

Why Do You Exist?

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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WHY do you exist—*WHY* were you born?
What is the meaning of your life? Were
you put here for a reason? You can know—
you *must* know!

WHY WERE YOU BORN? Is there a reason—a meaning—for your life? Is your existence part of a divine plan?

Was mankind placed on Earth by an all-wise Creator as part of a great Purpose—a MASTER PLAN? Knowing the answer is supremely important!

Think for a moment. What could be more important to understand than the purpose for your life?

Atheists refuse to know. Those who do not accept the existence of God certainly cannot accept that He has a Master Plan.

Cynics scoff at the possibility of knowing. They see the confusion and wide disagreement over this question and conclude that it can never be answered.

Scientists cannot discover this knowledge through laboratory analysis. Honest astronomers, microbiologists and others acknowledge that God exists, but this alone does not reveal His Purpose for mankind.

Philosophers cannot discern it through meditation or discussion. Divinely revealed answers cannot be obtained by centuries of pondering questions.

Educators cannot teach what they themselves were never taught. Those who merely teach from books written by other men cannot teach what those books do not contain.

Astrologers dazzle with tricks that reveal nothing of value. Do any reasonable people seriously think that such “business people” (those who *sell* fortunetelling as true understanding), supposedly in contact with the “dead” and the “spirit world” (actually demon spirits), hold the meaning of life?

Theologians offer humanly-devised counterfeits. All religions *profess* to hold the answers to life's questions, but their ideas pale as cheap substitutes—empty counterfeits—when the awesome truth of God's Plan is fully understood.

Most people live their entire lives without a clue as to why they are here. They drift aimlessly, unconcerned about the answers to life's greatest questions—*why life* and *why death*? Others enjoy debating the meaning of life, but never arrive at the correct answers. Many conclude that mankind is little more than a product of evolution—blind, dumb luck!

Insoluble Problems

The world is experiencing an explosion of knowledge amidst ever greater human suffering, unhappiness, discontent and confusion. Why such ever-worsening moral decline alongside astonishing materialistic progress? Weapons of mass destruction now threaten man's very survival.

Why? And where do we go from here?

The number and severity of problems facing mankind have never been greater—disease, pollution, poverty, ignorance, religious confusion, war, terrorism, crime, violence, hunger, immorality, slavery, oppression, political upheaval and much more—*why?*

Problems both between and within nations have never brought more division between peoples—*why?*

With the passing of time come more problems, not less—*why?*

Also, existing problems grow collectively worse instead of better—*why?*

Why, at every turn, has man botched, bungled and failed miserably in all efforts to solve his truly great problems?

Individually, people have never seemed more incapable of addressing and overcoming their personal problems. As with the world in general, the passing of time sees individuals and families drowning in a sea of moral decadence and under seemingly insurmountable difficulties. More and more seem completely incapable of managing their lives—*why?*

Men have created many amazing technological inventions, but they cannot create solutions to their problems. Mankind has harnessed the power of computers to process vast amounts of information, but human beings cannot correctly process their personal problems. Scientists have discovered much about the size, magnificence and precision of the universe, but they cannot discover the way to peace. Astronomers can find majestic, beautiful new galaxies throughout the universe, but they cannot find a way to preserve the beauty and majesty of Earth. Scientists have also unleashed the power of the atom, but are powerless to unleash answers to life's biggest questions. Educators have taught millions how to earn a living, but not *how to live*—because they themselves do not know how to live.

With the creative genius of man having been used to create weapons of mass destruction, and to bring worse and worse forms of terrorism to a world incapable of successfully combating it, the world is in a terrible mess.

The well-known presidential historian Peggy Noonan summarized mankind's complex, jumbled history in this way: "In the long ribbon of history, life has been one long stained and tangled mess, full of famine, horror, war and disease. We must have thought we had it better because man had improved. But man doesn't really 'improve,' does he? Man is man. Human nature is human nature; the impulse to destroy coexists with the desire to build and create and make better" ("America's Age of Uncertainty," *Knight-Ridder*, 11/9/2001).

Who could disagree?

So, something is terribly wrong. Man's extraordinary creative genius has left him incomplete—and it has proven insufficient to solve his problems. The power and creative prowess of his mind has been more channeled to destruction than to productive effort in planning and inventing.

The SOURCE That Reveals

Sir Winston Churchill, the famous Prime Minister of once-Great Britain, proclaimed, "There is a *purpose* being worked out here below." He understood that in some fashion a Supreme Being was working out an unseen and little-understood PLAN on Earth.

But what is it? Churchill did not know.

Many long to know what God is doing "here below," but have no idea how to learn what it is. Mankind is ignorant of where to turn. Humanity does not know what the Source of instruction is.

The Creator of human beings sent with them a detailed *Instruction Book* containing vital information. It explains the nature, design and purpose of His greatest of all creations. It identifies the hidden key—the missing dimension—to the right and proper use of the mind. It explains *the way* to peace, happiness, abundance and universal prosperity.

But this greatest *Instruction Book* is almost universally ignored, misrepresented, misunderstood and rejected. I speak of God's Word—the HOLY BIBLE! As a result, the problems, troubles and evils of civilization mount. With no solution in sight, conditions only grow worse.

Stop and think! Apply basic logic. Would God create His own marvel of engineering—your mind—and send it without an *Instruction Book* explaining how to use it?

Of course not! This overlooked and misunderstood Book *does* exist. We need to examine this "Manual," which unlocks the mystery of why you exist. It offers hope for you—and solutions to humanity's problems. It explains *why* man is incapable of solving his problems without divine intervention from the One who is working out His Purpose. It explains the meaning of life and answers the most important question you face—*why do you exist?*

The evolutionist cannot answer this question. He believes that life has evolved over millions of years. He believes that his *theory* explains the presence of millions of plants and animals on Earth, with mankind merely being the

highest animal in the evolutionary chain. Evolutionists reject special creation by a Supreme Creator and therefore reject the Source of revealed knowledge that He sent with His creation.

Proponents of the evolutionary theory cannot explain man's awesome potential, or why it has never been realized. Nor can they explain why things keep getting worse—when evolution teaches that mankind is supposedly evolving to a higher order.

The world's religions have utterly failed in giving *meaning*—or *hope*—to life. These religions have almost universally caved to the evolutionists and even professing Christianity has largely rejected the Genesis account of creation as myth and ancient Hebrew “literature.” Yet, while rejecting many Scriptures that explain the purpose of life, they claim to believe a few selected passages and falsely label themselves “Christianity”!

