

Did God Create
**HUMAN
NATURE?**

by David C. Pack

Herbert W. Armstrong led the Worldwide Church of God (formerly The Radio Church of God until 1968) until his death in 1986. Hundreds of millions heard his voice and read his literature. God called him in the fall of 1926 and he was converted in the spring of 1927. Over the course of Mr. Armstrong's ministry, God revealed through him a great many true biblical doctrines, which had been lost to the Church through the centuries. After his death, his successors ceased to believe and teach these doctrines. Although copyright law prohibits The Restored Church of God from reproducing and distributing literature produced while he led the Worldwide Church of God, we are committed to the preservation and teaching of all of these truths!

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What is HUMAN NATURE? *Why* does it exist?
Where did it come from? Did God create
it? *Why* is it so selfish and evil? Few have
understood this subject. Here is the truth.

Human troubles and evils are prophesied to grow far worse in this age. Appalling violence, terrorism and war are escalating as human nature hurtles further out of control. After a recent school shooting where many lay slaughtered, a parent remarked, “I don’t understand this world any more.”

You *can* understand both this world and the *cause* of its troubles. Understanding human nature is the key.

All human beings possess human nature. The selfishness, rottenness, violence and terrible evils that spring from human nature have plagued the world for thousands of years. The apostle John said, “The *whole world* lies in *wickedness*” (I John 5:19). The cause of this condition lies directly at the feet of evil human nature.

Every “expert” has a different opinion about *what* human nature is and *where* it comes from. Yet none understand the answers to these questions or the question of *why* human nature exists. This is because they reject the *SOURCE* to understanding the answers to *all* of life’s greatest questions.

Consider the paradox! Think of all the wonderful things the human MIND is capable of producing. Its ingenuity and inventiveness are practically limitless. Yet it cannot solve the most basic of life’s greatest problems—poverty, ignorance, immorality, crime, war and misery. All of these problems—and many more—are by-products of unbridled human nature!

No “Better Nature”

Many theologians and religionists teach that all humans are endowed with a “better nature” hiding inside, waiting to be tapped and used. This is untrue. The Bible says no such thing! Yet, millions subscribe to it.

This teaching comes from the long-held pagan doctrine of the *duality* of body and soul. It states that all people have a pure, pristine soul locked in an evil body that serves as a prison house until death, when the soul is freed. This idea is an attempt to explain the root of human nature without examining the truth of what God says. People do not have immortal souls—they *are* souls (Ezek. 18:4, 20; Matt. 10:28; Gen. 2:7)!

No “Original Sin”

Millions more believe the unbiblical doctrine of “original sin.” While Adam and Eve certainly *did* sin, the Bible teaches nothing about any “*original sin*” committed by them, which is passed on, generation by generation, to every person. The term is found nowhere in scripture and is a fiction of men.

Romans 3:23 states, “For *all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Every human being has sinned on his own account! All are responsible for and guilty of their *own* sins—not those of Adam and Eve or anyone else!

The sin of Adam and Eve brought the following consequences: (1) It cut mankind off from the Tree of Life and (2) brought the death penalty on all human beings (Gen. 2:17; Heb. 9:27; Rom. 6:23).

What Christ Taught

In Mark 7, Christ addressed those who thought they could be “defiled” by dirt they might ingest through eating food with unwashed hands. The Pharisees went to ridiculous extremes, continually washing their hands to avoid being “defiled,” and they asked Christ why His disciples did not do the same. Of course, Christ knew that accidentally ingesting a little bit of dirt on unwashed hands does not spiritually defile anyone.

His answer explained what *DOES* defile human beings: “And He said, That which *comes out* of the man, that defiles the man. For *from within, out of the heart* of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things *come from within*, and defile the man” (vs. 20-23).

First, accept that Christ made the statement—and that it has to be true! This, in itself, is a staggering revelation. But the prophet Jeremiah added more: “The *HEART* is *deceitful* above all things, and *desperately wicked*: who can

know it?” (17:9). Of course, most do *not* understand this about themselves, though they often readily see it in others. Further, the apostle Paul wrote, “The *carnal* [natural] mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, *neither indeed can be*” (Rom. 8:7).

These are incredible statements about the minds of *all* human beings. But how did the torrent of evil thoughts, which pour from all people, come to exist in them in the first place? How did it get there?

Does God infuse human nature into tiny babies at birth? Does an all-wise, all-powerful, loving God take innocent children and turn them toward terrible evil from the moment they are born? And, if God does not put this nature there, then where *does* it come from?

The Arch Broadcaster

Paul wrote the Ephesian Church about the life that God had called them out of when He revealed His truth to them. Chapter 2, verse 2 references the power of the devil and his influence upon the world: “Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the *prince of the POWER of the air*, the *spirit* that now works in the *children of disobedience*.”

This is an amazing passage. The phrase “children of disobedience” is also found in Ephesians 5:6 and Colossians 3:6. Let’s examine how these references relate to the phrase, “prince of the power of the air.”

Notice that verse 2 states Satan’s “*spirit...works* in the children of disobedience.” Do you see this? Did you grasp it? Satan has the *power* to use the “air” to broadcast, through his *spirit*, an attitude of disobedience! His spirit sends moods, feelings and attitudes of hostility into people’s minds. These “work” within people’s hearts and minds, bringing disobedience. This “air power” gives the devil tremendous INFLUENCE, allowing him to send thoughts of confusion, deceit, anger, pride, hate, foolishness, vanity, jealousy, lust, greed, envy, rebellion and much more directly into people’s thinking!

