

# Man became a Living Soul

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Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

[ 0 : 00 ] We're going to sing now from Psalm 103. Psalm 103, at the beginning of the psalm.

O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord and all that in me is. Be stood up his holy name to magnify and bless. Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, and your forgetful be of all his gracious benefits he hath bestowed on thee.

All thine iniquities, who doth most graciously forgive, who thy diseases all and pains doth heal and thee relieve, who doth redeem thy life, that thou to death must not go down, who thee with lovingkindness doth, with tender meshes crown, who with abundance of good things doth satisfy thy mouth, so that even as the eagle's age renewed is thy youth.

God righteous judgment executes for all oppressed ones. This way is to Moses. He his acts made known to Israel's sons.

And so on. These verses. O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord and all that in me is. O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord and all that in me is.

[ 1 : 36 ] His strength of God the Lord and all that in me is. O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord and all that in me is.

I am blessed. Bless, O my soul, Lord, thy God the Lord forget will be.

O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord and all that in me is. O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord and all that in me is.

O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord and all that in me is. O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord and all that in me is.

Thy kisses All and grace Stroudly not be Revealed Who doth Reveal Thy life That the dew Death is not O God Her name Will the wind Kind as God On tender Mercy's Journey Who with The ■ Is not essence

[ 3 : 48 ] High Light Water So That You Not Achilles reacting Renewed is thy good.

God righteous judgment exhibutes for all the present ones.

His wisdom was it. See his light. Medion to his little sons.

I'd like us to turn for a short while to Genesis chapter 2. And we can read again verse 7. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul.

A number of years ago I was given the gift of a book of daily readings.

[ 5 : 26 ] I have to say it wasn't a book that I would have bought for myself. Many of the contributors to that book, I knew nothing about them.

I didn't recognize their names. But just to give you a taste of some of them. There was Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Justin Trudeau, Jamie Oliver, the Dalai Lama, Vivian Westwood, and Paul Martin, formerly Canadian Prime Minister, and Nelson Mandela.

Now these are just a few names and these are the names I've probably recognized myself. And maybe some of you will recognize some of these names. But they were sayings that these people had written or uttered in speeches and they were recorded and contained in a book.

Similar to many of our daily readings books that we have. But the introduction to the book had these words in it.

Humans today are confronting the greatest challenge ever faced in the four billion year history of this planet. in the face of an environmental destruction the world over, devastating prevalence and severity of poverty, continually distressing situations of socio-political turmoil, intensely intensifying effects of climate and a general earthy equilibrium that we have gravely disrupted and so on.

[ 7 : 42 ] Now you may detect from the flavor of these words that the book focuses mainly on grain issues.

but you will notice that there are several of these comments that you can note simply because of their understanding the understanding that lies at the heart of what is said.

For example, the fact that it quotes our, and it is a quote because it's a consensus of scientific opinion that belongs to many today, that the planet that we occupy is between four and a half billion years old and five billion years old.

What's half a billion between friends? But that's the prevailing scientific worldview that the earth is that age.

And secondly, I think just from gleaning what these words also bring to our attention, humanity, that is mankind, is at the centre of what is important in this world.

[ 9 : 20 ] And the fate of the planet and the power to avert what is pessimistically held as a fate that is more definite than not lies in the hand of man and only man can alter its fate.

Now, as I suggested, many of the contributors to this book are ecologists. They are of the green lobby. They are interested in the environment and rightly so.

But their understanding of the place that this world of our occupies in the sight of God is most likely it could be said of all of them a view of God, if they have a view of God, that is quite wrong.

They certainly do not, well I can't speak for everyone who is a contributor, but many of them have no belief in God or the God that they believe in is certainly not the God of the Bible.

And instead of a theological understanding of God as being a God who created man, their understanding of God would be that God is a God created by man or in the plural that there are many gods that man has created.

[ 11 : 14 ] and the Bible as the word of God as many of us believe has no place in their reckoning of what the future may hold or what the past may have to say to us.

