

THE FUTURE OUTLOOK

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Age of Bad Health?

For many this is the age of bad health. Everyone should have a family doctor and dentist, however, many people consider the drugstore as being the doctor of all pains. There are too many people relying on pain killers for toothaches, aspirins for headaches and upset stomachs, and foot products for ailing feet. Many of these remedies relieve the pain, but many of them aggravate the pain.

There are too many people suffering from cancers, tumors, and rare diseases and illnesses today because of modern convenient medicines. Rather than making an appointment with a doctor or dentist, a person usually runs to his nearest drugstore and buys a bottle of pills. When the pain goes away as a result of the pills, the person is happy and thinks nothing else about it unless the pain returns. As a last resort the person visits the doctor to find out that he could have prevented his illness two or three months before if he had visited the doctor. Many doctors tell their patients that it is cheaper and more pleasant to prevent than to treat and cure.

Drugs used in the hands of inexperienced people such as LSD and marijuana often shorten the lives of many, most of them teenagers because of overdoses.

However, drugs are not the only reasons for bad health. Consumer products such as cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products are known to cause heart attacks, lung cancer, throat disorders, and other serious illnesses. Alcohol, another consumer product is known to affect the liver, kidneys, bladder and has caused the loss of many lives in car accidents.

Even overeating is dangerous to the health. Overeating is a major cause of heart attacks because food usually turns into fat which eventually surrounds the heart, overworks it, and smothers it.

Water and air pollution as a result of big industries in large cities distribute chemicals which are harmful to the body especially the eyes and nose. Bad weather, such as too much sun, usually results in heat exhaustion or sun strokes. Exposure in cold weather can cause pneumonia, flu, or tuberculosis.

Believe it or not, overworking can result in bad health. Many backaches and spinal disorders have developed from long and hard hours.

There are over a thousand illnesses and diseases; there are over a thousand reasons for them, and yet there are over a million doctors to prevent, treat, and cure them if possible.

Therefore, I say to you, as you walk or drive along the streets of the city and observe signs, let them refer to your health as well as to your driving.

CAUTION—handle each pain with care.

YIELD—to the thought that each pain may be serious.

GO—to the doctor of your choice.

STOP, LOOK, LISTEN—to what your doctor or dentist has to say, and 25 to 55 more years of good health may be added to your life.

SING WHILE YOU DRIVE

45 miles per hour—sing, "Highways are happy ways."

55 miles per hour—sing, "I'm but a stranger here, Heaven is my home."

65 miles per hour—sing, "Nearer my God to Thee."

75 miles per hour—sing, "When the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there."

85 miles per hour—sing, "Lord, I'm coming home."

DRIVE SANELY

This Week's Sunday School Lesson

THE PROBLEM OF SIN

Beginning Where You Are

To get a better look at the rebellion that took place in the Garden of Eden, suppose we let Harvey Cox challenge us with a nontraditional view of the Genesis 3 story. His ideas may help us see more clearly the significance of original sin in our time. Cox writes:

"Let us take a second look at that incident in the garden, the first human sin. If we read that old story carefully, we will see it is not just a sin of pride. It is a sin of acedia (sloth). Eve shares with Adam the assignment of exercising mastery over all the creatures of the field. Her 'original' misdeed was not eating the forbidden fruit at all. Before she reached for the fruit she had already surrendered her position of power and responsibility over one of the animals, the serpent, and let it tell her what to do. Thus self-doubt, hesitant anxiety, and dependency actually preceded that fatal nibble that has fascinated us for so long and made us fuse sin with pride. Adam and Eve are the biblical Everyman and Everywoman. Their sin is our sin. It is not promethean. We do not defy the gods by courageously stealing the fire from the celestial hearth, thus bringing benefit to man. Nothing so heroic. We fritter away our destiny by letting some snake tell us what to do."

This is a contemporary and provocative interpretation of the Garden of Eden story. In Harvey Cox's view, man has stooped to the level of the rest of creation by surrendering the responsibility God gave him. He has lost his special relationship with God.

