

IV. THE NATURE OF MAN (Anthropology)

A. Introductory Notes

1. The relevant portions of the symbols

a. His Creation

Section IV, LC 17, SC 10.

b. His Fall

Section VI, LC 20-29, SC 12-19

c. His "potential" Recovery

Section VII, LC 30-35, SC 20-21

Naturally much other confessional material deals with man and his state, etc. These are the central portions that express to us where man is and what his possibilities are. In discussing this point you will remember that academically we are far better off today than the church was 1800 years ago. Our vocabulary is developed, our understanding is maturing, our potential for research is vast. I am not sure this has rendered us better at any of these things but it is true, just the same.

2. Summary of the Doctrine

Man is the special creation of God --uniquely prepared to enjoy Him and participate meaningfully in His will. But man has fallen and in a corrupt state does not do what pleases God. As man failed in his first covenantal relationship, God has graciously provided a means whereby he might be restored to a place of life and favor through faith in Jesus Christ.

3. Importance

The importance of this part of doctrinal study is indicated by Cunningham in his Historical Theology, Vol. I, p. 321:

There never, indeed, has been much appearance of true personal religion where the divinity of the Son of God has been denied; but there has often been a profession of sound doctrine upon this subject, long maintained, where there has been little real religion. Whereas, not only has there never been much real religion where there was not a substantially sound doctrine in regard to the points involved in the Pelagian controversy, but also--and this is the point of contrast--the decay of true religion has always been accompanied by