

A Biblical World View

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“In the beginning God...”

A question that has profound implications is, “What is truth?” This is a foundational question. The sure foundation is the revealed will of God, which has been recorded in an inspired way in the Bible. The special revelation of God (the Bible) is the only true source for such information! God has revealed what is necessary for our living in His world. This includes dealing with man when he is at cross purposes with God and creation. Every attempt to define truth is limited and corrupted by minds distorted by the fall. Such effects of the fall extend to the power of reasoning. All truth is God's truth, but the human understanding of what is true may not be accurate at all!

The first revealed words from God to man were informative of origin, *“In the beginning God created”* (Gen. 1:1). These words of God are at the point between time and eternity. It can be considered an aesthetic statement because it reveals origin, it also reveals that something entered time and space which is also a visible communication. One should think of God's creation in terms of perfect beauty. However, there was one primary restriction on this creation. The Hebrew word *“bara”* has a much more restricted view than our English word “create.” The Hebrew word for *“create”* was sanctified, which confined its use to describe a Divine work. This described creation in the true sense, for it was creation *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). However, any Christian view (or any accurate view) of any realm of thinking must begin at this point. This was also the place where cosmology of necessity originated. There will be more detail on cosmological considerations later.

God must be seen as the source of all things.

Where must man begin to understand who and what he is? To form a Christian estimate of man that estimate must be based on God and not man. God is the source of all knowledge and possibility. This is a Biblical concept. Cornelius Van Til (1969) stated in his *Christian Theory of Knowledge*,

The Protestant doctrine of God requires that ... if God is self-sufficient, he alone is self-explanatory. And if he alone is self-explanatory, then he must be the final reference point in all human prediction. He is then like the sun from which all lights on earth derive their power of illumination. You do not use a candle in order to search for the sun. So, the very idea of any fact in the universe is that it is derivative. God has created it. It cannot have come into existence by itself, or by chance. God himself is the source of all possibility, and, therefore, of all space-time factuality (p.12).

Van Til gave the true reply describing epistemology or “how we know.” Any model developed on biblical grounds must take into consideration that God is the starting point in our knowing.

The objective of this study is to note the foundation needed for the development of a sound basis for understanding. The Bible is the revelation of God, and man is God's creation thus that word is the proper source of a true theory of man and his personhood. Man in his present state needs help. What must be known and done to help him? What is foundational in order to develop a philosophy life? What is the goal of change in relation to a problematic person? The helping of man must be done in a way that is compatible to God's glory, will and creation. What are the norms that God has set in place?

PRESUPPOSITIONS

There is an element of faith involved in any approach to any field of knowledge. It is the presumed structure upon which one builds his views. In a sound Biblical understanding this structure is constructed on the revealed truth found in the Word of God.

First, there is the need to develop a world and life view. This is itself based on presuppositionalism. The Bible begins where all must begin. It begins where everyone must begin if they would have the correct knowledge or understanding of anything. Genesis 1:1 is the passage already mentioned. There God is introduced without apology or explanation. God must be believed or nothing else is intelligible in its proper perspective (Heb. 11:6). The Bible and the God of the Bible is the point of our inquiry into anything. Van Til wrote in his *Apologetics* (n.d.) regarding Scripture,

This view of Scripture, therefore, involves the idea that there is nothing in this universe on which human beings can have full and true information unless they take the Bible into account. We do not mean, of course, that one must go to the Bible rather than to the laboratory if one wishes to study the anatomy of the snake. But if one goes only to the laboratory and not also to the Bible one will not have a full or even true interpretation of the snake (p. 2).

The Bible is the source of our presupposition. "God is," and He has revealed Himself and His will. "In the beginning God" is where the foundation is fixed. Again, in the same book Van Til asserted,

The Christian religion ... has a definite bearing on scientific enterprise. Christianity claims to furnish the presuppositions without which a true scientific procedure is unintelligible. Chief of these presuppositions is the idea of God as expressed in the doctrine of the ontological (the argument from being) Trinity. In addition there are the doctrines of creation, of providence, and of God's ultimate plan with the universe. Christianity claims that the very aim and method of science require these doctrines as their prerequisites (p. 24).

It is the biblical view that the chief presupposition is the eternal person of God in triunity, and that this is necessary not only for scientific procedure, but also for conceptual thinking. Another reminder of this was given by Abraham Kuyper (1970),

The starting-point of every motive in religion is God and not man.... This is the fundamental conception of religion as maintained by Calvinism, and hitherto, no one has ever found a higher conception. For no higher conception *can* be found (p. 46).