But the Book of books offers hope and meaning. Here is the truth from this vital Instruction Book made plain!

The Pinnacle of God's Creation

Genesis 1 records the Creation account: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (vs. 1). These are the first words of the Bible. It is an all-encompassing statement. It is inclusive and straightforward, with no ambiguities or room for doubt. God says this is what He did.

On the sixth day of Creation, at the end of chapter 1, God said, “Let Us make man *in Our image, after Our likeness*” (vs. 26). Man was made to look like, was “made after,” the God “kind.” Man was the crowning achievement—the supreme pinnacle—of God's Creation. He was not of any animal kind, but was made in *God's* “image and likeness.” This reveals an enormous difference between men and *every* kind of animal.

Verse 25 reveals that animals were made in a different way and that each 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*...”

Horses look like horses. Dogs look like dogs. Cows look like cows. Birds look like birds. None of these—and nothing else—is formed and shaped in the image and likeness of God. So says God, who inspired this account in His Word!

Men are not part of the animal kind. They do not carry the likeness of any “beast of the earth.” As part of the God kind, man was created to enter a relationship with his Creator that animals can never realize. This will be explained later.

At this point, it is vital to understand something about WHO and WHAT God is. Genesis 1 reveals critically important knowledge.

Verse 1 states, “In the beginning *GOD*...” Moses recorded the first five books of the Old Testament in the Hebrew language. The Hebrew word

translated “God” is *Elohim*. This word is uniplural, like *team*, *group*, *family* or *church*.

God is one *Family*—presently composed of two Beings.

Verse 26 said, “Let us [more than one] make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness.” There was clearly more than one Person involved in the creation. This verse records the God FAMILY doing the speaking and creating.

The apostle John amplifies what Moses recorded: “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 being described. This is why Christ could *be* God and *with* God at the same time.

The Greek word rendered “Word” is *Logos*. It means “Spokesman.” This is the One who became Christ and is the One speaking in Genesis 2.

John 1:14 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.

Beginning in Genesis 2:4 is another name translated as “God,” *YHWH*. It is best rendered “the Eternal” or “the Ever-living One”—the Spokesman/Word.

Human Mind vs. Animal Instinct

Animals possess instinct. No evolutionist has ever successfully explained why this is or how it is even possible.

Why would bees return to their hive day after day, generation after generation, making honey in the same way they did 1,000 years ago, unless they were *designed* to do this?

Why do baby cows and horses stand up almost immediately after birth? It was *programmed* into them—through instinct.

Why do birds know to fly south, and at just the right time? Then, how do many know to return each year to the exact same tree in Central or South America—and then fly back north, right on schedule? Instinct!

How would *all* bears “know” to eat enough food to survive hibernation all winter—and how would *all* bears even know to hibernate, unless this was *built into* their instinctive behavior?

Why do all wolves hunt the same way—in packs—and eat the same things?

Why does almost every bird have its own distinct nest-building design?

There was once a test conducted with weaver birds. Five successive generations were deprived of nest-building materials. The fifth generation was given the materials but had never seen a nest. It immediately proceeded to make nests that looked exactly like all weaver bird nests.

As marvelous as is this instinctive capability, it is dwarfed by the capacity and power of human intellect. Humans are able to acquire knowledge. They can reach the moon and create super-computers. They can design buildings the

height of six football fields and discover secrets of the atom. Animals have no such capability.

People do *not* instinctively know everything that they need to know to operate successfully throughout their lives. They must acquire ever more knowledge as they grow older and as more demands are placed upon them.

All knowledge falls into two categories: (1) The *physical* knowledge of how to work with matter and physical things, and (2) the *spiritual* knowledge necessary for people to develop personal relationships with both God and their fellow man. All knowledge is either physical or spiritual.

Physical knowledge is acquired through the five senses—*sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste*. People understand that they must ACQUIRE certain knowledge and add to it throughout their lives. The senses permit this.

Created Incomplete

The Psalmist wrote, "...for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psa. 139:14). This is most true of your brain—the HUMAN MIND! But it is incomplete—and so are you.

Genesis 1 records the account of man's PHYSICAL creation. Adam was created so that he looked like—appeared like—God in *physical* form and shape. Though physically complete, Adam was left spiritually incomplete. A vitally important spiritual component was missing.

Notice Genesis 2:7: "...God *formed* man of the *dust* of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man *became* a living soul." Man is made out of physical matter—flesh. While not composed of Spirit, like God, he is fashioned—*formed*—in the "image and likeness" of God.

Adam was physical. He breathed air, and required food and water. Without any of these, he could not survive.

God intended to begin His spiritual creation with Adam. This process has never included animals. But first, we must understand a related point.

Not an Immortal Soul

Most people do not understand the relationship between *men* and *souls*. Almost everyone has been taught and assumes that every person is born with and possesses an IMMORTAL SOUL. The popular belief is that, upon death, the souls of sinners go to hell *forever*, while the saved go to heaven *forever*.

Is this what the Bible says?

God's Word states, "the wages of sin is *death*" (Rom. 6:23), and that "sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). Could the Bible then also teach that people possess immortal souls? It does talk about "souls," but in what context?

Recall Genesis 2:7: "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and *man BECAME* a liv-

ing soul.” This verse does not say that men *have* souls, but that they *are* souls. Adam *became* a soul—he was not *given* one.

Then, almost immediately, God warned Adam, “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof *you shall surely die*” (vs. 16-17). When placed together, these verses reveal that men *are* souls, and that souls can *die*!

The prophet Ezekiel confirms the instruction in Genesis. Twice he was inspired to write, “The soul that sins, it shall **DIE**” (18:4, 20). Death is the *absence* of life.

Finally, notice Matthew 10:28: “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him [God] which is *able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*” Understand! Souls can be destroyed!

But John 4:24 states, “God **IS** a Spirit.” God is composed of Spirit. Men are made of flesh. Because God is a Spirit, His Spirit must work with *another* spirit within His human creation. But it is not an immortal soul.

Since God has programmed into animals, through instinct, everything that they need to function effectively within their environment, there is no “spirit of animals,” which gives them mind power. And humans do not possess immortal souls. But I Corinthians 2:11-12 reveals that they do possess what God calls “the spirit in man.” (You may read our free booklet *What Science Will Never Discover About Your Mind* to learn much more about this spirit. It is only briefly described here to help you understand God’s Master Purpose.)

Humans receive the spirit in man at conception. It permits them, through the five senses, to acquire and retain knowledge in a way that animals cannot. The human spirit is not **THE** man—it is **IN** the man. There is a big difference! This spirit does not have mind power of and by itself. Neither does the brain.

