

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

LESSON 5: THE SUBJECTS OF GOD - MANKIND

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

5.1 - Mankind: Human subjects of the Creator

People have tried in a variety of ways to explain the origin of man e.g. the philosophers, evolutionists, social scientists, etc.

Some believe that man is merely an accident, without meaning or purpose. But we believe that we are 'fearfully and wonderfully made' (Psalms 139:14, 16)

We are made in the image of God to rule the earth justly, creatively and responsibly. We are given intelligence, feeling, and the ability to make morally responsible choices.

The term 'man' or mankind' refers to both members of the human race, male and female.

5.1.1 - Man's Origin

(a) A Special creation

Man is unique and is the result of a special divine act. (Isaiah 45:11-12; Genesis 1:27, 5:1-2; 6:7; 9:6; Deuteronomy 4:32; Psalms 100:3; James 3:9)

First, He formed man out of the earthly dust; then He breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life (Genesis 2:7), and man became a living being.

The divine inbreathing imparted to man a spiritual nature from God that gave him a position far above all other creatures.

The other creatures were created by a divine command which was put into effect immediately (Genesis 1:20, 24).

The most important distinction between man and all other creatures is that man was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). Man's likeness to God is not physical but a moral and spiritual likeness.

Other evidences of a difference between man and animals are:-

- (i) Man has the power of speech. He has the ability to communicate with other human beings because he is able to think, understand and express his thoughts through speech. Animals can't.

- (ii) Man has the ability to enjoy beauty while animals can't appreciate beauty.
- (iii) Man has the ability to distinguish between right and wrong. Animals do not have this capacity. Dogs may be trained to obey but cannot learn what is morally wrong.
- (iv) Man has a deep sense of the need to worship a superior being but animals do not have that capacity to worship or to express reverence.
- (v) Man can plan ahead, anticipate future events, and bring about changes of events. Animals are incapable of creativity or foresight. Anything the animals do in preparation for what lies ahead is simply a response to their natural instincts.

Man is therefore a product of special creation of God and did not evolve from a lower form of animal life.

(b) Made in God's Image (Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6; 1Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9)

The term, 'in the image of God' does not mean that man is an exact copy of God. It means that in some ways he resembles God.

Man is not made in the physical likeness of God because God is Spirit.

Our likeness to God is in our Personality;

- Like God, we are personal beings
- We have the possibility of interacting with God in a personal relationship through our human spirit and also the capacity, like Him, to have fellowship with other beings.