Many would consider the Bible just as a work of literature that is valuable because of its literary content. Now the Christian whose worldview is governed by the Bible believes unlike many of them and the scientific view that we've read from that passage that the world is not 4.5 billion years old but that in all likelihood it is about 6,000 years old and that would be the reckoning that you would have to follow based on how the book of Genesis begins.

Now we have to acknowledge the fact that even within reformed theological discussions there is a debate about the age of the world and many of these views come from the understanding based on a geological reckoning of the age of the earth or a theological one such as looking at Genesis 1, 1 and then Genesis 1, 2 and believing that based on the Hebrew text that these two verses allow for an old earth theology that is that God when he created the world that there is a God created gap from the point at which he began the work of creation to the point at which he resumed the work of creation.

Now these are views that are held within the church and even within a reformed theological framework.

But I'm not going to talk about that and that's not the focus of our interest this evening. The focus of our interest is mainly on the words of our text.

[ 13 : 55 ] Within the work of creation which we attribute entirely to God is the creation of man. And in the verse that we read there chapter 2 verse 7 we are told that God created man and that God gave life to man.

And while we understand that there is clearly an interest in the world about its origins and that there is a vast array of opinion regarding the origins of man that the biblical view is that the origins of this world of ours and man in it is entirely attributable to God and God alone.

the French theologian Henry Blocher has written a book on the first three books of Genesis.

He's an evangelical theological college. I don't know if he's still living or not. But this is what he says and it's just an observation it's nothing by way of making a major theological statement.

It's just an observation that any one of us could make just surveying the interest people have in the past. The human race he says quite rightly feels that it cannot find its bearings for life today without having light shed on its origins.

[ 15 : 46 ] Now that's a theologian stating the obvious perhaps. many people today want to find out where they came from, who they came from and when they're thinking about that the tendency is to go back maybe a couple of hundred years and they're interested by way of research in their genealogy.

but if they were wise they would go all the way back to the book of origins which is the book of Genesis and there they would find more than enough for them to understand where they came from because that's where the book of Genesis begins.

It begins in the beginning and it begins in the beginning with God. You know that statement at the beginning of Genesis in the beginning God it's a very profound statement even though it's simple on the surface in the beginning God that beginning that starting point has nothing before it but God and God in that beginning created and what he created he has revealed to us through his word and there is nothing and no one before him and the God that is spoken of there interestingly for us because when you go on to examine the Bible as a whole you'll find that the work of creation is attributed to

God in the plural God the Son is described in the Gospels as being involved in creation God the Spirit is described as one that was involved in the work of creation as this God the Father and Elohim is the plural name for God so almost without any emphasis coming to focus upon the name God who created this world is seen to be the triune God and the world that he created is a world before which as we said there was nothing and all things that he created are all things that depended upon him to be created all things whatever they are have their origin in him now here in chapter 2 we're looking at the creation of man and it's not the first time he's spoken of it because in verse 26 of the first chapter

God said let us make man in our image again the plural is here let us make man in our image after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth so God created man in his own image in the image of God created he him male and female created he them now there's a whole host of different things there that you could explore for yourself we live in a day where the sexuality of mankind is questioned and we are told that there is a broad spectrum of sexes within mankind where you have the male at one end and the female at the other and any kind in between and that we have no right to identify the sex of a person that is entirely down to them but if you read for example

[ 20 : 33 ] Donald MacLeod in his book of theology he makes the very simple statement that the sex of a person is down to two things the chromosomes that mark them out if you're male you have an X chromosome and a Y chromosome and if you're a female you have two X chromosomes and that is that is the fact of the matter it is something that is not dependent upon anything or anyone it's what you are by nature you are either in possession of these chromosomes or you're not now I'm not interested this evening in discussing that or entering into what it says but the word of God tells us that God created man male and female the generic term for mankind is man people don't like that because they want it to be inclusive they wanted to speak in gender neutral terminology whatever that is so that you can't speak of man or woman but use some other designation to describe what they are the

