



# New Covenant

Presbyterian Church

## Genesis 1:26-2:9 Study Questions and Answers

### 1. What three things does the Creation account teach us about man in his original state?

He was a creature *dependent* on God, he was made *distinct* from the animals and he was created *with dignity* as the image bearer of God.

### 2. Why is it important for us to realize that man was created dependant on God just like all the animals?

In a very real sense, man is a creature exactly like all the other creatures. Man is merely the dust of the earth. He is equally dependent upon God for his existence as is true of the animals. God created man to be “a living being” just as He made them to be “living beings.” There is a similarity between man and animal in the “stuff” from which they are made. God made the beasts of the earth and man out of the same substance—the dust of the earth. Man is sustained in the same way as the animals. Man was to sustain himself in exactly the same way as animals (Gen. 1:30). This serves to show that man, no matter how much dignity he is invested with, is nevertheless, a “frail creature of dust, and feeble as frail.” Man is not above creature. Man is anatomically basically nothing but the dust of the earth. The physical stuff out of which we are made is worth almost nothing (The chemical elements of which our bodies are made are of so little value that it has been calculated that they would make each person worth somewhere around \$150).

### 3. How does the Genesis 1 account of the creation of man teach us that man was made *distinct* from the animals?

The creation account teaches us about the unique and special place that man holds in God’s world. God created the world and its fulness prior to creating man in order to show that He was acting as a father in providing for His offspring (Acts 17:29). He made man the crown of His creation. Calvin noted that God “first filled the earth with good things and riches, for everything...is for man’s use.”

Man is the center of God’s creation. In Genesis 1 everything moves to the creation of man—it mounts up to the creation of man. In Genesis 2, man is placed in the Garden and shown to be the center of God’s creative work. We do not have two different creation accounts. We have two angles from which the same account is explained. Genesis 1:1-2:4 a shows the preparation and provision of God for making a habitable world in which man would be the crown of His creation. In Genesis 2:4b on we have a record of God’s special dealings with man in the paradisiacal Garden and then in the sin-cursed world, throughout the history of redemption, after the fall.

God spoke to the other creation when He called it into existence. He deliberated with Himself when he came to make man. The creation of man takes place by means of a distinctive Divine counsel. “We hear the voice of God speaking, not into the universe, but into the confines of heaven.” This serves to teach us how special man is as a creature. Even the Angels—who are greater in power and glory—do not receive the special honor that man receives at creation.

### 4. What was the Garden of Eden?

Just like the Tabernacle and Temple after it, the Garden was a Temple--a special dwelling place where God intended to dwell with and have fellowship with man, His special creation.

### 5. In what way did God bestow dignity upon man at creation?

Man, like the animals before him, was made according to his kind; however, man unlike the animals was made according to the image-of-God kind. Meredith Kline put this so well when he explained that men and women are “one in generic classification as members of one of the “kinds” God created. They were male and female varieties of man-“kind”, each individually a member of the image-of-God “kind.”<sup>2</sup>

God created man in His own image and likeness. While these terms have been much debated throughout church history, we can be sure that they are denoting that man would have a very special relationship and connection with God above that of all the other creatures. God breathed into man His image. Sinclair Ferguson explains the significance of the language of Gen. 2:7 when he says, “God, as it were, placed His divine face into the dust and kissed into life with His own breath this man whom He was going to create as His own image.”<sup>3</sup> Man, unlike the fish and the birds and the animals, is created for conscious fellowship with the true and living God. Geerhardus Vos explained that the two terms, “image” and “likeness,” “serve to describe one and the same concept from two sides. Or, if one wishes to make a distinction...“Image” then becomes the impression in man, “likeness” the archetypical knowledge of the image of His nature that God bears in His own consciousness.”<sup>4</sup> The Scripture speaks against image making because God has made one image of Himself. Man was to reflect, through holiness and righteousness, the loving, wise and upright God. He was to be a reflected image of the true and living God. In a sense, man was the image that a great King set up over His kingdom. (Cont.)



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Man was given dominion over the earth and all other creatures on the earth. The greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night were not sufficient to rule over and bring order to the agriculture and living beings on the earth. In his magnum opus, *Human Nature in Its Fourfold State*, Thomas Boston captured the essence of the dominion mandate given to man when he wrote:

“God made him lord of the world, prince of the inferior creatures, universal lord and emperor of the whole earth. His Creator gave him dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, over all the earth, yes, and every living thing that lives upon the earth: “He put all things under his feet,” Psalm 8:6-8. He gave him a power soberly to use and dispose of the creatures in the earth, sea, and air. Thus man was God’s deputy governor in the lower world; and this his dominion was an image of God’s sovereignty. This was common to the man and the woman. . . Behold how the creatures came to him, to own their subjection, and to do him homage as their lord; and quietly stood before him, till he put names on them as his own, Gen. 2:19. Man’s face struck an awe upon them; the stoutest creatures stood astonished, tamely and quietly adoring him as their lord and ruler. Thus was man ‘crowned with glory and honor,’ Psalm 8:5. The Lord dealt most liberally and bountifully with him, ‘put all things under his feet;’ only he kept one thing, one tree in the garden, out of his hands—even the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.”

6. Why is it important for us to understand what man was created to be pre-fall and what he became post-fall?

Because we will never see our need for Christ until we understand what we were, why we were created and how far we have fallen in our rebellion in Adam and in our everyday lives now.

7. What did God do to restore the image of God in man?

After the fall, the image of God and His purposes for His image bearers must be—and can only be—renewed in Christ. Man lost the image of God in the narrow sense. He retained the intellectual ability and the capacity for ethical decision making, but lost the good moral quality of those faculties. In the work of redemption in Christ, God is restoring this marred image. He is presently renewing those who are in Christ by faith “in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him” (Col. 3:10) and “in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph. 4:24). Jesus is “the brightness of God’s glory and the express image of His person.” He is the second Adam. He came to undo all that Adam did. In order to do so, He had to be what Adam should have been and to do what Adam should have done. God purposed to bring about through Christ what Adam should have brought about before the fall. When we are “in Christ” by faith we have become new creatures—part of the new creation. We have died with Him and been raised with Him.

8. What does the Psalmists appeal to the creation account in Psalm 8 teach us about God’s purpose and goal for man and creation? What does the redemptive historical interpretation of Psalm 8 in Hebrews 2:5-11 teach us about this?

The Psalmist—when he came to a meditate on the relationship between man and the creation around him—set out the purpose of God in creating the world and giving man dominion over it (Psalm 8). When the writer of Hebrews expounded this Psalm, he explained that while God’s original intention for man to have a fully realized dominion over creation, that is not the reality for man in this fallen world. “We do not yet see all things put under him,” he explained, “But we see Jesus who, for a little while, was made lower than the Angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone” (Heb. 2:9). Jesus stood as the representative second Adam to secure the new creation. He hung on the cross to take upon Himself the sin and corruption with which His image bearers had been corrupted. Now we await the day when all those who are being renewed into His image will reign with Him in righteousness in the New Heavens and New Earth forever.