

BRINGING THE BIBLE TO LIFE

D I S C I P L E S H I P C L A S S E S



A BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF
THE BASIC NATURE OF MAN

Track I.2
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Introduction



A biblical understanding of the nature of man?

A study in anthropology!





Anthropology's basic concerns are "What defines Homo sapiens?", "Who are the ancestors of modern Homo sapiens?", "What are humans' physical traits?", "How do humans behave?", "Why are there variations and differences among different groups of humans?", "How has the evolutionary past of Homo sapiens influenced its social organization and culture?" and so forth.

-Wikipedia

Who is man?

Where do we go for the answer?

Hierarchy of “Deeds”

Why I do what I...

I do what I do because I want what I...

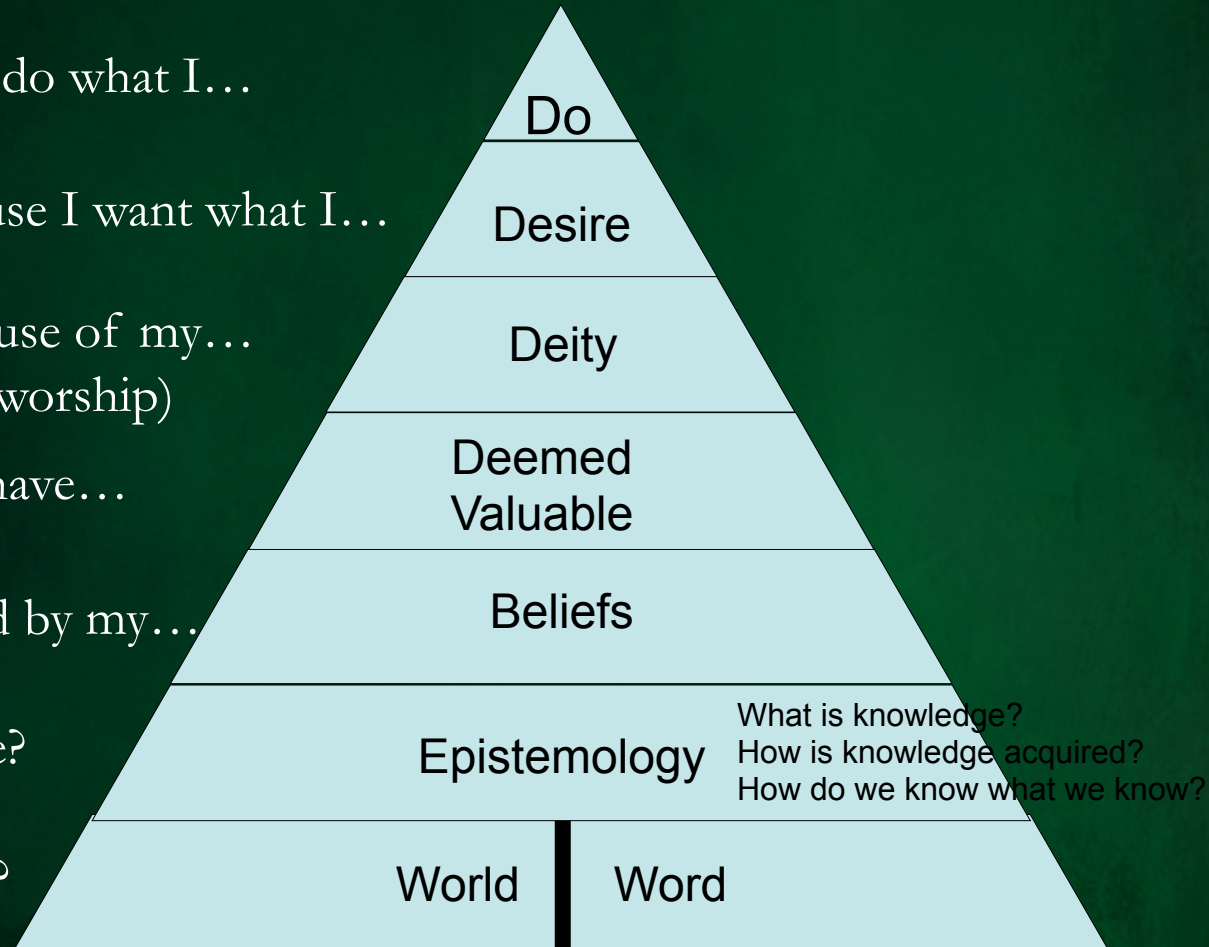
I desire what I desire because of my...
(or because of what I worship)

What I worship is what I have...