God is the starting point of every motive, and this is the highest conception that can be found. Here is where any workable model must be built. At the beginning of all truth “lies the postulate that God is God—absolute and irresistible. It must be so. Without this we face a closed door; with it we have a key which unlocks every mystery” (Pink, 1975, p.5). Without this there is no order. It is every man for himself in the Darwinian sense. The means of communication is in conflict if God is not God, and all that has occurred is a fluke.

Presuppositionalism has been discussed, but what is the meaning of a world and life view or worldview? As has been noted God is (and has always been) and has revealed Himself through Scripture. It is true that Christianity is creedal, but now we note that it is behavioral. True Christianity holds to truth, but it also lives out that truth in every facet of life. The phrase “world and life view or world-view” has to do with the permeation of all of life with one’s religious faith in obedience to God’s revealed truth. It became couched in this type of terminology in Germany during the last century. James Orr (1897) lectured,

It is the word “Weltanschauung,” sometimes interchanged with another compound of the same signification, “Weltansicht.” Both words mean literally “view of the world,” but whereas the phrase in English is limited by associations which connect it predominately with physical nature, in German the word is not thus limited, but has almost the force of a technical term, denoting the widest view which the mind can take of things in the effort to grasp them together as a whole from the standpoint of some particular philosophy or theology. To speak, therefore, of a “Christian view of the world” implies that Christianity also has its highest point of view, and its view of life connected therewith, and that this, when developed, constitutes an ordered whole (p.3).

Everyone has a world and life view although they may not use that terminology. Biblical Christians have a view that is “... far broader than the narrow confessional interpretation would lead us to suppose” (Kuyper, 1970, p. 15). The Christian system as a whole in the place of being one kind of theory among the rest is in reality “... the higher truth which ... takes up the vitalizing elements in all other systems and religions, and unites them into a living organism, with Christ as head” (Orr, 1897, p. 11). Truth is truth and it is found in its fountainhead, who is Christ. Christ is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). Highest truth is in the Godhead where it derives its origin. Kuyper (1970) writing on Calvinism as a *Life-System*,

Thus understood, Calvinism is rooted in a form of religion which was peculiarly its own, and from this specific religious consciousness there was developed first a peculiar theology, then a special church-order, and then a given form for political and social life, for the interpretation of the moral world-order, for the relation between nature and grace, between Christianity and the world, between church and state, and finally for art and science; and amid all these life-utterances it remained always the self-same Calvinism, in so far as simultaneously and spontaneously all these developments sprang from its deepest life-principle (p.17).

This world and life concept has a broad nature (world) and an extensiveness (life) to it. This view shows its usefulness in describing a life system which is operative in all areas of life.

Perhaps a defining of “world and life view” is in order at this point. What is meant by world-view? Briefly it may be described as, “A cluster of convictions and values not verifiable by the means of natural science; a way of looking at the world” (Schlossberg and Olasky, 1987, p. 153). A more complete denotation may be found in Reg McLelland’s essay on the subject,

A world and life view is nothing more than a conceptual framework—a system of concepts, or ideas, or presuppositions, more or less defined, in terms of which an individual interprets the data of the world present to him. This world and life conceptual framework is made up of intellectual, physical, emotional, aesthetic, ontological, epistemological, and axiological categories of thought which provide for our relative conceptions or “pictures” or reality. Further, there is no one who does not have such a cognitive framework. All human cognitive or knowing experience intrinsically, necessarily, involves such a structure (p.3).

What we are talking about here is the application of our faith in every aspect of life and especially in building a biblical model. That whatever is done in word and in deed we are to do it to God’s glory (1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17, 23). The aim is to fulfill all righteousness. Righteousness is obedience to the revealed will of God. All things in God’s world have a relationship that spells harmony when kept within their creation purpose or norm. Man should work well in God’s world. The perspective can be as great as God is and is only limited by man and the world-view to which he subscribes.

The following elements are to be found in a reformed world-view (Wolters, 1985, p. 3f). Worldview is a comprehensive framework of one’s basic beliefs about things. The basic belief about “things” is vague deliberately because of the universality of things about which one can form a belief. The word “world” shows the extent of area comprehended. The framework of basic beliefs is a “cognitive claim.” The belief herein discussed is the commitment to truth whereby one is willing to make personal sacrifices. Such a person is said to have convictions. The emphasis is not just on the beliefs one holds, but to “basic” beliefs. Basic beliefs have to do with ultimate questions that confront us. They involve matters considered as general in principle. It also involves a comprehensive “framework.” It is a pattern by which things hang together in a certain way. It is often called a “value system.” There is a uniformity to our system which evidences its validity and over all conformity to God’s purpose. A worldview is no greater than its foundation. The foundation is to be based on God and His redemption. One must have a biblically informed worldview based on the Godhead.

