

ANSWERS TO LIFE'S MOST
BASIC QUESTIONS:
What Is Wrong With The World?
Scripture: Genesis 3:1-7
Nov. 28, 10
Message 3

INTRO: Who Am I? I am a personal being created in the image of God. Why Am I here? I am here to bring glory to God. Our third question is: What is wrong with the world? We might say it like this: What is wrong with me? We said in the last message that our purpose is to bring glory to God, but we want that glory for ourselves. Why are we like that?

The teaching of evolution has no answer for that. It has no answers for other very basic questions either. First of all, where did matter come from? Let us say they are right that everything came about in very slow stages, still, where did matter come from? Or let us say they are right, it did not come about in slow stages, but by a big bang. Still, where did matter come from? Such a basic question they cannot answer. They can't even make up a good answer. But there is another very basic question evolution cannot answer. It is this: What is wrong with the world? Why are we not always bending more and more towards being good if we are evolving? As a matter of fact, evolutionists do not even know what good is, so they philosophize.

Well, we are Christians. We know what is wrong with the world. But could we go a little further and answer this question: What is wrong with the Church? Why are Christians bent on wrong as well? Those of you who have studied the doctrine of man with me will recognize quite a bit of these messages. Do you know why? Because these questions are all related to the doctrine of man.

So, let us consider this question: What is wrong with the world?

III. WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD?

A. The Lost

We have referred to creation in these messages already. When God had finished creating everything, including the crowning act of creation, that of creating man; He looked at it all and behold, it was

all very good. There is man. And he is very good too! But something happened! Something very tragic. We said in the last message that God had created the angels. No doubt God created them for His glory too. And then one day, sin found its way into the universe through Lucifer, that anointed Cherub that covered. Pride found its way into his heart and he embraced it and sin was born. That is the danger of free moral agents, the only kind of beings that have the potential to glorify God.

And as I speculated, then God created man in order that through the free will of man He would, in the end, be able to destroy Satan and all other evil persons while those that followed God would be left as free moral agents. And when God has completed His work with man, then for all eternity, though the devil and all his followers have been cast into hell, the question of being a free moral agent will never be questioned by man or angels.

So God created the universe and then man, and when it was all done He saw that it was very good, until one day... You see, what evolution cannot even attempt to answer is answered for us in Genesis 3:1-8 (read). Now God has warned Adam that the day he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he would die (Gen. 2:16-17).

Adam was the Son of God. He was created good. But because he disobeyed the command of God, his nature was tarnished with what we call a 'sin nature'. Adam and all his posterity, from that time forward have been bent towards sin. He is still in the image of God, a person. But he is now a person bent on sinning. This is what is wrong with the world! Evolution cannot tell you such facts.

Recently we were visiting with some folk from the church and they pointed Genesis 5 out to my wife and I. Look at 5:1 (read). Here we have Adam, in the likeness of God. Then Adam begot a son (verse 3 read). Notice that he begot him in his own likeness, after his image. From there on we do not need to be told whose image and likeness each one born is in. So we read in Romans 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so

death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." That is what is wrong with the world.

This sin nature constantly pulls man down. The world, the flesh, and the devil wreak havoc on man through the Adamic nature passed on to his posterity. And so Romans 1 shows us mankind ever spiraling downward until God gives them over to a reprobate mind, a state we have entered in Canada and the USA. That is what is wrong with the world. You cannot name a sin that is not being repeated over and over and over again in our country.

Here we are, beings of such a high capacity, that of our free will we can choose to bring glory to God Almighty! But we are corrupted. Our nature is tarnished! We ever gravitate towards sin! That is what is wrong with the world!

