

‘Created by God for God.’ (1)

One day the zoo-keeper noticed that the orang-utan was reading two books, the Bible and Darwin’s ‘The Origin of Species’. In surprise he asked the ape, ‘Why are you reading both those books?’ ‘Well,’ said the orang-utan, ‘I just wanted to know if I was my brother’s keeper or my keeper’s brother.’

Evolution has been a hot topic for many years now and slowly but surely TV, radio, newspapers, magazines and posters have all bought into the idea of evolution. It was only a few years ago when they fired up the world-famous **Hadron Collider** in Switzerland. The evolutionists got all excited about trying to create what it was like in the beginning with what they call ‘**the big bang**’. And as we know the whole experiment was a great failure and so the search for the source and meaning of life continues for the evolutionists.

And so, what I want to do today is try and answer some of life’s most, deepest questions. **How did we get here? Where did we come from? Is there someone ‘out there’ who lovingly made us or are we just here by accident? Why are we here? Does life have a purpose or is it meaningless? Are we going anywhere?**

You see loved ones if we’re to believe what the atheists have been telling us for over a hundred years, we’d say our solar system began with a chance explosion and things just turned out as they are. They’ve told us the only difference between human life and the scum that floats on stagnant water is that human life is more complex than fungus or scum. The atheist, **H. J. Blackham**, said the greatest objection to atheism is this, ‘**It’s too bad to be true!**’

The atheist, **Teller**, said, ‘**There is no eternal Justice in the heaven, no helping hand. The stellar depths are silent as the grave to human misery and want. The vast abyss of space is both our womb and tomb. It cares neither for our coming nor our going.**’

**Bertrand Russell** insisted that man’s ‘origin, growth, hopes, fears, loves and beliefs, are but the result of an accidental arrangement of atoms’ and that in time man will ‘be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins’.

**Ingersoll** who is an atheist thought that ‘**life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We cry aloud and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry.**’

Wow, guess life really is pointless, **isn’t it?** No wonder the suicide rate is so high if that’s what people are to believe. **Now what happens when we reject that theory and allow God to inform us through His Word as to where we come from and why we are here?**

In **Matthew 19** we find a bunch of Pharisees coming to test Jesus with a question about divorce. Jesus answers them and says in **Matthew 19:4-6** “**Haven’t you read, that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.**”

In Jesus’ answer, He actually quotes from **Genesis 1:27** and **Genesis 2:24**, **why?** Because He wants them to think about God’s original plan and the **Book of Genesis** clearly tells us that our world was created by God. We’re told that God created the Earth, a home for mankind and then He created man in **Genesis 1:1-27**. Loved ones, you and I are not some freak of nature, we’re not some ‘**accident**’ that just ‘**happened,**’ we’re here because God wanted us to be here.

**But why did God make us in the first place?** Well to put it simply, God made us because He loves us! **1 John 4:8** says that ‘**God is love**’ and because God is love that means that He can never act lovelessly. **Psalm 136:5-9** “**Who by his understanding made the heavens, His love endures forever. Who spread out the earth upon the waters, His love endures forever. Who made the great lights—His love endures forever. The sun to govern the day, His love endures forever. the moon and stars to govern the night; His love endures forever.**”

David repeatedly tells us in this Psalm that God created everything because His ‘**love endures forever**’. The creation which includes every human being that’s ever lived, living now and will live in years to come are the loving expression of God’s almighty power. Loved ones, God made us because He loved us.

Now you might ask, **well if He loves us so much, why is the world in such a mess?** Well, come back next week and we will try to answer that question. He made us because He loved us and He made us to have life within loving relationships.

If anyone has ever read **Genesis 1** they can clearly see that God provided for man's physical needs, even before He made man. But as we all know humans need more than food and shelter, **don't they?** Mankind needs more than that, they need love and they need companions. And as far as God is concerned, there is no life without love. **1 John 3:14** "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death." And so, we all need love, we all need to love and to be loved and that can only be experienced within relationships.

Remember what Jesus says in **Matthew 22** when a teacher of the Law came to test Jesus about which is the greatest commandment in the Law? **Matthew 22:37-39** "Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'" Jesus says, 'Above all things, He wants us to love Him and to love our neighbours as we love ourselves.'