What I most value is determined by my...

How do I know for sure?

What is my source of truth?





Psalm 1:1-3

¹ Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; ² but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. ³He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

This and all other references are from the *Holy Bible : English Standard Version*. Wheaton : Standard Bible Society, 2001

Introduction



In many counseling situations, we are told to focus on what others have done wrong to us—which justifies a sinful response. A friend's example...

We are also told to look at our environment, our upbringing, how we have been raised, our temperament, etc.

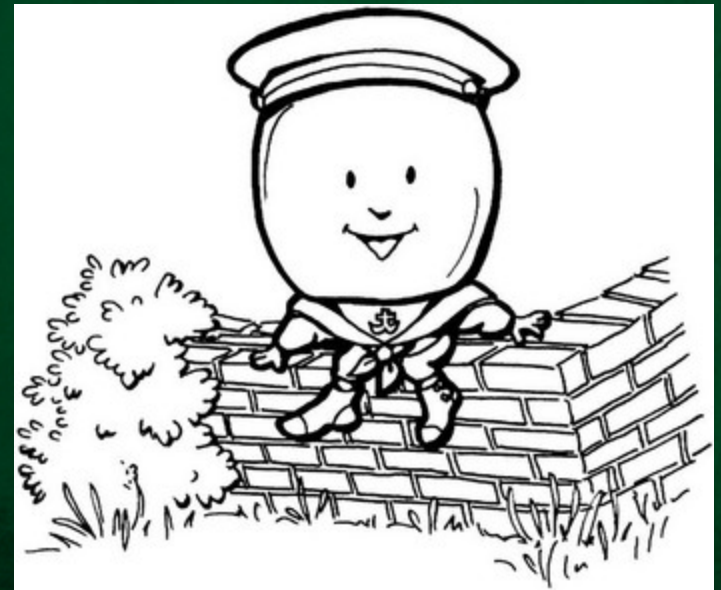
A poem was once written that gives a more theologically correct perspective on counseling and man:

Introduction



Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall
All the king's horses and all the king's men
Couldn't put Humpty back together again

What does this have to do with counseling?



Introduction



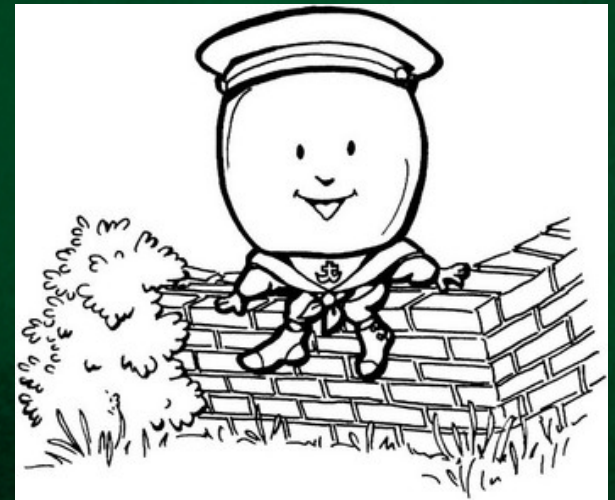
What does this have to do with counseling?

Who is man? A creation made in God's image that is flawed and broken.

Here is the big idea:

We must have a right understanding of man in order to have a right understanding of how to counsel ourselves and each other.

This is the only way to put Humpty Dumpty (us) back together again.



I. Man is a created being.



Genesis 1:26-31

26 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

27 So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

I. Man is a created being.



Genesis 1:26-31 cont.

29 And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.

30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so.

31 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.



I. Man is a created being.

Reflector mirror-image of God

Relational with God, self, Eve, rest of creation

Receiver needed God's Word

Reasoning logical, rational

Responder a worshipping being by nature, capable of awe, fear, love, obedience, and work.

Righteous pure, without sin

He needed God.

Reliant not autonomous < He needed God's Word.

Ruler dominion haver

He needed a helper.

I. Man is a created being.



Implications of man being a created being include:

A. Man cannot escape God's presence.

Psalm 139:1-10

¹O LORD, you have searched me and known me! ²You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

³You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. ⁴Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. ⁵You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it. ⁷Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? ⁸If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!

⁹If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, ¹⁰even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.

I. Man is a created being.



Implications of man being a created being include:

A. Man cannot escape God's presence.

Mother to son

“Jesus is watching you.”

Jay Adams

“God is our ‘environment’”.