The essential point where the biblical world-view differs from other world-views in the tradition of historic Christian orthodoxy. What distinguishes a reformational world-view is its understanding of the radical and universal import of both sin and redemption ... nothing in all of creation is neutral (Wolters, 1985, p. 60).

The development of a biblical worldview requires a worldview that is based on solid epistemological and ontological ground. Man is intrinsically valuable before God on the basis of Biblical truth.

ANTHROPOLOGY

Within the scope of the foundation needed to develop a biblical view is the need of a cultural model. Culture encompasses the whole of man and his activities. Culture involves man in his activity bestowed on creation. Culture involves human activity. Man's handling of God's creation demonstrates faith or rebellion. Henry R. Van Til (1972) said,

Culture, then, takes in the whole man, not merely as an individual, but as a member of the human organism, and therefore, in his various relationships to other men, and in the different institutions that are thus called into existence, the institution of the home, of society, with its relationships between employer and employee, capital and labor, commerce and industry, education and science, politics and government (p.32).

Culture comprehends the whole of man and his relationship to other men. The word "culture" derives from the Latin *cultura* meaning "cultivation." It takes one back to the Latin Vulgate translation where Adam "cultivated" the garden in Eden. Man was to exercise dominion over all things under the cultural mandate revealed in Genesis.

The word "culture," then ... aptly describes the God-ordained result [or better: the God-ordained permanent deposit] of the total normative expression of the world outside of him and within him, built on the traditions of the past and constantly expanded for the use of present and future generations (Lee, 1976, p. 6).

Man's Relation to Creation Mandates

God's blessing was upon male and female, and they were urged to "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:28). The mandate was fruitfulness, subjugation and dominion. There must be a mastering and a laying claim according to the will and revelation of God. This was evidenced in the two words used to show man's responsibility and authority.

First, the earth was to be "subdued" (*kabhash*). That word means to tread or trample down so that victory might be achieved. The same word was used of our compassionate God subduing our iniquities and abandoning them in the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19). It was this restoration to God by grace which enabled man to go on subduing after the fall. Donald MacDonald (1984) wrote,

The subjugation of the earth here evidently means it's being made subservient in every possible way to the use and comfort of man by the art of navigation, the operations of agriculture, mining, metallurgy, and road-making, and everything which contributes to the welfare of the individual and of the community, and to realization of the Divine purpose as to the multiplication of the species and the replenishment of the earth, and now the farther purpose of preparing the way of the Lord, and making straight in the desert a highway for our God (Isa. 40:3) (p. 293).

Second, the earth and things in it were to be brought under “dominion” (*radhah*). This word had a similarity to “subdued” (*kabhash*). It meant to tread on or trample down and to tread on thus breaking in pieces. The word was used in harvest concerning collecting and pressing grapes to gain their juice (Joel 3:13), and the result was grapes brought under dominion. The end of the pressing was the production of wine. The word referred to dominion by rule. Man’s rule extended over animate and inanimate creation (Gen. 1:26, 28). It was used for a victorious rule over enemies (Isa. 14:2; Ps. 110:2).

Man’s Relation as God’s Image Bearer

A question now arises, over what subjugation and dominion were to be exercised? There must be a subduing of internal and external things to produce for God. The subduing and ruling of all things was to be carried out by God’s image bearer. Man, as the image bearer, is like God, but never becomes God, in every aspect in which a creature may be like God. God’s creation of man in His own image constituted a special relationship (Gen. 1:26-2:7). There seems to be a natural and moral aspect to this image. There are natural faculties such as: intellect, sensibility, reason and will. There is a moral image, which has to do with the proper use of those natural faculties. There is then a practice of the natural abilities conferred at creation, which is holiness of life. Man was endowed by his Creator with the communicable attributes of the Creator and a righteous life is the proper manifestation of those attributes. A righteous life is a life which will be emotionally, spiritually and physically sound. Jonathan Edwards (1746) in his *Religious Affections* ties this together for us.

