

Introduction to Articles

By Ken Fortier Ministries

Why should anyone write articles dealing with the various aspects of human nature and destiny? Even more, why should anyone read them, especially when they deal with theological doctrines and dogmas?

The answer to the above questions is because most people believe that they address a dead issue that traditionalist theologians have settled ages ago. So, they think, what is the point of investigating what these many articles have to say about aspects of human nature and destiny?

Our response is that the aspects of human nature and destiny are not a dead issue, and have not been settled by any degree of imagination. All through the centuries individuals and movements arose to question what the truth is concerning the aspects of man's nature and his destiny. Sad to say, men of influence with a background of philosophical ideologies sought to re-explain the teachings found in the Scriptures. These individuals are, for the most part, called "church fathers". Men such as Athanasius, Tertullian, Origen and Augustine had great influence and a large following, so their ideas were propagated as being foundational doctrines and dogmas of the church at large. But this caused churches to be at odds with one another, and eventually, over time, to become the varied religious organizations and denominations we see today.

However, reading the writings that appeared throughout the history of Christianity we find glimpses of insight that support scholars over the last few centuries who have re-examined the aspects of human nature and destiny and have concluded that the traditional viewpoint is erroneous and contrary to the teachings of the Prophets, Jesus and His Apostles; and we may honestly say, the majority of the post-Apostolic writers such as Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, the Shepherd of Hermas, Polycarp (a pupil of John the Apostle), Irenaeus, and others. These all opposed the doctrine that man has an immortal soul and clearly taught that immortality is conditioned upon faith in Jesus the Christ of God.

From this early time until the Reformation the church that ruled Western Christianity was constantly in strife with individuals and movements that disagreed with what they taught — and the methods they used to control the mass of Christian people! During the Reformation period there arose courageous men who defied that church and who gave their witness to conditional immortality and opposed the traditionalist doctrines that man has a dualistic nature — a body and an immortal soul within it that is separable at the death of the body.

Over the last few centuries many books and articles have been written to correct the thinking of those stuck in the traditionalist mentality, and are still being written and published today. Reading them one can honestly come to the conclusion that Christianity is waking up from the sleep produced by Platonic views of human nature and destiny which promotes the idea that man exists in two parts, a "body" and an "immortal soul" that is separable from the "body" at death.

Because of this "dualistic" view or idea of man that came from the teachings of influential church leaders from the end of the second century and continuing today, many scholars, teachers and individuals of times past and especially today, have re-examined

this Platonic view in the light of what Scripture has to say. Thusly, you have all these articles put before you to read and consider. Admittedly, many Christians will discover that what they have been taught is deceptive, to say the least, and at the most, a danger to their salvation.

Any challenge to traditionally held beliefs is hardly what people want — apathy gets in the way and Biblical teachings can be devastating to their present way of life. We encourage all Christians who believe that the Bible is the Word of God to re-examine their beliefs in the light of what God has revealed, and to reject traditional beliefs that are proven to be unbiblical. Our hope for an immortal future life must be grounded on the unmistakable teachings of God's word — not on ecclesiastical traditions.

This “dualistic” view is the result of Satan's lie to Adam and Eve in the paradise of Eden: **“You shall surely NOT die!”** Satan contradicted God's warning that **“You shall surely die”** if (Adam and Eve) ate from the *“Tree of the knowledge of good and evil”*. As Jesus Himself said, Satan *“is the father of lies”*. Read Genesis 2:16–17, 3:1–12. Then read what Jesus Himself said in John 8:44 about Satan.

Let us quote from Curtis Dickinson's works: “What incentive is there to cause men to hold steadfastly to the faith in spite of Satanic opposition and strong temptation? Jesus challenged man by setting forth the ultimate goal of eternal life, in contrast to losing that life. The early Christians went singing into the arena of lions because they had firm convictions concerning their destiny after the pilgrimage in this world was over. Such understanding and such convictions are desperately needed today.

“But today in Christendom there is a dreadful reluctance to identify the destiny of either saint or sinner. The result is that there is little enthusiasm over the hope of a Christian and very little fear of God's wrath for the sinner.

“There is little value in believing doctrines which are disconnected and unrelated to one another. They must contribute to and harmonize with the whole purpose of God and the destiny of the believer in order to have meaning. The Virgin Birth, the death and resurrection of Jesus and all other Christian doctrines have a definite relation to the ultimate doctrines of life and death. When we hold these in relation there is sufficient incentive to motivate us to face present and future world conditions with bold, unwavering faith. It is a true adage, **that no man is ready to live until he is ready to die.**

“The goal Christ revealed can be summed up on one word: LIFE. He set forth in plain language the fact that He is the life-giver, that those who ‘believe on him should not perish, but have eternal life’.

“‘I came that they might have life’, Jesus said. The goal of Christianity is identical to the original purpose of God, to have man in His own image, alive even as Christ is alive.

“This is the question: Life or Death? Jesus made it clear that He could and would raise men from the dead, and give SOME of them eternal life. The question is not WHERE you are going to live, but ARE you going to live?”

That all being said by Curtis, it is now up to you to read and consider what all the various articles have to say on the topic they speak about — both the articles page, and the articles appearing on the Curtis Dickinson page. **If you have questions or comments, pro or con, please feel free to let us know: the email address is ken@kenfortier.com.**