

GROWING DEEP IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Returning to Our Roots

STUDY ELEVEN

From Creation to Corruption

Genesis 1:26–28; 2:15–17; 3:6–13; Romans 3:9–18

God created humans unlike anything else He created. Humans have the image of God stamped on them.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

WHEN God created the heavens and the earth, He simply spoke the words, and the universe came to be.

“Let there be light,” He said, and light penetrated the darkness (Genesis 1:3). “Let there be a space between the waters,” and the sky was formed (1:6). “Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place,” and dry land appeared (1:9).

With each creative act, the master Artist transformed order out of chaos, shaping what was “formless and empty” into perfectly symmetrical parts. On the ground, He made “seed-bearing plants, and trees with seed-bearing fruit.” (1:10). Into space, He flung the stars, the sun, and the moon (1:14–18). He supplied the oceans with “great sea creatures” and fish; He filled the skies with “every sort of bird”; and He stocked the land with “every sort of animal” (1:21, 25). He made living things able to reproduce new life “according to their kind” (1:11–12, 24–25).

God pronounced His creation good, but it was incomplete. With whom would He share His masterpiece? Who would live in the paradise He made to appreciate it and take care of it in a close relationship with Him? On the sixth day of creation, God made human beings, and the reasons for God’s creative work became clear. God created the heavens and the earth to reflect His glory and to express His love.



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MINISTRIES

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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

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PREPARE YOUR HEART

Join the psalmist in praise of your Creator as you draw near to Him through His Word.

*O LORD, our LORD, your majestic name fills the earth!
Your glory is higher than the heavens. . . .
When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—
the moon and the stars you set in place—
what are mere mortals that you should think about them
human beings that you should care for them?
Yet you made them only a little lower than God
and crowned them with glory and honor.
You gave them charge of everything you made . . .
the flocks and the herds
and all the wild animals,
the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea,
and everything that swims the ocean currents.
O LORD, our LORD, your majestic name fills the earth! (Psalm 8:1, 3–6, 9)*



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

From the opening chapters of Genesis flow the rest of Scripture and, for that matter, all of human history. We discover in this biblical fountainhead not only the origin of all things, but also the source of our identity and purpose and the backstory of all that is right in our world . . . and all that is wrong.

Adam and Eve's sin corrupted God's good creation. But thankfully, the account didn't end there. Their sin led to a Savior, the One to whom human history ultimately points. Let's pick up Genesis 1 after the creation of nature and discover God's design for humanity, how that design was tarnished, and how humanity's sin leads to Jesus Christ.



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Observation: Creation and Instruction, Temptation and Corruption

Be certain to observe the repeated words and phrases because they emphasize central themes. Notice the sequence of events that fall like dominoes, as well as key words you want to define later.

Creation and Instruction—Genesis 1:26–31; 2:15–17

Write down your observations of *Genesis 1:26–27*. What sets humans apart from the rest of God's creation? What is the basis for our identity and what role did God assign to humans?

What do you observe about God in *1:28–31*? About humans? About creation?

Peruse *2:4–25*, in which the author details God's creation of the Garden of Eden and the first man and woman. What specific instructions did God give Adam in *2:15–17*?



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Humans were unlike anything God created. No other created being had a heart to love God or a mind to know God or a volition to obey God. No other created being had an eternal destiny. God made humans distinct. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Temptation and Corruption—Genesis 3:1–13

According to [Genesis 3:1](#), how did Satan twist God's instructions when he tempted Eve? What do you observe about her dialogue with Satan in [3:2–5](#)?

What convinced Eve to eat the fruit and give it to Adam to eat, according to [3:6](#)?

In [3:7–10](#), what did the first humans feel and do after they sinned?



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How did they try to avoid responsibility when God confronted them in *Genesis 3:11–13*?

Summarize God's judgment on Satan and humankind in *3:14–24*. What hint of hope do you see in *3:15*?

Depravity intercepted innocence. As a result, our minds are veiled and clouded, our emotions are fragile, our wills are rebellious. Instead of loving God, we fight with Him. Instead of believing what He says, we reject His truth. Instead of wanting to do what He would have us do, we delight in doing what we want to do. Instead of facing sin, we cover it up. It all goes back to this first scene. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Image of God, Innocence, and Depravity

God stated the central truth about our identity when He said, “Let us make human beings *in our image, to be like us*” (Genesis 1:26, emphasis added).



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In what ways do humans uniquely bear the image of God? Consult your Bible study resources for help with the answer. For online resources, consult the article answering the question, “*What does it mean that humanity is made in the image of God?*” at gotquestions.org or the article, “*Image of God,*” in the Encyclopedia of the Bible at biblegateway.com.

In their innocent state, the first humans were morally pure, relationally whole, and were not subject to death. All that changed the moment “their eyes were opened” (Genesis 3:7). What does that line mean? What changed?

Trouble had entered the home of Adam and Eve. Created in innocence and beauty, they found themselves distant from the One who made them. At this moment, depravity, the presence of sin, had invaded their lives. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



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What does the theological term *depravity* refer to? Feel free to consult your resources or look online to gotquestions.org for help.

How did Cain illustrate human depravity in *Genesis 4:1–8*?

People don't look depraved. Most of us do a masterful job of covering up. But deep down inside, there is this disease that eats away at us and creates in our thoughts, words, and actions sinfulness. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: New Creation in Christ

Let's step into the New Testament, where we find further evidence of both humanity's *identity* as image-bearers and humanity's *condition* as sinners. How did James set the two concepts side-by-side in *James 3:8–9*? What realities did James convey about humanity?



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How did we inherit sin, according to *Romans 5:12*? What is the extent of our sin problem?

In the rest of the passage, *Romans 5:12–21*, Paul contrasted the effects of Adam’s sin with the promise of Christ’s righteousness. In the following chart, write down the contrasts you see.

Romans 5:12–21	
Deadly Effects of Adam’s Sin	Life-Giving Promise of Christ’s Righteousness
<i>Romans 5:12, 14, 16–19, 21</i>	<i>Romans 5:15–19, 21</i>

Paul declared, “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, this person is a *new creation*” (2 Corinthians 5:17 NASB, emphasis added). In Adam, we were under the curse of the old creation, but in Christ, we are created anew under grace.

Isn’t that good news? There’s One to whom you can turn—the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Application: From Creation to Corruption to New Creation

People still tend to respond like Adam and Even when they sin. They cover up their sin, hide from others, and point fingers of blame. Grace, however, frees us to be honest about our sin because we know we are secure in Christ.

If you've felt shame's pull to hide, what can you do to come openly before the Lord and receive His grace? Who can you talk to?

What phrases from our study assure you that you are no longer under sin's condemnation?

What practical benefit does this assurance have for you today?



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God designed us to have a close relationship with Him. Despite our sinful condition, we bear God’s image, and because God loved us, He sent His Son—His exact image—to bear our sin. Through faith in Christ, we are restored. We go from creation to corruption to *new creation* in Christ.

As you close, celebrate your freedom in Christ as your Savior, and join Charles Wesley, the writer of the hymn, “And Can It Be That I Should Gain,” in praising the Lord.

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine!
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness Divine,
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.¹



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, who am I that You should think about me and care for me? And yet, You designed me for relationship and for Your glory, all of which I give to You. Created in Your image, I devote my mind to know You, my emotions to love You, my heart to trust You, and my will to follow You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

ENDNOTE

1. Charles Wesley, www.hymnal.net/en/hymn/h/296.