Think of it this way. The devil owns a most powerful radio station, broadcasting 24 hours a day. Revelation 12:9 states that he “deceives the whole world.” This mighty “station” reaches and deceives the entire world! Yet, his incredible cunning has been so seductive that he has even been able to convince most that he *does not exist!*

The devil is immensely more powerful than most realize. The Bible identifies him as this world’s god. Notice what Paul wrote to the Corinthians: “In whom the *god of this world* has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (II Cor. 4:4).

Only one who has enormous power to influence—as a virtual “god” (Satan *is* this world’s god)—could blind and deceive on a scale so staggering. As a result, he has produced a world *filled* with disobedience—lawlessness!

On the other hand, a Christian follows God and obeys His Law. Paul recorded that God has a *spiritual* Law, and that it is *holy, just and good* (Rom. 7:12, 14)! Christians keep *it*. But how do they do this?

In Acts 5:32, the apostle Peter referred to “the Holy Spirit, [which] *God has given to them that obey Him.*” Christians understand and practice obedience to God. His Spirit is given upon repentance and baptism (Acts 2:38). *This* Spirit helps Christians obey the Ten Commandments! (Read our book *The Ten Commandments – “Nailed to the Cross” or Required for Salvation?*)

Before the invention of the radio, Satan’s power, as arch broadcaster and prince of the power of the air, could not be as easily understood. But now you can comprehend!

We can now better understand the “children of *disobedience.*” Like Christians with the Holy Spirit, these people are also inspired and guided by a spirit—that of this world’s god. Satan broadcasts a *spirit* of rebellion against God’s law—*disobedience*—through attitudes—into humanity. Ephesians 2:2 is plain. But a deceived world knows nothing of this understanding!

If you listen to the radio, you usually pick a station that plays what you want to hear. Today, people “surf” radio or television stations. Eventually, something interests them, and they stop and listen to a station of their choosing. In every case, stations are selected by choice. People have control over what they hear or watch.

It is not the same with Satan’s station. The world—and you—do not *decide* to tune into the devil’s broadcast. And no one ever sets out to be deceived. But every human being on Earth is automatically tuned to Satan’s wavelength! His wickedness, hostility, rebellion, deceit and selfishness are continually “on the air.”

Therefore, it is really SATAN’S NATURE that is being labeled as HUMAN NATURE. In fact, once it is injected into people, Satan’s nature becomes *natural* to them. It becomes *their* nature—now, *human* nature.

Though you cannot see it anymore than you can see radio waves or television signals, the air around you is literally charged and “crackles” with the power and energy of Satan’s broadcast.

It is absolutely critical to see how this spirit works in people. It is the single most important key to understanding exactly how Satan can deceive and manipulate over *seven billion people.*

An Important Illustration

Before further examining the devil’s role and how he came to be as he is, consider this illustration. It demonstrates how Satan can influence and sway humanity through his broadcast.

The setting involves King Cyrus of Persia. God wanted him to return to Jerusalem and build a second temple to replace Solomon’s, which had been destroyed. Here is how God communicated to Cyrus: “Now in the first year of

Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD *stirred up the spirit* of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing” (Ezra 1:1).

God was able to communicate with Cyrus through (by “stirring up”) his *spirit*.

Satan does the same thing. Just as God can lead a human being toward a right purpose, Satan’s spirit influences people toward hate, anger, selfishness, violence, competition, vanity, jealousy, lust, greed, murder and deceit. (Read our booklet *What Science Will Never Discover About Your Mind* to understand more about the spirit in man.)

Of course, when Satan injects his attitudes into an unsuspecting mankind, it has no idea that he is doing it. The devil does not announce his intentions in advance or speak aloud in an audible voice.

Murder, Lies and Destruction

Just as God the Father has children, the god of this world is also a father with his own children! Consider this proof:

On one occasion, Paul addressed a sorcerer named Bar-jesus, who was trying to hinder Paul’s preaching and ministry. Paul directly labeled this man: “O full of all subtlety and all mischief, *you child of the devil*, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?” (Acts 13:10).

Besides identifying him as a “child of the devil,” Paul teaches that the devil’s children are enemies of “all *righteousness*” and “the ways of God.” This is what being children of the devil means!

But what is righteousness? Psalm 119:172 defines it: “All Your [God’s] COMMANDMENTS ARE RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

Satan’s children hate, and are enemies of, the laws of God—His commandments! Remember, they are “children of *disobedience*.”

Revelation 9:11 describes Satan as “a destroyer.” The Hebrew word referenced there, *Abaddon*, means “Satan.” The Greek word used there, *Apollyon*, means “a destroyer.” This understanding sets the stage for the next scripture.

A confrontation between Christ and people who professed to “believe on Him” occurred in John 8:30-31. You should read the entire account, but here is a summary. Those who professed belief in Christ actually sought to kill Him moments later (vs. 37)! Christ said, “But you seek to KILL Me, because My *word* has no place in you.” He further added, “But now you seek to kill Me, a Man that has told you the truth” (vs. 40). Many *say* they want to hear the truth—but not if it means being told that they are wrong, particularly about cherished ideas.

