

Chapter Three



God And His Creation

III. GOD AND HIS CREATION

INTRODUCTION: *God is the great creator of all things. THROUGH HIS ALL-POWERFUL WORD GOD “SPOKE” ALL THINGS INTO EXISTENCE. NOT ONLY DID HE CREATE ALL THINGS, BUT HE CONTINUES TO UPHOLD AND SUSTAIN HIS ENTIRE CREATION. IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR US, AS CREATURES, TO REALIZE THAT WE ARE AT ALL TIMES TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON GOD FOR ALL THINGS. HE IS BOTH THE CAUSE AND REASON FOR OUR EXISTENCE, AND ONLY AS WE ALWAYS KEEP THIS IN MIND WILL OUR LIVES HAVE THE MEANING AND PURPOSE THAT GOD INTENDED FOR THEM TO HAVE.*

1. GOD’S VISIBLE AND MATERIAL CREATION—THE UNIVERSE AND THE WORLD

THE CREATION OF THE WORLD

Gen. 1:1-2 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. (NIV)

- 1st Day - God created light and separated it from darkness.
- 2nd Day - God created the firmament (heaven, space).
- 3rd Day - God separated dry land from water and created herbs and trees to grow upon the earth.
- 4th Day - God created the sun, moon, and stars.
- 5th Day - God created sea animals, fish and fowl.
- 6th Day - God created all creatures that move upon the earth, and finally, as the crown to His creation - MAN (*Gen. 1:24-31; 2:4-25*).
- 7th Day - God “rested” from His creative work.

Gen. 1:31 God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. (NRSV)

Ex. 20:11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (NIV)

Ps. 33:6 By **the word** of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by **the breath of his mouth**. (NIV)

Heb. 11:3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed **at God’s command**, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. (**creatio ex nihilo** = creation out of nothing) (NIV)

2. ALL CREATION, INCLUDING MANKIND IS CONTINUALLY SUSTAINED BY GOD AND IS TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON GOD FOR ALL THINGS

Ps. 100:3 Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. (NIV)

2. (Cont'd)

Ps. 145:9 The LORD is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made. (NRSV)

Ps. 145:15 The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. (NIV)

Acts 17:24-28 The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things....For 'In him we live and move and have our being'... (NRSV)

3. IF GOD IS DENIED AS THE CREATOR:

- a. There is no purpose or intelligence behind any existence. All thought is "caused" by random, uncontrolled forces and therefore has no ultimate meaning.
- b. There is no "truth" or error, for all activity or thought is simply "the fortuitous con-course of atoms." There is therefore no reason for hope; no discernible goal; fear and despair take over.
- c. All creatures are in competition with each other, equal in their non-value, and the earth is just as worthless as what lives on it.
- d. The individual human being loses a sense of personal worth, majesty and dignity as a creature created in God's Image.
- e. The loss of meaning and purpose results in a loss of incentive for work or effort; also a loss of hope and joy, for "that which ends in nothing is nothing."
- f. Love and compassion give way to ruthless self-preservation and exploitation of the weak. This is coupled with a loss of responsibility and accountability, cynicism and nihilism, and the fabric of society pulls apart.

Rom. 1:21-23 For though they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their senseless minds were dark-ened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools; and they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human being or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles. (NRSV)

Rom. 1:28-31 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind and to things that should not be done. They were filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, craftiness, they are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, rebellious toward parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. (NRSV)

4. GOD'S INVISIBLE CREATION – THE ANGELS, ETC.

The angels are glorious creatures of God. The word “angel” means “messenger.” The Bible indicates that angels, too, were created by God, as the following passage indicates: “For in Him (Jesus) all things were created, in heaven, and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him.” (Jesus, the Son of God) (*Col. 1:16*) Angels are described in the Bible as “spirits,” but when they appear visibly on earth, they resemble a radiant human being. (See also: *Mark 16:5; Acts 1:10; Acts 12:7-11*.)

A. The holy angels

THESE ARE THOSE ANGELS WHO HAVE NOT REBELLED AGAINST GOD BUT CONTINUALLY DO HIS WILL.