Bible doesn't make any distinction other than the distinction that we have that you are born male or born female and more importantly for us we are created in the image of God and that is the emphasis the writer and God through the writer has to bring to our attention that in the first chapter what we read by way of description is we're told of the origin of man God created man in his own image but we are also taught there the superiority the place that man has in the order of creation superiority in the sense that because of this distinction that man was created in the image of

God there is a superiority there's no getting away from it he created the world he created the plant life he created the sea life he created the birds of the air he created the beasts of the field but none of them were created in his image a only man is created in his image and not only is he created in the image of God we are told that he is given a place to superintend the creation that he is to govern it that he is that this creation is under his submission he has an authority albeit a God given authority over that creation we read God created God blessed and God gave that man that was created in his image work to do and then in chapter 2 and verse 7 the

Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul again the formation is God's doing man didn't evolve man didn't develop out of anything other than the created formation that God was responsible for he took the dust and out of the dust he formed man in his own image and he breathed life into him professor finn listen some of you will know his name and be familiar with his name he was speaking about psalm 8 in particular and the quotation of that psalm in Hebrews chapter 2 and this is what he says the natural consequences of this moral glory that man possesses he was created a little lower than the angels he was given a glory all of his own it was the consequences of this he says was man's investiture with material authority it was the dominion of reason over instinct man bore this resemblance to god that he was created a rational being endowed with intelligence and possessing a mind that was cognate to the divine mind in other words what finnisson is doing there is distinguishing the creature all creatures that are not humankind because this differentiates man from the rest of the creation as far as the creature is concerned there is the capacity to reason the capacity to respond to god as their creator now if you ask and

I suppose this is where my thinking was generated constantly we're reminded of this need that we have to care for the environment and I'm sure every single one of you as Christians have got a concern to be careful for the environment in which you live and there is an onus placed upon you as someone who occupies the attention of god to care for the environment in which you are placed and that you have a duty to do that as those who understand that god is its creator and that within that creation god has given to you a created mandate to care for the environment now what we see is that this emphasis to look after the environment seems to be concentrated as if it is the province of those who have no

[ 27 : 49 ] Christian interest at all no interest in the god of creation no interest in the teaching that the bible has to offer us concerning the burden that is ours to care for our environment they have their own moral agenda if you can call it that which is entirely man centred and devoid of a morality that is governed by anything that god has given to them if they did it would not be so contradictory so many I'm not saying that they're exclusively like that I'm not saying that there are not Christians who may be allied with those who are of that green lobby but the vast majority that we hear speaking have absolutely no interest in the spiritual well-being of society or the spiritual integrity of the environment that god includes within the interest that man should have for that environment there is a moral imperative on the part of mankind to be interested in what god has to say to us and what god requires of us he took man from the dust don

McLeod in his writing says he has close affiliation with the rest of the organic creation because of the fact that god took him from the dust but not only did god foreign man from the dust of the ground he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life that is divine activity of the most intimate sort can't remember which one of the divine says that when when Adam the first man opened his eyes after god breathed into his nostrils the first face that he saw was the face of god of course that cannot be so but what you understand by that theologian instinct is that the close proximity of god to him as he breathed the breath of life into spiritual life as well as natural life was what what made that encounter all important he mentioned

Finlayson and Finlayson goes on god breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul that thus it is that though in the composition of his physical frame he has kinship with the animal creation in his spiritual nature he has kinship with god god made him a living soul now theologians spend time trying to understand what that means what is man the living soul what does it look like and there's a whole discussion about the nature of the soul and the spirit and the body and whether we to think of them as three parts or two parts and so on but it's important for us as Christians to have a clear view of this relationship again with the nature that is the world that we occupy and the part that we play in it as