This story comes to a remarkable climax in verses 43-44. Christ asked, “Why do you not understand My speech?” He answers His own question with, “...because you *cannot* hear My word.” What could possibly cause people

standing right beside Christ to “not hear His word”? Verse 44 answers, “You are of *your father the devil*, and the lusts of *your father* you will do. He was a *murderer* from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a *liar*, and the *father* of it.” Christ plainly said, “You are not of God” (vs. 47), and these devil-inspired religious leaders immediately accused *Him* of “having a demon” (vs. 48)! Many today who *profess* to “believe on Christ” are no different than those described here.

This is a powerful, instructive statement. The devil is a *father* who murders, lies and destroys. As the author of killing, deceit and destruction, *he broadcasts these attitudes to his children around the world!*

The Devil Holds Sway Over Earth

Make no mistake! The world is *filled* with the children of the devil. It has been observed that children are basically much like their parents. Therefore, Satan’s children lie, hate, murder and destroy. Look at the world. It should now be most clear *WHY* confusion, war, ignorance, poverty, disease and misery abound among the nations. The fruits of human nature—*Satan’s* nature—are evident everywhere there are human beings.

Notice how Paul described the “last days” preceding Christ’s Return: “This know also, that in the *last days* perilous [dangerous] times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having *a form of godliness*, but denying the POWER thereof: from such turn away” (II Tim. 3:1-5).

While the world is filled with religion—“*a form of godliness*”—it neither teaches the truth nor is the religion of God! It denies the power of the true God, as the world unwittingly worships a different being who palms himself off as the God of the Bible.

The devil is also called the “god of this world” (II Cor. 4:4), the “prince of this world” (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), “prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2), and one who “weakens the nations” (Isa. 14:12) and “deceives the whole world” (Rev. 12:9). We have seen how he does this.

The World Before Man

We need to examine the time prior to the appearance of man on Earth to understand *how* Satan came to be as he is.

Satan rebelled against God’s government *prior* to the re-creation of Earth (Gen. 1:1-3) and the creation of Adam and Eve. He deceived one-third of all angels into rebellion (II Pet. 2:4-6; Rev. 12:4). Isaiah 14:12-14 reveals that he

had once ruled the Earth, and Ezekiel 28:15 shows that he was a created being—a powerful, perfect archangel. He remains as ruler over Earth until Christ reigns in Jerusalem. Christ qualified to replace him at His First Coming.

(Read our booklets *Who Is the Devil?* and *A World in Captivity* to learn more.)

Genesis 1:1 states, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” This sets the stage for our study. In the book of Job, God asked him, “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if you have understanding. Who has laid the measures thereof, if you know? Or who has stretched the line upon it?...*When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?*” (38:4-5, 7).

These “stars” were angels (Rev. 12:4) and are here described as “sons of God.” Literal heavenly stars do not sing. Notice that it says “all” of them “shouted” and “sang together.”

The Earth was created in a wonderful, beautiful condition. There was great joy and singing. Neither the devil nor demons existed yet in their present form.

Now read Genesis 1:2. This verse is mistranslated and does *not* reflect the correct Hebrew meaning. The King James Bible says, “And the earth *was without form, and void.*” Three key Hebrew words are all mistranslated here. This obscures, and actually *hides*, the true picture being described here.

The word translated “was” is *hayah*. In Genesis 2:7, this word is correctly translated “became,” and in Genesis 9:15, “become.”

The Hebrew words translated “without form, and void” are *tohu* and *bohu*. These should be rendered “chaotic, in confusion, waste and empty.” In short, a perfect creation (vs. 1) “*became* chaotic and confused” (vs. 2). *Tohu* and *bohu* are also found in Jeremiah 4:23 and also translated, “without form and void.” Isaiah 34:11 and other verses translate them as “confusion and... emptiness.”

Now notice Isaiah 45:18. This important passage clarifies how God did *not* create the Earth. It states, “For thus says the LORD that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He has established it, He created it *not* in vain [*tohu* meaning chaotic or waste], He formed it to be inhabited.”

It is clear that the Earth *became* chaotic AFTER God had created it—*between* the events described in Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. Verse 2 actually describes the *RE-creation* of the Earth 6,000 years ago. Verse 1 describes the original creation of the entire universe that, according to scientists, occurred as much as 17 billion years ago.

Psalms 104:30 states that God “*renews* the face of the earth.” During the seven days of the creation week, God did, in fact, *renew* a damaged, injured planet, then completely covered with water (Gen. 1:2). This had been caused by the devil’s rebellion against the government of God. Acts 3:19-21 reveals that only the Return of Christ will bring the “restitution [restoring] of all things.”

Now that we know *what* happened, we must ask, *how* did it happen? How did the Earth go from being beautiful and perfect at creation to being chaotic, confused, waste and empty? Since *God* is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33), *who* caused this?

The answers to these questions have everything to do with the origin of human nature. We have seen that man gets his nature from the devil. But how did the devil become the way he is?

Lucifer's Rebellion

Let's now read of Lucifer *after* he had become Satan. Isaiah 14:12-15 gives many clues about where Lucifer was once located, what he did and what happened to him. Read carefully and notice the key phrases emphasized: "How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How are you *cut down to the ground*, which *did weaken the nations!* For you have said in your heart, I will *ascend into heaven*, I will exalt *my throne* above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the *sides of the north*: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; *I will be like the Most High*. Yet you shall be brought down to *hell* [the "grave"—see verses 9 and 11], to the sides of *the pit*."

No *man* fits this description, having a throne that can be put above the "stars of heaven." Only the devil "weakens the nations" and said he would "ascend unto heaven."

