

ANTHROPOLOGY INDEX

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ANTHROPOLOGY – THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

There is only one divine prototype of God. There is only one being that God created in “His image.” Within this special creation there is the potential for tremendous accomplishment or horrific failure. Within this special creation there is the possibility of immense growth or immense stagnancy. No other being has purposely rebelled against God and still had God graciously promise to give him so much. No other created being can be Satan’s child one day and God’s child the next day. There has never been nor will there ever be such a magnificent and such a depressing existence like the subject of man. The Bible was written **for** man and it contains much information **about** man. Therefore, it is our privilege to study “Anthropology”– the doctrine of man.

QUESTION #1 – What is Anthropology?

Anthropology is the study of man. The word “anthropology” comes from two Greek words: “Anthropos,” which means man, and “logos,” which means a word, speech, saying or discourse. When we combine the two words–“anthropos” and “logos” to form “anthropology,” **the meaning is a discourse or study of man.**

QUESTION #2 – What are the two types of anthropological studies?

In today’s world there are primarily two kinds of anthropological disciplines which really have, as Dr. Chafer said, “...little in common between them” (Vol. 2, p. 125).

(Anthropological Discipline #1) - Philosophical Anthropology.

This is the type of anthropology that is primarily taught in colleges and universities. It attempts to study and observe man so that it can form various conclusions in an attempt to develop the best possible life. Philosophical anthropology is human reasoned theory and philosophy, much of which is based on pure speculation. It includes religion in its consideration, but tends to leaven God and His Word **out of** the picture on such important issues like origin, purpose and destiny. **Philosophical anthropology exalts man, not God.**

(Anthropological Discipline #2) - Biblical Anthropology.

This is the type of anthropology that should be taught in universities, colleges and churches. Biblical anthropology is divinely revealed revelation from God. It is totally factual and true. It is a study based on God’s Word. **Biblical anthropology exalts God and not man.** It deals with objective, not subjective information.

There are several differences between philosophical anthropology and biblical anthropology:

1. One is from man, the other is from God.
2. One uses man’s writings, the other uses God’s Word.
3. One deals with the intellectual, emotional and temporal, the other includes these themes but also deals with the spiritual and the eternal.
4. One is a composite of theory and fact, and the other is all fact.

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QUESTION #3 – What are subjects that true biblical anthropology studies?

(Subject #1) - It will study man's origin .

(Subject #2) - It will study man's material and immaterial character.

(Subject #3) - It will study man's relationship with God.

(Subject #4) - It will study man's fall .

(Subject #5) - It will study man's sin .

(Subject #6) - It will study man's destiny .

A true anthropology will touch base with and study every one of these critical matters.

QUESTION #4 – Is the Bible a science book?

The answer to this question is no ! The point we must **always** remember is that the Bible is God's Word to man given by God to reveal everything God wants man to know, and to point man in true paths. Whenever the Bible touches on any "scientific" subject, the Bible will **always** be true and accurate .

What particularly makes the Bible so unique to the study of anthropology is that it presents information about man which is far beyond any knowledge or study of a human being. For example, the Bible gives facts as to how man was created . It gives information regarding different types of death, both physical and spiritual. The Bible gives accurate information concerning future eternity , including discussions regarding the resurrection of the body, glimpses of eternity—both positive and negative and how God views man. No other anthropological study can deal with man at this level. There is scientific information found in the Bible, but there is also supernatural information found in the Bible.

Perhaps one of the more profound statements ever made on this question was made by Matthew Fountaine Maury, a scientist who was called "the pathfinder of the seas." In an address he made in the laying of the cornerstone of a university in 1860, he said these words:

"I have been blamed by men of science, both in this country and in England, for quoting the Bible in confirmation of the doctrines of physical geography. The Bible, they say, was not written for scientific purposes, and is therefore of no authority in matters of science. I beg pardon! The Bible is authority for everything it touches. What would you think of the historian who should refuse to consult the historical records of the Bible, because the Bible was not written for the purposes of history? The Bible is true and science is true. The agents concerned in the physical economy of our planet are ministers of Him who made both it and the Bible. The records which He has chosen to make through the agency of these ministers of His upon the crust of the earth are as true as the records which, by the hands of His prophets and servants, He has been pleased to make in the Book of Life.