Christians we have an understanding of our affinity with the world in which we live and the concern that we should have for it and while there are those who adopt a high moral tone there is no reason whatsoever that their attitude should be accepted if their attitude does not take cognizance of the fact that the God who created this world who gave who provided the environment who super intends it who has given life to it and who not only ordained life but ensures that life continues until the time that he appoints where it will come to an end it's interesting to note that when you go into the second chapter or third chapter here what you read when man encounters sin when man falls paid to sin what happens to man while you read in chapter 3 verse 19 in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground for out of it was thou taken for dust thou warden unto dust shalt thou return

God sees fit to remind man something that he had patently forgotten when he chose to eat the temptations of the devil to usurp the authority of God. God in the penalty that he brought to bear upon him reminded him you came from the dust you didn't spontaneously emerge from the dust I took you from the dust I breathed life into you and now by virtue of your disobedience you will return to that dust because I your God will invoke the judgment that was promised to the disobedient in verse 23 therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken it's as if

[ 34 : 17 ] God is saying this is where you were taken from you don't belong there because I took you from there to place you where you would be governing the environment that I gave to you to place authority over it in my name you were my vice regent the vice regent governing in my name in my stead this world in which I placed you and I gave you this authority and I gave you this precedence over nature but now because you have sinned you are going back to where you came but not because it is natural not because there was no option but to but because you sinned because you went away from me you remind yourself of this you hear it so often it will be so much brought to your attention and if you listen to it often enough you are bound to imbibe some of the error some of the teaching that tells you that this world is just something that emerged out of nothing in the sense of it it came from a blob of nothingness that emerged from nothingness that nobody knows about because it's so far back in time 4 billion years 4 and a half billion 5 billion years and by some chance by some by some dint of nature over which nothing has control emerged a microcosm something miniature something minuscule and that developed and that grew and that prospered and eventually we have the world and eventually what we have occupying the world is creation and man in it well you're not a naked ape you're not somebody who's descended from some other creature you're God's creation and you're

God's creation as one that God breathed life into you in the sense of in your origins in your first parents and if you believe that it is probably because God has breathed life into you as a new creature God has given you the capacity to believe his world and to understand that the God who created this world is the God who upholds this world and in whose hands the power is to bring this world to an end Adam as created was the pinnacle of God's creation who fell who lost his way and to whom God is to restore that lost glory through the last Adam Christ Jesus and that will prove well we have it's clearly a mystery what the new creation will be like where it will be how it will be occupied how will the occupants of it fulfil their role within that new creation questions that the

Bible does not fully answer God has not given to us a book that tells us day and date for creation or the duration of it six days we are told God created was involved in the creation of this world and he on the sixth day created man and he put man as we read here into the garden of Eden till the ground from whence he was taken after he was sent out into the world he had occupation in the garden he was given a greater labor out of it but that's what the Bible teaches that's what we believe in and the world in which we live clearly does not and yet they believe that they have a mandate to go out and claim the world for man it's not the world that belongs to man it's man that belongs to the world because

God placed him there but may God give you these thoughts of placing your mind and you can work at them hopefully to your benefit let us pray Lord help us to understand that there is a burden placed upon us with regard to where you have placed us just as surely as you placed Adam in the garden to work there and to live there and to glorify your name there and to have life as long as he lived it to your glory but you clearly teach that he was not willing or able to remain in that environment and the environment that he was placed in following from that was you doing and the curse that came upon the ground is there in evidence in this world of ours and we see the endeavours of man to resist the way the curse has impacted upon the world and it is not just in the physical realm but more particularly in the spiritual realm that that is to be seen because the greatest cause of the malaise of this world in its environment is the corruption that is in man's heart corruption that is seen in selfishness and carelessness and indifference to the effects of what they are doing and what we are doing to the environment that we are to live in help us to understand these things and to think about them as something that we can bring to you our God and to seek your guidance upon our lives as to how we are to live them for your glory and thank you for our sins in Jesus name amen going to sing in conclusion from

Psalm 103 and verse 14 we're singing in Gaelic verse 14 Psalm 103 and verse 14 which will hard to study in the cross har k■v sa3 ga protector some Gun skull high spion

[ 42 : 48 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 45 : 18 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.