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Published by:
Christ, Our Life Ministries, Inc.
Po Box 43268
Louisville, Ky. 40253

Program 4

A Universal oneness is virtually unknowable except expressed through a particular form. Therefore God created Man in His image in order to express His own personal Glory. Man is not God, however he is made a little lower than God (Elohim) (Psa.8:4 & Heb.2:6). Man was created to express and contain God, but never take God's place like Satan tried to do. Man is a dependent being, and only a receiver. Man cannot produce his own life, therefore he has no nature or life of his own, but instead he derives his nature from the one who indwells him. God created man's free will out of His sovereignty.

The human has no power source of its own, we are a helpless expression of someone else.

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The Bible calls us:

- **Rom.9:22-23 Vessels**, of which liquid?(wrath or mercy)
- **John15:1; Romans 6:21-22 Branches**, of which vine? (false or true)
- **ICor.6:19-20 Temples**, indwelt by which god?(false or true)
- **Rom.6:17-18 Slaves**, owned by which master?(old or new)
- **Rom.7:2-4 Wives**, married to which husband?(Satan or Christ)
- **Eph.1:22-23;Col.1:18 Bodies**, of which head (Satan or Christ)

What is Man?

(Psa. 8:4 & Heb. 2:6)

The question, "*What is Man?*" has been examined by philosophers and anthropologists alike, yet the simple question is best answered by the greatest source of spiritual revelation today, the Holy Bible. The Bible boldly addresses it four times. Three times in the Old Testament, Job7:17;Psa.144:3;Psa.8:4, and once in the New Testament in Heb.2:6. Psalms 8:4, properly translated by the New American Standard version, says this: "*What is man that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him? Yet, Thou hast made him a little lower than God (Elohim); and thou does crown him with glory and majesty! Thou doest make him to rule over the works of Thy hands.*" The New Testament, in my opinion, uses the weaker rendering in Hebrews 2:7 when it says, "*made him a little lower than the angels.*" The stronger Psalms translation (lower than God) is the one I prefer.

Angels are amazing spirit beings, but they were spirits created to minister and serve redeemed mankind who are, "heirs of salvation" (Hebrews1:14). "Angels were not made in the image of God, and God could therefore not become incarnate in them. No angel can become a blood-born son of God, nor can one ever be a partaker of the divine nature. Did Paul ever say of the angels as he did of the Church, that they constitute His Body of which He is the Head, "*the fullness of him that filleth all in all*" (Ephesians 1:23)? Did Paul ever say of angels, "*Ye are members of his body, of*

his flesh, and of his bones" (Ephesians 5:30)? And didn't Paul say that we, the body of Christ, would judge the angels (I Corinthians 6:3)?¹

Then how is it that Hebrews 2:7 says that we were made a little lower than the angels? I believe it was weakened in the King James Version, but correctly rendered in the New American Standard Version, "**lower than Elohim**" (Psalms 8:5).

Dr. Theodore H. Mann writes concerning the Hebrew text of Psalms 8:5 (Remember the author of Hebrews is quoting the LXX, a translation of the Hebrew text). "*We do not find the word angels, but God (Hebrew "Elohim"). The Jewish scholars who wrote the LXX thought that calling man only a little lower than God might belittle God, so they chose to use the alternate meaning of Elohim (the plural gods or godlike beings, interpreted as angels) in their translation.*"

It is interesting to me that the Jewish scholars didn't want to bring God down anywhere near to man's level, while God wants to bring man up to an exalted glorified level, that is "**a little lower than Elohim.**" Personally, the fact that God created man a little lower than God Himself doesn't belittle God, it elevates Him. It is nothing but self-less love that creates man in such an exalted position, and it is that same love that desires friendship and fellowship with His created sons.

The Spirit is making the point in the Hebrews 2:7 passage that through the Fall, mankind has fallen into a realm lower than even the angels. Angels are not mortal flesh beings—they are able to take any form they want to, while fallen man has mortal flesh and blood limiting him to time and space. However, through the intercessory work of our Savior, the last Adam, Jesus was made mortal "*flesh and blood,*" "*being made like unto his brethren*" (Hebrews 2:9-14). In order that by "*tasting death for all men,*" He might gain the victory of His resurrection, and reinstate man to his proper elevated place far above the angelic realm being made, "*lord of all*" (Galatians 4:1b).