Ezekiel 28:12-17 adds important information and parallels Isaiah 14. It speaks of one who "*seals up the sum, full of wisdom, perfect in beauty,*" who had also "*been in Eden the garden of God.*" No human being has ever been perfect. And Satan the devil was the serpent who beguiled Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Verse 13 states, "*you were created.*" Satan is a created being. Verse 14 calls him "the cherub that covers." (Exodus 25:17-20 describes the remaining two faithful "cherubs that cover[ed]" God's throne in the Old Testament tabernacle, where their wings cover the "mercy seat.")

The latter part of Ezekiel 28:14 states that this "king" was "in the mountain of God" and "walked...in the midst of the stones of fire." This describes the area around God's throne. Verse 15 states, "iniquity [lawlessness] was found in you," and verse 16 refers to it as "sin."

Verse 16 also describes this cherub as having been "cast...out of" heaven. God also said He would "destroy" (Hebrew: *expel*) Lucifer from heaven. Verse 17 reveals that his "heart was lifted up because of [his] beauty," and that his wisdom was "corrupted...by reason of [his] brightness." The verse ends with God "casting him down to the ground," where the kings of the Earth "behold him."

Lucifer was a brilliant being—an "*angel of light*" (II Cor. 11:13-15). *Lucifer* means "*the light bringer.*" This brilliant, wise, perfect being once

brought *light* to all that were around him. He REBELLED, SINNED—thus becoming the “prince of darkness.” His rebellion turned him into a twisted, perverted being. While of great intelligence, he has literally become an insane, *fallen* angel who no longer understands right from wrong. He believes he is right and God is wrong. Hate, anger, bitterness, murder, deceit, vanity, pride, envy and resentment entered him. These are the attitudes that Satan broadcasts!

We will learn how mankind opened the door to Satan’s wavelength.

The World at the Creation of Man

We must first examine the creation of man and what God said about His “product” after it was finished.

Genesis is the book of beginnings. It describes a period of over 2,000 years. However, it is not written to show detail. Rather, it represents a look at the most important *high points* of human history.

The creation week and the time immediately following it are described in the first three chapters. But the beginning of the book of JOHN is the best place to introduce the beginning of Genesis. Let’s examine what he said.

He wrote, “In the beginning was the Word” (John 1:1) and then continued, “the Word was *with* God, and the Word *was* God.” If there is One who WAS God, but who was also WITH God, it is obvious that two Beings—two Persons—are described.

Verse 14 continues, “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” The only God-Being who ever became flesh in order to dwell among men is Jesus Christ. Remember, it says that the Word “was made flesh.” Christ was not flesh until He came to Earth to become the Savior of mankind.

Genesis 1:1 states, “In the beginning God”—but who is the One speaking, calling Himself God? Moses recorded the first five books of the Old Testament in the Hebrew language. The word translated “God” is *Elohim*, a uniplural word like *team*, *group*, *family* or *church*. God is one Family—one God—composed of TWO Beings. This is why Christ WAS God and could be WITH God at the same time. John 4:24 states that “God is a Spirit.” God is made up of—composed of—Spirit. Men are composed of flesh.

God and Christ enjoy perfect harmony and agreement. They reflect perfect outgoing love, concern and cooperation. The Father is the supreme leader of a Family that both chose to expand. First, God created the angels and then the entire physical universe, including Earth. Next came man.

God said, “Let US [more than one] make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness” (Gen. 1:26). There was clearly more than one person involved in the creation of man.

Verse 25 shows that each animal was made after “his kind.” Notice: “And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creeps upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.”

Verse 27 continues, “So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them.” This verse is a vital key to understanding that God’s very purpose is to reproduce Himself. The human family and human reproduction is a type of this plan.

Verse 28 begins with an important statement: “And *God blessed them*, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” If God had instilled evil, selfish, sinful human nature into Adam and Eve at the moment of their creation, it could hardly be described as “blessing” them. If this were the case, it would be better described as a curse!

The next two verses explain that God entrusted the entirety of His creation (animals, plants, etc.) to man’s dominion—his overall control. Genesis 2:19 describes how God brought all the animals to Adam “to see what he would call them.”

The Genesis 1 account concludes with vitally important verse 31: “And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was VERY GOOD.”

Think about what this scripture is saying. In one sense, it is a stunning statement about human nature. Human nature is *not* “very good”—it is VERY EVIL. Yet, God called His creation “very good”!

If God “blesses” people and says that what He had done in making them was “very good,” then deceit (Jer. 17:9), hostility toward God’s law (Rom. 8:7), hate, selfishness, pride, vanity, lust and all the other evils of human nature (Mark 7:20-23) could not yet have been present. There is no evidence of rebellion against God in this account. Therefore, it describes Adam and Eve prior to their encounter with Satan.

In chapter 2, God presented Adam and Eve with the choice that they would face (chapter 3) between the Tree of Life and the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” In this choice, they would be offered the opportunity to decide between God’s “divine nature” (II Pet. 1:4)—building and developing His character—or taking on Satan’s sinful nature.

If Adam would have been willing to obey God’s instruction, he could have qualified to replace Satan and restore the government of God on Earth. Remember, Satan had rebelled and overthrown God’s government on the Earth.

Adam’s Fateful Choice

But how did the devil gain access to mankind? What opened the door to his influence—to his broadcast?

