

What Kind of Being Is Man - Part 1

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon examines the complex nature of man as created in God's image, his significance, and the implications of sin and free will.

Duration: 50:31

Scripture: Genesis 9:2, Job 4:19, Job 7:17, Job 25:6, Psalm 8:4, Isaiah 40:22, James 3:7

Topics: "Sinful Nature"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the nature of God and highlights several characteristics of God mentioned in the scripture. He emphasizes that God is right, truth, light, life, and love. The preacher uses an analogy of a father coming home to his children to illustrate the importance of genuine love and relationship rather than programmed actions. He concludes by stating that God desires a meaningful and genuine relationship with humanity, and if God had made humans incapable of choosing to love Him, it would have been a mere mechanical response rather than a heartfelt expression.

Transcript

For about 25 years I've been saying that the next area of conflict and polemic was going to be other than where it's been for about a hundred years, namely in the matter of inspiration or epistemology. Those of us that have fought through that battle and arrived at the position that the word of God is the inspired word of God, and so accept it. I'm not interested in dialogue on the subject.

I closed my mind on that subject about 25 years ago. I reached a position and accepted it and I've stood there and I just don't. If you can talk all you want, but I'm not getting interested in discussing the matter.

I believe it is the word of God, the inspired word of God, the authoritative word of God. So that's where we stand. Now I don't think that it's any surprise to you to realize that many of the great historical delineations or divisions of the Church have not been as much on the matter of theology or the nature of God as they've been on anthropology, the nature of man.

What kind of a being is man? What is man? What kind of a creature is he? And I believe that that is going to be the arena of conflict for the next 15, 20, or 25 years. Now I may be wrong. Prophets did not run in our family, spelled either with an E or an I, generally speaking.

And I therefore have no real authority to be dogmatic on this. It's just the feelings I have that you're going to see in the next five to ten years. A great many books written, articles written, sermons preached on the nature of man.

What kind of a being is he? And remember you heard it at the discernment first. That's where we got started with it. And I've asked you to turn to Psalm 8. I'm going to read the entire psalm.

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, who has set thy glory above the heavens! Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon, and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him? And this Son of Man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands.

Thou hast put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, the fishes of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Now, during the week to come in preparation for next Sunday, I wish you'd do some reading. I'm going to give you a few verses.

You might like to write them down, and you might like to look at them and ponder them in the days to come. I find that there are several verses that indicate the apparent insignificance of man. Job, in the 4th chapter, in the 19th verse, in the 7th chapter, in the 17th verse, spoke of man as being a tenant in a house of clay.

This doesn't sound very particular dignity, does it? And then in Job 25, in verse 6, he is called a worm. Now, we're getting down to our own opinion of ourselves generally. And in Psalms 8 and 4, in the 8th chapter and 4, we found that he was just an atom, as it were, in the natural universe.

And then in Isaiah 40 and 22, we find that he's a grasshopper when he's compared to God. But there are some other things that need to be brought to mind, so I'm going to give you a few that indicate that man is made in the image of God. And you can read these and ponder these, and if you have a concordance, it'll be a helpful thing for you to do some studying.

In Genesis, the first chapter, in the 27th verse, so God created man in his own image. In the image of God created he him. Male and female created he them.

And in Genesis, the 5th chapter, in the 1st verse, this is the book of the generations of Adam, in the day that God created man in the likeness of God made he him. And in 1 Corinthians 11, verse 7, chapter 11, verse 7, For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God. But the woman is the glory of the man.

James 3 and 9, Therewith blessed be God even the Father, and therewith cursed be men which are made after the similitude of God. You need to study these scriptures and think about them. Then we want to just look a little more as to this matter of the dominion that God gave man, as we saw in the 8th chapter, and I'll call your attention again.

In Genesis, the 1st chapter, in the 26th verse, and God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And in Genesis 9

and 2, and all you need to do is just write down a GE 9 colon 2 and you have it. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moves upon the sea, and upon all the fishes of the sea, and to your hands are they delivered.