As there are two kinds of attributes in God, according to our way of conceiving of him, his moral attributes, which are summed up in his holiness, and his natural attributes, of strength, knowledge, etc. that constitute the greatness of God; so there is a twofold image of God in man, his moral or spiritual image, which is his holiness, that is the image of God’s moral excellency (which image was lost by the Fall); and God’s natural image, consisting in men’s reason and understanding, his natural ability, and dominion over the creatures, which is the image of God’s natural attributes (p. 256).

As we shall see, the moral image of man and the natural image of man combine to reflect God’s image in a glorifying way. The moral image was destroyed in man during the fall and unrighteousness was the result. This image of God in man is what constitutes man a responsible being for it was his north pole which gave his compass direction. Edwards in his *Freedom of the Will* (1957, 1754) adds,

And herein does very much consist that the image of God wherein he made man (which we read of Gen. 1:26,27 and ch. 9:6), by which God distinguished man from the beasts, viz. in those faculties and principles of nature, whereby he is capable of moral agency. Herein very much consists the *natural* image of God; as his *spiritual* and *moral* image, wherein man was made at first, consisted in that moral excellency, that he was endowed with (p. 166).

Man resembles God in his soul originally being of spiritual substance, understanding and will. This is primarily seen in the moral conformity of his soul to God in knowledge,

righteousness and holiness. Man's exercise of his creation gifts was to issue into subduing all things to God's glory and dominion over all areas of his responsibilities. That which was to issue from God's creation was a reciprocation or worship. The result of this eschatology was to be God's glory (Rev. 4:11). Stephen Charnock (1864) the Puritan noted,

This image consisted *partly* in the state of man as he had dominion over the creatures, *partly* in the nature of man as he was an intelligent being, and thereby was capable of having a grant of that dominion, but *principally* in the conformity of the soul with God in the frame of his spirit and the holiness of his actions; not at all in the figure and form of his body physically, though morally there might be, as there was a rectitude in the body, as an instrument to conform to the holy motions of the soul, as the holiness of the soul sparkled in the actions and members of the body (p. 272).

The positive qualities of this image are knowledge, righteousness and true holiness (Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24). This is evidence of man being a crown of God's creation. And this crown of creation was able to reflect God's image.

What is primarily included in this image? First, is the element of righteousness and true holiness. Righteousness is obedience to the revealed will of God. God's mandated will in the law is the criteria for the image bearer of God. God's law is never a threat to us unless we become defiant to it. It is for our good. We have not been left to wander without a safe guide. Second, is the element of rationality or true knowledge. By this man the image bearer is capable of intelligently discerning the mandate of God and will thus be able to carry to fruition the purpose of his creation. Third, is the element of creativity. The end result is a sense of fulfillment. Man's capacity to create is a capacity to impart value to that which is made. This reflects God whom man is to mirror. The capacity toward art, building, etc. arises at this point in the image bearer. Man in the exercise of his priesthood performs his labor in joy under God and offers it to God as a spiritual sacrifice. We, as it were, are to display God's image. Fourth, is the element of dominion. This has been dealt with before, but it is now noted in the light of being a mark of God's image in us. The cultivating of all things for God's glory and man's good is the aim of dominion. Man is in the exercise of lordship over that which was placed under him (Ps. 8). Fifth, is the element of relation. Man was made in God's image a relational being. Man is capable of a relationship with God and man. It was not good for man to be alone (Gen. 2:18). This is a part of the image of God for the Godhead is relational. This is seen when God said, "Let us make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness" (Gen. 1:26). God is trinity in unity. There are three persons in one Godhead. Crabb (1987) noted,

Begin with the truth that God is a Trinity: three persons, one God. This is certainly a mystery, but it has a clear message: There is relationship within the very nature of God. God is a personal being who exists eternally in a relationship among persons: He is His own community.

When God decided to create a kind of being different from angels, He designed His new creation with a unique ability to respond to His love... God created man for relationship with Himself and others. Man is fundamentally a relational creature (p. 111).

These elements are to be lived out by God's image bearer. 'The third quality was creativity, which directly encompasses the area of art and all the other elements impact it as well. Thus,

man should be creative and do all things for God's glory and it will be for man's good including his communication through his acts of obedience.