The well known but little understood account of the Garden of Eden holds the key: “Now the serpent [Satan] was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yes, has God said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die. And the serpent said unto the woman, You shall

not surely die: for God does know that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. *And the eyes of them both were opened*, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons” (Gen. 3:1-7).

This account represents an astonishing—and truly far-reaching—decision. Instead of following God’s instruction, Adam took of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” He thought he knew better than God. He took *to himself* the right to decide between what was right (good) and what was wrong (evil). He thought that he could trust his own physical senses. In this sense, this decision did “open his eyes” (vs. 7)—but not to the things of God, which come only by receiving God’s Spirit (I Cor. 1:9-10). Certainly, God’s Spirit did *not* enter them at this moment. The spirit of rebellion entered their minds for the first time. The evil spirit of Satan’s influence was injected into their minds at that moment as the very first appearance of “human nature.” *This* is how their “eyes were opened.”

Adam’s decision precluded at that moment any opportunity to acquire true *spiritual* knowledge from God. Thus, his understanding remained limited to what he could learn through the five physical senses—and left him open to Satan’s broadcast. Human nature came into being for the first time!

With this decision, Adam completely cut himself and mankind off from access to God. This *other* tree has been guiding the thinking of the men and nations ever since Adam’s fateful choice. We must understand what this means for you and me. For his sin of rejecting God and the Tree of Life, Adam was rejected by God and cast from the garden. And mankind was cast out with him into Satan’s world!

Satan lied to Eve, who led Adam into sin with her. He got them to reject—disbelieve!—what God had taught them in Genesis 2:16-17. The devil’s deceit brought these two adult children to believe that they no longer needed to listen to God—their Parent. Human nature entered. Being thrust from the garden, they were forced to fend for themselves. Having rejected God’s perfect Law (Rom. 7:12, 14) and rule—His GOVERNMENT over all creation—as guides in their lives, and having yielded to Satan and his way of sin (Rom. 8:7; II Tim. 2:25-26), they were on their own.

Because of sin, they no longer had access to God’s blessings, guidance, protection or the gift of His Holy Spirit, which would have come by eating of the Tree of Life.

Human Nature Is Not Inherited

Grasp this! Human nature did not come from God, but rather from Satan.

But human nature is not *inherited*—it is *acquired*! Adam’s children and all succeeding generations did not “pass it on” at conception. A parent who loses

an eye, a hand or a leg does not produce children with one eye, one hand or one leg. When God used one of Adam's ribs to create Eve, it did not mean that all men ever after lack one rib. The Bible refers to their son Abel as "righteous Abel." Their disobedience did not prevent his obedience.

Adam and Eve were adult "babies." Just like babies born today, they were pure at the time of their creation ("birth") but were quickly exposed to a "broadcast" they were not able to resist. They were created on the sixth day of the week (Friday), rested on the Sabbath (Saturday), and were seduced by Satan (Gen. 3:1-6) probably the next day (Sunday)—at the age of *two days old!* Thus, Satan was waiting for unsuspecting and still innocent "baby" Adam and "baby" Eve. No two-day-old child can discern right from wrong. Adam and Eve just *thought* they were grown-up enough to make their own decisions.

Like most children today, Adam and Eve chose not to listen to their Parent, God. Instead, they believed Satan's lie that they would not "surely die." In so doing, they rejected the rule of the government of God in their lives. Again, if Adam had obeyed God's instruction, he could have qualified to replace Satan and *restore* the GOVERNMENT of God on Earth.

Let's examine one important New Testament instruction and example of how human nature is acquired, not inherited. Paul shed important light in the following warning that he issued to the Corinthian Church: "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, *as the serpent beguiled Eve* through his SUBTLETY, *so your minds should be corrupted* from the simplicity that is in Christ" (II Cor. 11:2-3).

Paul was writing to people who lived 4,000 years after Adam and Eve. He recognized that the devil was still alive and active. The Corinthians were adults capable of being deceived (beguiled) in the same way as Eve. Paul warned them to be on guard that they not return to following the ways of human nature. Just as Eve's nature was not evil and hostile to God before she was deceived, neither was the nature of the converted Corinthians.

Once one is called and converted, having received the Spirit of God, he has put off the old human nature of his past life. Paul also added in Ephesians 2:3, "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were *BY NATURE* the children of wrath, even as others." These verses follow and are part of the scripture identifying Satan as the "prince of the power of the air."

It would be grossly unfair of God to inject newborn babies with human nature, and then place them under His "wrath" for having it. Do you see this point? Human nature is *acquired*, leading to disobedience to God—and THIS puts people under the wrath of God!

The following is the same passage from the Phillips translation of the New Testament. This particular translation accurately describes how all people have *acquired* human nature from Satan: "You drifted along on the stream of this world's ideas of living, and obeyed its UNSEEN RULER [Satan is the "unseen

ruler” of this world—II Cor. 4:4] (who is still operating in those who do not respond to the truth of God)...We all lived like that in the past, and followed the *impulses* and *imaginings* of our EVIL NATURE...like everyone else.”

How true! Most people simply drift along in life following whatever feelings (“impulses”) and ideas (“imaginings”) strike them from moment to moment. All of Ephesians 1 is Paul’s accounting to those brethren of their calling into God’s way of life. Take time to read it, possibly using the Moffatt translation. The Ephesians had come out of the course of this world and were no longer “by nature” the children of wrath, and were no longer yielding to the “prince of the power of the air.” They had begun to “dis-acquire” human nature by yielding to God instead of the impulses, pulls, feelings and temptations of Satan’s wavelength.