And then James 3 and 7, that little insight, For every kind of beast, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things of the sea, is tame, and half-tamed of mankind. Now you go on with this study, and use your concordance and other books that you have, and try to find out what the word of God teaches about man. What kind of a being is he? What should we see? What's the view we should have of him? After all, there's a lot of us on deck, aren't there? There's, what, something like 3,400,000,000 a day, and there'll be about 7,500,000,000 in the year 2000, and about 15,000,000,000 in the year 2030, and if you gotta go once more, you see it doubles every 32 years.

So if you want to take another step up when your grandchildren will be our age, or some of us at least, there would be in the year 260, and it's not unthinkable that some of we grandchildren now might live to that age, or the ones who expect it, before the summer's over. There will be about 30,000,000,000 people. I'm not even gonna ask you to take it one more turn there, because that would be stretching your, your mind.

So with as many of us as there are, we ought to find out a little bit about us, and have some insights as to what kind of a, of beings we are. Years ago, when I was a student at the University of Minnesota, I was sitting in the student lounge between classes, and was reading my New Testament. At the other end of this four-seat leather lounge was another student, and he noticed I had a pile of books beside me, and I was reading out of this little, weird-shaped, black-covered book, and he'd look over once in a while, and after a while, his curiosity got the better of him, and he said, what are you reading? Is that a book of poems? Well, I said, it's got some poems in it, and I started to talk to him, and I began to answer his questions, and share my faith with him.

And after a while, he stopped, and he said, let me ask you a question before you go any further. Do you think that that book you've got, the Bible, teaches that God knew everything before it happened? That he really knew what was going to take place? Now, this was back in 1941, 40 and 41, that I refer to, and he said, do you think that God knew that, what Hitler was going to do to the Jews in Germany? And I had to say, yes, I don't think there are any surprises with God. The God of the Bible lives in the eternal now, and we've been saving these for you.

Come right out. We were just holding them. We wouldn't let a soul take them until you got here.

I know it was. Come early and get a back seat. Isn't that lovely? And he then said to me, look, why did God make man? If God knew that man was going to turn out to be such a wicked, cruel monster as he's shown himself to be, why did he ever make man in the first place? I was chewing on my gums a little bit there, muttering to myself, and I gave him an answer, the best I could, and I wasn't satisfied with it, and he wasn't satisfied with it, and you could do something about it.

I went to work. I started to study the Scripture, and to answer the question, why did God make man in the first place? If he knew that he would sin, making him capable of sinning, why did God ever make man? Because unless you could answer that, the rest of it wasn't too important. That was pretty basic.

Why did God make man in the first place? Make him so that he could sin if he knew that he was going to sin. Well, someone once heard me speak on this years ago, and he said, I've now heard the metaphysics

of Paris Regis, and maybe that's what you'll say, and I don't want to make what I'm about to give you the test of fellowship by any means, but I would like to have you think about it. And I would suggest that God made man.

Now, we realize that God is infinite and perfect in all of his being, in all of his attributes, that he is self-existent, one who needs nothing to complete himself, and yet at the same time, we're told in the Bible that God is a father, not only of the second person of the Trinity son, but he is the father of mankind. And then we are told that the son is the bridegroom, and this goes back to the nature of God. Now, what characterizes God? What are some things you can say about God? Well, I think we could pick out three or four statements in the scripture that have something to say about God.

God is. Now, you can think of one immediately, can't you? God is life, correct? And then, when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, God is life. I am the way, the truth.

God is truth. And then we've had the third statement, God is love. Well, there may be many more, but this suffices to illustrate what I want to say.

Let's take four, shall we? God is right, God is life, God is truth, and God is love. And let's dwell on the last one for a moment. God is love.

From eternity past, the triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit, not three gods, God, manifested as Father, Son, and Spirit, God who is love, in a sense, has loved with an everlasting love an object of his love. You see, love is incomplete without an object. Now, obviously, the Father loves, loves with Son, and he's the beloved of the Father, indeed, but, but we're talking now about outside of God and his triunity, some being.

