

1 - In the Beginning

Then God created mankind in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Gen. 1:27

God and His Garden

God created a perfect world with its spectacular solar system and more, and He made a beautiful place called “The Garden of Eden.”

Then He made man ([Gen. 1:26-27](#)) and gave him the Garden to live in. He even entrusted to man His dominion over every living thing!

God looked at His creation and said it was “very good.”

Man, in God’s Garden

There was no conflict, and what we know as the Fruit of the Spirit ([Gal. 5:22-23](#)) was just their natural way of life!

There was no need for patience because there was no capacity for impatience. There was no need for forgiveness because there was no capacity for one to act in a way that required the forgiveness of the other. Imagine that!

In the Garden, their bodies were healthy because they were nourished by appropriate portions of nutritious food. They drank pure water and breathed clean air.

The human body was not designed to handle the stress that now causes so much emotional and physical sickness, but life there was stress-free!

God alone influenced man and his environment, and everything was in total harmony. There was nothing to deprive man of absolute health, comfort, freedom and peace.

All of that was part of God’s plan. It portrayed “man” as God intended us to be, and that has not changed.

Man

God is a spirit, and He formed man as body, soul and spirit ([I Thess. 5:23](#)).

The word “soul” comes from the Greek *psyche* ([Strong’s G5590](#)). It speaks of our mind, will and emotions and is where our desires and affections reside.

Our spirit is the part of us that is made in His image and sets man apart from the rest of creation.

Satan is also a spirit, and this shared spirit aspect facilitates interaction between God, Satan and man.

Man’s Need

By creation’s design, humans are incomplete in ourselves. God made us with a soul-hunger – an irresistible inner need for relationship with one greater than and outside of ourselves. A god. Can you feel that?

We *must* have a god to give us value, purpose in life, personal security, and a sense of belonging. See [Psa. 42:1-2](#)! We call that “identity,” and it tells us who we are individually and in relation to others.

This identity cannot come from within us, from another person or from anything on the earth. It must come from a spirit, who then becomes our god. God and Satan are our only two options ([Rom. 6:16](#)).

The act of giving ourselves to our god, to satisfy our soul-hunger, is called worship.

In the Garden, Creator God was man’s default god, and through their unhindered spirit-to-spirit communion His Life flowed into man through HIS spirit, and every human need and desire was met perfectly.

The earth was God’s Kingdom. He is good and the earth fully displayed His character and His rule. Man reflected God’s nature, and it was innate in him to please God, but that was about to change.

Satan, Sin and Man

Satan was an angel who rebelled against God and was kicked out of heaven. He infected other angels and is obsessed with influencing humans to follow them. His nature is exactly the opposite of God's in every way.

When we read the story of temptation and sin ([Gen. 3:1-7](#)), we can see what it's all about. Up to this point Adam and Eve only did "good," because that's all they knew. Creator God and Satan, the two gods, knew evil but man did not.

The interlinear Bible, the King James, and several others, render [Gen. 3:5](#) as "then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Adam and Eve liked that idea so they chose to eat the fruit. Just as Satan had said, they now knew both good and evil, but Satan is a deceiver, a liar and a thief, and they now came under *his* authority rather than becoming their own god.

This was "original sin." Very simply, sin, or *hamartia* in Greek ([Strong's G266](#)), speaks of "missing the mark." Sin is man's attempt to satisfy his soul-hunger through acting according to his now-depraved instincts - and missing it because he aimed at the wrong source.

Satan will repeat "the lie" as long as we live, and we will keep believing that we are a god unto ourselves until we reverse that curse by choosing to make God, our god.

The Fall

When Adam and Eve listened to Satan, man's inner nature changed from naturally living in harmony with God, to naturally rebelling against Him.

Any temptation that we yield to, to appease a need or desire in a way contrary to righteousness, reveals our attempt to be our own god. We thus glorify Satan by declaring his way to be better than God's!

If we hope to understand ourselves, our struggle with temptation, our restoration into wholeness, and the meaning of "Church," we must understand God's plan for man and realize what happened in the Garden.

Free Will, God's Way with Man

The ability to choose our god and to then make moral choices, is the hallmark of the spectacular, vibrant, God-man relationship that we were created for! The spiritual intimacy and abundance portrayed in FOR HIS GLORY is hardly possible otherwise.

God intends that we will display His superiority over Satan, the other god. The heavens, the flowers and the birds glorify Him by design, but man must choose to.

We call that "free will," and its effect in both entering the Kingdom of God and experiencing life there, stands in vivid contrast to that of the predestination or "election" that some Christians hold to.

We love and serve Jesus, not as a bride in an arranged marriage but as the abused woman who said "Yes!" to a wonderful man who loved her as she was and promised to make her whole again if she would marry him.

The holiness that springs from free will's personal, spirit-intimacy with Jesus is very different from that which comes from obligation. Love that does not flow freely from the heart, by choice, is not love at all.

We glorify God every time we choose to please Him. Even 1,000 times a day!

Part of God's glory is that He, contrary to Satan, allows us to choose which god we will serve, and His sovereignty is preserved in that He alone determines the outcome of those choices.

Rejecting the Biblical truth of free will makes us vulnerable to forming a man-made religious belief system with a distorted view of God, man, and the God-man relationship. It hinders our entering deeply into the spiritual Life of the Kingdom of God and handicaps us in the humble self-examination that could lead to the repentance that today's church so desperately needs.

The challenge for those who profess to believe in free will is to apply it with integrity in obeying the commands of Jesus regarding holiness, lifestyle and mission, and we have a lot of work to do on that!

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