What Is God’s Purpose for Humans?

Most people have absolutely no idea WHY they were born. This is spiritually *revealed* knowledge, unattainable to all whom God has *not* called to understand His truth (John 6:44, 65).

Lucifer rebelled and *became* Satan. He sought to overthrow the government of God and disqualified himself to remain part of it. Each human being that God calls is presented with the same choice—yielding to God and *His* government or yielding to Satan and *his* nature.

God is a Father who now has one Spirit-composed Son, but who will later have many *more* sons (Rom. 8:19; Heb. 2:10). He is reproducing Himself by developing His character in yielded, conquered, spirit-begotten human beings. (God begets His children *spiritually*, as do human fathers *physically*. Read our booklet *What Does “Born Again” Mean?* to learn more about being born later into God’s Family.)

Just as little children grow up to look like their physical parents, so also do the children of God slowly take on the SPIRITUAL likeness of God (also their Parent), in “divine” nature (II Pet. 1:4) and holy, righteous character. Peter described Christians as “partakers of the divine nature”—the nature of God. There is the *physical nature* of creation, HUMAN NATURE and GOD’S NATURE. God is re-fashioning corrupt, carnal *human nature* into wonderful, glorious, perfect and holy spiritual character!

Character is understanding—knowing—right from wrong *and* DOING *what is right instead of what is wrong!* God reveals what is right. But righteous character is built through the power of free moral agency—deciding to DO what God instructs.

God has perfect character in every respect. He is love. Love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:10), which requires yielding to God. It is outgoing, out-flowing concern for others, putting them first—ahead of the interests of SELF.

Satan’s nature is selfish, incoming and concerned only with what is best for SELF and how to get more for SELF.

Let's speak plainly. You were created to become like God—to build perfect, holy, righteous character. God is *reproducing* Himself in people. Just as you are the child of parents, and possibly have children of your own, *God is your Parent*. As you physically look like your parents, and your children resemble you, God wants you to look like Him—IN SPIRITUAL CHARACTER!

So then, God is reproducing Himself in human beings who have received His Holy Spirit. He is creating children that will look and *be* just like Him! To build the very character of God is the reason you were born!

Converted Christians Not Immune

The fact that one has repented, been baptized and received God's Spirit (Acts 2:38) does not negate or automatically block Satan's ability to attack, tempt and probe for weaknesses.

Understand! You have been practicing Satan's way for your entire life. You have probably become *very good* at it. Believe me, as you strive to overcome and resist the pulls at work within you, you will find that Satan's influence, in the form of human nature, is truly "second nature" to you—more than you now know! Overcoming will not be easy or happen overnight. It is a life-long struggle against an attitude and way of life that the Christian has rejected and turned from.

Remember, the devil appeared in the form of a serpent and successfully SEDUCED Eve *through temptation* (Gen. 3:1-6). Verse 1 reveals *how* he tempts people into disobedience and sin. It says, "Now the serpent was more *subtle* than any beast of the field..." Satan deceived Eve by tempting her with the beauty of the tree from which God had forbidden her to eat.

Temptation never comes from God. James 1:13-15 states, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, *neither tempts He any man*: But every man is tempted, when he is *drawn away of his own lust*, and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death."

Temptation *always* originates from "the tempter," working on the lusts of people. The devil recognizes where human nature is vulnerable, where people can be "enticed" so that "sin is conceived."

Ephesians 6:11 warns of the "*wiles* of the devil," while Revelation 2:24 warns of the "*depths* of Satan"! II Corinthians 2:11 warns not to be "ignorant of his *devices*." Christians are constantly on guard for his schemes.

The apostle James taught, "SUBMIT yourselves therefore to God. *Resist* the devil, and he will *flee* from you" (4:7).

Christ Overcame and Qualified to Replace Satan

Resisting the temptation of the devil was central to Christ's having overcome sin. Matthew 4 contains the account of this temptation. It begins in verse 1: "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit...to be *tempted* of the devil."

The devil repeatedly *tempted* Christ: “The devil took Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed Him all the *kingdoms of the world*, and the glory of them; and said unto Him, All these things will I give You, if You will fall down and *worship me*” (vs. 8-9). Notice that Christ rebuked Satan (vs. 10) and quoted Deuteronomy 6:13: “You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.” At this point, the final temptation in this account ended and the devil departed. Christ had successfully resisted!

Comprehend this crucial passage! This account describes the *temptation* of Christ. What the devil offered Him was designed to *tempt* Him. If both Christ and the devil knew that the kingdoms of this world were *not* the devil’s to give, *then where was the temptation?* The offer would have carried no weight—it would have been hollow—if nations and empires were *not* the devil’s to offer.

For Christ to *overcome* the temptation there had to *be* a temptation! Ultimately, Christ succeeded where Adam and Eve had failed. Christ passed a very real test! He overcame the world, the devil and His flesh, in conquering sin and qualifying to pay the ransom price (His life) for man’s deliverance.

Grasp this vital point. Only by overcoming Satan did Christ qualify to *restore the government* of God to this Earth at His Second Coming!

After successfully resisting the temptation in Matthew 4, Christ began to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God. Notice Mark’s account: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God...Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, *The time is fulfilled*, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent you, and believe the gospel” (1:1, 14-15).