1. **THEY ARE THE MESSENGERS OF GOD AND THE SERVANTS OF MAN. THEY ARE SENT BY GOD ON ERRANDS OF MERCY AND ALSO TO PUNISH EVIL. (SEE MATT. 26:53; LK. 22:43)**

Ps. 91:11-12 For he will command his angels concerning you **to guard you** in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone. (NRSV)

Matt. 4:11 Then the devil left him; and angels came and attended to his needs. (Jesus') (REB)

Matt. 18:10 “Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven.” (NRSV)

Lk. 1:26-27 God sent **the angel Gabriel** to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. (NIV)

Heb. 1:14 Are not all angels **ministering spirits** sent to serve those who will inherit salvation? (NIV)

2. **THEY ARE POWERFUL AND NUMEROUS**

Ps. 103:20 Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, obedient to his spoken word. (NRSV)

Dan. 7:10b Thousands upon thousands attended him; **ten thousand times ten thousand** stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. (NIV)

3. **THEY SING THE PRAISES OF GOD**

Lk. 2:13-14a And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, **praising God** and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven...” (NRSV)

4. **THEY ARE NOT TO BE WORSHIPPED**

Rev. 22:8-9 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, **I fell down to worship** at the feet of the angel who showed them to me; but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your comrades the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. **Worship God!**” (NRSV)

4. (Cont'd)

B. The evil angels

THESE ARE THE ANGELS THAT REBELLED AGAINST GOD. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT ALL ANGELS WERE CREATED HOLY, BUT THAT SATAN, A HIGH ANGEL, BECAME EVIL AND ENDEAVORED TO OVERTHROW GOD'S KINGDOM. HE LED MANY OTHER ANGELS WITH HIM IN HIS REVOLT. SATAN, AND THOSE WHO SHARED IN THIS REBELLION, WERE CAST OUT OF GOD'S PRESENCE AND ARE TO BE PUNISHED ETERNALLY. FOR THE TIME BEING, HOWEVER, SATAN'S KINGDOM IS FIRMLY ESTABLISHED UPON THE EARTH.

1. SATAN AND HIS ANGELS REBELLED AND ESTABLISHED A KINGDOM ON EARTH

Matt. 12:25-26 Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand?" (NIV)

Luke 10:18 He (Jesus) said to them, "I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning." (NRSV)

II Pet. 2:4 ...God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of deepest darkness to be kept until the judgment; (NRSV)

Jude 1:6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. (NIV)

Rev. 12:7-9 And war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, but they were defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (NRSV)

Note: See Chapter 8 (page Ch 8-4) on castle illustration.

Note: In Scripture Satan is pictured as being, in some sense, the owner and ruler of this world. He is called, "the prince of this world," "this world's ruler," and, "the god of this world." Also, "the whole world is in the power of the evil one." See *Matt. 4:8; John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11; II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2.*

4.B. (Cont'd)

2. **THE WORLD IS CORRUPTED BY THE EVIL NATURE AND ACTIVITY OF SATAN, THE CHIEF DEVIL**

Though the Bible gives no complete answer to the problem of evil, it does indicate that evil originated with the Devil, and not with God. Satan's chief characteristics are pride, hatred, and opposition to the truth. His method of opposing God is to attack God's word and to destroy His works. Since man was created in God's image, Satan especially endeavors to draw the heart of man away from God and to bring man into opposition to God and His will. Then, when man has sinned, Satan becomes man's accuser, and seeks to bring about his condemnation. (Devil, Greek diabolos = Slanderer)

A. **A LIAR & MURDERER - FULL OF HATRED AND MALICE**

John 8:44 (Jesus, to unbelieving Jews) "You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father's desires. He was a **murderer** from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a **liar** and the father of lies." (NRSV)

I John 2:10-12 He who loves his fellow-Christian dwells in the light: there is no cause of stumbling in him. But anyone who hates his fellow is in darkness; he walks in the dark and has no idea where he is going, because the darkness has made him blind. (REB)

