

Questions & Answers

Part 4: *What Is Man?*

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS



A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

2018.9.30



Questions for Reflection

- **Open your Bible to Psalm 8.**

What idea serves as the "book-ends" of this psalm (see verses 1 and 9)?

With **that** idea in mind, what impression do you think the psalmist wanted to communicate with v. 3-4?

Verses 5-8 sets up a contrast to v. 3-4. What is it?

Now, in your own words, summarize the biblical view of mankind portrayed in Psalm 8.

Based on the biblical view of mankind, complete the following sentences:

"Compared to God, mankind is..."

"When mankind is compared to the cosmos, it is surprising that God even..."

"Compared to the rest of creation, mankind is..."

With **which** of those statements would the secular worldview disagree—**and why?**

David's question—"What is man?"—reflects astonishment that God knows and cares, but it can be asked with other nuances. For example:

in Psalm 144:3f. it mocks the arrogance of the rebel

in Job 7:17 it is a sufferer's plea for relief

in Job 25:6 it shudders at human sin

How do each of these nuances **increase** our understanding of the significance of human beings?

- Christians almost universally express opposition to a number of practices which degrade humans: slavery and human trafficking, genocide, racism, poverty, access to education and health care, etc. Modern science and Scripture are unequivocal: a unique human life begins at conception—so why do you think that the issue of abortion isn't universally recognized by Christians as evil?

Application-Challenge

Should it be? Why or why not?

- **Advocate for the unborn!** This is TCC's week to partner with **Love Life** and **Hand of Hope**. This **Wednesday** many of us will fast and pray. **Saturday** (9-11am) join your church family at **Hand of Hope Pregnancy Resource Center** (1522 Jones Franklin Road) for a peaceful prayer vigil.
- At this moment 2,000 children in North Carolina's **foster care** system are cleared for adoption. How should you be involved?
- **Traumatized by abortion?**
Don't suffer in silence!

For free hope and help write to:
counseling@tcc.org

Sermon Summary

For the last two weeks our worldview questions have dealt with some of the basic foundations of knowledge. We've talked about the trustworthiness of the Bible and about how science and faith relate to each other. Today we'll seek to gain a biblical answer to the question: What are people? King David was curious about this as well—see Psalm 8. David acknowledges the power and majesty of God, and when he asks “What is man,” his question is not simply, “What are human beings?” but “Who are we in relation to you, God?” This is an important place to start our discussion. When we consider the value, the purpose, and the dignity of human beings, we are starting on the wrong foot if we don't consult their designer. If we ask science, culture, or history what we are, we end up with some incomplete and at times dangerous answers. If we are to view ourselves solely as biological beings, we get an incomplete picture of humanity. If we deny the existence of the soul we deny the existence of good and evil, right and wrong. A survey of human history views man as being property and currency. Man has been expendable and valuable only for what he can produce for society. So that brings us back to Psalm 8. Not just, “What is man?” but, “God, who did you design us to be?”

Genesis 1:26-27 reveals that we were made in God's image. There's a growing fascination with comparing human behavior to animal behavior in order to learn about man. But God says we've got that all wrong. To learn about man, we shouldn't be looking downwards at animals but upwards to God! We are the pinnacle of God's creation; we bear his signature. We can't truly honor the Creator if we dishonor the pinnacle of His creation (James 3:9). A biblical worldview on the subject of man must result in giving man the same dignity and value that God does. We were bought with a price: the perfect blood of Jesus (1 Corinthians 6). Man's value isn't to be determined by race or by his usefulness (Galatians 3:28).

Euthanasia has become a celebrated medical option for the terminally ill. “Passive” euthanasia, when a terminally ill person decides to cease medical interventions that are prolonging their life, is sad, but biblically permissible. It's not causing death, it's allowing the natural causes of death to take effect. The dark side of euthanasia, “active” euthanasia, is when we actively cause death for the patient. I know that the pain and suffering that can go along with terminal diseases is immense both physically and emotionally for the whole family. But this doesn't give us permission to purposefully end a life. Active euthanasia assumes that God cannot heal. How certain must we be that a disease is terminal to allow a doctor to end someone's life? Is all suffering senseless and without value? Accepting active euthanasia puts us on a slippery slope from giving patients the right to die to believing that patients have a duty to die. It's easy to connect the dots to the argument that if a patient has lost enough functionality and is draining money and resources from the hospital and their family, the ethical thing to do is to die. And euthanasia no longer is just for the elderly—recently in Belgium two children were euthanized!

There is one other implication we cannot ignore: abortion. There are close to 900,000 abortions in the United States each year. Abortion is the leading cause of death in America. Jeremiah 1:5 and Psalm 139:13-16 reveal that God has been mindful of us even before we existed in the womb! Less than 1.5% of abortions have anything to do with health issues for the mother or child, or with rape. That means that over 850,000 babies were aborted because they were an inconvenience! Church, we can't stand silent on the issue of abortion. Abortion is the most widespread social justice issue we can be involved in. And if we are to be voices advocating for the unborn, we also need to be the leading hands and feet providing other options for the unborn. Prayerfully consider if adoption is a possibility for your family. There's no doubt it's a long, difficult road, but it's a necessary road to travel down if we are to effectively advocate for the unborn. We can make a difference. Some of us can bring a child into our homes. Others can help financially. We can be surrogate grandmas and grandpas or aunts and uncles. What you can't do is denounce the crisis that is abortion and do nothing to help.