The *brain* hears through the ears and sees through the eyes. The human spirit does not do these things of and by itself. The brain does the thinking—with the spirit giving it the power of intellect. Remember, the spirit is *in* the man, giving the five *physical* senses the ability to work with the brain to analyze physical knowledge and discern its meaning. The spirit *empowers* the mind to process information received through the five senses.

The presence of this spirit allows God, a Spirit, to continue the physical creation into the spiritual realm. Some other things must be understood before proceeding with how God works within those minds that He has conquered.

The Great Choice

How did man get into the state of confusion, division and disagreement that exists all over the Earth today? It began with a wrong choice between two trees.

Consider this direct instruction to our original parents: “And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had

formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the TREE OF LIFE also in the midst of the garden, and the TREE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL” (Gen. 2:8-9).

God warned Adam that eating of the second tree would bring death: “But of the tree of the *knowledge of good and evil*, you shall *not* eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely *die*” (Gen. 2:17). God explained, “... for dust you are, and unto dust shall you return” (3:19).

This well-known but little-understood account of the Garden of Eden holds the key. In it, Adam and Eve made a fateful choice. The Genesis 3 account records this: “Now the serpent [Satan] was more *subtle* than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made” (vs. 1).

The world is ignorant of a staggering truth that overarches *everything* that happens on this planet. Revelation 12:9 states, “Satan...deceives the whole world.” II Corinthians 4:4 reveals that he is “the god of this world.” This verse shows the devil to be cunning, clever—very subtle in manner—making him most effective in his appeal to Eve. (Read our two booklets *Who Is the Devil?* and *A World in Captivity* to learn about this great fallen spirit and his influence on civilization.)

Continuing with the Genesis account: “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*” (vs. 1-4).

The devil lied to Eve. She believed him and was able to lead Adam into sin with her. Satan told them, “You shall *not* die”—in other words, “you have immortal souls.” He has been lying to humanity ever since!

Satan continued, “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” (vs. 5-7).

The devil got them to reject—DISBELIEVE—God’s warning in Genesis 2:16-17. His deceit brought these two *adult children* to believe that they no longer needed to listen to their Parent. Human nature entered. Thrust from the garden, they were forced to fend for themselves.

Satan convinced them that they could become “gods” (the Hebrew used here is also *Elohim*) by appealing to their human pride—their vanity. He convinced them that their minds were complete apart from God. They believed him and took to themselves God’s prerogative to define right and wrong. Their perfect human minds became corrupted by vanity, which seized them and lifted them up.

This account represents a fateful decision. Mankind was faced with a far-reaching choice between God's Way, which leads to ETERNAL LIFE, or the devil's way, which leads to DEATH!

Putting God to the Test

Adam and Eve became confused about whether to listen to Satan or God. They could not be sure God was telling the truth unless they put Him to the test. In a sense, Adam and Eve conducted the world's first *experiment*.

Rejecting God's revealed instruction, Adam used human reason, observation and experimentation. With only his mind and the devil guiding him, he proceeded to eat 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, Adam and Eve's decision did "open their eyes" (Gen. 3:7)—but not to the things of God. The spirit of rebellion entered them for the first time. The evil spirit of Satan's influence entered their minds as the first appearance of "human nature." *This* is how their eyes were "opened." (Read our booklet *Did God Create Human Nature?* to understand what this meant.)

Adam and Eve Cut Off

With this decision, Adam completely cut off himself and all mankind from access to God. This OTHER tree has been guiding the thinking of men and nations ever since Adam's fateful choice. We must understand what this means for us. Because he rejected God and the Tree of Life, Adam was rejected by God and cast from the garden. Mankind was cast out with him into Satan's world!

Adam's decision precluded any further opportunity to acquire *spiritual* knowledge. Thus, his understanding remained limited to what he could learn through the five physical senses—and left him open to Satan's broadcast (Eph. 2:2). Human nature was born!

Choosing a Mixture

Notice that the wrong tree represented *knowledge* that was both "good and evil." The tree was not entirely evil—it contained a *mixture* of good and evil knowledge! It is the same with the governments, philosophies, educational systems, and religions and churches of this world. Some do have small amounts of true ("good") knowledge, mixed with much false ("evil") knowledge.

For 6,000 years, God has told His servants to avoid mixing truth with error. He warned that eating of the wrong tree would result in death. Adam did not believe God, and died—cut off from God. The warning for us is the same!

When I was first learning the truth in 1966, I was taught an analogy that I had never considered before and have never forgotten since: Think of a delicious cake laced with just a tiny amount of arsenic, cyanide or strychnine, while otherwise containing nothing but good and healthy ingredients. Eating the cake would always result in death.

The good ingredients would be insufficient to overcome the poison hidden in the cake. Humanity chose the poison-laced cake and has remained cut off from God ever since.

God, not men, determines right from wrong! Men may decide WHETHER they will do right or wrong—but never what IS right or wrong! Satan convinced Adam that he should take the power to make this decision to himself.

Mankind has been conducting his own “scientific” experiments ever since. As with the cake, the result is still deadly!

The Great Law of Cause and Effect

Everyone understands the law of gravity. All recognize that if they ignore this law, it could “break” them. If one accidentally drops a brick on his foot, the result could be broken bones. If a skydiver jumps from an airplane, and the parachute fails to open, the result is certain death.

While most never identify cause and effect as an immutable law governing almost every action in life, they are aware that it is a general principle at work in certain circumstances.

Every *effect* can be traced to one or more *causes*. Unwanted or illegitimate pregnancies, crime, drug addiction, bankruptcy and a thousand other effects can all be linked to specific causes.

Proverbs 26:2 teaches, “...the curse *causeless* shall not come.” This verse reveals that causes bring effects. Only a few things are products of chance.

Why can mankind not see this law at work when he looks at the world as a whole? Why do none look for the CAUSE of this world’s ills and evils? Why are educators not teaching this greatest of all principles? Look at the world. Do you wonder *WHY* it is filled with misery, unhappiness and discontent? Even supposed Christianity has almost completely ignored the relationship between cause and effect.

The cause of all the world’s troubles began in the Garden of Eden. As simple as this sounds, it is true. The world ignores the decision made by Adam and Eve. They chose not to eat of the *Tree of Life*, choosing instead to eat of the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil*.

Have you wondered what would have happened if just two people had chosen the *Tree of Life*? Think how this would have changed today’s world. Everything would be different!