B. **A DECEIVER - FULL OF CUNNING - HE DISTORTS THE TRUTH**

II Cor. 4:4 In their case **the god of this world has blinded the minds** of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (NRSV)

II Cor. 11:3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was **deceived** by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. (NIV)

Rev. 10:3b (An angel) threw him (Satan) into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from **deceiving** the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended... (NIV)

C. **THE ACCUSER AND SLANDERER**

Rev. 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For **the accuser** of our brothers, **who accuses them** before our God day and night, has been hurled down." (NIV)

D. **THE SOURCE OF PRIDE**

I Tim. 3:6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. (that is, he may get **proud** and share the devil's fate) (NIV)

4.B.2. (Cont'd)

E. AFFLICTION, DISEASE, DEMON POSSESSION AND EVEN DEATH, ARE ASCRIBED TO SATAN'S POWER

Luke 13:15-16 The Lord gave him this answer: "What hypocrites you are!" he said. "Is there a single one of you who does not loose his ox or his donkey from its stall and take it out to water on the sabbath? And here is this woman, a daughter of Abraham, **who has been bound by Satan for eighteen long years**: was it not right for her to be loosed from her bonds on the sabbath?" (REB)

See Also: *Acts 10:38* and *Hebrews 2:14*

3. THE CHRISTIAN IS IN CONSTANT CONFLICT WITH SATAN

In all suffering, sickness, loss and conflict, the devil tempts people to give up on God, to become distrustful, bitter, discouraged, despairing. The Christian must recognize all of these as trials or tests which God allows, and which He can turn to our good if we keep trusting God and seek His help. All Satan's temptations are, in essence, attempts to separate people from God's Word, and to bring them into disobedience and distrust toward God. See Genesis 3:1-5.

Matt. 26:41 "**Watch and pray** that you may not enter into temptation, the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (RSV)

Luke 8:12 The ones on the path are those who have heard; then **the devil comes and takes away the word** from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. (NRSV)

Luke 22:31-32 "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." (NIV)

Rom. 5:3-5 ...we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. (NRSV)

Rom. 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. (NIV)

II Cor. 4:16-17 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. (NIV)

4.B.3. THE CHRISTIAN IN CONFLICT WITH SATAN – (CONT'D)

II Cor. 7:9-10 Yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. (NIV)

Eph. 6:11-18 Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication.... (NRSV)

Heb. 5:8-9 Although he (Jesus) was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him. (NRSV)

I Pet. 4:1 ...he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. (NIV)

I Pet. 5:8-9 Be on the alert! Wake up! Your enemy the devil, like a roaring lion, prowls around looking for someone to devour. Stand up to him, **firm in your faith**, and remember that your fellow-Christians in this world are going through **the same kinds of suffering**. (REB)

Rev. 12:11 They overcame him (Satan) **by the blood of the Lamb** and **by the word of their testimony**; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. (NIV)

See also: *Matt. 4:1-11; I Cor. 10:12-13; Hebrews 12:3-13; James 1:12-15.*

Temptations and Trials

“Although temptations are to be resisted, trials are to be welcomed (Jas. 1:2). The Greek word for ‘temptation’ and ‘trial’ is the same, but the meaning is different. A temptation is an enticement to sin which arises from within. A trial is a testing of faith which comes from some external circumstance such as persecution. The value of such trials is that they develop Christian character and ‘produce steadfastness’ (Jas. 1:3-4).” (1954c:107)

– John R. W. Stott quoted by Timothy Dudley-Smith in *Authentic Christianity From the Writings of John Stott*, #484, p. 215, InterVarsity Press, 1995. Used with permission. (Taken from *Basic Introduction to the New Testament*, first edition, subsequently published as *Men with a Message*, p. 107. Downers Grove: IVP, 1965.)