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any passage. We can use it to explore the Scriptures and develop a truly biblical anthropology...

Monday— Isaiah 43:7; Ephesians 1:11-12; 1 Corinthians 10:31 **Why** was man created?

Tuesday— Psalm 16:11; 27:4; 73:25-26; John 10:10 What makes humans **truly** happy?

Wednesday— Isaiah 62:5 & Zephaniah 3:17-18 *cf.* Romans 1:18-23 & Ephesians 2:1-3
How does **God feel** about us?

Thursday—Colossians 3:10; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Romans 8:28-30 What **hope** does mankind have?

Friday— Genesis 1:27; 5:1-2; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 5:31-33 How is "man" **mysterious**?

Saturday— ***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** study Psalm 1.

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) is it found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



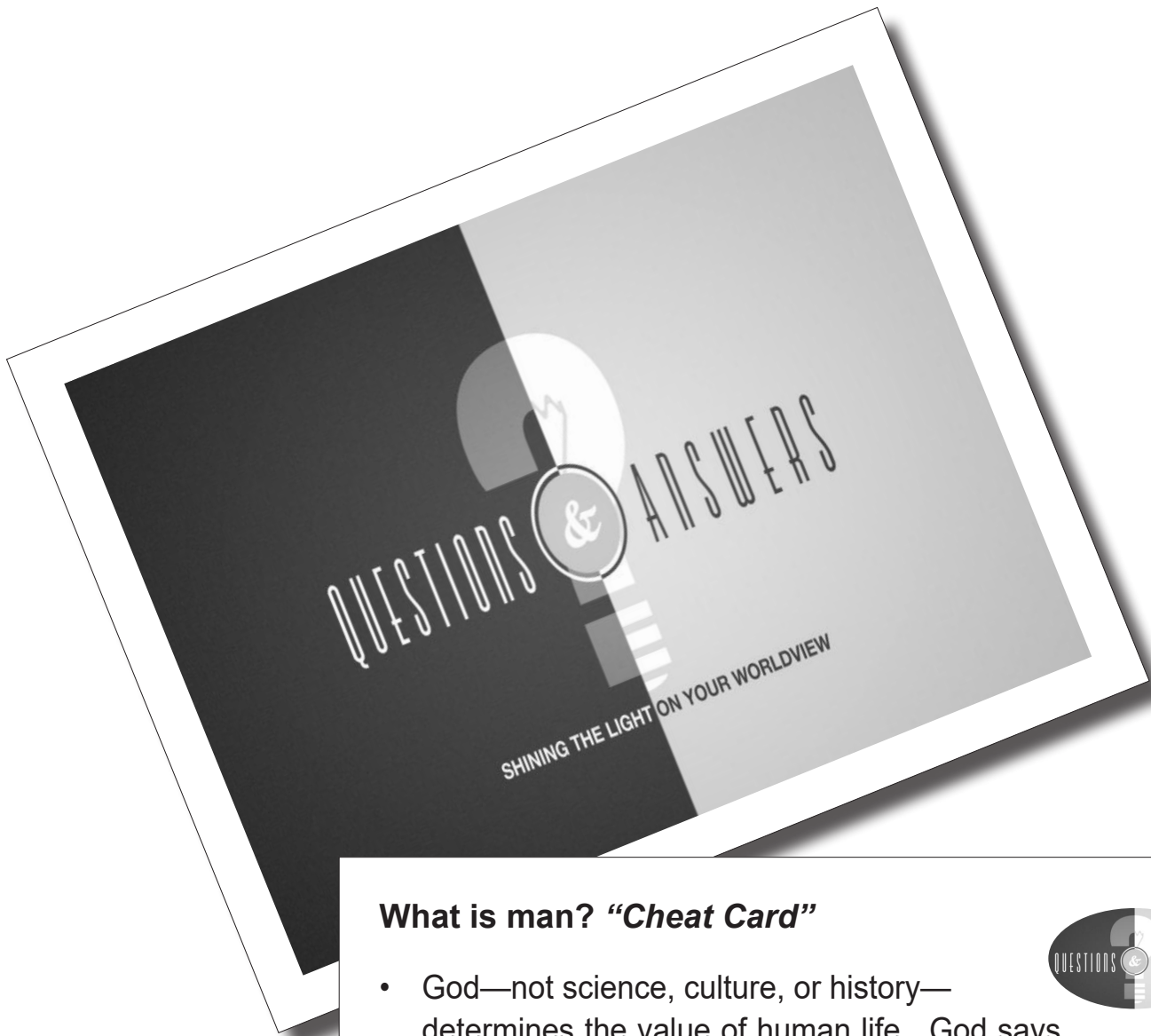
What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text?



What is man? “*Cheat Card*”



- God—not science, culture, or history—determines the value of human life. God says that we are made in His image (Psalm 8; Genesis 1). Whenever the value of people has been determined by man, we have been degraded into mere commodities (Revelation 18:11-13).
- How we treat people shows how we view God (James 3:9).
- Human beings are intrinsically valuable—irrespective of intelligence, health, wealth, age, beauty or productivity. Human life is sacred, and is to be protected, from conception to natural death (Genesis 9:6).