Love is incomplete, I'm saying, without an object. And so, in a sense, if God was to ever have the perfect fulfillment of his own being, then there would be the necessity for someone that he could love, that needed his love, and could, and was incomplete without his love, and was capable of returning his love in such a way as to satisfy God's heart. Are you with me? Therefore, if God wants to have a being, he could only love that which was like himself.

Now, we use the word love very rightly, don't we? Have you ever heard anybody say, only to love I knew whom? Or have you heard anybody say, I love that shade of blue? Or again, or I, in some years of my life, I love seven fried chickens. Now, this is a matter of speaking, but neither chicken, the colors, the size, are fit objects of love, because they don't need love. They're not completed by love.

They can't return love. Love can only be directed towards that which is in need of it, that understands it, that's completed by it, and can return it. We can only love that which is like ourselves.

I saw a cartoon years ago, a lady, you know, trying, she wore glasses on the end of a stick, and looked down her nose, and she had a little poodle in her arms, and underneath it says, oh, how I love my poodle comes. And then I read how much money was spent on dog food, and how many children there were without enough, and how much was spent on grooming, and all these other things, of which I have no argument. The point was that the dog was incapable of understanding all the nuances of meaning of a human's love, and returning it in such a way as to satisfy the need.

Now, I'm not, for a moment, belittling the relationship, the place that pets will play in a home. I'm merely saying that there's a vast cross stitch between the brightest dog and the dullest human, and we're going to have to recognize it, recognize it. So, if God wants to love someone in this fashion, if it was to be bride to

the bridegroom, and child to the father, so that the eternal longing in the heart of the father for someone that he could, to whom he could be father, and the eternal longing in the heart of the son, the bridegroom, for someone that could be to him bride, then that creature would have to be like him, like him.

Now, I do not know wherein angels differ from men, from man or God, but I do know that as much as, or as little as, the scripture says about other beings, and certainly it identifies them. We do have cherubim, and we have seraphim, and then there are the other intelligent beings, the wicked spirits, the angels that fell and were cast out with Satan. So, there's another order of being in the world.

Now, I do not know wherein they differ from people. I only know that the scripture says that he made man in his image and likeness, and nothing else. No other being that's made has ever been described as being made in the image and in the likeness of God.

Now, I think there's a very precise and important reason for it, because man is the only being that God says he loves. No, he doesn't. He doesn't say that he loves angels.

He doesn't say that he loves cherubim or seraphim, but he says that he loves man, and he's loved them with an everlasting love. And I think it's because man is made in his image. Man is a microcosm of God, if you please.

What God is infinitely, we are finitely. We have been given the same, I must be terribly careful at this point. We have been given the carnage over alas, using the image of a shoe, stretched over alas, if you please, when God made us.

He carved into us, he molded into us an empty place so enormous that only God can fill it. Nothing in the universe can fill the great emptiness of a human heart but God. We were made for God.

Now, he was very careful about that. Now, when he made us, he gave us certain appetites and urges and drives and propensities because we were microcosms. We were little, small, tiny miniatures, but in his image and in his likeness.

And consequently, he gave to us whatever was necessary to prolong our existence and to increase our kind. And we'll talk more about that in a with the same, the same capacities that he has. The ability to think because God thinks.

The ability to see with the mind because God saw the world before he spoke and brought it into being. And the ability to choose because God chose. In other words, God gave to us in the finite level, in the realm where he put us, the ability to do the things that he does infinitely.

Now, if we understand this, then we understand some other things. Now, let's go back. Uh, where did sin begin? I'm going to just bring you up to this point and then I'm going to go back again.

Uh, where, when did sin become a reality in the universe? When did it actually have its beginning? Now, this may be the point where my friend said I got into my metaphysics. And it's, and I'm not going to defend this adamantly. I'm going to suggest it for your contemplation and your consideration and to search the scriptures in the matter.