Ephesians 1:20-2:6 says that we are seated with Christ "*in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion.*" That certainly includes all the heavenly host and the whole angelic realm. Original man was made a little lower than Elohim. Fallen man lost that position and fell lower than the angels, but now the "*new man*" in Christ is crowned with "*glory and honor, and God put His works in our hands. The Lord put all things in subjection under our feet. For in that He put all in subjection under redeemed man, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him*" (Hebrews 2:6-8). Interesting statement. It is not until redeemed man is made safe by the Cross and receives his full inheritance in Christ that we will see all things put under redeemed man's feet.

Man is God's highest creation and lower only to the Creator. The Creator made man a little lower than "Elohim" in the sense that the visible form has to be lower than the one who is Himself the Creator and is invisible and uncreated. Also, God's created dwelling place (man) has to be lower than the one who created it.

Man, is a wonderfully, intricately, complex, spirit being. He is clothed in flesh (soul and body) as a means of expressing his ego "I". God has equipped him with magnificent faculties and capacities, but the human being has no independent nature of its own. There is no such thing as a "*just I,*" with powers of its own. Man is a neutral being void of its own nature. We are dependent beings derived from God Himself (Acts 17:28). Therefore, we must derive our life from another source, other than ourselves. Before we were regenerated, we, through the Fall, derived our nature from Satan, our former husband and master (Eph.2:2-3). Now as redeemed people, we are deriving our nature from our new husband and master, Christ (II Peter 1:4).

The Biblical proof of man's dependency is clearly seen by how the Bible defines mankind. The Bible calls us "**vessels**". "That he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy" (Rom.9:23). What is the function of a vessel? A vessel is designed to simply be available to contain liquid. The cup isn't the coffee, and the coffee isn't the cup. But we do speak of it in union

¹ Destine for The Throne by Paul E. Billheimer

terms—"A cup of coffee." However, the vessel is a neutral container available to contain either water or poison, Christ or Satan.

The Bible calls us **"branches"**. What is the function of a branch? John 15:1-4 says that Christ is the vine, we are the branches, and "without Him we can do nothing." It's obvious that a branch apart from the vine cannot produce fruit. Yet, we Christians falsely think that we can produce good works apart from the Holy Spirit. Or, we also think that we can produce good works with God's help. This too is a delusion as well. God can't help us be the vine, we are the branches. A branch simply rests in the fact that it is a channel by which the vine produces the fruit.

The Old Testament symbols were shadows of New Testament realities. 1 Cor. 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" What is the function of a **"temple"**? The temple, in the Old Testament, was the building that housed the Holy-of-Holies, which contained the Shekinah-Glory. It was not the Glory itself, but it was the container for the Glory. Just like today, we Christians contain the Shekinah-Glory in our "Holy of Holies heart," but we do not become the Glory, we contain it.

The Bible calls us **"slaves"**. Being then made free from sin, you became the slave of righteousness (Romans 6:18). What is the function of a **slave**? A slave has no freedom or life of his own, for he is bound to his master. He must do what his master tells him to do. II Peter 2:19b says, "for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." The human has never been an independently free agent. We have always been in bondage to our master, either Satan or Christ. "But thanks be to God you **were** the slaves of sin" (Rom.6:17).

The Bible calls us **"wives"**. We are "dead to the law by the body of Christ; that you should be married to another even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Romans 7:4). What is a wife? A wife is the loving coupled partner of her husband. The two are seen by God as "one flesh." However a wife can not produce a child apart from being inseminated by her husband. Similarly, we contain Christ, and He produces the fruit of the Holy Spirit through us.

And finally the Bible calls us **"bodies,"** not the head. Ephesians 1:22-23 says, "And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church. Which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all".

When we think of a person, we don't think that the head is one person and the body is another. We think of a person as a unity of both head and body, constituting one being. The head is joined to the body, the two function as one. But, we all know that the command center of our being is our head. It dictates all that the body does. The head does it spontaneously and freely, not as a dictator saying, "you *ought* to move here, or you should do that." The head and body just freely and spontaneously operate as one.