CREATION NORMS

What are creation norms? Creation by God was His work alone. It reflected the communicable attributes of God. The result of creation was the cosmic world. "*Kosmos*" is the Greek word for "world." The Greek translation of the Old Testament (Septuagint) uses this word in translating "the heavenly hosts" (Gen. 2:1; Isa. 24:21; 40:26). Definitively in the Greek (Thayer, 1930, p. 356) it referred to the universe and the earth, but was more picturesque for it also referred to a harmonious arrangement or order. It had the idea of ornament, decoration or adornment (1 Pet. 3:3). God perpetuates and preserves His creation by imposing His rule of law. There are two ways God does this, mediately and immediately or indirectly and directly or without means or by means, or without the involvement of man and with the involvement of man. These are called the laws of nature or norms. In culture God works mediately. But what of these creation norms? Wolters (1985) said, "We are not so familiar with, or feel less sure about, God's laws for culture and society, which we call *norms*" (p. 15). Man in his physical creation and spiritual recreation is God's epic poem of creation and redemption. God's masterful production or work of art which is impossible to explain apart from God's sovereignty. In Romans 1:20 "that which has been made (*poiema*)," and in Ephesians 2:10 "we are his workmanship (*poiema*)." This Greek word brings to mind our word "poem." God's artistic expression in creation and redemption is man who receives a communication from Him. Wolters (1985) says we have some hearing impairment, but it is not total.

Nevertheless, in spite of human perversity, some of God's message in creation gets through. Even the Gentiles, "who do not have the law" (i.e., the Mosaic law, God's spelling out of his creational law for Old Testament Israel), have a sense of its normative demands, as Paul adds in the next chapter of his letter... (Rom. 2:14-15). Even without God's explicit verbal positivization of the creational norms for justice and faithfulness, stewardship and respect, people have an intuitive sense of normative standards for conduct. One word for that intuitive attunement to creational normativity is *conscience*. As human beings we are so interwoven into the fabric of a normed creation that in spite of our religious mutiny we conform to creational standards "by nature," by virtue of our constitution as creatures.... God does not leave himself unattested; he refuses to be ignored (p. 25).

Culture since the fall has to be transformed and that is what Christ has accomplished through His passive and active obedience in redemption by His impeccable life and sacrificial death. Niebuhr (1956) in his *Christ and Culture* introduced five models of Christ relative to culture. First, Christ *against* culture. Two, the Christ *of* culture. Three, Christ *above* culture. Four, Christ *and* culture in paradox. And fifth, Christ the *transformer* of culture. Those who hold that Christ is a transformer of culture he calls "conversionists" (p. 190). He noted,

For the conversionist, however, the creative activity of God and of Christ-in-God is a major theme, neither overpowered by nor overpowering the idea of atonement. Hence man the creature, working in a created world, lives ... under the rule of Christ and by the creative power and ordering of the divine Word, even though in his unredeemed mind he

may believe that he lives among vain things under divine wrath.... On the one hand he emphasizes the participation of the Word, the Son of God, in creation, not as this took place once upon a time but as it occurs in the immediate origin, the logical and momentary beginning of everything, in the mind and power of God. On the other hand, he is concerned with the redemptive work of God in the incarnation of the Son, and not merely with redemption in his death, resurrection, and return in power.... The effect of this understanding of the work of Christ in incarnation as well as creation on conversionist thought about culture is unmistakable. The Word that became flesh and dwelt among us, the Son who does the work of the Father in the world of creation, has entered into a human culture that has never been without his ordering action (p. 192f).

God has provided an atmosphere conducive for man to carry out the cultural mandate. Christ has redeemed the creation and the elect. True dominion is possible for God's glory again. A biblical model should fit into the dominion mandate.

CREATION STRUCTURES

Now to consider creation ontology and creation structures. The existence of creation by the God of order implies creation structures or modal spheres. The sovereignty of social spheres is a biblical concept of creation structures. Here is where our model must work. H. Henry Meeter (1975) pointed out that this is

an expression which has become a favorite watchword among Calvinists ... "The sovereignty of the organic groups in society each in its own sphere." By this is meant that the family, scientific organizations, commercial, industrial, agricultural, philanthropic organizations, and whatever other groups naturally develop out of the organic life of human society, as well as churches, do not owe their origin, existence, or principle of life to the State. They have an inner principle and cultural taste all their own, entrusted to them by God. They are authorized directly by God *for the pursuance* of their task. Upon this sovereignty given them by the Creator the State may not infringe (p. 157).

There is only one who is truly sovereign or supreme and that is God, but He delegates authority to everyone to pursue their callings. Each legitimate modal sphere has an authority from God. Herman Dooyerveerd (1969) penned,

Every modal aspect of temporal reality has its proper sphere of laws, irreducible to those of other modal aspects, and in this sense, it is sovereign in its own orbit, because of its irreducible modality of meaning.