But we do know that, that the beings he made, including Lucifer, who was apparently endowed with superior ability, the way he's described as the son of the morning, would imply that this being was made

kind of as the prime minister for God in the administration of the hierarchy of angelic beings. And he was given superior intelligence and superior ability and capacity. This is an assumption that we would make from the brief statements that are in the scripture.

Now, if he is intelligent, what is intelligence? I would define it as the ability to see with the mind that which isn't, but which might be, and then to develop the appropriate means to bring what might be into actual existence. In other words, the ability to imagine and then to implement the imagination. I think that would be my definition of intelligence.

And Lucifer is intelligent. Now, we have a little record of what happened. Here is a being beyond the other angelic beings over which he presides, and he's beginning to fake.

And we hear this soliloquy going on, sort of like, you know, I think God's making a mistake. If I were God, if I were God, I'd do it this way. Now, that's innocent.

In that, there's no great crime in that. But then something else happens. There comes a moment when the innocent imaginations of this is what might be done, changes to this is what I am going to do.

There's an aboriginal element. There's a choice. Now, you'll see the importance of that in just a moment.

He said, I will set my throne above the throne of the Most High. I believe that when an intelligent being made that decision, that was the moment that sin became a reality in the universe. It was the supreme choice to please himself without regard for the will of God or the rights of God or the well-being and happiness and joy of God.

Now, I believe that's the moment that sin became a reality in the universe, when an intelligent being set his will against the will of God. Now, remember we've established that there were at least four things we can say about God. God is light, God is life, God is truth, and God is love.

Now, an intelligent being, especially if he has freshman logic, knows that every thesis has an antithesis, or every positive has a negative, or if you want to change it, get down to my level, every front has a back. And if you see what looks like the front of a hand and you quickly run around, there's no back there, you didn't see a hand. Because a front has to have a back, and a positive has to have a negative, and a thesis has to have an antithesis, and light has to be opposite to something, and life has to be opposite to something where it doesn't exist, and truth has its meaning in its contrast, and love has its meaning in contrast.

Now, if an intelligent being sets his will against the will of God, he knew that he couldn't be more light than God is light, because God is infinitely light. And he couldn't be more light than God is light, because God is infinitely light. And he couldn't be more truth than God is truth, because he's infinitely true.

And he couldn't be more love than God is love, because God is infinitely love. But as an intelligent being, he would know that the negative would have to have almost equivalent power as the positive if it was to be a true negative. So if there is light, there had to be something almost as powerful as light.

And he knew about that. And there was darkness. And that life, to be anything, had to have an opposite that it wasn't.

That would be death. And the truth, if it was anything, would have to be the opposite to something it wasn't, the lie. And that love, to have meaning or value, would have to have the antithesis, which would be hate.

So here is an intelligent being that is found a way by which he can put his throne above the throne of the Most High. First he makes the decision, I will. That's when sin becomes so blown into the universe.

I will set my throne above the throne of the Most High. And I will do it because I will take the antithesis to what God is. And I will become darkness.

And he was described by our Lord as the priest of darkness. And I will take death. And I will take the lie.

And I will take hate. Now, here is God, in his triunity, preparing the universe for this beloved that he will yearn for from eternity past. And now, conflicts arise.

So suppose God had said, look what that rascal is doing. I hate that. And he had taken hatred.

What would he have done? He would have destroyed himself, wouldn't he? He had to use the weapons consistent with his own nature, and his strength was in his character. And so we find the record talking about a battle. Correct? A battle.

We don't know much about it. It's just just silence. There's only one thing that's said to the Lord Jesus said, I saw Satan fall as lightning from heaven.

And where did he fall to? Now again, you're re-touching my metaphysics. I mean, this is what happened between the first and the second verses of Genesis 1. And the earth was bala, made out of nothing. God created the heavens, and the earth made it out of nothing.

And verse 2 said, and the earth decayed. Not made, isn't the same Hebrew word. Decayed without form and voice.

And darkness covered the face of the deep. And every living thing died of cataclysm, hit the ground. And he was called by Christ the God of this world.