The “time that was fulfilled” was that of Christ’s SUPER VICTORY in His struggle to overcome Satan and his world. This victory literally authorized Christ to announce the Return of God’s government, almost 2,000 years later, under His leadership.

In the meantime, God must call a *few*—a very few—to be prepared at the *inauguration* of that government for rulership in the kingdom of God with Christ. These few must also overcome, as Christ did, to *qualify* for rulership—and Satan *hates* all who are qualifying to replace him!

A Christian is one who copies and builds the character of Jesus Christ now, so that he can later enjoy membership in the God Family with Christ and the Father. What a sobering yet exciting opportunity and responsibility!

Isaiah describes God as a “Potter” working with clay as He works in the lives of human beings. He is molding and shaping each person into a beautifully finished product. Paul describes those who are “in Jesus Christ” as being “a NEW creature.” God, as Creator, is fashioning a new creation in those who have His Holy Spirit working in them.

A Christian is converted to a new way of life. He seeks to change—to become more like Jesus Christ every day. He also seeks God on a daily basis. He exercises the Spirit of God to develop His very character—through a daily

renewing of the mind! Galatians 5:22-23 lists the nine “fruit[s] of the Spirit.” They are *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance*. These qualities of God’s nature are practiced and reflected where His Spirit is present.

Our goal is to become like God in character *now* so that we can rule with Him *later* in His kingdom—AND FULFILL OUR INCREDIBLE HUMAN POTENTIAL!

Overcoming Not Easy

Like any muscle of the body, character is built by pushing against resistance. Successfully facing that resistance strengthens the muscle (in this case, the mind). Building character means *choosing* to do what is right instead of *choosing* to do what is wrong. Character does not concern itself with what OTHERS say or do. It only concerns itself with what GOD says to do!

Never forget that the Christian must resist Satan, who is active at every turn. But it is not through human strength or effort alone that this can be achieved. Paul wrote, “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole *armor of God*, that you may be able to stand against the *wiles of the devil*. For we *wrestle* not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the *RULERS of the darkness of this world*, against *spiritual wickedness* [Greek: wicked spirits] in high places” (Eph. 6:10-12).

This verse contains much to consider. Christians must forcefully “wrestle” against the power of the devil and his demons—“wicked spirits”—on a day-to-day basis. They must constantly struggle against feelings of offense, hostility, envy, anger and many other attitudes.

Many New Testament scriptures describe the extent to which human nature, unchecked by overcoming, has complete dominance over every aspect of people’s lives. And the fruits of human nature are evident all over the world. Carefully consider and think about the following four extensive scriptures. Reflect on the evidence of them in *your* life, and recognize that they represent a list of things you probably need to overcome.

Paul wrote the Galatians, “Now the works of the flesh are manifest [obvious], which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall *not* inherit the kingdom of God” (5:19-21).

Overcoming—eliminating these patterns of conduct and thinking—is directly tied to salvation and ruling in the kingdom of God!

Now consider what Paul was inspired to write to the Roman congregation: “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate [void of judgment] mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity;

whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them” (1:28-32).

This powerful list of wrong attitudes and conduct summarizes the condition of all humanity.

Paul also wrote to the Romans of an entire world under the influence and sway of the devil: “There is *NONE* righteous, no, not one: there is *NONE* that understands, there is *NONE* that seeks after God. They are *ALL* gone out of the way, they are *together* become unprofitable; there is *NONE* that does good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways” (3:10-16).

No wonder John commanded true Christians of all ages in the following direct way: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the *lust of the flesh*, and the *lust of the eyes*, and the *pride of life*, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (I John 2:15-16).

The three phrases in italics identically match what Eve loved about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 3:6). Take a moment to re-read it. It will be clear *why* John wrote as he did, 4,000 years later, about the world that Adam and Eve chose and indirectly helped build.

To the Overcomer

This world is completely deceived, and drifting along, unaware of God’s purpose, which is to restore His government to Earth. Only the *tiniest few* who have been called by God are to be a part of this restoration.

While all who are of this world are primarily devoted to acquiring goods and enjoying pleasures, this is not the goal—the attitude—of the one who seeks God and is a true Christian. He is striving to remain in constant harmony with God’s supreme, over-arching purpose for his life.

Important understanding must be introduced here. It sets up scriptures that we will study momentarily.

The Bible teaches, in Revelation 2 and 3, that God has worked with His Church through seven separate and successive eras. In these two chapters, Christ describes each one. With one exception, the first five are described as having their own unique set of doctrinal and spiritual problems that eventually led to their downfall. Each time this happened, God raised up a new leader to establish the next era.

These seven eras are *Ephesus*, *Smyrna*, *Pergamos*, *Thyatira*, *Sardis*, *Philadelphia* and *Laodicea*. Originally, these were seven cities that lay close together (in this order) on a mail route in Asia Minor (now western Turkey).

Each city reflected corresponding attitudes that would exist in the seven eras they represented. Christ was able to use them to show a pattern that would span the history of His Church over the next 2,000 years, from AD 31 until His Return. (Read our book *Where Is the True Church? – and Its Incredible History!* to understand much more.)

While certain attitudes dominate each era, understand that some of the attitudes Christ describes are found in all of them. Therefore, they have application to the whole Church in a general way.

In His message to THYATIRA, Christ instructs, “And he that OVERCOMES, and keeps My works unto the end, to him will I give *power over the nations*: And he shall *rule them* with a rod of iron...” (Rev. 2:26-27).

