

Volume I - Chapter 5

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Mankind

The greatest truth of the Bible is that God is reproducing Himself through mankind. Hence, humanity's goal and purpose for existence is, ultimately, to enter God's family and to become literal sons of God. Human beings are physical beings with no inherent immortality, but they can receive eternal life as a free gift from God. Man was created by God to be wholly flesh and blood, yet in God's image and with a spiritual component added to his brain to create the human mind.

Mankind

To understand that God is reproducing Himself through mankind is absolutely essential for understanding the nature of man.

Solomon makes the point clear: "For man's fate is a beast's fate, one fate befalls them both; as the one dies so the other dies, the same breath is in them

David was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), the eternal king of Israel (Ezekiel 37:24); yet Peter stated that "David...is both dead and buried, ...is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts 2:29, 34).

The fact that human beings were made with the potential and the destiny of entering God's family as His literal children and thereby actually sharing His God-level plane of existence is fundamental to our knowledge of who and what we are.

Man was created as a physical being, a "living soul" (Genesis 2:7). The English word "soul" is translated from the Hebrew word *nephesh* and simply means a "living, breathing creature." The same word is used in reference to all "breath-bearing life" (which is a good working definition of *nephesh*—animal as well as human life. *Nephesh* refers to animals in Genesis 1:20, 21, 24; 2:19; 9:10; 12, 15 (where it is translated "creature").

The Greek equivalent of *nephesh* is *pseuche*, which also literally means "breath," animal as well as human (Revelation 8:9; 16:3). Thus, the biblical "soul" is just the physical life of man and beast—man and beast alike.

Nephesh is also used to represent "dead bodies"—dead *nepheshes* or "dead souls" (Leviticus 21:1, 11; Numbers 6: 6, 11). The biblical "soul" then can simply become the "body," and when it dies, it dies all over. thus man is a living soul which lives and dies as does any animal soul; therefore, man neither has, nor is, an "immortal soul."

- Ezekiel twice states "the soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4, 20).
- Jesus proclaimed that both the body and the soul can be destroyed in hell (Matthew 10:28).
- John agreed: "no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (I John 3:15).
- Paul concurred: "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).
- Psalm 146:4 "breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in the very day his thoughts perish.
- Ecclesiastes 9:5 "the dead know not any thing".

The spirit in man, is that essence which imparts human mind power to physical brain tissue. Man exercises his promised "dominion" over all other creatures (Genesis 1:26).

Paul confirms that this "spirit of man" is "in him" (I Corinthians 2:11). This does not say that man is a spirit, but rather that this "spirit" is located in the man.

Physical life provides the arena for man to learn the object lessons necessary to become like God in character. This kind of character can be developed only through time and experience.

God did not create man with an intrinsically evil nature but rather with free choice, and subject to the influences of both good and evil.

Antidote to Satan's broadcast—the remedy required to change the heart of man—is God's Holy Spirit.

Although man and animals have identically mortal "souls," man has been created superior to animals in a number of important respects.

- God shows that man was made in His own "image" and "likeness" (Genesis 1:26) and therefore carries the general appearance of God, unlike animals who are simply made "after their kind."
- God has given "the spirit of man" to humans. This "spirit in man," a nonphysical component which God designed to combine with the human brain to form the human mind, is the primary factor which distinguishes man from animals, elevating man's mental capacity from the wholly physical to the spiritual.

Here is one way of explaining that man is not a spirit, but rather that this "spirit" is located in the man.

- If a man swallows a marble, that marble would be in him, but does that then make the man a marble? The man may have "lost his marbles," but he is surely not a marble himself.

Man was created physical, mortal and limited so that God could work with and prepare him for his ultimate destiny. God's moral character is self-determined by His own free choice. If man is to be like Him and share eternity on His level, he must also be free to make his own decisions and thus to build his own character.

- The Bible states that when God created man, He "saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). Man was not created with an evil nature (Ecclesiastes 7:29). One might say man was created morally neutral so that he could develop moral character through experiencing life.
- Romans 8:7 "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."
- Jeremiah 17:9 "man's heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

God wants us to learn that we desperately need His Holy Spirit in order to have our minds and hearts converted, to have our whole direction of life changed to follow God's way.

Although the negative or evil side of man must be dealt with, the Church of God chooses to focus on the positive and awesome potential of mankind. Through God's grace and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, man can be forgiven of his wrong choices and sins. God in his infinite love and wisdom has provided a plan by which man can, as a free moral agent, gain the experience and character necessary to receive eternal life.

Here is God's plan of salvation for mankind;

God's purpose is to put "all things"—everything—including the whole universe, under man (Hebrews 2:8).