I think personally, and you don't need to agree with me, this is certainly not going to get you to heaven if you agree with me. I mean, it's my feeling that there's some possibility, maybe, I hope this is being recorded properly, because some of you are going to pick me up, that that's what happened. When Satan was cast out of heaven down to earth, and darkness covered the face of the deep, and there were earths without form and voice.

What is it? Well, it's Jesus. God's arrived, and he's overspreading it with his nature. And what's his nature? Death and darkness.

Now, isn't it astounding that when God, at full length of time, decides that the hour has come to make this beloved for which he's yearned from eternity past, this bride for which he's longed, this eternal bridegroom, that he should decide to come to the very place, the prison where he confined the arch-foe? Isn't it astounding? Not astounding. Now, look what happened. And we were told, and the Spirit of God brewed it over the face of the deep.

God brewed it over that world of darkness, that universe of chaos. And what's the first thing he says in this recreative process? Light! Oh, there's the battle cry, isn't it? Light be! And light is. And then he sets light holders, and he divides the water which has been death, and he separates it, and he comes right down into the terrain of the God of this world.

Then he exerts his power to bring life where there's been death and chaos. And then he makes man in his image and in his likeness. And what does he do? He gives to him this marvelous thing of a mind.

He breathes into him this breath of life. Man became a living soul. And Job says, there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Lord, the inspiration of the Almighty, giveth him understanding.

And so he makes man out of the clay of the ground, gives to him a body, and then he breathes into him this breath of life. The man becomes a living soul, made in the image and in the likeness of God. In what respect? His physical form? Well, certainly when man, God, became flesh and dwelt among us, he took foreign life to ours.

Perhaps we took foreign life to his. That's his decision. But the important thing is he gave to us the capacity on this finite level that we have infinitely.

And he then establishes a rule. And he says, as long as you love me, as long as that wedding ring I'm putting on your finger remains unbroken, and your love goes out to me, my love will continue to flow into you. And there'll be an unbroken circle of love and continued life and light and truth.

And he's done this right in the very place where his arch foe and enemy has been confined. Now, isn't it astounding that three days or two days after the serpent beguiled Eve and the federal head, Adam, kind as had Eve, that he put a flaming angel at the garden? He could have done that three days earlier, couldn't he? Huh? Couldn't he? And kept the serpent out. He defeated him.

He could have said, now that's my beloved. Don't you get in there and mess around. Don't you go tearing this all up.

I've been waiting a long time. You stay out. No, no, no.

Now we're coming to the question the student asked. Why did God make man so that man can sin? What is sin? Sin. Let's go back to how he made man.

What did he do? He gave to him a body, didn't he? Gave to him appetites and urges and drives and propensity. Let's look at them for a moment. We're finite.

We're microcosms of God. God knows everything infinitely, and we have to learn in sequence. We learn one day two and two make four, and we go back to school the next day, and he messes it all up by telling us two and three make five.

And from that time on, it's just confusion compounded. But that's how we learn, item by item. Not God.

He knows in eternal now. So he gave to us an urge to know, a hunger for knowledge. And then God depends on nothing for his existence, but he made us dependent upon the glass of the field, for all precious is glass, and this by this we live, and therefore he gave to us an appetite for food, for knowledge, for food, and then he made a man and a woman, and from that there was to come this beloved.

And so he gave an appetite, an urge to taste. And then he'd been so thoughtful in provision, in providing everything he gave to us an appetite for pleasure, so that we could enjoy all that it means. We had a watermelon on the other day, and I sat and looked at that beautiful thing, and I said, thank you God, I'm so thoughtful of you.

We don't need it to get along, you know, that he made it such beautiful color, and fragrance, and taste, and crispness, and your mouth watering right now, isn't it? Wasn't it thoughtful of your father to give a watermelon? Because if he'd never given it, we wouldn't have missed it. We wouldn't have needed it, but just to give us that appetite for pleasure, and the things he'd, to show us that he's a thoughtful, tender, loving father, gave us an appetite for pleasure. And then because he was one that protects and provides, he gave to us an appetite for security.

