



MAN'S NEED OF CHRIST

Course 5, *Real Christian Living*, Lesson 2

The Problem: Throughout history, people have wrestled with questions about human nature: Why is doing right so difficult? Why does sin seem so easy? The Bible provides clear answers, explaining the forces at work in shaping human behavior.

God, as Creator, designed humanity for goodness, purpose, and harmony. However, the world we experience today is not what He originally intended. Another force—the devil—has introduced deception and temptation, leading people away from their true potential.

The Bible doesn't leave us in confusion. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to reveal the truth, defeat sin's power, and restore what was lost. His teachings provide the most practical, realistic, and life-changing answers to the struggles people face. Through Scripture, we discover why goodness seems unattainable, why humanity wrestles with brokenness, and how God provides a way to overcome.

Objectives:

- I. We learn what Scripture teaches about humanity as created by God.
- II. We realize the profound consequences of sin resulting from the first act of disobedience.
- III. We acknowledge the struggle for righteousness and the impact of external forces that make doing good challenging.
- IV. We understand that human willpower alone is insufficient and that only divine power can truly transform our lives.
- V. We embrace God's unwavering efforts to save us, offering hope and victory over the forces of evil.

I. THE ORIGINAL PERFECTION OF HUMAN BEINGS

From the moment they were fashioned by the Creator, our first parents exhibited flawlessness in every aspect. Their minds were untainted and imbued with holiness, and their bodies were free from corrupt desires. They experienced no inner urge toward sin—no bias or propensity for wrongdoing marred their nature. Enjoying an intimate, ongoing fellowship with God, they found their ultimate delight in aligning with His will.

The Word:

- 1. In whose image was mankind originally created? Genesis 1:26-27
- 2. What kind of spiritual standing did our first parents enjoy? Over what dominion did they rule? Hebrews 2:6-8
- 3. Who was the Creator of this ideal world and the perfect beings who inhabited it? John 1:1-3, 14; Colossians 1:15-16

Explanation: Created in the image of God—both physically and spiritually—humanity was originally perfect. Scripture teaches that God is entirely free from moral impurity and is perfectly righteous, with no inclination toward sin. That was

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

the design for humankind. Adam and Eve enjoyed such a close intimacy with God that their life was, in essence, heaven on earth. Moreover, the same Jesus Christ who came to earth centuries later as a man to bear the penalty of sin was our Creator. Not only is He the source of all life, but He is also the Redeemer, whose eternal purpose has been to restore us to that sinless state and provide an environment free from wickedness, suffering, and death.

Relevance: Understanding the original perfection of human beings as fashioned by God helps us grasp His ideal for our lives. Although we cannot fully reclaim the flawless nature that Adam and Eve once enjoyed in this earthly life, through God's grace we can pursue spiritual purity and freedom from sin. Ultimately, when Jesus returns, believers will be restored to the complete, perfect state originally intended for humankind.

II. THE RESULTS OF HUMANITY'S FALL INTO SIN

The spiritual challenges we face today stem from sin. Our nature, originally created in God's perfect image, fell when our first parents chose to disobey Him. While each of us further compounds this fallen state through our own sinful decisions, the root of the problem lies in that original act of rebellion—a fall that separated humanity from God and weakened our inherent goodness.

The Word:

4. What were the two terrible results of Adam's fall? Romans 5:12, 17-19
5. What is the spiritual state of children born into a world of sin? Psalm 51:5; 58:3
6. What dominion did mankind lose when he chose to sin? Genesis 3:17-19; Hebrews 2:8 (last part)

Explanation: Scripture teaches that Adam's sin introduced death and sinfulness to the entire human race. See Romans 5:12, 17-19. By choosing the path of rebellion instead of the perfect will of God, Adam and Eve forfeited the gift of eternal life. Consequently, every descendant inherited a mortal nature, subject to death. As Ecclesiastes 9:5 reminds us, *"The living know that they will die."*

Originally, humanity was created in the image of God, perfectly designed to live in harmonious communion with Him. However, after the Fall, our nature became deeply corrupted. We lost the inherent ability to overcome temptation: our will was weakened, our minds left vulnerable, and our desires began to crave evil. The Psalmist poignantly reflects our fallen condition in Psalm 51:5: *"Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me."*

Although no individual is guilty of Adam's original sin, each person is born into a condition—a sort of inherited "disease" of sinfulness—that separates us from God. Without the transformative power of Christ, this fallen nature makes true holiness and immortality unattainable. Just as an infant may inherit a physical ailment from its mother without being directly culpable for the cause, we too suffer the consequences of the Fall even though we did not commit the original act of disobedience.

Relevance: Adam and Eve's sin ruptured the perfect union with God that they originally enjoyed and introduced a fallen nature into all of humanity. This inherent brokenness explains why, apart from divine intervention, we naturally struggle with sin. Recognizing our fallen state underscores our urgent need for a Savior—only through the redemptive work of Christ can we be restored to the ideal of life as it was meant to be.

III. THE INABILITY OF HUMANS TO DELIVER THEMSELVES

Jesus and the Bible writers repeatedly emphasized that, since our first parents fell, humanity is powerless to free itself from the forces of evil or to achieve righteousness in God's sight on our own. We cannot rescue ourselves, nor can we overcome the relentless pull of our fallen, carnal nature without divine intervention.