- God first calls us by opening our minds to His truth, leading us to recognize our wretched, sinful state, cut off from God.
- Upon our heartfelt repentance and sincere acceptance of Jesus Christ as our Saviour, God enables us through baptism and the laying on of hands to receive His Spirit.
- Through God's Spirit man can have the fellowship and communion with God that is so important to personal growth.

Jesus Christ said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Although the ultimate purpose of human life is to be fulfilled at the resurrection, God does not neglect the present physical life. Indeed the fulfillment, abundance, happiness and success of this human life are an integral part of God's plan. The entirety of the book of Proverbs is filled with instructions and exhortations explaining how men, women and children should act in order to achieve the maximum success in their lives.

Lesson 1

Adam And Eve Created

Bible Story:
Genesis 1:26-31, 2:7, 8, 15,
18-23

Focus:

- God created Adam and Eve with love and care.

Purpose:

- To know that man was created in the image of God.
- To be thankful that our Creator is loving.
- To want to love and obey the God who made us.

Memory Verse:

- Genesis 1:27 “So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

Generate Interest

Read Psalm 139:14.

We are wonderfully made.

We are wonderfully made. God created us with five senses. Can you name them?

- Seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching.

When someone loses one of their senses, often times the other senses become more keen. This is because they rely on and use the senses they have. Use the example of someone who is blind. They will pay more attention to the noises around them and to their sense of touch.

Is there anyone just like you?

Identical twins are not exactly alike. One way to prove this is by comparing fingerprints.

Everyone, even twins, have their own fingerprints.

- Have your child put ink on their finger and then make a fingerprint on a piece of paper.

Each person God has made is a special person.

- Have other members of the family do the same.
- While you may be from the same family, everyone's fingerprints are different.

Who was Adam?

Adam was the first man created by God. The word "adam" means red earth. Adam was put in charge of all the animal life. He lived in the garden of Eden.

Who was Eve?

Read The Bible Story

Read:
Genesis 1:26-31.

"Then God said, "Let Us make man in our image, according to Our likeness..."

It was with love, care, and thoughtfulness that God created Adam and Eve.

- The image of God, what does that mean?
- It means that we are a special creation. We have the shape and form of God. We can think, God thinks. We can feel, God feels. We can love, God loves. God has created us to have the ability to be creative, the freedom to make choices, and the ability to reason.

Psalm 8:4-8

God gave us the authority over the animals (Genesis 2:20).

God has perfect love
(I John 4:8).

God loved Adam and Eve so much that He created a beautiful garden especially for them. Adam's first assignment by God was to tend the garden (Genesis 2:15).

Adam was alone, so God created Eve
(Genesis 2:21).

God supplied their every need, and He supplies our every needs. The food that grew in this garden of Eden was delicious.

Adam and Eve did not get sick. They could not get sick because there was no sin. Life in the garden of Eden must have been wonderful.

Talk It Over

After studying the creation of Adam and Eve, your child should know and understand the following:

- God carefully and lovingly created man.
- The first man was Adam. What does the word 'adam' mean?
- The first woman was Eve. When God caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep, He took what from Adam?
- Does this mean that all men are missing one of their ribs?
- What does image mean?
- What does dominion mean?
- Was the garden of Eden a beautiful place?

Have fun discussing with your child how beautiful, peaceful and good everything was that God created. After all, God did give us the ability to imagine. Now enjoy that gift with your child.

Lesson 2

Adam & Eve Disobey

Bible Story:

Genesis 2:9, 16, 17, 3:1-24

Focus:

- Adam and Eve make the wrong choice.

Purpose:

- To know that all have sinned.
- When we sin we should feel sorry.

Memory Verse:

- Romans 3:23 "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God".

Additional Reading For Parent:

- Romans 5:12-21 All have sinned in Adam.

Important Concept:

When we make wrong choices, we not only hurt ourselves, we hurt others.

Adam was created in the image of God. Adam made the wrong choice and sinned. Now the image of God was twisted. Man was now ruled by death. What did Adam pass on to humanity? Death. Reread verse 12.

Generate Interest

Words and their definitions we should know.

Sin	Wrongdoing. Criminal acts against God's Law.
Temptation	Entice to do wrong.
Lucifer/Satan	When God created Lucifer, he was an angel that was beautiful. Lucifer rebelled against God, his name is now Satan.
Man	The only creature God created in His Image.
Command	Order given by God.

Synopsis

As we now know, God created the world, all that is in the world, all that is around the world, and He created man. We have learned that God placed Adam and Eve in a beautiful garden which was called Eden. God provided for their every need and want. Satan arrived in the garden and tempted them with something God told them was forbidden.

