

Who am I?

What is life meant to be like? What is my purpose?

We are fascinated by the lives of others, but sometimes we know and understand ourselves least of all.

The Christian message teaches two great truths about who we are:

1. We are made ‘in the image of God’

Just like the moon reflects the light and glory of the sun, we were made to reflect the nature of God.

The image of God in us involves numerous aspects of our nature. We are...

- *Personal* beings
- *Relational* beings
- *Moral* beings
- *Able to choose*
- *Intelligent* beings
- *Spiritual* beings
- Beings with *purpose*



When we see the Bible’s picture of what life was like for the first human beings, we get a glimpse of what life was meant to be like for us.

What went wrong with the beautiful image of God in humanity?

2. We are fallen, broken

In spite of their beautiful relationship with God, the first man and woman decided not to believe what God had said, not to trust his goodness. They decided to re-focus their lives around themselves instead of around God. They rebelled against God’s rules. In effect, they shook their fists in the face of God and said, “We are going our own way!”

Little did they realise the impact of that choice. What happened then is what we call ‘The Fall’. Something changed in the very core of their being. When they fell, the image of God was damaged.

And it gets worse—the children of that first couple were born in *their* fallen, broken image (Genesis 5:3). We inherited their brokenness and the damage shows up in every aspect of the image of God in us...



Our fallenness:

- *Personal fallenness* – laziness, workaholism, things we don't like about ourselves and can't change.
- *Relational fallenness* – conflict, divorce, misery, murder, arguing, blame.
- *Moral fallenness* – we turn what is beautiful into what is evil and ugly; we do what's wrong even when we know the right thing to do.
- *Fallen choices* – Our nature now is to break rules if we can get away with it.
- *Intellectual fallenness* – we construct great systems to justify life without God (Freud, Marx, scientific humanism, etc).
- *Spiritual fallenness* – our relationship with God is broken.
- *Fallen in our role on earth* – instead of caring for this world we are destroying it.



This is not how it is meant to be!

The real Christian message is all about God's solution to our problem of fallenness.

God is in the business of restoring what has been damaged in our inner lives.

There is a place where our searching comes to an end and our life journey takes a dramatic turn.

Discussion questions (pick some to discuss)

- How much of your nature do you think you are born with, and how much do you learn from your experiences?
- What do you think of this statement: "Everyone is normal until you get to know them"?
- If we are all 'fallen', why are some people worse than others?
- What's the best thing about being human? And what's the worst thing?
- Malcolm Muggeridge wrote, *"When I look back on my life nowadays, which I sometimes do, what strikes me most forcibly about it is that what seemed at that time most significant and seductive, seems now most futile and absurd. For instance, success in all its various guises; being known and being praised, ostensible pleasures, like acquiring money and seducing women or traveling, going to and fro in the world and up and down in it. ...In retrospect, all these exercises in self-gratification seem pure fantasy, what Pascal called 'licking the earth'."*

Steven Covey wrote, *"Many people work harder and harder climbing the ladder of success only to discover it's leaning against the wrong wall. If the ladder is not leaning against the right wall, every step we take just gets us to the wrong place faster."*

Have you ever felt like this?