This is an obvious picture of the re-establishing of God’s government over all the nations of the Earth. When this happens, Christians will receive REAL POWER TO RULE.

The instruction to LAODICEA, the final era, adds more understanding: “To him that OVERCOMES will I grant to sit with Me in My *throne, even as I also overcame*, and am set down with My Father in His throne” (Rev. 3:21).

One more verse in Revelation summarizes the previous two: “And has made us unto our God KINGS and PRIESTS: and we shall *reign on the earth*” (5:10). Kings and priests are *teachers*. All those called of God are in training to become *teachers*. This is why Christ’s great commission to His Church throughout all ages is, “Go you therefore, and *teach all nations*” (Matt. 28:19).

God’s Church does this today. You now are being taught the marvelous truth of God in this booklet!

Only a relative handful of people were called in the Old Testament, with apparently just three—Abel, Enoch and Noah—called prior to the Flood. After the Flood came the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) and the prophets, along with David and Lot. God used each of these men for a special purpose or commission. But all of them were *trained* and had to OVERCOME Satan, the temptations of his world and the pulls of the flesh. Like these great servants, Christians OVERCOME their problems, weaknesses, sins and wrong attitudes, rather than being overcome and defeated *by* them. They endure no matter what!

Christ said, “In the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD” (John 16:33). Christ had overcome both the world and the god of it. Recall that He said, “EVEN AS I ALSO OVERCAME, and am set down with My Father in His throne.” You must not miss this point. It was Christ’s OVERCOMING that qualified Him to rule. Just as He qualified to replace Satan, so must we!

Such enormous power to rule could never be given to people who are unprepared—who have not QUALIFIED to properly use it. God is not about to hand tremendous AUTHORITY to people who might rebel and revert to the ways of Satan. He knows that He cannot ever again have another “Lucifer-turned-Satan” cause destruction and chaos. It will be impossible for any in the ruling government of God to sin (I John 3:9).

Satan to be Sent Away

When Christ returns, Satan, as the deposed ruler over Earth, will be removed. No leader could ever succeed a disqualified leader, and permit him to *remain* and co-rule with him. The disqualified leader would second-guess and undermine all that the new leader plans to change and implement. Since all *human* governments understand this, of course, God does also. He knows that Satan has to be *removed* from his position of influence.

Notice what Moses said in regard to Satan's fate: "The goat...shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go...into the wilderness. And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness" (Lev. 16:10, 21-22).

These verses contain crucial understanding about God's future plan for all mankind. Soon now, Satan will be cast into the outer heavens—"the wilderness"—and rendered unable to deceive all the inhabitants of Earth for many generations. The temptations of this world and human nature, caused by Satan, will disappear—though there will still be certain pulls of the flesh that all will have to overcome (Rom. 7:18, 21-23).

When Satan is removed, peace will literally begin to break out all over the world. The saints will be ruling with Christ from Jerusalem—having restored the government of God in His kingdom, administered by the Family of God. God's "holy, just, perfect and spiritual" Law (Rom. 7:12-14) will be enforced among all nations. (Read our booklets *What Is the Kingdom of God?* and *How God's Kingdom Will Come – The Untold Story!*)

Understand! The world is approaching a wonderful time when it will enjoy complete peace for 1,000 years, having not been exposed to Satan's broadcast. But his release brings the immediate return of human nature.

Satan is an *invisible spirit*, meaning he can keep his presence unknown. Therefore, even with 1,000 years of continual prior warnings, many will ignore the danger from Satan's broadcast and be overcome by it.

Those who choose Satan's way, whether knowingly or through a careless lack of vigilance, ultimately come to a terrible end.

The Great White Throne Judgment

Revelation 20:10 describes a much later time period, when Satan is "cast into the lake of fire"—finally destroyed!—never again to inject his nature and deceive the nations. Verses 11-13 describe the wonderful period after the Millennium when "the rest of the dead" who have lived from the time of Adam

will be given an opportunity for salvation. Most will eventually receive salvation—eternal life—because the influence of Satan will have been permanently removed from the Earth. They will not have to overcome either his influence or the pulls and enticements of his world.

Christ Restores God's Government

When Christ returns to Earth He will establish God's Kingdom, which will replace the kingdoms of this world (Dan. 2:44). In time, He will open eternal life and salvation to the whole world, now still cut off from God (Isa. 59:1-2), blinded and led by Satan's nature.

Those of all nations will sit before Christ. Some will have qualified to rule and some will not. Notice: "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit *upon the throne of His glory*: and before Him shall be gathered *all nations*: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his *sheep* from the *goats*: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, you blessed of My Father, **INHERIT THE KINGDOM** prepared for you [all those who have overcome] from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:31-34).

The GOVERNMENT of God will soon be restored to Earth, and all who have prepared themselves will "inherit the kingdom." Only the *overcomers*, those who successfully submitted to God and resisted Satan throughout their lives, shall take part in this glorious future: "He that **OVERCOMES** shall *inherit all things*; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:7-8).

Will you be one who **INHERITS ALL THINGS**?

The following literature expands on topics discussed in this booklet:

- The Ten Commandments – “Nailed to the Cross” or Required for Salvation?
- Where Is the True Church? – and Its Incredible History!
- A World in Captivity
- How God’s Kingdom Will Come – The Untold Story!
- What Does “Born Again” Mean?
- What Is the Kingdom of God?
- What Science Will Never Discover About Your Mind
- Who Is the Devil?

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