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They are both true; and when your men of science, with vain and hasty conceit, announce the discovery of disagreement between them, rely upon it the fault is not with the Witness or His records, but with the “worm” who essays to interpret evidence which he does not understand. When I, a pioneer in one department of this beautiful science, discover the truths of revelation and the truths of science reflecting light one upon the other and each sustaining the other, how can I, as a truth-loving, knowledge-seeking man, fail to point out the beauty and to rejoice in its discovery? Reticence on such an occasion would be in, and were I to suppress the emotion with which such discoveries ought to be in, and were I to suppress the emotion with which such discoveries ought to stir the soul, the waves of the sea would lift up their voice, and the very stones of the earth cry out against me” (Vol. 2, pp. 127-128).

QUESTION #5 – According to the Bible, what is the origin of man’s existence?

The Bible clearly and emphatically states that man came from God !

(Passage #1) - Gen. 2:7, 18, 21-22 - Man was a specific, creative act of God.

(Passage #2) - Psalm 8:3-7 - God is credited with making man in the context of other great, creative works of God—heavens, moon, stars, angels and animals.

(Passage #3) - Psalm 139:13-16 - God is credited with forming the intricate design of a baby.

(Passage #4) - Matthew 19:4 - Jesus Christ credits God with creating men and women.

(Passage #5) - Mark 10:6 - Jesus Christ specifically states God made males and females.

(Passage #6) - Luke 3:38 - Luke calls Adam “the son of God,” meaning Adam literally and physically was an original creation of God.

(Passage #7) - I Cor. 11:3, 7-9 - According to Paul, a key motivation for both men and women functioning in the church according to their proper God-designed roles was the fact that both were created by God and accountable to God.

(Passage #8) - I Cor. 15:35-50 - The entire process of man’s life, death and resurrection is a creative work of God.

(Passage #9) - I Timothy 2:13 - Adam and Eve were created by God in a chronological order.

QUESTION #6 – Why is the origin of man so important?

Another way this question may be asked is why has this truth been so twisted and rejected when the Bible clearly stresses God created man? The origin of man is critical for several reasons:

(Reason #1) - Because of God’s revelation .

This issue determines whether or not one believes or rejects the Word of God. God reveals He created man, so accepting this truth or rejecting it is an issue of believing the Bible.

(Reason #2) - Because of man’s nature .

Man has been created in the “image of God.” If this truth is rejected, then man is not much more than an animal and not only is the nature of man lowered, but God is dishonored.

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When one admits man has been created in the “image of God,” one has a healthy, reverential sense about man, life and God.

(Reason #3) - Because of man’s responsibility.

Since man has been created by God, he is accountable to God. If this truth is denied, man makes himself accountable and responsible to no one, at least temporarily in his own mind. This enables him to think, do and say whatever he wants. Once one admits he has been created by God, he also admits a responsibility to the God who created him.

(Reason #4) - Because of man’s destiny.

Since man has been created by God, he will have a future date in which he will face God. Those who downplay the fact that they were created by God promote a philosophy which says “this life is everything.” They dismiss any idea from their minds that they are accountable to God and will one day face Him. Not wanting to face the thought of eternity, they begin by denying the fact that they were created by God.

The majority of people will go to great lengths to keep from thinking about the reality of facing God. A critical doctrine which must be attacked by the majority is the doctrine which says man was created by God.

QUESTION #7 – What is evolution?

Evolution is a theory which states that man is related to all forms of life through a common ancestry and evolved into existence from a simpler form of life into a higher form of life.

Evolution is a theory. A theory is a speculative and imaginative idea not based on fact. Facts require witnesses, but theories do not.

Generally observed, there are two types of evolution:

(Evolution Type #1) - Atheistic Evolution.

This is the type of evolution that says man just happened by chance. According to this theory, there was no God involved in any part of the process. Man just naturally evolved. This is often referred to as Naturalistic evolution.

(Evolution Type #2) - Theistic Evolution.

This is the type of evolution that says God started the evolutionary process and carefully oversaw it and brought it along until man evolved. God created an original cell, according to this theory, then let the process evolve until it ultimately produced man.