

Expanded Statement on Humanity

We believe that God created humanity in His image (Genesis 1:26-27) and for His glory (Isaiah 43:7; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Romans 11:36). Being created in God's image endows every human being with inherent dignity and worth (Genesis 9:6; James 3:9) and indicates that human beings resemble God. This resemblance is not in a physical capacity, for God is spirit (John 4:24), but rather is reflected in a rational capacity to think, reason, and communicate abstract thoughts (Genesis 2:20), a decision-making capacity to make free moral choices (Genesis 2:16-17), a relational capacity to establish and maintain relationships with God and fellow humans, reflecting the unity and relationship God Himself has within the Trinity (Genesis 2:24; John 17:21-22), and a functional capacity to rule and care for God's creation, serving as His representatives and being accountable to Him (Genesis 1:26, 2:5, 15-17; Psalm 8:5-6).

We believe that God created human beings as either male or female, which reflects His intention for an unchangeable biological distinction between genders (Genesis 1:27; 2:18-25; Deuteronomy 22:5). Both genders equally bear the image of God (Genesis 1:27), and so have equal value and importance before God. However, the distinction between genders indicates that there are God-intended differences in roles between the two (Genesis 3:9, 4:1; 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 1 Timothy 2:11-15).

We believe that the Genesis account of Eve's creation indicates that God's intention for marriage is that it be a union of one man with one woman in an inseparable bond for companionship and procreation (Genesis 2:18-25, 1:28; Matthew 19:4-6). That explains why marriage is the only legitimate context for sexual activity (1 Corinthians 7:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Hebrews 13:4) and why any same-sex sexual activity is considered sin (Leviticus 18:22, 20:13; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:10).

We believe that human beings are comprised of a material component, a "body," which is perishable after humanity's fall into sin (Genesis 2:16-17, 3:19; 1 Corinthians 15:42-49), and also an immaterial component, a "soul" or "spirit," which lives on after physical death (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Matthew 10:28; Acts 7:59; 2 Corinthians 5:1-8; Philippians 1:19-26; Revelation 6:9-11). At the

resurrection, this immaterial component will be raised to new physical life with a resurrection body (1 Corinthians 15:1-58).

Because human beings are created by God and in His image (Genesis 1:26-27), we believe that every human life is sacred. As a result, we believe that all stages of human life from conception through natural death should be valued and protected. Also, in the post-Fall world in which we live, it is a sad reality that force—even lethal force—may sometimes need to be employed in order to stop grave threats to innocent lives (Genesis 14:14-20; Exodus 22:2-3; Esther 3:13; 8:7-11; 9:1), in the conduct of a just war (Nehemiah 4:13-14), and in the God-ordained capital penalty on one who willfully takes an innocent human life (Genesis 9:5-6).

We believe that the language used to describe “sin” in Scripture indicates that sin fundamentally involves a failure to fulfill God’s moral law—“sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4)—whether in action (actively or passively), thoughts/attitudes (e.g. Exodus 20:17; Matthew 5:27-28), or nature (Romans 5:18; Ephesians 2:3). God’s moral law is most clearly expressed through Scripture, but all human beings have some awareness of it through their own conscience—their actions show that the demands of His moral law are “written on their hearts” (Romans 2:12-29). As such, God does not sin and is not the cause of sin (Deuteronomy 32:4; James 1:13), but rather human beings (and angels) have sinned when they freely chose to disobey God’s moral law (Genesis 3:1-19, cf. 2:16-17).

We believe that the original sin of Adam profoundly affected the entire human race (Romans 5:12-21). As a result, every human being is considered a sinner before God both because of the sin of Adam (Romans 5:18-19) as well as because of the personal sins every human being has committed—“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23; cf. Psalms 14:2-3; Romans 3:9-18; 1 John 1:8-10). Sin has corrupted human nature (Ephesians 2:1-3), affecting every facet of our being, including the mind (2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 4:18), emotions (Romans 1:21, 24, 26), heart (Jeremiah 17:9), will (Romans 7:20), and even physical bodies (Romans 7:18).

We believe that sin has rendered every human being spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1-3), unable and unwilling to please God or turn to him on their own (Romans 8:8; Hebrews 11:6; John 6:44; 1 Corinthians 2:14), subject to wrath of God (Psalm 11:5; Romans 1:18), opposed to Christ (1 Corinthians 1:18), and subject to eternal death (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:11-15)

unless forgiven by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:36; Romans 5:8-10, 6:23, 8:1; Ephesians 2:8-9).