Oh, he gave all he needed. Look at the man that he's made, with the appetite for knowledge, and the appetite for food, and the appetite for sex, and the appetite for pleasure, and the appetite for security, and the appetite for creation. Because he said, now look, we're going into this as partnership.

I make the tree, you make the table. I make the iron, you make the tool. And Bacon honored us by saying, Francis Bacon, that God dignified man by giving to him the second degree of casuality, allowing us to become co-creators with him.

He made the raw material, and we make it into useful objects. But he gave to us an appetite to create, and he looked at the one he had made, and what did he say? Bad. Is that what he said? No.

He says, it is good. Now, if anyone ever talks to you about the appetite for knowledge, or the appetite for food, or for sex, or for pleasure, or for security being bad, will you go back and read what the history says? He says, it's good. It's good.

Now, look what happens. When do I quit? In about five minutes, ten minutes. Run when I'm supposed to stop.

That's the only way you're getting me cut out. Because I do know where I want to quit. I hope I go ahead.

So here is the situation. I said, you can eat all the fruit, but not this, because this has a function, and I've left it there for the purpose, and you don't go need it back. And so into this situation comes this ancient fool.

Now, he's coming, what, as light, an angel of light, but he's actually in darkness. He says, I got some news for you. You think God loves you? God doesn't love you.

He knows. So when you eat that, you're going to be like him. You are like him.

You're going to be like him. He doesn't want you to be like him. So he said, don't eat of it.

But it's good. It's good to eat. Oh, you're looking for it.

It tastes good. And I can see him crying. See my eyes? There you are.

You just saw it. And it will make you wise. And you should do it.

You think I'm just saying, you think God loves you? He doesn't love you. He hates you. Who's God? The God of lies.

The God of darkness. The God of death. And so he looks at it, and he says, it is pleasant to look at.

And it would taste good, and it would make you wise. So something happens. She imagines what would happen.

She imagines. And then there's no longer, how did Satan get in trouble? His imagination. And then what was it? A precision.

So what does he say? Go ahead, go ahead. And she says, I will. And that moment that she said, I will, it reached out her hand.

The decision, she hadn't even tasted it yet. But the committal of her will to the principle of pleasing herself outside the will of God, that's sin. Now what's temptation? Temptation is the proposition presented to the intellect to satisfy a good appetite in a bad way.

Now I want you to get that. Because some folks who thought temptation was the proposition presented to satisfy a bad appetite in a bad way. The appetites aren't bad.

Temptation is the proposition presented to the intellect to satisfy a good appetite in a bad way. And sin is the decision to satisfy a good appetite in a bad way. I didn't say the completing of it.

It's the decision. He that looketh, he that tasteth, the act is completed. The crime is committed with the decision.

Temptation is the proposition to the intellect. Sin is the committal of the will to the person. So what happens? She comes back and she says, Adam, you've got a choice to make.

I have eaten of that fruit. Now you're either going to stick with me or stick with this God that we thought was our friend and he isn't. As I know, opening that fruit opened my eyes.

He's not our friend. And so Adam chooses to stay with the woman and he eats deliberately. She is beguiled, he sinned deliberately.

And the consequence is now that God comes in the cool heat as he was wont to do to speak to them, and Adam is where? Following, expressing the nature of his new God, darkness. And he's gotten one of the shrunkest and the thickest and the deepest, and he's saying, shh, leave me down, and be a quiet he won't find it, expect him to come digging through, but he doesn't. He doesn't.

With broken hearts, the eternal bridegroom, the eternal father, Adam, where art thou? Oh, he knew where Adam was. But you see, Adam had to find out where he was. He had to find out.

He had to find himself. You see, no one can be saved till they're lost. Oh, they're lost enough, but they have to know it.

That's why more people aren't seen saved. They're not using the word in such a way to get them lost. So they're lost, but they don't know it.

