Overview

Isaiah 5:1, 2 Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

God decided to create man according to His image in which they can choose to stay in God’s given physical and moral image or to reject it. To do good is to stay with God’s choices, with His will or character, a choice of continual acceptance and appreciation of His care and love—of His service and commitment to them as His children by creation through obedience. And, they can choose evil which means to reject God’s character, to desire or usurp God’s authority, to claim independence from God’s commitment and service God provides to them—hence a risk of rebellion which will cause the effacing of His image. He took the risk for the sake of love and freedom. God put himself in a trial of character by sharing this moment with His intelligent creatures. Angels and man foretaste God’s trial, that through the union of experience—the probation may seal their eternal destiny for the purpose of eternal security. God’s choice as a gift is to give them a character and experience patterned after His, but they, the creatures must decide for themselves whether to accept and appreciate it or reject and rebel against it in good time or in adversity—in this moment of trying time in which both the Creator and the creatures are subjected together. The creatures may reject the Creator and fail, but God took the risk anyway. The only way to eternal security is the union of man’s choice with God’s choice in the time of trial.

1. GOD’S CHOICE

1. Imprinting the Divine character and form—to become God’s children

Genesis 5:1, 2 This [is] the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

Luke 3:38 Which was [the son] of Enos, which was [the son] of Seth, which was [the son] of Adam, which was [the son] of God.

Adam was crowned as king in Eden. To him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created. The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as he had not given to
the animal creation. He made Adam the rightful sovereign over all the works of his hands. Man made in the divine image could contemplate and appreciate the glorious works of God in nature. {RH, February 24, 1874 par. 6}

… In the beginning, man was created in the likeness of God, not only in character, but in form and feature…. {GC 644.3}

When Adam came from the Creator's hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker. "God created man in His own image" (Genesis 1:27), and it was His purpose that the longer man lived the more fully he should reveal this image--the more fully reflect the glory of the Creator. All his faculties were capable of development; their capacity and vigor were continually to increase. Vast was the scope offered for their exercise, glorious the field opened to their research. The mysteries of the visible universe--the "wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge" (Job 37:16)--invited man's study. Face-to-face, heart-to-heart communion with his Maker was his high privilege. Had he remained loyal to God, all this would have been his forever. Throughout eternal ages he would have continued to gain new treasures of knowledge, to discover fresh springs of happiness, and to obtain clearer and yet clearer conceptions of the wisdom, the power, and the love of God. More and more fully would he have fulfilled the object of his creation, more and more fully have reflected the Creator's glory. {Ed 15.1}

Note: God’s image in man is a token of His commitment of love and care to mankind. He even wrote in the man’s heart His covenant of His love that they might have the capacity to reciprocate to His love. God sealed it with His choice but man also has to seal it with his choice to create a complete security of their relationship.

2. **Man’s privileges, a holy life, future eternal security**

Genesis 2:15-17 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Adam and Eve could trace the skill and glory of God in every spire of grass, and in every shrub and flower. The natural loveliness which surrounded them reflected like a mirror the wisdom, excellence, and love of their heavenly Father. And their songs of affection and praise rose sweetly and reverentially to heaven, harmonizing with the songs of the exalted angels, and with the happy birds who were caroling forth their music without a care. There was no disease, decay, nor death. Life was in everything the eye rested upon. The atmosphere was filled with life. Life was in every leaf, in every flower, and in every tree. {Con 11.1}

The Lord knew that Adam could not be happy without labor; therefore, He gave him the pleasant employment of dressing the garden. And, as he tended the things of beauty and
usefulness around him, he could behold the goodness and glory of God in His created works. Adam had themes for contemplation in the works of God in Eden, which was heaven in miniature. God did not form man merely to contemplate His glorious works; therefore, He gave him hands for labor, as well as a mind and heart for contemplation. {Con 11.2}

If the happiness of man consisted in doing nothing, the Creator would not have given Adam his appointed work. Man was to find happiness in labor, as well as in meditation. Adam could take in the grand idea that he was created in the image of God, to be like Him in righteousness and holiness. His mind was capable of continual cultivation, expansion, refinement, and noble elevation; for God was his teacher, and angels were his companions. {Con 11.3}

...After God had made every provision for the happiness of man, and had supplied his every want, He tested his loyalty. If the holy pair should be obedient, the race would, after a time, be made equal to the angels…. {Con 18.2}

3. **Assurance and surety of creation of man: the life of the Son**

John 1:1-4 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

In the creation of man was manifest the agency of a personal God. When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life, and man became a living, breathing, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were put in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the perceptions of the mind—all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. **Through Jesus Christ a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power.** {CCh 74.4}

**II. MAN’S CHOICE**

1. **The risk in creating man in God’s image with capacity to choose: loyalty or rebellion**

Ecclesiastes 7:29 Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

God made man upright; He gave him noble traits of character, with no bias toward evil. He endowed him with high intellectual powers, and presented before him the strongest possible inducements to be true to his allegiance. Obedience, perfect and perpetual, was the condition of eternal happiness. On this condition he was to have access to the tree of life. {PP 49.2}
Adam and Eve, at their creation, had a knowledge of the law of God; they were acquainted with its claims upon them; its precepts were written upon their hearts… {PP 363.1}

Before his fall Adam was free from the results of the curse…. He was created perfect in thought and in action… {3SM 141.4}

Above all lower orders of being, God designed that man, the crowning work of His creation, should express His thought and reveal His glory. But man is not to exalt himself as God. {CCh 75.2}

2. Risk of failing the trial and probation: Sin and death

Genesis 2:15-17 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Like the angels, the dwellers in Eden had been placed upon probation; their happy estate could be retained only on condition of fidelity to the Creator's law. They could obey and live, or disobey and perish. . . . {CC 15.3}

3. The big risk: the threat of rebellion

Revelation 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Genesis 3:1, 4, 5 Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? … And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

…Satan announced his purpose to conform to his own nature the father and mother of all humanity, and to unite them with his own ranks of rebellion. He was determined to efface the image of God from the human posterity, and to trace his own image upon the soul in place of the divine image. He adopted methods of deception by which to accomplish his purpose. He is called the father of lies, an accuser of God and of those who maintain their allegiance to God, a murderer from the beginning. He put forth every power at his command to win man to co-operate with him in apostasy, and succeeded in bringing rebellion into our world. {RH, April 14, 1896 par. 4}

REFLECTION
All who have chosen God's service are to rest in His care. Christ pointed to the birds flying in the heavens, to the flowers of the field, and bade His hearers consider these objects of God's creation. "Are not ye of much more value than they?" He said. Matthew 6:26, R. V. The measure of divine attention bestowed on any object is proportionate to its rank in the scale of being. The little brown sparrow is watched over by Providence. The flowers of the field, the grass that carpets the earth, share the notice and care of our heavenly Father. The great Master Artist has taken thought for the lilies, making them so beautiful that they outshine the glory of Solomon. How much more does He care for man, who is the image and glory of God. He longs to see His children reveal a character after His similitude. As the sunbeam imparts to the flowers their varied and delicate tints, so does God impart to the soul the beauty of His own character. {DA 313.2}

God cares by taking the risk of creating you after his image! He risks himself in entrusting in you his dignity, his name and his character. Are you taking the same risk in entrusting your life under His care by faithfully bearing His character?