I. Man is a created being.



Adam was created in a perfect environment:

Vertical	Purity-no sin, intimacy w/God
Internal	Peace-of heart, mind, soul, and conscience
	Pleasure-comfort, no pain/grief
	Plans-always met, no disappointment
Horizontal	Personal relationships-no conflict
External	Provision-all needs met, no wants
	Protection-perfect safety, justice



I. Man is a created being.

Implications of man being a created being include:

B. Man is created in God's image.

Made in the "image of God" means that man is:

Personal

Spiritual

An everlasting being

With moral responsibility

A creation who well resembles his Creator, but
without ascribing sin to God.

(taken from TMS Theology notes)

I. Man is a created being.



Implications of man being a created being include:

B. Man is created in God's image.

Genesis 1:26-27

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make man **in our image, after our likeness**. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

²⁷ So God created man **in his own image, in the image of God** he created him; male and female he created them.

I. Man is a created being.



Implications of man being a created being include:

B. Man is created in God's image.

1. Man is different than animals.

What in Genesis 1:26-31 helps us to see that man is different than animals?

As believers, we wear different glasses.





I. Man is a created being.

Implications of man being a created being include:

B. Man is created in God's image.

2. Man is a dominion-haver.

Mankind is to subdue creation and not allow the environment to rule.

Animals are different in this respect.

Genesis 1:26,28

FishingHurts.com

I. Man is a created being.



Implications of man being a created being include:

B. Man is created in God's image.

2. Man is a dominion-haver.

“Several recent studies confirm that fish are intelligent individuals who lead complex lives. An issue of *Fish and Fisheries* cited more than 500 research papers proving that fish are intelligent animals with long-term memories who can use tools and even build structures. University of Edinburgh biologist Culum Brown says, ‘Fish are more intelligent than they appear. In many areas, such as memory, their cognitive powers match or exceed those of “higher” vertebrates, including nonhuman primates.’”

What do we do with this kind of information?



I. Man is a created being.

Implications of man being a created being include:

B. Man is created in God's image.

2. Man is a dominion-haver.

What do we do with this kind of information?

Does this make us “equal” in this world?

I. Man is a created being.



Implications of man being a created being include:

B. Man is created in God's image.

3. Man was created with a purpose.

1 Cor 10:31

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,
do all to the glory of God.

Rev 4:11

“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory
and honor and power, for you created all things, and
by your will they existed and were created.”



I. Man is a created being.

Implications of man being a created being include:

B. Man is created in God's image.

3. Man was created with a purpose.

- To Worship God
- To Glorify God
- To Please God
- To Work (even before the fall!)

I. Man is a created being.



Implications of man being a created being include:
C. Man was given all that was necessary to fulfill his purpose.

Before the fall

After the fall

2 Peter 1:3

2 Timothy 3:16-17



I. Man is a created being.

What would you say are the implications or the applications for this first point as it relates to counseling?

A. Man cannot escape God's presence.

B. Man is created in God's image.

1. Man is different than animals.

2. Man is a dominion-haver.

3. Man was created with a purpose.

C. Man was given all that was necessary to fulfill his purpose.

II. Man is a fallen creature.



Implications that man is a fallen creature include:

A. Seeks to make sense of life apart from God.

Another counselor arrives with
“other wisdom”

Gen 3:1b

Did God actually say?



Adam and Eve's thoughts could potentially have been:

Did God tell us enough?

Did He withhold something we need to know?

II. Man is a fallen creature.



Implications that man is a fallen creature include:

A. Seeks to make sense of life apart from God.

Psalm 10:3-4

3 For the wicked boasts of the desires of his soul, and the one greedy for gain curses and renounces the Lord.

4 In the pride of his face the wicked does not seek him; all his thoughts are, “There is no God.”

1 Cor 2:14

The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

II. Man is a fallen creature.



Implications that man is a fallen creature include:

A. Seeks to make sense of life apart from God.

Examples of ways unbelievers try to make sense of life apart from God?

Examples of ways believers try to make sense of life apart from God?

II. Man is a fallen creature.



Implications that man is a fallen creature include:

A. Seeks to make sense of life apart from God.

We are like people vacationing at the beach and get upset that there is sand!

“God, why the sand? I don’t deserve this sand! I’m going to try to find a way to do a vacation on the beach without sand!”

We don’t recognize that the “sand” in our lives is ordained by God.

We toil endlessly to no avail—to try to make sense of life apart from God. This shows our fallen nature.



