

## Born in the Wrong Body?

There is no doubt that the world can be an uncomfortable place. Stress, anxiety, dislocation, and alienation are relatively common experiences. We usually seek to locate the source of these struggles in the world around us, our circumstances, or even at times our own bodies. But are these the right places to look?

It's no surprise that virtually everybody, on some level, struggles with discomfort in the physical world—this world is under a curse. The Bible tells us that “the creation was subjected to futility” (Romans 8:20). Put another way, the world isn't how it's supposed to be and doesn't do what it's supposed to do. Our experience testifies to this—we all know the frustration of our plants dying, the trauma of horrible diseases and natural disasters, the grief of losing loved ones, and the ambiguous discomfort in the way things are. We know intuitively that things aren't right. Yet one place we often neglect to look is at ourselves, because—though we hate to admit it—we know that we are as much a part of the problem as anything else. We perpetuate the curse we're under.

The Bible tells us that we're made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). This is a great honor—it gives humanity a unique dignity, beauty, and value. It also comes with tremendous responsibility. Anybody who's ever had a pet understands that it is the human's job to take care of the pet, not the other way around. Similarly, humans were given the responsibility to take care of creation: “And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth’” (Genesis 1:28). It was man who disobeyed God and brought a curse on the whole earth. It continues to be man whose sin perpetuates and accentuates the curse up to this day. The biggest problem in the world always has been and always will be us and our sin.

This is a humbling truth, but if we're honest, we all know it. And to make things all the more brutal, every one of our sins must be paid for because God is just: “Everyone shall die for his own iniquity [sin]” (Jeremiah 31:30). It is for this reason that God, out of pure love and mercy, became a man, the perfect man, to reverse the curse our sin brought. He lived a sinless life and was executed on a cross for our sins, taking our guilt, canceling our debt (Colossians 2:14), and making us right with God once and for all if we trust in Him and repent of our sin.

Yet even when we understand this, when we see our sin and acknowledge our guilt and our culpability for the curse in this world, we still experience suffering, anxiety, alienation, and profound discomfort. This is because we still experience the curse of sin all around us. This world, and every one of us in it, were made for glory, but it is a glory we have not yet attained—we are still dealing with broken, failing bodies in a broken, failing world. But this is something that God also addressed. When Jesus died, He paid for our sins, but that wasn't the end. Jesus was raised back to life in a glorified body, starting the process of renewing and perfecting all creation (Romans 8:29). This means that we

can look forward to all things being made right and new—including our own bodies: “Just as we are now like the earthly man, we will someday be like the heavenly man” (1 Corinthians 15:49). So although we still struggle with trials and temptations, and feelings of alienation and dysphoria “We do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison” (2 Corinthians 4:16-17). This is certain for us if, and only if, we have faith in Jesus, who is the perfect, heavenly man who died for sin and rose again.

This is something God alone does. He created us, and He alone has authority over us. We ruin ourselves and everything around us because of our sin—and we cannot fix anything. Only God can work to restore us to the glory He made us to have. Our bodies may bear the scars of sin and brokenness, they may fail in crucial and painful ways, they may even feel uncomfortable and foreign to us, but they are *our* bodies given to us *by God*—and they are eternal. We will live forever in these bodies. When we try to “fix” our problems by our own methods, we tend to only make things worse. When God addresses our problems, He fixes them to the root, from the inside out. We will either live forever apart from God, in anger, rebellion, and turmoil in these bodies more tormented than ever before, or we will live forever with God in joy, peace, and comfort in these perfected, glorious bodies. This is our’s through the risen Lord Jesus Christ, and Him alone.