There would be no armies, wars, death, devastation or displacement of peoples. There would be no famine or hunger because there would be plenty of food for everyone. There would be no doctors, because there would be no ill-

ness. Hospitals and clinics would not exist. Neither would prisons, jails, judges and police forces that exist to punish lawbreakers.

Universal happiness, abundance, prosperity, peace and harmony would abound all over the world. All people would get along—neighbors, families, individuals and nations. Can you imagine such a world?

When Adam and Eve made the wrong decision, it directly affected *you* and *me*! One wrong choice—the CAUSE—brought untold tragic EFFECTS! Do not complicate the simplicity of the Bible record.

Their decision was to reject God’s perfect LAW (Rom. 7:12, 14) and rule—His GOVERNMENT—as a guide in their lives, and yield to Satan and his way of sin. 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.

The Carnal Mind

There is a related reason why violating the law of cause and effect has beset the world with insoluble problems. We must recognize another vital KEY that explains why the world is in its current state of affairs.

We read earlier that human nature appeared when the eyes of Adam and Eve were “opened.” Paul, in his letter to the Romans, makes an amazing statement. Notice: “Because the carnal [physical] mind is *enmity against God*: for it is *not subject to the law of God*, neither indeed can be” (8:7). Other translations use the phrase “is the *enemy* of God” in place of “is enmity against God.”

This verse offers startling insight into the working of every person’s physical—“carnal”—mind. Cut off from God, the natural mind is His ENEMY—it hates Him. Think! Has any minister or theologian ever even suggested this to you, let alone explained it?

NO! The religious leaders of this world either ignore this understanding entirely or do not recognize its far-reaching implications!

The natural mind does not want (and even HATES) to yield to God and obey His law. While most people profess that they “love God,” the truth is that their minds naturally hate His way and refuse to obey Him.

Now, here is why most cannot and will not recognize it: “The heart is *deceitful* above all things, and *desperately wicked*: who can know it?” (Jer. 17:9).

This is an absolutely stunning statement. Consider it carefully. Above all the qualities of human nature—vanity, jealousy, lust, greed, envy, pride, foolishness, hate, etc.—God reveals that *deceitfulness* exceeds them all.

No wonder Jeremiah also wrote, “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: *it is not in man that walks to direct his steps*” (10:23).

This is another incredible statement. When confronted with problems or important decisions, men simply *do not know what to do*. They are at a loss for *how* to address and *how* to solve the challenges, difficulties and problems

in their personal lives. Put another way, they do not know *how* to direct their steps.

How then can they solve the far bigger and more complex problems engulfing civilization today? *They cannot.* Solutions born of human reasoning always generate *more* problems. We will learn why.

The *Right* Spiritual Cause

Would the One who created mankind, the One who says He “is love” (I John 4:8, 16), not then have explained the supreme importance of love within His Plan? Would He have neglected to explain the principle of CAUSE and EFFECT?

Broadly speaking, there are two different ways of life. One is the “GIVE” way—the way of love and outgoing concern—*God’s Way*. The other is the “GET” way—the way of selfishness and self-concern—the way of this world. Love is patient, kind and considerate. It shares, cooperates, serves and helps. Christ taught that “it is more blessed to GIVE than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

The way of love is a great unseen *spiritual law* that keeps those who keep it and breaks those who break it! It is inexorable and binding in every aspect and relationship in life. Like the law of gravity, you cannot see it, but you can see the effects of breaking it.

This world is based on the “get” way rather than the “give” way, which is God’s Way! People constantly strive to “get” more—to accumulate—to amass for themselves throughout their lives.

This violates the Tenth Commandment, which forbids coveting. Notice what God says of His people, and of all nations, in a prophecy directed to those alive at the end of the age: “For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them *every one is given to covetousness*; and from the prophet even unto the priest *every one deals falsely*” (Jer. 6:13). Two chapters later, there is an almost identical statement, except that God also warns of the horrific punishment He will bring because of this worldwide attitude.

God wanted Adam to take of the Tree of Life so that he could enjoy all the good things of life. God must have explained this to him, since He told him that violating His basic command would result in his death.

If Adam had eaten of the Tree of Life, he would have received the Spirit of God. He would have learned the way of LOVE—the “give” way—instead of the “get” way.

Love Defined

Paul wrote, “...because *the love of God* is shed abroad in our hearts *by the Holy [Spirit]* which is given unto us” (Rom. 5:5).

Now what is the Bible definition of love?

John wrote, “For *this is* the love of God [here comes the definition], THAT WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS: and His commandments are not grievous” (I

John 5:3). Yet, so many who claim to have love believe that the commandments ARE grievous. God says they are not. He calls His Law “holy, just, good and *spiritual*” (Rom. 7:12, 14).

Paul explains that the *commandments* and the *law* are the same: “Love works no ill to his neighbor: therefore LOVE IS THE FULFILLING OF THE LAW” (Rom. 13:10). The Bible plainly defines love as “the fulfilling of the law.” Keeping the commandments is fulfilling the law—and this “WORKS NO ILL TO HIS NEIGHBOR.”

The Bible speaks of “the Holy Spirit, [which] God has given to them that OBEY Him” (Acts 5:32). True Christians obey God’s spiritual Law. Jesus never taught that we should just “believe on Him” to be saved. When asked what one must “do” to have “eternal life”—be SAVED—Christ did not say, “Just believe on Me.” He said, “If you will enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS” (Matt. 19:17).

It is possible to obey God. The world resists this or is ignorant of it because its ministers and theologians tell them it cannot be done, or that Christ did it *for* them. Yet, “Love is the *fulfilling of the LAW*.” Romans 8:6 states, “For to be carnally [physically] minded [hostile to God’s Law] is *death*; but to be spiritually minded is LIFE and PEACE.”

Understand! “Sin is the *transgression of the LAW*” (I John 3:4), and “The wages of sin is *death*” (Rom. 6:23). There is a cause for every effect.

Adam faced the choice of believing and accepting *knowledge* from God. He was freely offered eternal life. Eating of the Tree of Life would have caused God to beget a new life in him—through the Holy Spirit. Had he received the Spirit of God, he would have had life inherent within him. He would have practiced the way of “love,” which comes with receiving the Holy Spirit. He would have known the way to peace, happiness, abundance and prosperity.

Adam would have been given access to enormous amounts of revealed knowledge that he could never have discovered on his own. He would have been taught the difference between true and false values. He would have understood the origin of the universe, with much important spiritual knowledge—including the purpose of his life. He would not have had to continually *experiment, theorize* and *guess* at what is *good* and what is *evil* and why things are as they are—only to always be confused by his research.

