

Who Am I?

Assertion of the Question of Identity

I. THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION OF IDENTITY

The query "Who am I?" is identified as one of the most fundamental questions human beings ask. The term "identity" itself, originating from the Latin *idem* ("the same"), implies a state of sameness and oneness. When an individual poses this question, the inquiry can be understood in one of three ways:

- **Substance:** Pertaining to the essential nature of being (e.g., an animal, a biological machine, an illusion).
- **Functionality:** Relating to roles and responsibilities (e.g., a mother, a father, an employer).
- **Affiliation:** Concerning identification with a particular person or group.

II. THE BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK: CREATION AND HUMAN DISTINCTION

The document establishes its foundational premise on the existence of the God of the biblical worldview. The answer to the identity question is first sought in the creation account of Genesis, chapter one.

The Order of Creation

The six days of creation are presented as a process of God first preparing the earth and then filling it with living creatures. The repeated phrase "after their kind" in the creation of plants and animals is highlighted as central to the "consistency and the order" of God's work, which is repeatedly declared "good."

The Uniqueness of Humankind

A sharp contrast is drawn between plants, animals, and humankind, emphasizing humanity's unique position in creation. While all were brought into being by God's word, only humanity was explicitly made in God's image.

Feature	Plants	Animals	Humankind
Origin	God spoke into existence.	God spoke into existence.	God made from earth.
Image & Likeness	Not made in God's image.	Not made in God's image.	Made in God's image and likeness.
Divine Qualities	Do not possess God's qualities.	Do not possess God's qualities.	Given some of God's communicable qualities.
Mandate	Made to bear fruit.	Told to be fruitful and multiply.	Given dominion over creation.

In contrast to this view, an alternative pantheistic worldview is presented, which sees the Universe as the creative, preserving, and destructive force, with humanity being an interdependent part of that whole.

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III. THE BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK: CREATION AND HUMAN DISTINCTION

The analysis explores the substance of humanity by asking, "Is Humanity Only Material?" The answer provided is a definitive no, establishing a dualistic view of human nature.

Based on Proverbs 20:27, "The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, Searching all the innermost parts of his being," humanity is described as having two distinct aspects:

Aspect	Components
Immaterial	Spirit, Thought, Volition (Will/Desire), Conscience
Material	Body, Organs, Bodily Systems, Neuronal Connections

Solomon's proverb is interpreted to mean that humans possess a spirit originating from God, and this spirit contains the qualities of conscience and volition.

IV. THE PROBLEM OF IDENTITY: THE FALLEN STATE

- The document posits that humanity's original identity has been corrupted. Citing Ephesians 2:1-3, it describes the natural human condition as being "dead in your trespasses and sins" and being "by nature children of wrath." This fallen state assigns several other designations to humanity from a biblical perspective:

• Sinners (Rom. 5:8)	• Unbelieving (2 Cor. 4:4)
• Ungodly (1 Tim. 1:9)	• Immoral (Eph. 5:5)
• Rebellious (1 Tim. 1:9)	• Evil (Matt. 7:11)
• Lawless (1 Tim. 1:9)	• Hostile (Rom. 8:7)
• Unholy (1 Tim. 1:9)	• Natural/unspiritual (1 Cor. 2:14)
• Profane (1 Tim. 1:9)	• Unbelieving (2 Cor. 4:4)

V. THE FUTILITY OF "INSIDE THE BOX" IDENTITY

Attempts to establish identity from a purely human-centric perspective are categorized as an "inside the box" approach. This method relies on internal or external human works and feelings, such as:

- Personal achievements
- Philanthropy or charitable causes
- Inner feelings or emotions
- A personal journey to "find oneself"
- Being a "moral" individual or avoiding evil.

This approach is deemed untenable due to several fundamental problems:

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Problem	Description
Quantitative	How many good deeds are required to establish an acceptable identity?
Qualitative	What specific good deeds qualify, and is a person inherently good by nature?
Definition	What is the definition of "good," and is that definition sufficient for establishing identity?
Epistemological	How can a person know that these self-selected things are truly associated with their identity?
Attribute	How can individuals trust their own conclusions, given their limited attributes?
Standard	How can one know that their chosen standard of authority is not erroneous?
Ontological	What is the origin of the description of "good" used for identity, and how is this origin known to be reliable?
Consistency	Why is it impossible for individuals to perform these "good things" consistently?

VI. THE "OUTSIDE THE BOX" IDENTITY IN CHRIST

The biblical worldview offers a solution to these problems by grounding identity "outside the box"—in God himself. The work of Christ is presented as the definitive answer to the deficiencies of the self-derived identity.

- **Quantitative & Qualitative Problems:** Christ's works have fulfilled the divine requirement for humanity. His righteousness is imputed to those who believe, resolving the issue of human sinfulness.
- **Definition & Ontological Problems:** God is the origin and definer of "good." Christ's work fulfills God's definition of good, and those "in Him" can then complete genuinely good works.
- **Epistemological, Attribute & Standard Problems:** God, who knows all things and possesses perfect attributes, is the ultimate source of authority and the absolute standard. He has communicated this knowledge to humanity.

VII. THE "OUTSIDE THE BOX" SOLUTION IN CHRIST

1. **The First Identity (In Adam):** This is the natural, fallen state inherited from Adam.
2. **The Second Identity 1.0 (In Christ):** This new identity is received by "believing in the work of God (by way of the Gospel)." It is a present reality for the believer in the sight of God.
3. **The Second Identity 2.0 (Future Realization):** This is the future, perfected state of identity that believers will experience. This concept is supported by 1 John 3:2: "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is."

In summary, human beings are distinct creations of God, composed of material and immaterial aspects. In their natural state, they are considered hostile to God. A person's true identity is redefined not by their own works, but as a result of being convinced of what God has accomplished for them. This entire process, from creation to final redemption, is a reflection of the handiwork of God.