

Doctrine 3: Human Condition

3. Human Condition

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Doctrine (truth)

- We believe that God created Adam and Eve → Good

Devotion (relationship)

- in His image, → like God
do God's work → first human being

Duty (action)

- but they sinned → Sin
- when tempted by Satan. → Disobedience
Disloyalty

So we come now to the third part of our doctrinal statement, looking at humanity, the human condition.

And we believe two fundamental things about humans: that we are **created by God** and **there is sin**. And we were created good, yet we've rebelled. There is sin. I think this is essential to understanding all of humanity. In all human endeavors, there is goodness and there's brokenness. In every person and in fact in each part of our lives.

We believe in the historical **Adam and Eve**, that these were the first human beings, in relationship with God. And we choose not to spend much time thinking about or debating about what came before them as a church. It's a good thing for people to endeavor... we see Christians having different beliefs about the history of the world and the universe. What matters fundamentally to us is that God created Adam and Eve.

And they are the ones who were created **in God's image**. And this means that they were like God and this makes human beings fundamentally different from other animals, because human beings alone are made in the image of God. And we believe that human beings also do God's work, and so we're in His image in that sense too. So human beings have a unique responsibility in caring for the world, for instance, that other animals do not have. Again, we were created good. Adam and Eve were created without sin, without moral error.

And yet they sinned **when tempted by Satan**. This sin was a disobedience, when they were told, "Don't eat from this tree." And it was disobedience. It was also disloyalty when they said, "Well, we will listen to the ideas and the words of someone else who is tempting us away from God."

And so God created Adam and Eve in his likeness. They were good, and yet they chose to sin when tempted by Satan. They broke that relationship with God.

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Doctrine
(truth)

- In union with Adam, human beings are sinners.

Devotion
(relationship)

- by nature and by choice.
- alienated from God,
- and under His wrath.

Duty
(action)

→ inherited

→ freely behave

→ unlike God's moral goodness

→ Breaks Relationship / shame

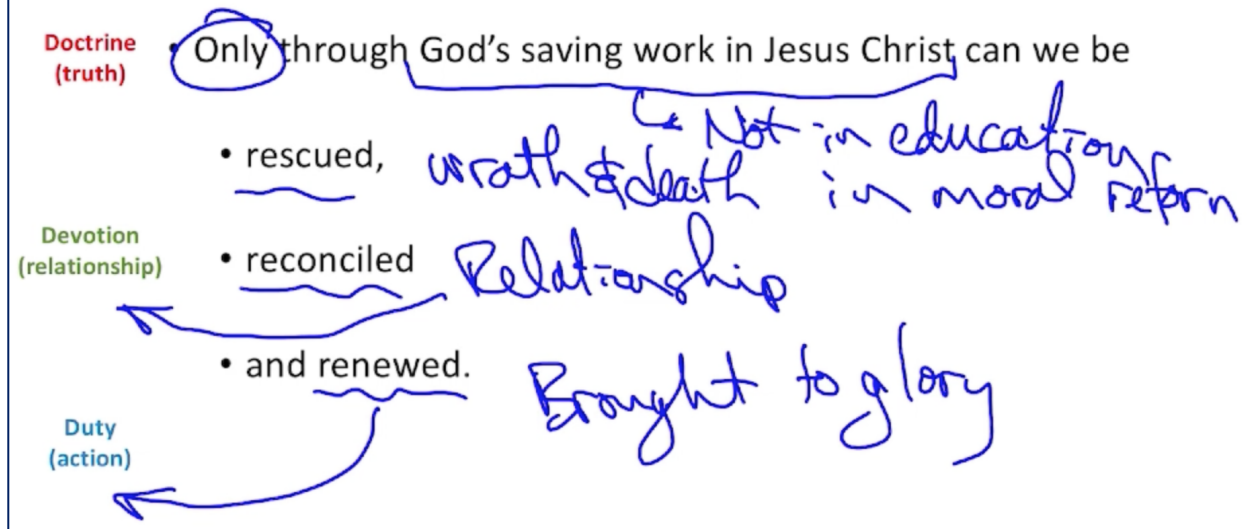
→ Guilt & power

And it's not just them. And so we believe that we are in union, all human beings are **in union, with Adam** in the sense that we also are sinners, every one of us. And what we mean by sin is whatever is unlike God's moral goodness. And the goodness in man and the brokenness is essential here. We're not saying that people don't have any goodness in them. People have a great amount of goodness and yet we are unlike God's moral goodness. We are not as good as He is. We are this way both by nature and by choice.

And so this is inherited. It is like an inherited debt. It's like a genetic disease. We are born broken. We're born distant from God. And we freely behave in a way that is just like Adam and Eve. We also disobey and express disloyalty.

When we do this, it **alienates us from God**. It breaks the relationship. And in breaking this relationship, it brings a shame before God. It also puts us **under God's wrath**. And so here is where there is guilt and the power of God is against us. because of the path we have taken. So with Adam, we also, by nature and by choice, are broken, bringing shame in ourselves, living in guilt, and being subject to the power of God and his wrath.

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And yet the hope is, we are not left there. By God's saving work, and this is the key thing, this is central to Christianity: our hope is not in education and saying if we can just teach people; the hope is not in moral reform, if we could just get ourselves and others to be better. Our hope is in **the saving work of Jesus Christ**. And it's **only** in that. There is no other authority, no other means of being saved.

And in this, we have three things that happen: We are rescued, we are reconciled, and we are renewed. And this being **rescued** is being rescued from wrath and death, because sin brings death. And so we're rescued from that.

We are **reconciled**, meaning that the relationship is restored, that we go from being God's enemies to being God's friends.

And we are **renewed**, and this is not merely escaping from trouble. It is that we are brought to glory. All of this is through the saving work of Jesus Christ.

So when we look at what this means for life, in **devotion**, clearly the reconciliation of the saving work of Jesus is to bring us back into relationship with God, into fellowship, and into worship. And we are renewed.

And this is in **action**, we are to live according to what God has done in us to become like him again. We believe that the saving work is both once for all and it takes a lifetime, as we are declared righteous and brought into relationship with God, and called to become more and more like him, until we see Jesus face to face.