

STEWARDSHIP 101-2

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Nature of the “Steward” – The “superstar” of Creation Genesis 1-3

Man as created in God’s Image:

Personal (Rational, Moral, volitional),
Spiritual being (eternal soul)
Material being – (finite physical body)

His Four “Relationships”

- God (Creator, owner)
- Self
- Others
- Creation

His role in Creation:

- **Caretaker (as created) Gen 1:26-2:23**

God as a free and loving creator has fellowship with the steward who is given the tasks of a servant of the Lord with dominion over all creation for God’s glory. Man has true knowledge by God’s revelation. Worth and Value are defined by relationship to God (“It was good”).

- **Usurper (fallen) Gen 3:1-24; Romans 1:18-32**

Having seized the “ownership” for himself (distorting who God is and who we are as His creation), man rebels and distorts all his relationships in terms of his experience (guilt) and his “appetites” – others and creation are exploited for his own wants and needs. All morals and values become relative and subjective; and ethics human centered.

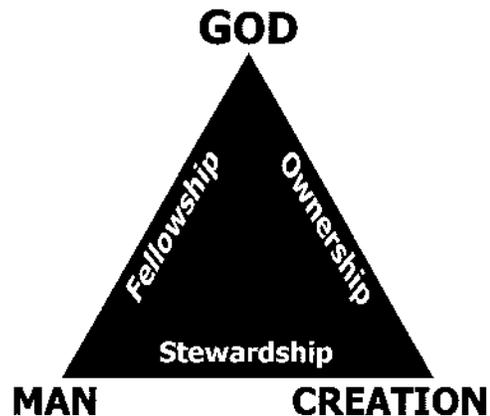
“One defining mark of this fallenness is the shift in our self-understanding from steward to owner. In defiance of the God who gives us all things freely, we become takers, usurpers actually of that which we can never ultimately own. . . . there is a second shift that occurs when our relationship to creation ceases to be a part of our self-definition. We also begin to see creation in respect to its ability to supply us our needs and fulfill our desires. Creation ceases to have inherent value, and so stewardship cease to make sense unless it is linked to some potential use for creation that serves our needs.”. Rodin, p. 103

- **Restorer (redeemed) 2 Cor 5:16-21; Col 3:1-17; Rom 8:18-25; Eph 1:3-2:10**

Sinners, redeemed by a loving and merciful Triune God through the completed work of Christ, and continuing in a Covenant relationship of grace with Him, receive and embrace it in faith, and respond to it in joy by living, loving and working for both His present and future glory.

*“To be a steward in the kingdom of the triune God of grace is to understand our fallenness and its effect on all four levels, and to understand the grace of God and the work of Christ that brings redemption and wholeness to all four levels. Our work is the compassionate, obedient and ultimately thrilling task of shepherding each relationship for the building and the glory of God.”
Rodin, p. 98*