Think about it, to love God with everything you've got means we are simply do what God wants. **And what does God want?** He wants to be loved by us. That's one of the reasons we're made in His image, so we could live with Him. **Genesis 5:1+2** "When God created mankind, he made them in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. And he named them "Mankind" when they were created." And notice that God created male and female, **why?** Well simply so that we could live with one another.

**Genesis 2:18-23** "The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

You see loved ones when God made us, He made us to give us honour and dignity. **Have you any idea of just how special you are in God's eyes?** In **Psalms 8:5+6**, David says God made man, 'A little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet.' David found it amazing that God could care this much for mankind, **do you not find this amazing?**

Out of all the things which God created, you are God's most special creation. And remember when God created everything day by day, at the end of each day He said, 'it was good'. But when He finished creating mankind, He said in **Genesis 1:31**, 'it was very good. Chesterton, who was a writer and philosopher, when he was looking at modern man, said, 'whatever else is true about man, he isn't what he was intended to be'.

**So, what happened to the dignity and power God gave man at creation?** We'll like I said earlier, come back next week and we'll try to answer that question too. But for now, turn your Bibles to the **Book of Genesis** again. **Genesis 1:26+27** "Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them".

Now notice again that mankind, that's all males and females were made 'in the image of God.' You see all human beings are triune beings, let me explain. The Godhead is made up of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Human beings are also triune beings because we have a body, soul and spirit.

The apostle Paul gives us complete description of the nature of man in **1 Thessalonians 5:23** "May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here, the apostle clearly reveals that man is a triune being, consisting of spirit and soul and body.

**Ecclesiastes 12:7** "The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it." Here we see the distinction between the body and the spirit. **Matthew 10:28** "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell." Here we see the distinction between body and soul.

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” Here we see the distinction between **soul** and **spirit**. But it’s in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 where we find a definite statement as to the nature of man.

Turn your Bibles to Genesis 2:7 “The LORD God formed the man from the soil of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.” We see here that God formed or fashioned or moulded, man’s body out of the ground, and we read, that God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being”.

Now the word ‘being’ has been preferred by later translators, rather than the word ‘soul’ which is used in the King James Version, because the original word ‘nephesh’ does not mean ‘soul’ in the special New Testament sense. In fact, in the Old Testament, where the word ‘nephesh’ occurs 745 times, the translators of the King James Version have rendered it by at least 30 different words or phrases.

So, the difference between the Hebrew word ‘nephesh’ of the Old Testament and the Greek word ‘psuche’ of the New Testament is easily recognizable. And remember that we’re not to suppose that man was a ‘dead soul’, until God breathed into him ‘the breath of lives.’ The word ‘life’ is plural in the Hebrew text. In other words, there was nothing before and so it was the entrance of ‘the breath of lives’ which actually constituted him ‘Man’.

Notice that the word ‘became’ is categorical. We should read the verse in this way, “God breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives, and Man came into being, a living soul.” That phrase, ‘a living soul’, is adjectival and describes and defines man after God breathed life into the form which He had shaped. And it’s here we see the difference between man and the rest of creation.

Remembering that the Hebrew word ‘Adam’ means ‘man.’ ‘Life’ like animal life, is something which Adam shared with every other living creature created by God. But the difference between the other creatures and man lies in the fact that God said in Genesis 1:26 “Let us make man after our own image, after our likeness.” Only with reference to man is this said, and it is this ‘likeness to God’ which uniquely constituted man a rational and moral being. A being which possesses a conscience that enables him to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong, obedience and disobedience.

It is in this sense that man is a soul, a self, having self-awareness and self-consciousness. Now look at Genesis 1:26 again, “God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the sky, and over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

This shows us that man is not only superior to all other living creatures on Earth because he possesses this moral awareness. This is also shows us that the gulf between man and the rest of creation was further emphasized and endorsed when God assigned to him dominion over all other living creatures.

So how do these three different parts of man relate to each other? I go into the local schools quite regularly and every now and then they ask me to come in and have a question and answer session with the children about God, the Bible and religion as a whole. And I remember one child asking me an amazing question, does the body have a soul?