He never would have foolishly conducted an experiment that ended with his DEATH!

Created to Obtain Knowledge

God gave Adam and Eve “dominion” over the Earth (Gen. 1:26). This meant that man would be able and need to learn and produce—to generate—much knowledge as he subjugated the planet.

God designed human beings with minds that could create, devise, reason, observe and experiment. Through this inherent ability to reason, *physical*

knowledge could be processed. This was good and right, as long as it was used within the framework that God intended.

Adam and Eve's problem was they reasoned that *every* kind of knowledge necessary for salvation could be obtained on their own, through experimentation. Once they moved off course from God's intended WAY, they had no hope of reaching the *destination* that He purposed for them—and neither does mankind, which followed their choice. Once Adam and Eve accepted the *wrong premise* as their STARTING POINT—that they could reason everything out themselves—they were destined to fail!

The accumulation of vast amounts of knowledge, over a period of 6,000 years, has not changed—and could never change—the fact that mankind is headed for the wrong destination.

Revealed Knowledge

Every sophisticated or technical device or product comes with an *instruction manual*. Without this, the owner would find the object useless. He would not know how to properly operate it. Nor could he repair or maintain it.

Once again, God gave an Instruction Manual—the Bible—that contains vital REVEALED knowledge. It explains *how to live*, not just how to earn a living. It explains history, prophecy, important knowledge of doctrine and thousands of other points and principles that govern every aspect of life.

Now understand. The Bible was never intended to contain ALL knowledge, just that which is essential for salvation—knowledge that man could not discover through human reason, experimentation, analysis and observation. The Bible was not intended to teach mankind how to design marvels of engineering, telescopes that can probe the outer reaches of the universe or computers that can perform trillions of calculations per second.

Men were given the capacity to reason out and design these and many other highly complex, technical inventions. Education in physical knowledge is important.

Here is why. Most of Earth's population live in abject poverty, disease, filth, squalor and illiteracy. They lack the most fundamental *education* that the developed "have" nations enjoy. Therefore, basic education can lead to *physical* improvements and advancements for civilization.

But surely 6,000 years of misery, unhappiness and every conceivable evil, ill and woe that humanity has suffered ought to tell the world that it should carefully heed the *Instruction Book* of revealed spiritual knowledge it has ignored. Yet, man continues to reject God's SPIRITUAL REVELATION.

However, cut off from the right channel and path of spiritually understood cause and effect and God's revealed law, man still possesses the power of physical, human reasoning, which, sadly, has led to weapons of mass destruction and terror, cruelty, slavery, repression, pollution, crime, religious confusion and so much more.

Hence, man's misery and woes compound and mount at every turn.

But remember, God's process of SPIRITUAL CREATION is still in progress. It is *not complete!*

Product of God's Workmanship

Let's continue examining the bigger picture of God's PURPOSE.

You are not the first to be concerned with God's overall Plan—or wonder why you exist. Job asked this same question: "If a man die, shall he live again?" (14:14).

God inspired him to answer his own question: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. You shall call, and I will answer You: *You will have a desire to the work of Your hands*" (vs. 14-15).

Job acknowledged that he was the "WORK of God's hands." He knew God "desired" a certain purpose that involved a process at work within him. He understood that one day God would "call" him from the grave, and that he would "answer," thus fulfilling his purpose.

This is important knowledge that could only be revealed by God. Job could not otherwise have known it.

God is at work in those He has called. He is fashioning, molding, and building within them holy, righteous character—His very character. Notice: "But now, O LORD, You are our Father; we are the CLAY, and You our POTTER; and we all are the WORK OF YOUR HAND" (Isa. 64:8).

Tragically, many will not allow God to work with them. They fight His PURPOSE. They think they know better than the God who made them. Many refuse to be told what to do and be clay in God's hands. This was Adam's problem.

Isaiah also wrote, "Woe unto him that strives with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to *Him that fashions* it, What make You? Or Your WORK, He [God] has no hands?" (45:9).

Most people have absolutely no idea that God actively works within human beings He has called—or *what* He is doing when He does. Again, this is spiritually *revealed* knowledge, unattainable to all whom God has *not* called to understand His truth (John 6:44, 65; 17:17).

God is now actively working in the minds of only those *few* who have His Holy Spirit within them (Acts 2:38). Humans are not born with God's character. And God cannot instantly infuse them with it by divine fiat. Character must be developed.

The real Christian increases in understanding and "grow[s] in grace, and knowledge" (II Pet. 3:18). He endures a lifetime of overcoming, because he is in training for a supreme purpose. Those called understand that "...he that shall ENDURE unto the *end*, the same shall be *SAVED*" (Matt. 24:13). (Read our free article "You Can Overcome and Prevent Sin" to understand this process.)

Bible study and earnest prayer are part of the Christian's daily schedule. The one called has found the "pearl of great price" and is determined to build

the SPIRITUAL CHARACTER and NATURE of God. While none of this will earn him salvation, it is the *substance* of his character that determines his reward.

Paul understood how God works in Christians. He recognized that salvation (Rom. 6:23), and even faith to receive it, are free gifts. They cannot be earned. But this does not mean God is not actively working (requiring good works) in human beings, as He REPRODUCES HIMSELF.

Consider: “For by *grace* are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the *gift* of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. *FOR WE ARE HIS WORKMANSHIP*, created in Christ Jesus *unto* GOOD WORKS, which God has before ordained that we should WALK IN THEM” (Eph. 2:8-10).

Did you catch the phrase Paul used—“we are *His* workmanship”? What could be plainer? God has a Purpose at work within each person!

The verse continued by saying that Christians must “walk” in “good works.” The false notion of “just believing in Jesus” thwarts God’s Supreme Purpose of fashioning people through careful WORKMANSHIP, like a potter with clay.

Salvation, though of “grace...through faith,” involves good works. This means that salvation is a process and not something that happens immediately upon “giving your heart to Jesus.”

Notice what else Paul wrote about this process taking place within those God calls: “And be *renewed* in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the NEW MAN, which after God is *created in righteousness and true holiness*” (Eph. 4:23-24). II Corinthians 5:17 puts it this way: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a *new creature*...”

Those whom God is working with are literally a *NEW CREATION!*

The one who serves God is being transformed in his mind. He yields his own will and seeks to replace it with God’s will in all matters. He seeks to please God—not *self!*

Born to Build Character

Each person that God calls is presented with the same choice that Adam and Eve faced—yielding to God and *His* government or yielding to Satan and *his* nature.

