

Creation and Original Sin

After examining God, His existence and how He reveals Himself, one's attention naturally shifts to God's action in the world. As the first unmoved mover,¹ God is the ultimate cause of all that exists and thus before He created, nothing but God existed. God created the world out of nothing as a free gift, to manifest His glory and to share His truth, beauty and goodness. Today, He continues to remain present in and through His creation.

The first three chapters of Genesis recalls the story of creation. This text is a unique genre of literature which is told in a way that characterizes real historical events without giving a literal account of exactly what happened. While the book of Genesis is not intended to speak about the specific details of how God created the world it shows seven important truths; the creation of all things at the beginning of time by God, the special creation of man and the unity of the human race, the eternal happiness of the first parents, the command given by God to test mankind's obedience, their breaking of God's command at the temptation of the devil, their falling from a state of innocence and the promise of a savior.

The crowing achievement of God's creation is the human person who He created in His own image and likeness.² While all other creatures act on instinct, mankind is a rational creature, meaning he has an intellect by which he can know, judge, and reason as well as a free will which gives him the ability to make free choices. Man derives his dignity then not from what he does, but from who he is. In being made in God's image each human person is infinitely valuable and worthy of respect. There is nothing that can remove this likeness to God and there is nothing that can strip a person of the dignity owed to them as human persons.

While man is created in God's image and likeness, he is still a fallen creature. God created Adam and Eve in a state of original justice, possessing certain supernatural gifts including sanctifying grace³, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit⁴, and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit,⁵ as well as the preternatural gifts of infused knowledge, incorruptibility of the body, integrity or the proper ordering of the passions and impassibility or the freedom from suffering. Yet rather than depend on God, Adam and Eve sought autonomy from God⁶ and so they were punished by having the supernatural and preternatural gifts removed through original sin. Since that moment every human person, with the exception of the Blessed Virgin Mary,⁷ has been born with original sin and while the supernatural gifts are restored with baptism the preternatural gifts are not restored in this life.

¹ See the Chapter Does God Exist?

² Gen 1:26

³ Sanctifying grace will be discussed later

⁴ The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit will be discussed later

⁵ The Gifts of the Holy Spirit will be discussed later

⁶ The fall of Adam and Eve is recounted in chapter 3 of Genesis

⁷ We will discuss this more later

God justly punished Adam and Eve for their sin but in His love for them He did not abandon them. Immediately after the tragic sin of Adam and Eve, God foretold and put into motion His plan of salvation and redemption for all of humanity through Jesus Christ.⁸

⁸ Gen 3:15