Now that’s a great question and yes, we can answer and say, ‘yes the body has a soul’ but maybe we should say, ‘it’s the soul which has a body’. Now I say that in light of what we’ve just looked at, the ‘soul’ is man’s unique self. It is the part of his being which, because it is rational and moral, determines the actions performed by his body, and which, therefore, renders him personally accountable for what he does. And so, it is man’s ‘soul’ which will ultimately be either saved or lost, depending on his response to the offer of the salvation which was made first possible by the coming of the Christ into the world.

So now let’s look at the body, as someone once said to me ‘The Body is of the earth and for the earth’. We might describe the body as ‘Earth-conscious’, since it is the physical tool or instrument, by means of which a person’s ‘soul’ or ‘self’ by its very nature is invisible is able to function in a physical world. If we think about Jesus Himself, when the Lord came into the world.

John 1:1+2 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was fully God. The Word was with God in the beginning.”

John 1:14 “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.” Although the Son existed ‘in the beginning with God’, it was necessary that ‘the Word’ should ‘become flesh’ and ‘dwell’ or ‘tabernacle’ among us. You see loved ones the Lord needed a physical body.

And as Paul tells us in **Philippians 2:6-8** that Jesus “Though he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking on the form of a slave, by looking like other men, and by sharing in human nature. He humbled himself, by becoming obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross!”

Paul says without the human form that He took on Himself, it would have been impossible for Him to fulfil the unique purpose for which He came. He needed a body **why?** **1.** To be able to communicate with mankind in a personal and unmistakable and uncomplicated manner. **2.** To present the ‘signs’ which were to be the authentication and endorsement of His Messiah-ship. **3.** To set the human race the perfect example of obedience to the will of the Father. **4.** And above all, by means of that perfect life, to demonstrate His worthiness to become the perfect offering for the sin of the world.

And so, **The Word** must become flesh. This was the divine plan, and it is why we find the writer of the letter to the **Hebrews**, in **Hebrews 10:5** placing the words of the Psalmist from **Psalm 40:6-8** into the Lord’s mouth. **Hebrews 10:5** “Therefore when he comes into the world, he says, “Sacrifice and offering you didn’t desire, but you prepared a body for me; You had no pleasure in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin. Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come (in the scroll of the book it is written of me) to do your will, O God.’”

Notice that the ‘body’ was prepared for ‘me.’ Peter, also talks about the body in **2 Peter 1:13+14**, and he describes it as “putting off my tent.” Man is not merely an animated construction of flesh and bones, he is a soul, a ‘self.’ Man is housed in a physical body and since his body is designed for earthly life, at death, the body returns to the earth.

God told Adam in **Genesis 3:19** “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to the dust you shall return.” We’ve briefly looked at the soul and the body now let’s briefly look at the spirit of man. **Job 32:8** “But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding”.

If we consider the body to be **Earth-conscious**, and the soul to be **Self-conscious**, we may think of the spirit as being **God-conscious**. In other words, it is that part of man’s nature which enables him to reach out to, and communicate with God. It is the spiritual dimension in man’s character, and, here again we see the difference between man and other creatures.

It’s only man who can say, “My soul thirsts for God, for the living God”. **Psalm 42:2**. Its only man who is encouraged to “seek after Him, in the hope that they might feel after Him and find Him.” **Acts 17:27**. Its only man who is given the assurance that “He is not far from each one of us, for in Him we live and move and have our being”. **Acts 17:28**. And like we saw earlier according to **Ecclesiastes 12:7**, at death, “the spirit returns to God Who gave it”.

Someone recently shared with me an illustration to help me get this point and I would like to share it with you because I think it’s helpful. **When I am away from home, I use the telephone as a means of communication with my wife. But when I am at home we talk face to face and so I do not need the telephone. Well in a similar way, God has endowed us with the ability to contact and communicate with Him, whilst we are here on earth. And so when we are ‘at home with the Lord’ we will no longer need the telephone.**

In other words when we leave this Earth we will have no need for our spirit as we will be in the presence of God. Loved ones we are blessed with a spirit, soul and body. Now I believe that one of the main reasons people hold false perceptions of God is our tendency to project onto God the unloving characteristics of the people we look up to. We tend to believe that God is going to treat us as others do.