The acceptance of the basic philosophic principle of modal sphere-sovereignty consequently has an indissoluble coherence with the Christian transcendence—standpoint ruled by the religious ground—motive of creation, fall into sin, and redemption (Vol. 1, p. 102).

Biblical Christians do not view society as made up of autonomous beings doing their thing in a world of chance happenings. What is to be acted out in this world is not to be an

infringement of one modality over another. There is not to be an absolutizing of modal spheres.

Calvinism views Society, not as a loose aggregation of isolated individuals, but as an organic unity, one vast social organism. This organism is composed of a wide variety of distinct though related spheres, which arise out of the complex life of mankind, each having its own task to perform, its own mandate entrusted to it by God. Thus, there is the sphere of the family, of science, of art, of technique ... and to mention no more, the sphere of things which belong to Society as a whole.

As each of these spheres has been authorized and commissioned by God to carry on its specific task, it has therefore sovereign rights within its own domain. No outside influence, whether State or Church or other social unit, may interfere with the proper pursuance of this task by the group itself, without thereby infringing upon the authority which God has delegated to that group. This is what is known as the sovereignty of the spheres of society (Meeter, 1975, p. 159).

These spheres were complicated by sin. As a matter of fact, the church and state are spheres resulting from the fall. The family sphere was prior to the fall. The church, for example, arose, not out of creation, but out of the decree of the fall. If there had been no fall there would not have been a need for the institution of special grace. Pastoral ministry is a result of the fall, and any biblical model must take this into account.

Kuyper (1970) shows the separate nature of modal spheres when he said,

Religion and Art have each a life-sphere of their own; these may at first be scarcely distinguishable from each other and therefore closely intertwined, but, with a richer development, these two spheres necessarily separate.... Religion and Art demand an independent existence, and the two stems which at first were intertwined and seemed to belong to the same plant, now appear to spring from a root of their own.... Calvinism occupies a higher standpoint in the 16th century than Romanism could reach. Consequently, Calvinism was neither able, nor even permitted, to develop an art-style of its own from its religious principle. To have done this would have been to slide back to a lower level of religious life (p. 148).

God has made all persons, and they possess gifts because of their being God's creation. There is to be an awareness of the spheres of life in developing a worldview model. Calvin (1979) said,

We ought not to forget those most excellent benefits of the divine Spirit, which he distributes to whomever he wills, for the common good of mankind. The understanding and knowledge of Bezalel and Oholiab, needed to construct the Tabernacle, had to be instilled in them by the Spirit of God [Ex. 31:2-11; 35:30-35]. It is no wonder, then, that the knowledge of all that is most excellent in human life is said to be communicated to us through the Spirit of God. Nor is there reason for anyone to ask, What have the impious, who are utterly estranged from God, to do with his Spirit? We ought to understand the statement that the Spirit of God dwells only in believers [Rom. 8:9] as referring to the

Spirit of sanctification through whom we are consecrated as temples to God [1 Cor. 3:16]. Nonetheless he fills, moves, and quickens all things by the power of the same Spirit, and does so according to the character that he bestowed upon each kind by the law of creation. But if the Lord has willed that we be helped in physics, dialectic, mathematics, and other like disciplines, by the work and ministry of the ungodly, let us use this assistance. For if we neglect God's gift freely offered in these arts, we ought to suffer just punishment for our sloths. But let anyone think a man truly blessed when he is credited with possessing great power to comprehend truth under the elements of this world [cf. Col. 2:8], we should at once add that all this capacity to understand, with the understanding that follows upon it, is an unstable and transitory thing in God's sight, when a solid foundation of truth does not underlie it. For with the greatest truth Augustine teaches that as the free gifts were withdrawn from man after the Fall, so of the Sentences and the Schoolmen, as we have said, are compelled to agree with him. Not that the gifts could become defiled by themselves, seeing that they came from God. But to defiled man these gifts were no longer pure, and from them he could derive no praise at all (p. 275).

The persons we deal with may or may not be a Christian, but if he is a Christian his actions will evidence a renewed mind. But we have a better understanding of man as God's creature with certain drives and a calling to fulfill whether he be "in Christ" or not. A biblical model must deal with man in unregenerate and regenerate states.

PERSONALITY

A biblical model of man is necessary for a biblical model of living and ministering to men. Much has been related already to man's origin. But what is meant by personality? Man's "soul" usually refers to his specific "personality" (Ps. 103:1-2; 104:1; 146:1; Isa. 42:1). "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being (soul, *nephesh*)" (Gen. 2:7). Franz Delitzsch (1977) asserted the personality was included in the soul.