The Kinship Triangle



We need to always keep in view both man’s dignity and his depravity

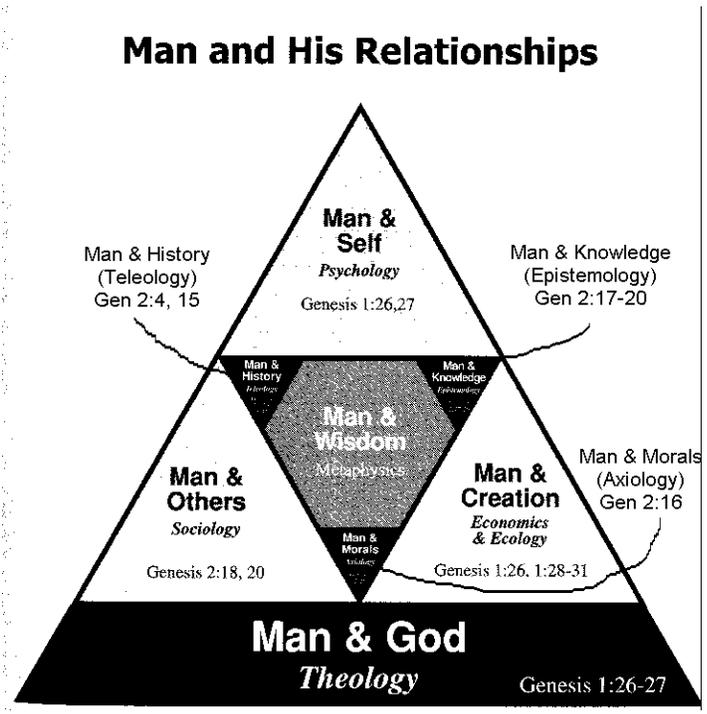
“Man is to worship and serve his Creator. God has the right of ownership over creation, while man is given the task of stewardship over all God has made. Man is God’s steward (servant) or vice-regent, in submission to God but in authority over the world and its resources. Thus man’s primary relationship, his relationship with God, is outward and vertical. This is why theology (the study of God) has been called the queen of the sciences. The kinship triangle also points to man’s secondary relationships. These relationships deal with what man does as God’s vice-regent in creation and encompass four spheres. The first, psychology, is inward, as man studies his soul, spirit, or inner self. The second, sociology is outward, as man studies human beings in community. The third, ecology, the study of “the house” (oikos) involves mans’ interaction with the physical world. Ecology is related to economics, which focuses on stewardship in God’s “house.” The fourth area, metaphysics, has several facets: epistemology, the study of knowledge and truth; axiology, the study of good and evil, ethics and morals; and teleology, the study of “ends,” purpose and design—from which man gets his sense of purpose in serving his creator.

“All of life is to be lived in relationship. Human beings cannot be understood apart from their kinship with God, others and themselves. Man’s primary relationship is toward the living God. To fully experience his humanity, man must be “before the face of God,” living *corum Deo*. Man’s “mannishness”—spiritual, rational, moral, and volitional—is fully esteemed when he is at home with his creator. His humanness atrophies, however, when he is separated from God. We are to live each day *coram Deo*. (Col 3:17, 1 Cor 10:31, Phil 2:12-13).

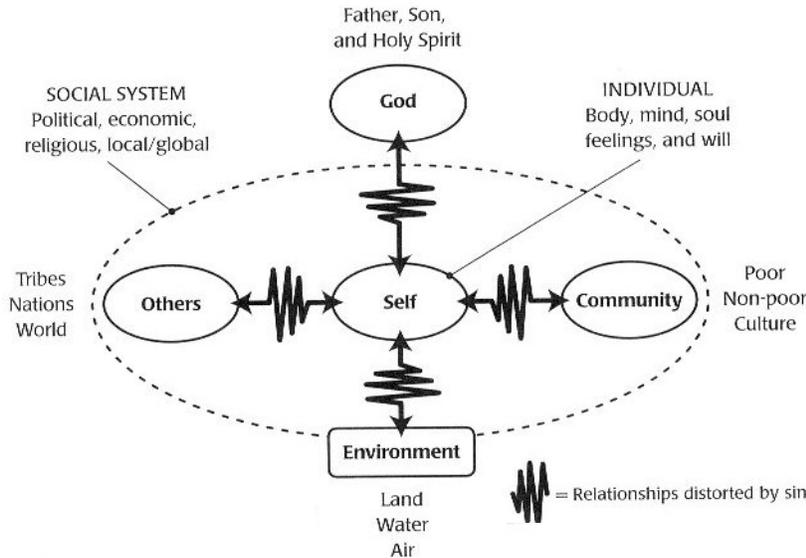
All of man's secondary relationships are defined in the context this primary relationship with his Creator. If our understanding of wisdom, creation, ourselves, and others is not based upon our foundational relationship, then everything else collapses Paul asserted that we are to “*demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.* (2 Corinthians 10:5).