This is because our negative images of God are often rooted in our emotional hurts and destructive patterns of relating to people that we carry with us from our past. **Imagine a little girl of seven who has known only rejection and abuse from her father whom she loves dearly. At Sunday school she is taught that God is her heavenly Father. What is her perception of Him going to be?** Based on her experience with her natural father, she will see God as an unstable, rejecting, abusing person she cannot trust.

But we need to remember that the God of the Bible is not like our physical fathers.

It's an absolute honour to be made in God's image but we need to remember we're not God. When I look in the mirror to have a shave, I see my image, but that image isn't me, it's a reflection of the real me. The problem is that many people have a misconception about God because, like Adam did in the beginning, they want to be God, they want to act like God. Being created in His image doesn't make us God, He created us.

**Psalm 139:14** "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well." And here's the problem that everyone has to face and a problem which evolutionist can't solve. **How are we so fearfully and wonderfully made?**

Let's just pause for a moment and think about the human eye just as one small example. **Your eyes are at work from the moment you wake up to the moment you close them to go to sleep. They take in tons of information about the world around you, shapes, colors, movements, and more. The information our eyes receive is sent to our brain along the optic nerve. This information is then processed by our brain and helps us make appropriate decisions, for example if you can see an object flying in your direction then you will probably move quickly out of the way.** Loved ones I could go on and on and spend a whole sermon just talking about our eyes.

**But can you see my point?** If people would only take a moment to see how amazing the human body is, they would have to come to the conclusion that we were created by a very intelligent being. To believe that we evolved from a big bang into these wonderful human beings is like me throwing a hand grenade in the car scrap yard and when the dust settled there is a boeing 747 aeroplane sitting there ready to fly.

And so were not here by accident, we're here because God created us. He created us because He loves us and wants to be loved by us. And He also created us to have authority to rule over the earth. **Genesis 1:28** "God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Now notice that mankind never earned this power, it was given to them. And so, in a sense they, they were God's representatives and were to rule for Him. And as ambassadors for God, mankind is supposed to reflect the honour and dignity of the country he represents.

In other words, man was made to reflect the honour and glory of the God he represents and the glory and honour of God is seen in His power. **Psalm 19:1** "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."

And that's why Paul can say in **Romans 1:20** "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse."

And so, we are made to mirror the glory of God as we exercise influence and power. Mankind was also made in God's image in order for mankind to have fellowship with his Creator. God didn't just create human beings for the fun of it, He created us because He wants to be a part of our lives.

And we see that right from the very beginning of creation. **Genesis 3:8** "Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day." God walked with man in the garden and He wanted people to live in His presence. He wants to have close personal relationship with us all.

You see in making us in His image, God made us capable of appreciating spiritual realities like truth, honour, obedience and loyalty to God and others. God made us to give us life, joy and peace with Him and with one another, He didn't make us to torture, cripple or curse us.

And when people ask things like, **why can a loving God punish the very people He created?** We need to remember that just like our physical parents don't find any pleasure in punishing their children, neither does God. Let me ask you, **do you find any pleasure in seeing people suffering? Do you find any pleasure in watching people enduring any form of pain they are going through in their lives?**

God finds no pleasure in the pain His creation endures. **Lamentations 3:33** "For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to anyone". God's purpose from the beginning, right up to the present age is to bless mankind.

Genesis 1:28 “God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.”

John 3:16+17 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” God wants to offer mankind life which comes in intimately knowing God and being His friend. Jesus says in John 17:3 “Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”

Loved ones, we were created by God for God. As humans, we didn't arrive on planet Earth by some random accident, there is Someone 'out there' who cares about us and gives our lives meaning. We were created to enjoy love-filled lives with God and one another. We are not just complex scum and we aren't simply sophisticated animals, we've been made in the image of God to enjoy fellowship with Him.

The question you need to ask yourself is simply this, can you find the answers to life's deepest questions anywhere outside of the Bible? Can you find meaning as to why you take up space on this planet by believing in evolution? Are you going to believe what the atheists themselves admit that 'atheism is too bad to be true'?

Or are you going to believe the words of A. W. Dicus? It was A. W. Dicus, who was a scientist in the field of physics and the inventor of car indicators who wrote the song, 'There is a God' and in one of the stanzas he writes. 'Secure, is life from mortal mind, God holds the germ within His hand'. Tho' men may search, they cannot find, for God alone does understand'.