But that "*nephesh*" may indicate not only the entire inner nature of man, but also his *entire personality*, i.e. all that pertains to the person of man, has its reason in the fact that the soul, and indeed (let it be well considered) the soul capable of spirit and spirit-like, is the mediator in man, having two aspects, bearing upon the spirit and the body respectively (p.181).

The soul denotes that which makes the body into a living being (Gen. 2:7; 36:6). It is the vital part of man. A dying person is said to breathe out his soul (Jer. 15:9), and to pour out his soul (Lam. 2:12). The soul leaves the one who dies (Gen. 35:18; Mark 8:35; Matt. 16:25; 10:39). The soul denotes the sensitive part of life, the ego, the seat of emotions, of love, of longing, and of gladness (Song of Sol. 1:7; Ps. 63:1; 86:4). The soul is the seat of religious life and of man's relationship to God (Lk. 2:35; 3 John 2; 2 Pet. 3:8). The soul can be saved (James 1:21; 5:20; 1 Pet. 1:9, 22; 2:11). The soul, as a part of us, believes and is sanctified, is destined to an inheritance in God's kingdom (1 Pet. 2:25; 4:19). The soul has only God over it (Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:5; Rev. 6:9; 20:4). One has said, "The soul is spirit modified by union with the body." Delitzsch (1977) pointed out a danger of mixing up personality with individuality. This

distinction should help us further distinguish the meaning of personality. “Personality is that which is common to all men as such, whereby they are elevated above plants and beasts.... Individuality, on the other hand, is the peculiarity of the individual man, whereby he is distinguished from the other beings of his kind” (p. 180).

J. Gresham Machen (1937) in *The Christian View of Man* spoke of the meaning of the soul.

It means not only that man has mind or consciousness, but also that his mind or consciousness is a unity. It is not a mere stream of consciousness, but the *consciousness of a person*. Not merely does thinking go on within me, but it is *I* that think. It was I many years ago, and it is the same I today, and it will be the same I to all eternity. That the Bible means when it tells me that I have a soul (p. 161).

PROBLEM

God placed the man that He created in His image in the garden in Eden. Man had a task to perform (cultivating and guarding the garden) (Gen. 2:15). God saw fit to test man (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:1-24). The result was the devastation of the race and the created order. Genesis three is the pivot of the Bible, for if it is ignored or removed, the rest of the Scripture is meaningless. This is necessary ground in understanding man’s problem. An understanding of anthropology and hamartiology are necessary in dealing with personality needs.

Man’s behavior certainly affected his relation to God and other men. End point eschatology is certainly in evidence for the soul that sins shall surely die. The Law of God can be looked at in two tables. The first table of the Law deals with man’s relation to God, and the second table deals with man’s relation to man. When man’s relation to God is wrong it follows that he will have trouble with human relations. There is certainly a teleological or final aspect to behavior. We have already noted that man as God’s image bearer is a relational being. And when the vertical relation with God is cut off (as in the fall), then the horizontal relation with men will be conflicting. Clark (1984) said,

A study of the nature of man can become complex, cannot avoid becoming complex. But because sin is a disturbing factor, it is easier to study man in his original state of innocency. Modern psychology and secular philosophy face extreme difficulties.... Without a revelation from God who made man, it is doubtful that we could learn much about him at all. Even with the aid of a divine revelation the subject is still difficult (p. 15).

Remember God created man, “male and female created He them” (Gen. 1:27). Male and female in a relational union which brought completeness (one flesh). The fall saw a complication of this aspect (Gen. 3:12-19) of personal relations and all others. When Adam “did eat” it was then that the eyes of “them both were opened” (Gen. 3:6, 7). It was at this point that they tried to “fix it.” This was the beginning of autosoterism (self-salvation). Man has sought to remedy his problems and provide his own salvation ever since. He has been at enmity with God ever since. Lostness is a relational problem with God brought about by the first pair being out of relation with God’s mandate and creation purpose. Man violated God’s holy law! How did this develop? Satan made Eve the head when he spoke to her and said “Ye

(plural) shall not surely die” (Gen. 3:4). She accepted this reordering of God’s constituted authority. Relational conflict arises when the creation norm is violated. Eve did not go to her head (Adam) about this situation, but she ate and then gave it to her husband. She had become the leader of the pack as God’s creation order was violated as well as His command being violated. This brought humanity into an abnormal state where they must try to relate with one circuit broken and the other jammed. The lifestyle of the dead, as Dr. William Crabb referred to it, is the new sphere of life (Rom. 1:18-32). Dr. William Crabb (1990) in lectures at Reformed Theological Seminary said Adam “chose loneliness toward God rather than human loneliness” for he sided with Eve.