Jesus was the perfect pattern of a human vessel. In the book of John there are numerous scriptures that show his human vessel-hood. Here are some of them:

- John5:19&30 The Son can do nothing of himself, and of my own self I can do nothing. The human Jesus had no power of his own
- John5:31-33 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. Jesus didn't bear his own witness
- John5:43 I am come in my Father's name. Jesus did not come in his own name
- John6:38 I came not to do my own will. -He did not do his own will.
- John6:57 I live by the Father. He didn't have his own life
- John7:16 My doctrine is not mine-Jesus didn't have a doctrine or teaching of his own

- John7:28 I am not come of myself. The Father sent him
- John8:16 If I judge, my judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me-His judgment was not his own
- John8:28-29 That I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things-He didn't learn from himself, and he didn't teach himself
- John8:50 I seek not mine own glory. His glory is not his.
- John8:54 If I honor myself, my honor is nothing-He doesn't honor himself
- John12:49 I have not spoken of myself. Jesus didn't speak his own words
- John14:10 I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me-He doeth the works..His works were not his works

Somehow, we Christians think that we are better than Jesus. This is how we think: "I know that you say that you can't live the life on your own, Jesus, But I can, and I will." Do you see the foolish pride of us Christians who think "*we can do it*" when even the Son of God didn't live as if he were separate from his Father

I went to Lubbock, Texas once to do a meeting at a friend's house. Prior to the meeting a word came to us that two people, a woman and a man well versed in the Bible, were coming to dispute the message and accuse me. I gave it no power and said, "This ought to be fun, let's see what the Holy Spirit is going to do." I began teaching, the woman frowning the whole time, and her bible reference man holding his bible and waiting. As I was well into my message, I asked if anyone there knew and could quote Heb. 11:6, "Without faith it is impossible to please God?" Well, wouldn't you know, the bible man said, "That is my favorite verse, see I have it engraved on the front of my Bible." So after that he listened intensely. His face changed as he began to hear the Spirit speak to him. This made the woman very angry. She stopped the meeting and said with an accusatory tone, "somewhere in the Bible it says that we have to imitate Jesus." Immediately, I agreed with her and replied, "It is true, we do have to be like Jesus, but the problem is we don't know how". Then I began to read the list of the above scriptures and said, "See how Jesus functioned by faith, by not having His own works? If we really want to be like Him we have to function the same way. It stopped her short. Later the woman was won over to the truth, as well. See how the Holy Spirit handles the problems as we perfectly trust Him in all things. The problem is we fight the devil, and blame the people, instead of agreeing with the devil quickly, and winning over the misguided people from his hold on them.

The Capacity to Receive

Do we have it clear?--the human vessel is not a "me" by itself. It never has been. My good friend Bill Bower says that "there is no separate vessel "ME." The only me there is in me, is Christ/me. As a spirit/vessel I have capacities, of willing, knowing and desiring, yet these capacities have no independent "ME."

- Human vessels have the capacity to receive: (John 1:12)
- The capacity to receive Christ's willingness (Phil. 2:13)
- The capacity to know, Christ's knowing (I Cor. 2:16)
- The capacity to receive, desire/love, that is, Christ's desiring and loving (I John 4:8)

These capacities have no "I" at all. When Galatians 2:20 says that it is NO longer "I," that lives, but Christ that lives; it is saying that there is not a "me" other than Christ/me who lives in my human vessel.

More than a Vessel

When you think that you are **more** than a simple vessel, you will be under the law of trying to be good. Romans 6:11 says that "he that is dead is freed from sin." If you are under the law of trying

to be good, you are acting as if you are not dead, but instead you are acting as if you are alive apart from Christ with power of your own to be good. And if you are condemning yourself for not being good, you are really expecting to have the power to produce goodness and you are condemned for failing. That is a false expectation, because it is impossible for you to produce any goodness apart from Christ.

There is no good you, nor no bad you. It is only Christ expressed through a branch, a vessel, a temple, a wife, and a body. Knowing that you are only a vessel with no independence of your own, is easy to understand. However, it will cost you everything to know it.

The human is not the producer of evil or good. If we can produce our own evil, then there is a strong possibility that we can produce our own good, and if that is the case, then we wouldn't even need a Savior at all.