

What Is The Nature of Us?

The definition of a tool is: “an implement used for a specific purpose.” This is a tool. [Hold up object] Does anyone know what it’s used for? [give explanation] If you don’t know the purpose of something, you’re much more likely to misuse it, aren’t you?

Well, the same is true about us. What’s our purpose, our nature? If we don’t know, we’re much more likely to misuse our lives. The Bible reveals three truths about our nature and we’re going to study them today. First, the Bible says...

I. We’re Created by God, not Evolved from Chaos.

I’m not going to spend a ton of time on this point, though much could be said. I just want to make one simple point and then give my own opinion. The point is that the Bible clearly states that:

God created man... male and female he created them. (Gen. 1:27)

Our public schools at every level today teach that a process called “natural selection” is how people came into being. Though science has not discovered where the original building blocks, the atoms and molecules and life forms first came from, once they existed, they claim a process of mutation began which led over a very, very long period of time to sub-species and species and families of living beings. So, the formula of human life as explained by evolution is this:

mutations + natural selection + time (lots and lots) = human beings

But one evolutionist pointed out a nagging problem with his own theory. He wrote:

A fact that has been obvious for many years is that Mendelian mutations deal only with changes in existing characters, never with the appearance of a new functioning character... No experiment has produced progeny that show entirely new functioning organs. And yet it is the appearance of new characters in organisms which marks the boundaries of the major steps in the evolutionary scales. ⁱ

Darwin himself said that if the fossil record didn’t eventually provide evidence of these “intermediary forms” of life between species, then...

He who rejects [my theory] on the nature of the geological record, will rightly reject my whole theory. ⁱⁱ

And Professor Colin Patterson, senior paleontologist at the British Museum of Natural History, admitted:

I will lay it on the line – there is not one such [transitional] fossil for which one could make a watertight argument. ⁱⁱⁱ

So, this is a basic and unsolved problem for evolutionists.

Now, for creationists, those who believe we didn’t evolve but were created by God, there is also a problem. Simply stated, it is this, “If God created people as Genesis seems to state, in six solar days, then why is there a fossil record and other evidence that the world is much older than five days before humans appeared?”

[This is where my personal opinion comes in because other very intelligent Christians have explanations different from mine regarding the six days of creation.]

So, my explanation is this: God created everything miraculously. I used to believe that the days mentioned in Genesis 1 were really not 24 hour days but eons of time; millions of years. But I no longer believe that. Here's why: Genesis 3 and Romans 5 both teach that Adam's sin brought death into the world. Rom. 5 says:

...sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin... death reigned from the time of Adam... (Rom. 5:12, 14)

So, death did not exist in this world until Adam and Eve sinned. Then how could there be plants and animals for millions of years without death? Besides this, the Hebrew grammar really does not allow for the days spoken of in Genesis 1 to be anything other than 24-hour days. The proof of this is that it doesn't just say "day," it also says, "evening and morning," and it gives a number to each day. Dr. Charles Ryrie, former professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, points out that:

...in other places in the Old Testament when a numerical adjective appears with the word *day*, a solar day is meant.^{iv}

So, your next obvious question probably is, "Pastor, come on! Are you trying to tell me that all the scientific evidence of "age" in the earth – the carbon dating, the sedimentary rock, the oil that is buried in the ground from decomposed plant life – that all of that is false?" Here's my answer...

When Adam and Eve were created, were they created as infants or adults? They were adults. So, two seconds after they were born, if you gave them a physical, they would test out as being 30 years old. But in reality, they were two seconds old. When Jesus turned the water into wine at the wedding at Cana, the wine tasted like it had fermented for years but it was really just minutes old. When Jesus fed the 5,000 and the 4,000, the fish tasted as if it had grown for years in a lake, but it was really just seconds old, by Jesus' miraculous creation.

I believe that the Bible consistently teaches that when our God creates something, if you gave it to a scientist, he or she would find that it tested out to be as old as natural processes would have taken for it to grow or be produced; but in reality it would be only seconds old. We are the descendants of two people who were miraculously created, one from the ground and the other from the first person's rib. Every detail of how we were created teaches us something important about our nature and our purpose but the bottom line is that we did not evolve from an accidental process of chance called "natural selection." No, we were created on purpose in the image of an incredible, intelligent, loving, all-powerful and good God. And His purpose for us has always been to know Him and to enjoy life with Him forever. BUT, something happened that spoiled God's purpose for us. So, that now:

II. We Are Morally Guilty, Not Innocent.

I think we all know the details of the story of the Garden of Eden in Gen. 3, but Romans 5 describes the outcome:

...just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned... (Rom. 5:12)

In theological terms this is called "imputational guilt." In laymen's terms this means that two things are true about sin. First, Adam's sin changed his moral DNA. He was created innocent but his disobedience of God's command changed his

nature, so that not only he but everyone born after him would have a proclivity toward sin.

If that seems unfair to you, don't worry, because secondly, this verse points out that all people ratify their sinful DNA by actually choosing of their own free will to sin as well.