GOAL

A biblical model must also recognize a goal of change. Can the damage of the fall be repaired or is it hopeless? Can man repair the damage like he made a coat of fig leaves? The damage can be repaired as biblical soteriology or salvation asserts. But man cannot repair the damage since spiritual death is his state of being outside of Christ. The test was don’t eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil lest you die (Gen. 2:17). This is more than physical death, which only set in at this point, but it was immediate spiritual death. Man is totally depraved or totally incapacitated spiritually because the vertical relationship is totally destroyed by the fall. The moral image of God was destroyed in man by the fall. How can man be changed? With man it is impossible but with God all things are possible (Matt. 19:26). The goal of change is the restoration of man to the moral image of God. But this is a work only of God. The biblical model recognizes a salvation which is solely of a sovereign God. Restoration is through redemption and regeneration. Conformity to the image of Christ is the end of predestination (Rom. 8:29, 30). Biblical soteriology sets forth five articles which deal with grace. They are identified by many with the mnemonic TULIP: *Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace, and Perseverance of the saints*. Total depravity describes man’s condition of helplessness, for in his state by original sin he cannot believe the gospel and no amount of human persuasion can change that state. Unconditional election describes the effort which God the Father made in salvation, whereby He chose a people and gave them to His Son (John 6:37). Limited atonement or particular redemption describes God the Son’s work in salvation whereby he substituted Himself by an active and passive obedience unto the death of the cross for all the Father gave Him (John 6:38ff). Irresistible grace or effectual calling describes the work of God the Holy Spirit in applying the purpose of the Father and the sacrifice of the Son (John 6:63). The work of the Triune God in salvation does not fail in its object. Perseverance of the saints attests to the efficiency of grace and how the redeemed are preserved by grace and how they persevere in grace till glorification. Those predestined are also being conformed to Christ’s image and they are ultimately glorified (Rom. 8:29-30). Many only consider Calvinism as a five-point system. Dr. J. I. Packer (1963), in the introduction to *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*, warned against assuming these five points are the be all of Calvinism.

Calvinism is something much broader than the “five points” indicate. Calvinism is a whole world-view, stemming from a clear vision of God as the whole world’s Maker and King. Calvinism is the consistent endeavor to acknowledge the Creator as the Lord,

working all things after the counsel of His will. Calvinism is a theocentric way of thinking about all life under the direction and control of God's own Word. Calvinism, in other words, is the theology of the Bible viewed from the perspective of the Bible the God-centered outlook which sees the Creator as the *source*, and *means*, and *end*, of everything that is, both in nature and in grace (p.5).

Biblical theology seeks to carry the gospel of grace into all the world and to every creature. God must act in salvation, but the servants of God must proclaim to all and this goes for the counseling setting as well. Malcolm Watts (1989) in an article carried by *Sword & Trowel* noted,

The Gospel offer is the setting forth of Christ as the only Savior given to sinners, with the invitation that if people take Him as their refuge, they shall be saved. Now, in this offer, Christ is revealed as having died for all who place their trust in Him, and it is asserted that all who do this shall be saved.

Professor W. G. T. Shedd remarks as follows: "The offer of the atonement is universal because, when God calls upon men universally to believe, He does not call upon them to believe that they are elected, or that Christ died for them in particular. He calls upon them to believe that Christ died for sin, for sinners, for the world; that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved; that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; and that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

Reformed theologians have carefully differentiated between these two acts of faith, calling the first *direct* and the second *reflex* or *consolatory*. "The former is the act of faith, by which we fly to Christ as the only Savior, cleave to Him, and appropriate Him to ourselves for salvation. The latter is the act by which, flying to Christ and resting on Him, we trust that we have, and to eternity will have, communion with Him in His death and benefits; and joyfully repose in the firm persuasion that He died for us, and by His death reconciled us to God" (Professor Francis Turretin) (p. 20).

The biblical model seeks to invite men to take Christ as their refuge. A biblical model would seek to be a refuge and encourage men to flee for ultimate refuge to Christ. Personal man needs a refuge since he lost direction in the fall. Rational man needs a refuge since he lost understanding in the fall. Volitional man needs a refuge since he lost his will toward God in the fall, and he wills not to come to Christ. Emotional man needs a refuge since he lost coping ability in the fall. The image can only be restored through Christ who is the only hope.

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