Read the Bible Story

Once again, take time for discussion. There are many points of interest you can bring out while telling this true story. Or you can discuss the story as you read it. Here are some examples for you to use:

- How beautiful the garden of Eden must have been that Adam and Eve enjoyed.
- The wild animals we are afraid of today, Adam and Eve were not afraid of. Why? Because God gave them rule over the animals.
- Think about why God gave the command, "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat..."
- When God created us, He gave us the ability to make choices. When we choose to obey God, we are expressing our love for Him, and it is a way of praising Him.
- Do you think Satan was happy about Adam and Eve obeying God? Do you think Satan was jealous of them? If he was jealous, why?

Reread Genesis 2:17.

Satan's strategies are evil.
God's motives are good.

- It is interesting to make note of Satan's strategies:

1. Satan went to Eve when she was not with Adam.
2. Satan put doubt in Eve's mind about God's motives.

Genesis 3:4

Older children will understand
"Situation Ethics"
If not, you could explain.
Doing wrong to bring about
something good is not correct.

God desires that we willingly
obey Him.

Don't be like Adam and Eve.
When you are guilty of wrong,
admit to your guilt.

Darkest hour of human history
is when Adam and Eve sinned.

Now grace will abound.

Romans 5:20 "...But where sin
abounded, grace abounded
much more.

3. Satan accused God of lying. How BOLD of Satan.

4. What was Satan's FOCUS? Eve believed Satan. She believed that disobeying God was a good means to an end.

5. Finally, did Satan show Eve an ugly piece of fruit? No!! He used Eve's sense of seeing. It was a piece of fruit that was "pleasant to the eyes."

- Adam and Eve exercised their ability to make a choice. Yes, they did know the difference between obeying God and disobeying God. After disobeying God, they had personal experience with sin.
- God, on the other hand, does not have to experience evil to know evil.

In conclusion, Adam and Eve became sinners. Everyone has sinned. We could say that Adam and Eve passed the "buck" of responsibility for their actions. Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent.

Talk It Over

Assure your child that regardless of their sins, God is ready to forgive, and forget. God promised a Savior, God keeps His promises, Jesus came and died for our sins. Due to Jesus Christ's sacrifice, all people have the opportunity to become a member of God's family.

Lesson 3

The "Better" Proverbs

Bible Story:
The list of "Better" Proverbs

Focus:

- The book of Proverbs is a tool to help us live our lives skillfully.

Purpose:

- To have a desire for God's wisdom which is true, right and lasting.
- To understand that the book of Proverbs provides detailed instructions for everyday life.
- To know how awesome God is.
- To trust and respect God.

Memory Verses:

- Proverbs 1:7 "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction."
- Proverbs 3:5 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding."

Generate Interest

Who wrote the book of Proverbs?

The book of Proverbs was written by several wise men. The majority of the verses were either written by Solomon or collected by him. "Wisdom Literature" would be the best way to describe Proverbs.

Both the Hebrew and Greek call it "Proverbs of Solomon." In Latin, it is the "book of Proverbs." The rabbinical writings it is referred to as the "Book of Wisdom."

Important facts to know about the man who contributed the most to this book.

Who was King Solomon?

- He was the son of King David and Bathsheba.
- King Solomon had inherited a peaceful kingdom, thanks to his father who had fought many wars.
- Israel was a rich country under King Solomon.
- Solomon built the first temple for God.
- God given wisdom made Solomon famous.
- Solomon allowed his foreign wives to influence him in to worshipping their gods in addition to the one true God.

Proverbs

"Wisdom" is the key word in the book of Proverbs.

To live a godly life in an ungodly world is not easy. Teaching our children proverbs can help give them the tools they need to skillfully live their lives. The best way to study Proverbs is to choose a topic, and then find each of the Proverbs that deal with that topic. For the purpose of this lesson, however, I have chosen the Proverbs that all have the word "Better" in them. The reason for this is as follows:

Wisdom is associated with things that are excellent.

- The "Better" Proverbs cover a wide spectrum; such as integrity, morals, humility, friendship, kindness, goodness, self-control, love, and obedience.
- These verses are short, and easy to learn.

Choose one Proverb each week. At the breakfast table discuss how you will put that Proverb into practice. At the end of each day ask your child if they were able to apply that proverb during the day at all. Be sure you are ready to explain each proverb in a language your child will understand.

The "Better" Proverbs

- Proverbs 3:14
- Proverbs 8:11
- Proverbs 8:19
- Proverbs 12:9
- Proverbs 15:16
- Proverbs 15:17
- Proverbs 16:8
- Proverbs 16:16
- Proverbs 16:19
- Proverbs 16:32
- Proverbs 17:1
- Proverbs 19:1
- Proverbs 19:22
- Proverbs 21:9
- Proverbs 21:19
- Proverbs 22:1
- Proverbs 25:7
- Proverbs 25:24
- Proverbs 27:5
- Proverbs 27:10
- Proverbs 28:6