The Word:

7. What did Old Testament writers have to say about the impossibility of man's delivering himself? Job 14:4; Jeremiah 13:23
8. How did Paul dramatize the ineffectiveness of his own willpower? Romans 7:18-19
9. What is the spiritual state of the person who has not been transformed by Christ? Romans 8:5-8

Explanation: Fallen human beings lack the inherent power to change their own nature or character from within. While external measures—such as education and psychological training—can modify outward behavior, they do not reform the heart. The deep-seated selfishness intrinsic to our fallen nature cannot be eradicated by autosuggestion, mind training, or mere willpower. As Paul noted in his struggle, without Christ, he could recognize what was right but found himself unable to put that knowledge into action. Knowing the good is not the same as doing the good. In our fallen state, our minds resist reconciliation with God, remaining opposed to His will and to the lifestyle of those who live in obedience to Him.

Relevance: The first step in addressing our fallen nature is to acknowledge its existence and our inability to overcome it on our own. Recognizing our own helplessness—be it in the context of specific issues like substance addiction or more general weaknesses—is essential. Only by admitting that we cannot rise above our fallen condition without divine intervention can we begin the journey toward true transformation.

IV. OUR NEED OF NEW LIFE FROM CHRIST

At its very core, Christianity teaches that we are entirely dependent on God. Few of us enjoy confronting our inherent dependence, yet when it comes to overcoming sin, it is undeniable: we are all limited by our fallen nature. Because we inherit a broken human condition, we must rely on God's power to overcome our shortcomings. True victory over sin comes not through our own strength, but through turning to the divine source of transformation.

The Word:

10. Who did Paul find to be the Deliverer from his sinful habits? Romans 7:24-25
11. Is there any other way to be saved but God's way? Who provides the only way for us to come to God? Isaiah 45:22; Acts 4:12; John 14:6
12. What is the only means for us to be righteous in God's sight? Romans 8:9-10; compare 6:16-23

Explanation: When Paul invited Christ to dwell in his heart through the Holy Spirit, his life underwent a dramatic transformation. At that moment, he received righteousness from above and the power to do God's will. This experience underscores an essential truth: there is no salvation apart from Christ, nor is there deliverance from Satan and his dominion without Christ living in our hearts. Christ is the answer to every one of our spiritual struggles.

Consider the vision of Jacob while fleeing from his brother Esau. In a dream, Jacob saw a ladder stretching from earth to heaven, with God at the top and angels ascending and descending. This ladder was a symbol of Christ—a symbol that Jesus affirmed when He said, *"You will see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man"* John 1:51. Through His life and sacrificial death, Christ has bridged the gap between humanity and divinity. We have access to God through Him, and our pleas for strength to live a sin-free life are answered because He is our heavenly Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5).

Relevance Praise the Lord—there is a way to break free from the grip of sin. Through Christ's transformative power, deliverance from even the most persistent addictions is made possible. While His power is our ultimate source of victory, God often provides additional practical support. Many who struggle with addictions and other habitual sins benefit from the guidance of trained counselors, therapists, and accountability groups. These professionals, working under God's

providence, offer practical tools and compassionate support that complement our spiritual journey. In our pursuit of true freedom, we are encouraged to rely on both divine intervention and the sound counsel of those God has raised to help us overcome our weaknesses. When we combine the strength of Christ living in our hearts with the practical assistance offered by caring, skilled counselors, we are better equipped to live in lasting victory over sin.

V. GOD'S UNTIRING EFFORTS TO SAVE HUMANITY

Salvation from sin through Christ is secured by His self-sacrifice on our behalf. When Jesus died on the cross, God paid an immeasurably high price for our redemption—a price that no loving deity could exceed. At Calvary, Christ and the Father offered a gift so profound that the perfect unity between them was, in effect, temporarily set aside, resulting in unfathomable suffering. This immense sacrifice bore the full penalty for our sin and secured our salvation.

The Word:

13. What did God's gift of His Son make possible for every believing person? John 3:16; Acts 16:1
14. What did Christ's work on the cross achieve for the individual battling with sin? Galatians 6:4; Colossians 1:20
15. What victory is ours today when by faith we accept Christ as Savior and Lord? 1 John 5:3-5

Explanation The cross of Christ stands as the central, most transformative event in history. It is at the cross that Jesus took away our sin, providing us with deliverance from a world of wickedness, from the dominion of Satan, and from the relentless grip of destructive habits. God's saving work is boundless. Jesus Christ—supreme Deity, equal in authority and power to the Father (Colossians 2:9)—offered Himself as the ultimate sacrifice. In this profound act, the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—shared in the suffering necessary to remove our guilt. Through this sacrifice, we now have the privilege to approach God through Christ and to receive the spiritual power required to live in a manner pleasing to Him. As Revelation 3:21 promises, *"To him who overcomes, I will grant the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on His throne."*

Relevance: Do you believe in Jesus Christ? Have you accepted His sacrifice on your behalf? Recognizing that we are wholly dependent on Him for deliverance from sin, are you willing to submit to His power every time you are tempted?

Review Questions

1. True or False
 - a. Our wills are not strong enough to overcome sin, without divine aid.
 - b. Adam's children were held by God guilty of his sin.
 - c. There are some sins that can never be overcome.
 - d. Only through Christ can we be saved from sin.
2. Considering that our fallen nature renders us incapable of achieving moral perfection on our own, in what concrete ways have you experienced the transforming power of Christ in your life, and how can you deepen your reliance on His grace in your daily struggles?

Further study: Ellen G. White, [Steps to Christ](#), Chapter 2.