Many other theologians see the incident in the Garden of Eden as pure rebellion. Man knew what God expected of him but followed his own desires instead. Man rebelled against the ultimate authority of God.

B. D. Napier, in his interpretation of Genesis 2 and 3, uses the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil as a symbol both of God's authority and of man's defilement of the delight and mystery of sex in defiance of God. Napier highlights the perverse defiance of man toward higher, external authority; his rebellion against God, the ultimate authority. It is sweeter to die a protest death than to submit to God's rule and dominion. How man yearns for freedom — freedom even from God!

Our present times document the willingness of many to die rather than to submit to any authority other than their self-will or conscience. In the name of freedom and a new age, all kinds of establishment and authority are being challenged. The criticism may be healthy and needed or diseased and deadly. Perhaps we are observing through some sharp situations what has long been true: A majority of mankind would rather die than submit to God and his will.

Searching The Scriptures

The Scripture for this lesson is Genesis 3; Luke 15:11-32; Ro-

mans 1 through 3. Selected verses are printed below.

Genesis 3:1-15

1 Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?'" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" 4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.

8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 And he said, "I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." 11 He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12 The man said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." 13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I ate." 14 The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above all wild animals; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

Memory Selection: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners. —Matthew 9:13

Exploring The Questions

If creation was made by God, and God is good, then his handiwork must be good. But what has gone wrong? What has happened? There is obviously much that is false in our world, much that is displeasing in the universe. Man, made in the likeness of the divine, is often guilty of evil. Is this an expression or a denial of the divine image? Is ours really a "good" world?

I have often thought that if I were God, I would have made things differently. It doesn't take much imagination to think of things I would change. For example, so much pain and suffering seem to be needless. Why should it be part of life?

Would I have made a world

atmosphere that can get so out of balance that it must suffer electrical shock and thunder in order to be calmed again? If I were God, would I allow one organism to feed itself by devouring another — one creature to consume the existence of another? When I am bereaved of a child through leukemia, can I easily bless the Lord and believe that all is well in his creation?

Why is the process of growth so slow and difficult when life is neither lengthy nor sure? Simply growing teeth may, for a baby and his parents, mean weeks of pain and anguish; and the final result may be just another dental problem.

Why did God plant a tree of the knowledge of good and evil in Eden and then forbid man to eat from it? Is it necessary that man know good and evil to live in this world? Could not the Lord God have made a world free from the possibility as well as the actuality of evil?

None of these questions can be completely answered. They, and others like them, are age-old queries. Job was not the first man, nor will he be the last, to question the power of God in the face of sin and evil — or to question the goodness and justice of God if he is able to create and control, yet permits evil and suffering. But we can find help in these problems.

Finding Help

With Your Questions

In the face of the mysteries and uncertainties surrounding life and death processes, and confronted with both good and evil in this world, we mortals are able to stand in the Christian faith. We believe that the almighty Creator is also the able Redeemer and that he will act justly, compassionately, and wisely for the salvation and renewal of his creatures.

While the story of Genesis 3 raises more questions than it answers, it at least provides a significant perspective on good and evil in the world.

What Do We Mean by "Good"?

The original goodness of the universe God has made cannot be understood only as moral goodness. Moral goodness or evil describes the way mankind lives in relation to the creation and to the Creator after His work has established all things. The fact of the existence of the universe — its "givenness" — cannot be subjected to moral categories and judgments. The total creation, as the primary fact of existence, is "good" itself, without reference to morality. Simply to exist is good.

When we say, "It is good to see the sun shine," we are not making a moral judgment but expressing a fact of existence. Sunshine is neither moral nor immoral.

Composing music, creating a painting, producing a poem, or making a telephone is good. However, the actual making of these things or the products in themselves cannot be subjected to moral categories.

In the same way, we recognize that sexual activity, the means by which human conception occurs and new life is born, is good. It is also good

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