...in this way death came to all men, because all sinned... (Rom. 5:12)

So, the biblical teaching is that God created morality. He decides what is right and what is wrong. Ever since the Garden of Eden, people don't just have a proclivity to sin but by our own free-will, we've all chosen to sin too, and the consequence is that we and all creation are under a curse.

So, what can we do about our sin? One answer today is – just ignore it! Sin doesn't really exist! This idea originated with those who don't believe that God exists. They reason that if there is no God, then there isn't a universal moral code. And if there is no universal moral code, then each person can decide for him- or herself what is right and what is wrong.

In the end, however, this is an unlivable idea. What I mean is this: if each person can decide for himself what is right and what is wrong, then there is no right or wrong. You can never accuse a Hitler of doing wrong because he can appeal to your definition of right and wrong as being self-determined and, to be consistent, you'll have to give him a pass. By getting rid of a universal moral code, you might think you're getting rid of guilt but you're actually getting rid of much more. You're destroying society. No society can operate without agreed-upon moral boundaries. As the historian, Will Durant, noted:

There is no significant example in history, before our time, of a society successfully maintaining moral life without the aid of religion. ^v

Why? Because religion provides a universal moral code.

But there's another popular way that people try to deal with their sin today. They try to blame it on others. "It's not my fault! Deep down, I'm a really good person, but because of the family I grew up in (or the neighborhood I grew up in or the school my parents made me go to or the school I wasn't allowed to go to), I got all twisted around and psychologically messed up. So did I do those unethical and immoral things? Yes, I did! But it's not my fault! My gene pool or my allergies or the fact I didn't get a pony for my 10th birthday or the Devil made me do it!"

This approach might actually give you some relief from guilt for a while, but eventually, it will do you in. The first thing to go will be your job. No employer wants an employee who can't own his mistakes. The next thing to go will be all your good friends. People just don't want to spend a lot of time with someone who blames them for all their issues. The third thing to go will be your mind. Psychologically, this is called projection. Listen to how this is described by psychological journals:

Projection may help a fragile ego reduce anxiety, but at the cost of a certain dissociation, as in dissociative identity disorder. In extreme cases, an individual's personality may end up becoming critically depleted. In such cases, therapy may be required which would include the slow rebuilding of the personality through "taking back" of such projections. ^{vi}

“Taking back” your projections... what does that sound like to you? It sounds to me like repentance! This leads us back to the Bible which says that projecting your guilt onto someone else simply won't work. Deut. 24:16 says:

Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sin.

So, what have we learned? We've learned that every person on earth has failed to live a morally perfect life. Secondly, we've learned that the two most popular ways of dealing with our moral failings don't work! One will eventually destroy society and the other will eventually destroy us! So, what's left? What's left is the biblical truth that says...

III. It's Not Hopeless; God Wants to Redeem You and Remove the Curse.

In I Cor. 15, we're introduced to a “first” and “second” Adam. Listen...

So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being” (Gen. 2:7); the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. (I Cor. 15:45)

Who's the second Adam? It's Jesus. Why is He being compared to Adam? Because these are the only two men in history who lived without a sin nature. The first Adam took on a sin nature by his actions and we inherited it from him. The second Adam, Jesus, went to the cross as an innocent man and paid the price so that all of us could OVERCOME the consequences of our sin nature. Do you see it? When it comes to our moral condition, these are the two most important people in history – one brought upon you the curse of sin. The other removed from you the consequences of your sin, which is death. One gave you the possibility of physical life (we are all descendants of Adam and Eve). And the second One gave you the possibility of spiritual life (all those who put their faith in Jesus are “descendants” of the “second Adam,” the One from heaven.) Listen:

As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (I Cor. 15:48, 50)

Do you hear what he's saying? The first Adam, the one that gave you physical life, can't give you spiritual life. Why? Because he can't remove your sin which is what separates you from God! No philosophy, no psychology can remove your guilt. Then what can? Only the second Adam.

Lacey Sturm today is a professional musician but she grew up in a difficult single-parent home. In her young life she saw what raw evil could produce when her three-year-old cousin was beaten to death by his step-dad. This sent her life reeling, until she met the second Adam. Please watch this:

[Show Lacey Sturm video – 6:28]

II Cor. 5 tells us this truth:

...if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ... (II Cor. 5:17, 18a)

Is there anyone here or listening to me in The Venue or in Greene-Hills School who needs to be made new? Lacey told you in the video what she did. She just said to God, “I need you. I know I messed up and don't deserve it, but I'm asking you to forgive me. Yes, change me. Yes, make me new.” Let's do that right now...

-
- ⁱ H. Graham Cannon, *The Evolution of Living Things* (Springfield: Thomas, 1958), p. 92
- ⁱⁱ Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, 6th ed. (London: John Murray, 1902), pp. 341-2
- ⁱⁱⁱ Colin Patterson quoted in *Understanding the Times* (David A. Noebel) (Manitou Springs: Summit Press, 1991), p. 279
- ^{iv} Dr. Charles C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972), p. 103
- ^v Will Durant, "Humanism in Historical Perspective," *The Humanist*, Jan./Feb. 1977, p. 26
- ^{vi} Wikipedia, "Psychological Projection – Clinical Approaches."