God is a Father. He has one Spirit-composed Son, but will later have many *more* sons (Rom. 8:19). He is reproducing Himself by developing His character in yielded, conquered, Spirit-begotten human beings. As human fathers beget their children *physically*, God begets His children *spiritually*.

Just as little children grow up to look like their physical parents, so also do God’s children slowly take on the spiritual likeness of their Parent, in holy, righteous character—“divine nature” (II Pet. 1:4). 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, holy, SPIRITUAL CHARACTER—His DIVINE NATURE!

Character is understanding—knowing—right from wrong *and doing what is right instead of what is wrong!* God reveals what is right, but it is through the power of free moral agency, deciding to DO what is right, that righteous character is built.

Character is consciously *choosing* the right way, against resistance. It is not the easy way. It is swimming against the current, rather than drifting lazily in the direction it is flowing. It is building love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (self-control), wisdom, knowledge, understanding and humility. This takes time, because character is built through *experience*.

Animals develop none of these traits.

God has perfect character in all respects. He *is* love. Remember, love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:10; I John 5:3), which requires yielding to God. It is outgoing, outflowing concern for others, putting them first—ahead of self-interests.

Satan's nature is selfish, incoming and concerned only with what is best for self and how to get more for self. This is the attitude he injected into Adam and Eve when they ate of the forbidden fruit.

Are you seeing that, while God made man in the form and shape, physically, of Himself, it does not end there? You were created to become like God—to build perfect, holy, righteous character. God is *reproducing Himself* in human beings. Just as you are the child of parents, and possibly have children of your own, *God is your Parent*. Again, as you physically look like your parents, and your children resemble you, God wants you to look like Him—in *spiritual character!* In this life, God begins to spiritually re-form and re-shape those He calls. His Purpose is to build within them His nature.

So then, God is reproducing Himself in those 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 exist!* But there is more to understand.

God has allotted 7,000 years—seven *millennial days*—to work out the first several phases of His Plan “here below.” We are nearing the end of the sixth day (6,000 years) allotted to man under Satan. God's government will soon be established, bringing His perfect spiritual law to all nations of Earth. Satan will be removed (Lev. 16:10, 21-22) and no longer able to sway this world to evil and rebellion against God's revealed knowledge.

A few will reject God, refusing to obey Him. They will trust in their human minds and reject the missing dimension of God's Spirit, which would have led them to eternal life. They will reject building righteousness in their life and choose to remain *incomplete—unfinished* in purpose and character.

But Whose Righteousness?

It is supremely important—absolutely vital!—to understand that Christians only grow through being connected to Christ.

The Bible often speaks of “Christ in us” (Gal. 2:20; 4:19; Col. 1:27; Eph. 3:17; II Cor. 13:5). *We* do not do the character-building works. Jesus Christ at work in us does them. Understand. The Father guides this process as each person remains in contact with Him through the Spirit of Christ (and God) in him.

Keep this clear. It is not anything that *you* do, of and by yourself, which produces works of righteousness. Romans 10 warns of those who do not understand God’s role in building character, good works and righteousness: “For they being *ignorant* of *GOD’s* righteousness, and going about to establish their *OWN* righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God” (vs. 3).

It is a complete waste of effort to build your *own* character, your *own* works of righteousness. They gain you nothing with God. All spiritual growth comes from Him! But you must do *your part* in yielding to God.

Paul wrote, “For we are laborers *together* with God: you are *GOD’S* HUSBANDRY, you are *GOD’S* BUILDING” (I Cor. 3:9). This is profound understanding. God is *building* a Family. He is a Husbandman. True Christians are the *product* of His “husbandry”—His “workmanship.”

GOD, not any man, is building His Church. Christ said, in Matthew 16:18, “I will build My Church.” No wonder Paul wrote, “*you* are God’s *building*.” Yes, God is building something special within those He calls, just as He is building His Church overall.

Of course, every stable building has a proper foundation. It helps it remain solid. In I Corinthians 3:11, Paul adds, “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which *is Jesus Christ*.” Your life must always be built on the stable, solid foundation of CHRIST—and Him at work in you!

You Must Be “Born Again”

Most professing Christians believe that they are “born again” in *this* life. Invariably, they believe this follows on the heels of “receiving Jesus.” This is not what the Bible teaches.

Paul stated that “...*flesh and blood cannot INHERIT the kingdom of God*; neither does corruption *INHERIT* incorruption. Behold, I show you a *mystery*” (I Cor. 15:50-51). This knowledge *is* certainly a mystery to most.

A series of verses in John 3 is commonly misunderstood by people who believe that they can be “born again” in this life and “see” God’s Kingdom, while they are still composed of flesh and blood.

In this account, Nicodemus questioned Christ, who answered, “Except a man be *born again*, he cannot *see* the kingdom of God” (vs. 3). Then, in verse 6, He added, “That which is *born* of the flesh *IS* flesh; and that which is *born* of the Spirit *IS* spirit.”

Flesh and blood cannot enter the Kingdom of God—but *spirit can!* Because Christ wanted to allow no room for misunderstanding, He likened spirit to wind. Like wind, spirit is *invisible*. It cannot be seen. Only at the resurrection

are all true Christians changed from flesh to spirit—BORN AGAIN! (Carefully read our booklets *What Does “Born Again” Mean?* and *What Is the Kingdom of God?* to understand these crucial doctrinal truths in detail.)

What You Will Look Like

Recall that God made human beings in His “image” and “likeness.” But this process will not be complete until the Resurrection, when we are no longer composed of “flesh and blood.”

God created *you* to become “like” Him in every way. Through His Spirit entering the mind of each of His newly converted children, a new spirit life is begotten. A tiny, spirit-begotten *embryo* comes into existence. Let me repeat: In the same way that little children grow to look like their physical parents, so also do God’s children gradually take on the SPIRITUAL LIKENESS of God (their Parent), in nature and character, as much as in image and form (II Pet. 1:4).

Both the Old and New Testaments make this absolutely plain! While many have a vague idea that Christians might be “sons of God,” none consider this: “Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the SONS OF GOD...Beloved, *now* are we the SONS OF GOD, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM; for we shall see Him as He is” (I John 3:1-2).

Then John adds, “Whosoever is *born of God* does not commit sin; for His seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is *born of God*” (vs. 9). We will one day have the very likeness of Christ. At that time, we will be born of God. Romans 8:16 states that we are “children” of God and heirs *with* Christ.

David understood this very point a thousand years earlier: “As for me, I will behold Your face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I AWAKE, with Your LIKENESS” (Psa. 17:15).