You see, Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, and one of our responsibilities is to still apply the words of the consciences of men as they discover they're lost, simply because the law is the schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, and we pretty well cut the law out of the proper proclamation. I mean, if I had my way, I'd declare a moratorium, and no one from public utterance by radio, television, or pulpit could print the plan of salvation for two years. It would only preach the holiness of God and the righteousness of God and the enormity of the crime of sin, until people began to cry out the way the Philippians did.

What did he say? The weak gospel heard the generation of sinners by telling them how before they knew why. He knew how was going to help, but how doesn't help. Adam, where are you, child? He suddenly comes out.

What is this thou hast done? Now listen, watch as he's now reflecting the character of his new God. The woman you gave me, she made you evil. If you're going to kill somebody, kill her, but don't touch a hair on my head.

What's happened? Darkness and death and mirage and hate have now become the manifest character of this fallen man, who reflects now the nature, the image, if you please, of this one to whom he's committed himself. And to what? What's the Lord Jesus do? He takes a lamb and he, he takes the lamb and he slays the lamb and he lets the blood pump from the little lamb's heart out upon the ground and he takes the skin. Now you can take the wool and not hurt the lamb, but when you take the skin, the lamb dies.

And he makes, he makes toast of skin and he thus points his finger down across the centuries to the day when one will see him and say, of him behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Now, suppose God had made man in such a way that man could not sin. What would we have had? What was sin? It was the temptation of the proposition presented to the intellect to satisfy a good appetite in a bad way and sin was the decision.

Now suppose God had made man so he couldn't imagine and he couldn't do, what would he have done? He'd never been in the image of God, would he? He'd have done in the Christmas time, the machine programmed where I would be away from most of my wife who's had the responsibility of raising our family and done a very wonderful job in my estimation. I used to say, say, where do you live? I'd say, well, I live here in this car, but my wife is running an orphanage for our children or whatever it was. And suppose I came home and there were my children now pretty well grown but a little tight.

When I came in, I knew that they had no interest in me so to get some expression of love I'd have to hypnotize my own little children. And when my mind and my will controlled them I would sit down and then I would say Sonny, Jimmy, Sarah, walk over, stand in line, put your arms around my neck, kiss my cheek, say I love you. Do you think that that cold mechanical tromping of little feet and crossing and uttering of words that had been programmed into the mind would ever satisfy the heart of a lonely father? Oh, I'd rather my children say, no daddy, I won't so that when they did it meant something.

And God had waited for me so many times that rather that the money's made be able to say, no, I don't love you. So when he said yes, I do. That yes had meaning to him.

And if God had made man so he couldn't assume man would have been a mere automaton, a mere machine. And he never could have met the need that the heart would draw. But I would just get started, we'll stop thinking about what kind of a being is man? What kind of a relationship do we have to draw?

Father, we thank you for your grace We thank you for your love We can't understand it, father because we know our fathers, we know we were monsters of a mix No sin anyone ever committed of which every one of us are not capable The seeds of every sin sprouted and sought to grow in our hearts If we were restrained it was by grace and circumstance not capacity We've seen ourselves how God is And we would agree with thee that none righteous, no not one that we were wounds and bruises and crucifying swords at this terrible crime of turning to our own way and truly corrupted every emotion and purpose of our lives We can't understand it We see your picture of us, the leper leprosy is your picture of us this thing this enormous crime of distorting the rightful place in our life and then to find out that you've loved us and that you've loved us with an everlasting love and that you loved us even to death and that the death is a cross and then to hear your son pray in his high priestly prayer that the world may know that thou has loved them even as thou hath loved them We stand amazed at the presence of Jesus in Nazarene and wonder how he could love us sinners condemned and we know how merciful and we know how wonderful is thy love to me Father we thank you we worship you we adore you we want to learn who we are we want to learn why we are as we are we want to discover what you want us to be how you want us to glorify your son and what it means that whom the son makes free is free go to that end Lord we ask thee seal the thinking of our hearts this morning move upon us in the days of the week until we share again together again on next Lord's day in Jesus' name

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