5. MAN — GOD’S IMAGE, CREATURE AND SON

A. GOD CREATED MAN AS THE CULMINATION OF HIS CREATIVE WORK

God took special interest in the creation of man, for man alone of all the creatures was to be created in God’s Image, and was created to be the ruler over the world which God had made. Since we learn from the New Testament that man only regains the Image of God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, it is proper to say that the Image of God was the presence of God’s Spirit and nature within man. That man possessed the Image of God does not mean that he looked like God, for God has no physical shape or form. But man resembles God in his mind and spirit. He was righteous, pure, loving, full of wisdom, and had the ability to rule over God’s world. The rest of God’s creation should have been able to look at man and say, “That is what God is like.” (In Jesus we see God’s Image as it ought to be in all people.)

Gen. 1:26 Then God said, “Let us make man **in our image, in our likeness**, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” (NIV)

Job 7:17-18 “What is man that you make so much of him, that you give him so much attention, that you examine him every morning and test him every moment?” (NIV)

Ps. 8:3-6a When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? **You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.** You made him ruler over the works of your hands. (NIV)

See also: *Hebrews 2:5-9* (where this verse is applied first of all to Jesus); *Luke 3:38* (where Adam is called, ‘the son of God.’)

B. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT HUMAN BEINGS IS THAT GOD LOVES US, GAVE HIS OWN SON TO DIE FOR US, AND IS WILLING TO HELP US, GUIDE US, AND GIVE US ETERNAL LIFE. GOD ONLY ADDRESSES HIS WORD TO PEOPLE, AND ONLY PEOPLE RESPOND IN PRAYER.

Luke 12:4-7 “I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that can do nothing more. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him! Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God’s sight. But even the hairs of your head are all counted. Do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.” (NRSV)

Rom. 8:31b-32 If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? (NIV)

Note: The Bible sometimes depicts human beings as creatures comprised of **body and soul**. In other places it speaks of humans as **body, soul and spirit**. See *I Kings 17:21-22*; *Matt. 10:28*; *II Cor. 12:1-4*; *I Thess. 5:23*; *Luke 8:55*.

5. (Cont'd)

5.C. MANKIND LOST THE IMAGE OF GOD THROUGH DISOBEDIENCE

When Adam listened to Satan's temptation and disobeyed God (as recorded in *Genesis 3*), he came under the Devil's power. By rebelling and disobeying God's command, humanity lost God as the real ruler of life and Satan assumed control. Thus man "died" as God had warned he would if he disobeyed. Thus **humanity also lost the Image of God**, since the Spirit of God no longer dwelt within man as the ruling power.

Henceforth, man is described in the Bible as **spiritually dead**. He is described as "flesh," that is, lacking the life of God's Spirit and controlled and dominated by the evil inclinations and lusts of his own heart. This condition of spiritual deadness was passed on by Adam to his children, and they to their children, so that all of us are born without spiritual life. By nature we lack all true love of God and the ability to do His will. Unless we are restored to God's life and love, we live lives of lust, pride, selfishness, and godlessness. We call this fallen condition of man, **ORIGINAL or INHERITED SIN**. (We sin because we are sinful. We are not sinful only after we have sinned.)

5.C. (Cont'd)

1. **BY NATURE WE ARE SPIRITUALLY DEAD**

Ps. 51:5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. (NIV)

John 3:5-6 Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. **What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.**" (NRSV)

John 8:34-36 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (NIV)

Eph. 2:1-3 **You once were dead** because of your sins and wickedness; you followed the ways of this present world order, obeying the commander of the spiritual powers of the air, the spirit now at work among God's rebel subjects. We too were once of their number: we were ruled by our physical desires, and did what instinct and evil imagination suggested. **In our natural condition we lay under the condemnation of God like the rest of mankind.** (REB)

Man's Favorite 'God': Self

5.C. (Cont'd)

2. **BY NATURE WE ARE INCLINED TO DO EVIL, ARE HOSTILE TO GOD, AND CANNOT MAKE SENSE OUT OF GOD'S WILL AND WORD. OUR MIND AND REASON ARE ALSO DARKENED.**

Jer. 10:23 I am aware, Lord, that no one's ways are of his own choosing; nor is it within his power to determine his course in life. (REB)

Jer. 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? (NIV)

Rom. 3:9 What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all; for I have already charged that **all men, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin.** (RSV)

Rom. 7:18-19 **I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.** For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. (NIV)