David and John understood that, like Job, they would “awake” at the resurrection and look exactly like God, in image, form *and character*—and be composed of spirit!

So then—let me also repeat this—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!

Paul amplifies what John and David referred to when they said that Christians will be “like Him”—and with His “likeness.” Notice: “For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; *from whence* [He is coming here] also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned LIKE UNTO HIS GLORIOUS BODY, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself” (Phil. 3:20-21).

This is mind-boggling knowledge. Nothing compares to it! But let’s make it even clearer.

The following is a direct description of Jesus Christ, as He now exists in full glory. Meditate on it, realizing that you will look—and be—*like Him*: “His head

and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a *flame of fire*; And His feet like unto *fine brass*, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two edged sword: and His countenance was as *the sun shines in his strength*” (Rev. 1:14-16).

What this astounding description reveals about your future is not my personal opinion. It is what *your Bible* reveals! This is what Paul meant when he wrote, “And as we have borne the image of the earthy, *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*” (I Cor. 15:49). While we are physically formed and shaped like God now, we shall later become Spirit, and take on the “IMAGE of the HEAVENLY.”

Grasp this. The very Spirit of God in us will allow us to awake in the resurrection. Notice Romans 8:11: “But if the *Spirit* of Him that *raised up Jesus* from the dead *dwell in you*, He that raised up Christ from the dead *shall also quicken your mortal bodies BY His Spirit* that dwells in you.” Christ was *raised* (resurrected) to return to His position alongside the Father. He had fulfilled His task of becoming the Savior.

Now, understand this point! It is the same Spirit, dwelling in us from the moment of begetting, which will raise us (all those begotten of God) to join God in His Kingdom.

Like the newly begotten baby grows in its mother’s womb, the Christian must also *grow* before he can leave the womb. Christians are to grow in this lifetime. In order to be given divine authority and power, as “joint-heirs with Christ” (Rom. 8:17) LATER, they must qualify, through building God’s holy, righteous character in their lives NOW!

Your Awesome Future

The book of Hebrews reveals God’s awesome purpose with crystal clarity. The context begins in Chapter 1. Watch the picture unfold of what your awesome future can be.

First, understand that God created angels to be “ministering spirits” to assist the “HEIRS of salvation” (vs. 14). This is their role within God’s Plan. Angels are not offered membership in the Family of God. This is why Satan (as a *fallen* angel) so hates the idea that puny, fleshly man can receive what he has never been offered nor can ever achieve.

Paul quotes from two places in the Psalms: “For unto which of the angels said He at any time, You are My Son, this day have I begotten you? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to Me a Son?” (Heb. 1:5). (Hebrews 2:5 describes the Earth under the “subjection of angels” now, but makes clear that these angels will not rule over “the world *to come*.”)

God has never said these things to any angel!

Paul then quotes from another Psalm, explaining what has always been God’s Purpose: “Your THRONE, O God, is for ever and ever: a *scepter* of righ-

teousness is the *scepter* of Your KINGDOM..." (1:8). A scepter is a rod or staff used as a symbol of *rulership* or *authority*—and in His Kingdom it is God who has all *power*.

Finally, Paul *re-frames* the same question about angels: "But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to *minister* for them who shall be HEIRS of salvation?" (1:13-14).

This sets the stage for what we must understand! Let's really comprehend the awesome future that God has prepared for all those who serve Him.

This amazing series of verses continues in chapter 2—and builds in understanding and impact. Paul quotes Psalm 8:4-6. There David asked the all-important question, "*What is man, that You are mindful of him?*" (Heb. 2:6). Since God is eternal, and sits over the entire universe and has all power under His control, no wonder David asked, and Paul repeated, this question.

The astounding answer is in the next verse: "You made him [man] *a little lower* than the angels; You crowned him with glory and honor, *and did set him over the works of Your Hands.*"

Paul further explains that God plans to give immense power and *authority* to His Sons: "You have put ALL THINGS in subjection under his feet. For in that He put ALL in subjection under him, He left NOTHING that is not put under him. But now we see *not yet* ALL THINGS put under him" (vs. 8). This has not *yet* happened—but soon will.

When God says that "all things" will be put under the feet of man, this is what He means. This will start with the entire Earth. Then the vast universe, with all of its quadrillions of stars and one trillion galaxies, will eventually be put under the authority of men who have been born into the Family of God. In fact, the Moffatt translation renders the Greek word for "all things" as "the universe."

This is staggering knowledge!—wonderful beyond description! Take time to truly grasp it. Savor what can be *your future*. It is the reason you exist—it explains why you were born!

Before continuing, consider a fascinating verse about another related aspect of salvation few understand. We have seen that Christians await a truly incredible salvation. But, the whole creation is also intensely awaiting the appearing of a time when all those new sons will be added to God's Family.

Carefully read the following: "For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; for *the creation* [all things in the known universe] was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of Him who subjected it in hope; because *the creation itself will be set free* from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the CHILDREN OF GOD. We know that the *whole creation* [everything] has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only *the creation*, but we ourselves [Christians], who have the *firstfruits* of the Spirit [the FEW now called], groan inwardly as we wait for [birth] as SONS" (Rom. 8:19-23, *RSV*).

All future “children of God”—SONS—will be liberators of a creation now in bondage. This is part of your calling. A decayed and wounded Earth, moon and stars will soon be renewed and returned to a state of beauty, harmony and tranquility under the leadership of Christ and God’s other children.

Many Sons

Now we can continue the all-important account in Hebrews 2: “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the *suffering* of death, crowned with *glory* and *honor*; that He by the grace of God *should taste death for every man*. For it became Him, for Whom are *all things*, and by Whom are *all things*, in bringing *MANY SONS UNTO GLORY*, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect *through sufferings*” (vs. 9-10).

Did you catch what was said? Do you grasp it? These verses contain the promise of a staggering future available to mankind. Those called in this age are to inherit “*all things*” and be “crowned with glory and honor” through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ—“the *Captain* of their salvation.”

These verses reveal the awesome potential planned for all Christians. Paul reveals that, when Christ returns to Jerusalem, “MANY SONS” will be brought “*unto glory*,” through the work of the “Captain of our salvation” (Heb. 2:10).

The Bible reveals a connection between sons and heirs. An heir has not yet *inherited* what is to come to him. We read, in I Corinthians 15:50, that we will “INHERIT the kingdom of God.” But those called now, in this lifetime, are HEIRS—begotten (not *yet* born) sons. Paul further explains, “And if you be Christ’s, then are you Abraham’s seed, and HEIRS according to the promise... Wherefore you are no more a servant, but a SON; and if a son, then an HEIR of God through Christ” (Gal. 3:29; 4:7).