II. Man is a fallen creature.

Implications that man is a fallen creature include:

B. The image of God in man has been completely marred.

Adam and Eve enjoyed perfect...	Rebellion's disruption...
Purity-no sin, intimacy w/God	Guilt, shame, fear, condemnation
Peace-of heart/mind/soul, conscience	Fear, confusion, regret
Pleasure-comfort, no pain or grief	Pain, suffering
Plans-always met, no disappointment	Failure, disappointment
Personal relationships-no conflict	Isolation, rejection
Provision-all needs met, no wants	Loss, hardship, pain,
Protection-perfect safety, justice	Harm, injury, shame

Exchange for Listening to “another counselor”

Reflector	Disfigured
Relational	Dissenter
Receiver	Disconnected
Reasoning	Deceived (noetic)
Responder	Defector
Righteous	Depraved
Reliant	Destitute
Ruler	Dominated

II. Man is a fallen creature.



Implications that man is a fallen creature include:

B. The image of God in man has been completely marred.

Ephesians 2:1-3

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

What in this passage shows that the image of God in man has been completely marred?



II. Man is a fallen creature.

Implications that man is a fallen creature include:

B. The image of God in man has been completely marred.

We are sinners who sin.

A friend and my conversation:

“What about the good Jew or the good Muslim?”

II. Man is a fallen creature.



Implications that man is a fallen creature include:

C. It is impossible for fallen man to know God or please Him.

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

This goes back to the “good” person idea (celebrities, etc.).

Isaiah 64:6

We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.



II. Man is a fallen creature.

Implications that man is a fallen creature include:

C. It is impossible for fallen man to know God or please Him.

Inner man is totally corrupt/depraved:

Spiritual - idolaters

Emotional – emotions hijack our hearts

Relational – difficult, isolate, conflict

Intellectual – understanding is darkened, futile

Volitional/Responsibility – selfish, lazy, disobedient

Desiring being - desires drag us away, tempted

We don't always practice what we preach, but we always do what we want.

“We are far worse than we think we are.”

-We grade on a different scale than God.

II. Man is a fallen creature.



Implications that man is a fallen creature include:

C. It is impossible for fallen man to know God or please Him.

Quotes from *Holiness* by J.C. Ryle:

“The fault and corruption of the nature of every man who is naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam; whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusts always against the spirit; and, therefore, in every person born into the world, it deserves God’s wrath and damnation.”

“I say, furthermore, that ‘a sin’, to speak more particularly, consists in doing, saying, thinking, or imagining, anything that is not in perfect conformity with the mind and law of God” (1 John 3:4).

Four Ways to Sin

	Omission (Neglecting the law)	Commission (Breaking the law)
Presumptuous (Willful / Rebellious)	I know, but I don't want to obey	I know, but I break God's law
Ignorant (Not knowing the law)	Don't know; don't obey	Don't know; break God's law

II. Man is a fallen creature.



Implications that man is a fallen creature include:

D. Effect on self

E. Effect on relationships

What are the implications or the applications for this second point as it relates to counseling?

A. Seeks to make sense of life apart from God.

B. The image of God in man has been completely marred.

C. It is impossible for fallen man to know God or please Him.

D. & E. (above)

III. Man is a redeemable creature.



I am more sinful than I realize, yet I am more loved and welcomed than I can ever imagine.

This is the topic for the next class.

Romans 5:8

Conclusion



Restatement of the Big Idea:

We must have a right understanding of man in order to have a right understanding of how to counsel ourselves and each other.

Having this right understanding will help us put Humpty Dumpty back together again.

Let's cling to Christ, our creator and sustainer, to change us from the inside out.



SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

- Summarize your main take-aways from this session, especially noting any areas that were either unclear to you or that you might disagree.
- *Fundamentals of the Faith*; complete lesson #5, listen to audio message @ gty.org/fof



GOING DEEPER

Additional materials, recommended for further study

- “An Increasing Awareness of Unworthiness” From *God’s Solutions to Life’s Problems*, page 45ff, by Wayne and Joshua Mack
- Chapter 8 “Grace is Only for the Powerless” from the book *Tell the Truth*, by Will Metzger
- Chapter 5 “Counseling and the Sinfulness of Humanity” from the book, *Counseling; How to Counsel Biblically*, by John MacArthur
- Chapters 8-11 from the book, *A Theology of Christian Counseling*, by Jay Adams



NEXT CLASSES

Next Monday and beyond:

- Track 1.Session 3, The Gospel and Your Identity
- Track 1.Session 4, The Purpose of Life
- Track 1.Session 5, Why Do I Do What I Do?

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DISCIPLESHIP CLASSES

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