“Wealth and bounty, therefore, come in relationship. Poverty comes not from a lack of resources but from separating our secondary relationships from our primary one. The nature of wealth is relationships. While naturalism defines wealth in exclusively physical terms, the consuming of things, and animism defines it primarily in spiritual terms, biblical theism overrides both. It defines wealth in terms of the wholeness of relationships, first with God, then with man, and final with the rest of creation. Man's relationship with God is his highest form of wealth. To love God and enjoy Him forever is not only the chief end of man; it is man's supreme treasure. Material wealth, "stuff;" despite what our culture intimates, is actually one of the lowest forms of wealth. Material wealth is a weak substitute for bounty, which comes from God. Worth forth flows down from the Creator to His creation: to man, and plants, and inanimate things. God created all things good, but things actually gain in value as they serve what is above them. God created a hierarchy of value, not a cosmic democracy. We are not “brothers” with the animals, much less their inferiors, contrary to what some radical environmentalists claim today. A man is more valuable than an animal, and an animal is more valuable than a rock. Minerals “serve” plants as food and man as raw materials for a multitude of products. Animals offer man power, transportation, beauty and companionship. Man serves God with his worship and with his stewardship of creation.

“Finally, the Creator is glorified by serving the lower. The highest expression of this, of course, came when God redeemed man through his self-sacrificial love. Man, as God’s vice-regent receives glory by serving others and stewarding creation in God’s stead.”