God will share rulership over His entire creation with all of His Sons. Christ is merely the first of *many*. Notice: “For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the FIRSTBORN among MANY BRETHREN” (Rom. 8:29).

The birth of a firstborn son does not preclude the birth of additional sons (and daughters) to that same family. I have two sons and am a firstborn son with a younger brother. My father was a second born son, having an elder brother and so on. You see the point.

Continuing in Hebrews 2, notice that Christ “...is not ashamed to call them *brethren* [the other many sons—US]” (vs. 11). Truly, the begotten Christian has been called to “glory” and to be one of “many sons.” Christ’s suffering and sacrifice allow Him to be the “Captain of *their* salvation”—and potentially *yours*.

What an incredible future for those whom Jesus Christ “calls...brethren.” Notice again: “For both He that *sanctifies* [Christ] and they who are *sanctified* [begotten Christians] are all of one: for which cause He is *not ashamed to call them brethren*” (vs. 11). There will be no difference between Christ and His

younger brothers and sisters, except that He will have greater overall authority within God's Kingdom.

Christians are "sanctified" (set apart). *How?* John stated, "Sanctify them [begotten Christians] *through Your truth: YOUR WORD IS TRUTH*" (John 17:17). This booklet has taught you the TRUTH about why you exist!

The cherished traditions and fables of men, about life after death, or about anything else, have no value. The truth of the Bible is the only knowledge of permanent worth. Christians, having come out of a deceived, confused world, are set apart from the world by the TRUTH.

If Christ is "not ashamed to call them (us) brethren," then we, God's begotten sons, must not be ashamed to defend the very truth that sanctifies us—and the truth of the gospel (Phil. 1:17). We must "grow up" unto Christ (Eph. 4:13) and hold to the true doctrines of God. We must QUALIFY to stand beside Christ over "all things."

Do you see what has been described here? The Christian goal is to be born into the KINGDOM OF GOD—to become an immortal spirit being who will rule under Christ. What could be more wonderful—more GLORIOUS—to look forward to?

The Role of Suffering

Earlier, this booklet spoke about the terrible suffering, misery and insoluble problems of a world cut off from God. His mercy will soon cut this short, bringing it to an end. Man's allotted 6,000 years under Satan will soon be over, and *all* human beings will be taught why they were born.

But why has such terrible suffering been necessary—and for so long? What purpose has it played in God's Master Plan?

Much! We read that Christ, as the "Captain of our salvation," was made "PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERINGS." It is critical to understand *why* Christ was required to suffer.

Hebrews 5:8-9 explains clearly: "Though He were a Son, yet LEARNED HE OBEDIENCE by the things which *He suffered*; And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him."

What a profoundly important verse to grasp. Suffering kicks the spiritual learning mechanism into gear. When people suffer, they LEARN (Ecc. 7:14)! They gain experience—learn lessons. This is critically important to the character-building process—to fulfilling their purpose for being!

Even Christ learned through suffering. This allowed Him to "Captain" the salvation of the *many* sons that God will add to His Family.

Can you now understand *why* the world must suffer? Can you now understand that it is through difficult, painful experience that people will eventually understand life's deepest lessons?

Of course, the deepest lesson of all is men must recognize that they can achieve nothing—accomplish NOTHING—apart from God. They desper-

ately need REVEALED SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE, so that they can come into harmony with God's awesome Purpose of reproducing Himself!

Paul wrote to the Philippians that he (Paul) wanted to know Christ "...and the *fellowship of His SUFFERINGS*," so that "...by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (3:10-11). This is why he told the Ephesians, "...to make all men see what is the *fellowship of the mystery* [which involves the need to suffer in order to learn], which from the *beginning of the world* has been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ...According to the eternal PURPOSE which He PURPOSED in Christ Jesus our Lord" (3:9, 11).

God's Plan truly *is* a mystery to this world, but His PURPOSE has not changed since the *beginning of the world*.

You now understand how YOU can be a part of it!

Why You Exist!

Here is how Herbert W. Armstrong concluded his booklet *Why Were You Born?* The subheads are his:

Now Understand Why You Were Born!

"The purpose of life is that in us God is really recreating *His own kind—reproducing Himself* after *His own kind*—for we are, upon real conversion, actually *begotten* as sons (yet unborn) of God. Then through study of God's revelation in His Word, living by His every Word, constant prayer, daily experience with trials and testings, we grow spiritually more and more like God, until, at the time of the resurrection we shall be instantaneously changed from mortal into *immortal*—composed of Spirit—we shall then be *born* of God—actually born into the God FAMILY!

"For, remember, the word 'God' in Genesis 1:1, comes to us from the Hebrew word *Elohim*. *Elohim* means ONE GOD—not many gods. But that ONE GOD *is* a divine FAMILY—a KINGDOM. There is but one true Church—one Church, but many members (I Cor. 12:20).

"So it is with God.

"As an illustration, there is the mineral kingdom, the plant kingdom, the animal kingdom, the *human* kingdom, in this material world. Spiritually, there is the angel kingdom, and, high above all, the Kingdom of God. A human—flesh and blood—cannot enter into the Kingdom of God (John 3:6; I Cor. 15:50), but one *born* of God can.

The Fantastic, Incredible Potential

"Do you really grasp it? The purpose of your being alive is that finally you be born into the Kingdom of God, which is the divine FAMILY of God.

“When you fully grasp this tremendous, wonderful truth, your mind will be filled with transcendent joy and glory. It gives a new meaning to life so wonderful you’ll never comprehend the full heights of its splendor.

“It means, of course, total renunciation, denial, of those injurious things and ways which have falsely *seemed* so bright and alluring to this world.

“But your eyes will be open at last to the great deception—the scales will fall from your blinded vision—you’ll see the *meaning* of life, its great *purpose*, as you never dreamed it could be. Giving up this world’s evils, temptations and pitfalls—its snares and delusions which have glittered and then ended only in sorrow and suffering—is but emerging from gross darkness into the splendor of true light, and of happiness and joy forever!

“In the words of I Peter 1:8, you will ‘rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of GLORY!’”

The following literature expands on topics discussed in this booklet:

- A World in Captivity
- Did God Create Human Nature?
- What Does “Born Again” Mean?
- What Is the Kingdom of God?
- What Science Will Never Discover About Your Mind
- Who Is the Devil?
- “You Can Overcome *and* Prevent Sin”

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