Rom. 8:7-8 For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and **those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** (NRSV)

I Cor. 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for **they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them,** because they are spiritually discerned. (NIV)



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THE ESSENCE OF SIN: SELF-CENTEREDNESS

5.C. (Cont'd)

3. **ADAM'S DISOBEDIENCE ALSO BROUGHT PHYSICAL SUFFERING, SICKNESS, AND DEATH INTO THE WORLD (SEE ALSO 3-12 AND 3-13)**

Rom. 5:12 Therefore, 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. (NIV)

Rom. 5:18-19 Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. For just as **by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners**, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. (NRSV)

4. **HUMANITY IS REINSTATED IN GOD'S FAVOR AND RECEIVES THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHEN IT REPENTS AND ACCEPTS CHRIST AS SAVIOR. THUS ALSO A BEGINNING IS MADE IN THE RESTORATION OF THE IMAGE OF GOD. IF WE WISH TO SEE THE FULL IMAGE OF GOD IN HUMAN NATURE, WE SHOULD STUDY THE PERSON OF CHRIST.**

John 1:12-13 Yet to all who received him (Christ), to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. (NIV)

II Cor. 3:18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, **are being changed into his likeness** from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (RSV)

Col. 3:9b-10 ...seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, **which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator.** (NRSV)

See also: *I Cor. 15:45-49; II Cor. 4:16.*

6. **EVEN THE PHYSICAL CREATION WAS CURSED**

The Material Creation is also subject to the weary treadmill of birth, decay, and death. But it, too, will be released from its bondage when man, its intended ruler, has been totally freed from sin and death in the resurrection.

A. **THE EARTH IS CURSED BECAUSE OF HUMAN SIN**

Gen. 3:17-18 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field." (NIV)

B. **THE EARTH WILL BE RESTORED WHEN CHRISTIANS ARE GLORIFIED**

Rom. 8:19-23 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that **the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay** and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. (NIV)

7. GOD, THE CREATOR, STILL RULES HIS WORLD

Ps. 145:8-9 The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The LORD is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made. (See entire Psalm if time permits.) (NRSV)

Is. 46:9b-11 "...I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: **My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please....** What I have said, that will I bring about; what I have planned, that will I do." (NIV)

Rom. 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (NIV)

II Pet. 3:13 But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. (NRSV)

THE FIRST ARTICLE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED

CREATION

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean? I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them.

He also gives them clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life.

He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil.

All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.

This is most certainly true.

- *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, p. 105.

WORKSHEET FOR CHAPTER III (PAGE 1)

I. On the basis of this lesson, can you answer the following questions?

1. What is the difference between **God creating** something and **man manufacturing something**? _____

2. What does it mean that God created man “in His own image”? _____

3. What does the Bible teach us regarding the origin of evil? _____

4. What is the meaning of the term, “original sin”? _____

5. What are some of the weapons (offensive and defensive) which the Bible tells Christians to use in their battle with the devil? (See Eph. 6:11ff.) _____

6. How, according to the Bible, can the lost image of God be regained?

7. What are the major consequences (bad results) of human sin? _____

II. Problems for thought and discussion.

1. Which statement, according to the Bible’s teaching, is more accurate?
 - a) We are sinful because we have committed sins.
 - b) We commit sins because we are by nature sinful.
2. A Christian man said, “Before I became a Christian, I used to hate those highway signs that say, ‘Prepare to Meet Thy God!’ or ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and You Shall Be Saved!’ But now that I have become a Christian myself, I don’t mind those signs at all.”

On the basis of this lesson, can you explain this man’s reactions? _____

WORKSHEET FOR CHAPTER III (PAGE 2)

III. Satan's one 'virtue' is persistence. Look up the following Bible passages and write on the blank line the evil activity that Satan is engaged in.

1. Matt. 4:9 _____

2. Matt. 13:19 _____

3. Luke 22:31 _____

4. John 13:2 _____

5. Acts 5:3 _____

6. 2 Cor. 4:4 _____

7. I Pet. 5:8 _____

8. Rev. 12:10 _____