyone who is called

³⁴ Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: God and Creation*, 2:557–58.

by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.” (Isa 43:6-7)

V. Man is Made with a Body and a Soul

We know this from our creation:

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. (Gen 2:7)

And we know this from the intermediate state (the state between our physical death and the future resurrection):

And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43)

VI. Man is Made 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. (Gen 1:27)

Adam and Eve are that “male and female.” There are two and only two sexes. You are one or the other.

Sex is a biological, physical, reality that is true of us from conception. It cannot be changed.

What about “gender”? Gender is a different category. Gender touches on what our sex means? What does it mean to be a man in our day? What does it mean to be a woman in our day?

In the Bible, it means something to be a man and a woman. That’s why we have commands like, “Act like men” (1 Cor 16:13). When Isaiah prophesies against Egypt, he says they will one day “be like women, and tremble with fear” (Isa 19:16). Courage and manhood are to go together.

We can differences in the way man and woman are created. Man created directly from God out of dust to work in the Garden. Woman is created *from the man* and *for the man* as his helpmate.

Both are given the command to “be fruitful and multiply” and “have dominion” and are “blessed” in this (Gen 1:28). And yet, their roles in this endeavor will differ.

We tried to capture these ideas in the *Trinity Catechism*:

Q14. How did God create us?

A. God created us male and female after his own image in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. He gave us an immortal soul and dominion over the creatures. We are each either a man or a woman according to his good purposes for us. (Gen 1:26–28; 2:7–8, 15–18, 21–23; Col 3:10; Eph 4:24; Rom 2:14–15; Eccl 7:29; Matt 10:28)

Q15. What does it mean to be a man?

A. A man is created a biological male by God to work, cultivate, and keep what is entrusted to him. Spiritually, he is a son, brother, and father; and these are potentially true in his body as well. (Gen 2:7–8, 15, 24; 1 Cor 16:13; Eph 6:4; Phil 2:22; 1 Tim 5:1; 1 Cor 11:3, 8–9)

Q16. What does it mean to be a woman?

A. A woman is created a biological female by God to help, nurture, and bring life to those given to her. Spiritually, she is a daughter, sister, and mother; and these are potentially true in her body as well. (Gen 2:18, 21, 23–24; 3:20; Rom 16:13; 1 Tim 5:2)

*Trinity Catechism*³⁵

Note the parts of the definitions in Q15–16:

1. We are created distinct from conception: “A man/woman is created a biological male/female by God”
2. We are created with a God-given vocation (calling):
 - a) Man: “created...by God to work cultivate, and keep what is entrusted to him”
 - b) Woman: “created...by God to help, nurture, and bring life to those given to her”
3. We are created with a God-given ontology/essence:
 - a) “Spiritually, he is a son, brother, and father” (Acts 17:29; 1 Tim 5:1–2; Rom 12:10)

³⁵ *The Trinity Catechism* (Trinity Fellowship Press, 2022).

- b) “Spiritually, she is a daughter, sister, and mother” (Acts 17:29; 1 Tim 5:1–2; Miriam to Moses in Exod 2:4–7; Mary and Martha in John 11; Rom 16:13)
4. We are created with God-given *potential* in our bodies:
- a) “These are potentially true in his body as well.”—becoming a physical brother and father (of course, he is automatically a son!).
 - b) “These are potentially true in her body as well”—becoming a physical sister and mother.

VII. Mankind is Made of One Race

We are one race:

And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place. (Acts 17:26)

That’s why Christians MUST never give in to racism, the sin of thinking one race is superior to another or inferior to another. It is a sinful partiality (James 2:1–10).

We all came from the same parents. We’re ALL COUSINS!

VIII. Conclusion

“You come of the Lord Adam and the Lady Eve,” said Aslan. “And that is both honor enough to erect the head of the poorest beggar, and shame enough to bow the shoulders of the greatest emperor on earth. Be content.”

C.S. Lewis, *Prince Caspian*