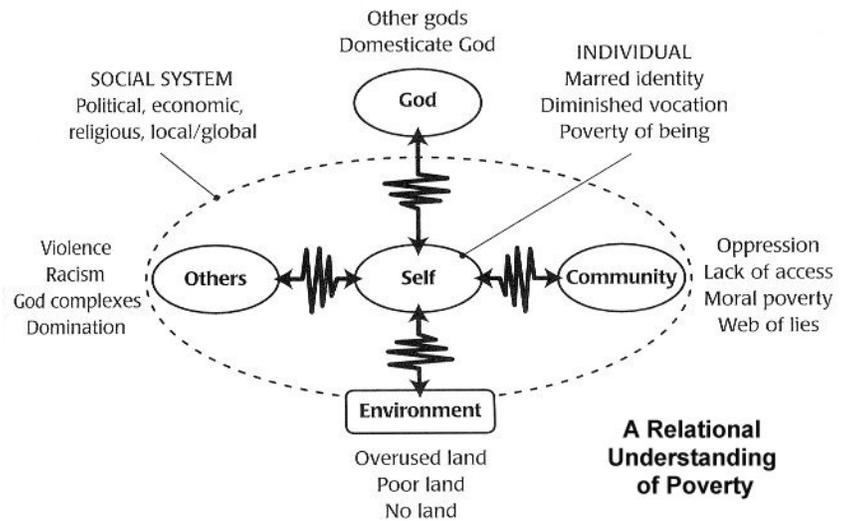


Man's Relationships : Both Impacted by Sin and Transformed by the Gospel

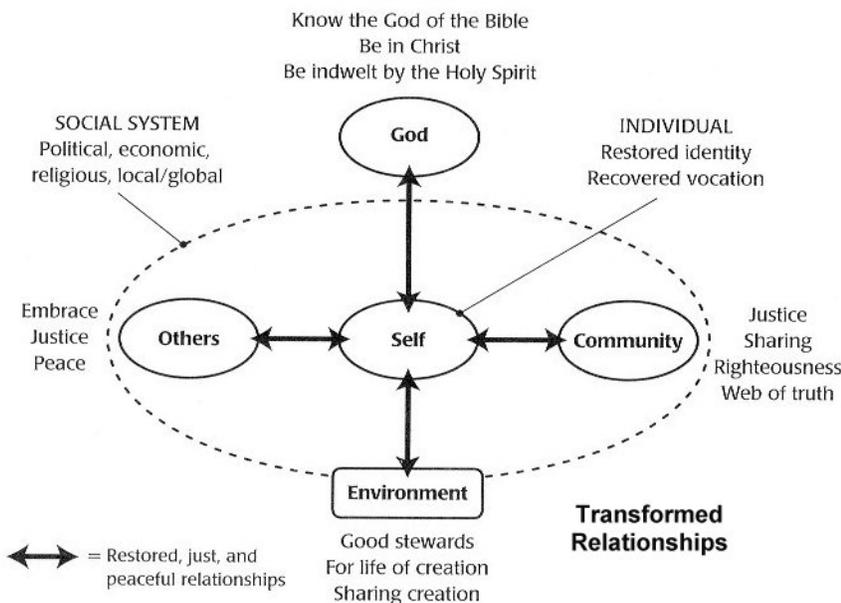


The effect of Adam's disobedience ensued that human identity and all dimensions of human relationships would be marred. The scope of sin proved very broad—very holistic, if you will. It led to widespread deception, distortion and domination in all forms of human relationships—with God, within one's self (and family), within the community and between others, and with the environment.

Poverty is a result of relationships that do not work, that are not just, that are not for life, that are not harmonious or enjoyable. The scope of sin affects every one of the five relationships in which every human lives: within ourselves, with our community, with those we call "other", with our environment, and with God. Behind it is an evil work of Satan, deceiving and distorting and destroying what God intended for man's good.



A Relational Understanding of Poverty



Transformed Relationships

The work of restoration is the work of God reconciling and restoring us in all our relationships through Jesus Christ – relationships that work, that are just, peaceful, and harmonious. Relationships that can work as well as they can in a world of fallen people. Life and relationships are inseparable. Development should aim at a blessed life, a life at peace with itself, others, the environment and with God.

The Effects of the Fall on Mankind:

	Rational Mind - Thinking - Prophet	Moral Nature - Character - Priest	Will Purposes - Actions - King
Man as Created	True Knowledge (Col 3:10)	Righteousness - Holiness (Eph 4:24)	Dominion over creatures (Gen 1:28)
Man as Sin made Him	He exchanged the truth for a lie (Rom 1)	Followed the way that seems right (Prov 14:12)	Set at naught his dominion
Objectively:	Rejected God's Word as basis for life	Rejected God's Character as basis for morals	Rejected God's purpose
Subjectively:	Set his mind against the truth	Set his desires against the right	Set his will against God's will
How man "avoids" the problem Denials and excuses	Affirming that sin hasn't affected the mind, he makes rationalistic arguments	Affirming that sin hasn't affected his character, he makes moralistic arguments	Affirming that sin hasn't affected his will, he makes deterministic arguments
How Man Tries to "resolve" the problem	He ever learns, but never comes to a knowledge of the truth (2 Tim 3:7)	He seeks to establish his own righteousness (Rom 10:3)	He promises freedom (social, economic, etc.) while remaining a slave of corruption (2 Peter 2:19)
Results:	Darkened in understandings (Rom 1: 21 Eph 4:17ff)	Unrighteous, under God's wrath and curse (Rom 1:18)	Corruption leading to death (Rom 6:23a, Gen 3:19)

**“People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money. . . lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God - having a form of godliness, but denying its power.”
2 Tim 3:2-5a**

Man Renewed Through Christ:

	Rational Mind - Thinking - Prophet	Moral Nature - Character - Priest	Will Purposes - Actions - King
God's Provision	Revelation of the Truth through Scripture and Christ	Reconciliation through Christ's sacrifice	Restoration to freedom through Regeneration
A Saving response:	Turn from the lie and Believe the truth	Repentance and Acceptance of the gift of Christ's righteousness	Conversion: Trusting and confessing Christ
Man being Renewed in Christ's Image	Guidance of Scripture and the indwelling Holy Spirit - Prayer for God's Wisdom	Sanctification- the work of God's grace in our hearts	New obedience to Christ's Lordship Living for and serving Him.

Two Christian Positions on Sin:

The Arminian position:

The effects of sin on the Mind, Character, and Will are partial

Salvation is in the hands of Man making a decision

Salvation is insecure resting on man's faith

SIN:
THE
GREAT
DIVIDE

The Reformed position:

The effects of sin on the Mind, Character, and Will are total

Salvation is in the hands of God applying Grace

Salvation is secure resting on God's work