[Mel Gibson, who produced the Hollywood show, 'The Passion', a highly successful man business wise has recently demonstrated the Adamic nature. It appears he caused some domestic violence when he hit his lady partner. The Jerusalem Post reported that he later apologized in an e-mail. Then in an e-mail sent from his i-phone on March 2 he wrote, "I really am losing my grip. I desperately need a solution. Sorry it has to affect you. I can't stand anything any more... I'm stuck." And then again, "I try to be ok but it overpowers me & I'm something I don't want to be. It's a primal scream thing. The pain is too great & everywhere I turn is making it heavier. Oh to have peace! Oh to have joy. Oh to be able to provide it for another. I'm a 'beep' failure." Well, we can conclude that it is not Mel Gibson alone that is a failure. According to the Bible, it is mankind that gravitates towards sin. We are all as an unclean thing; that is what is wrong with the world.

Now let me take one moment to give you some idea of how bad sin is. I have given this illustration before but it still holds true. Let us say while you are in Church today somebody burns down your house. When you come home, the last embers are smoldering away. It was your well-to-do neighbor's boy who torched your house. Well, when this neighbor finds out his boy did it, he offers to rebuild your house and refurnish it

however you wish. It will be available to move into in just a few months and for the inconvenience he will give you an extra \$100,000.00. You are allowed to supply your own blueprint, and he will build it as you wish, and he will deal with his son.

Would you be happy with that? I would be. But let us say you are away one night and this boy comes while your family is asleep and they are all burned in the house. What price would satisfy you now? And the answer I have always received to that question is: there is no price. Nothing could ever repay that loss. That is how bad sin is before God.

And now, here we are, beings created by God for His glory, and we sin and are bent on sinning. Now what I want to do for the next little while is something you are not going to enjoy. I don't either. I want to spell out some sins for us. This will show us what is wrong with the world, a place we have all had our being.

I want to just give a few sins, such as are given in Romans 1:29-30; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-20.

Then there is covetousness. It comes from the word, *pleonexia*. *Pleon* means *more* and *echo* means *to have*. It is the desire to have more. It always wants more. It is not satisfied and wants more. We Mennonites are loaded with this sin, but we have had a way of making it look acceptable, even good. But it is a horrible, wicked sin!

Then there is malice. Webster's original says, it is extreme enmity of heart, or a hatred towards others with a disposition to injure others from a mere personal gratification. Malice rejoices to hear things that have gone wrong for others.

Then there is envy. Vine's dictionary says it is that feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others. So you sit in the coffee shop and hear how another person in the same business as you has gotten a really good contract or deal and it produces great displeasure within.

Then there is fornication. This is the physical unfaithfulness of unmarried people. I want to mention specifically here, pornography. You see, the original word translated fornication is *pornia*, from which we get the word pornography. This is a very high sin. It is horrible. It promises gratification and fulfillment and brings condemnation and judgment. It has never satisfied in 6000 years of man's history and never will. Still millions are deceived by it. It is horribly far off the mark of God's perfect will and character. If you are caught in its web, you must get help.

Some translate the word *pornia* as marital unfaithfulness in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 and thus allow divorce on this ground. However, there does not seem to be any good reason to do this except to find room for divorce.

Then there is the word *debates* or being contentions. This is a sin that is readily present among Christians. Then there is deceit. Webster says it is leading a person to believe what is not true or to believe something to be true that is not. It is any practice that misleads another, or causes him to believe what is not true.

Another sin is to malign. Vines says the word translated to malign is from *kakos* meaning bad and *ethos* meaning manner thus bad manners or character. That which is like a rotten apple. Whatever it touches becomes bad as well. You see many young people like this. If you have godly concerns you do not want your young people around them because they will become like this too.

Another sin is translated, 'whisperers'. It is to pass off injurious information about others behind their back, so it is called 'to whisper.' Along with that is a closely related word express as backbiters. Vine says this word is closely related to the word 'whisperers.' The difference is that the whisperer says bad things or things damaging to the character of another without the one slandered hearing it. The backbiter does it in front of the other person in a hidden sort of way, that is clandestinely.

Then there is the sin called 'despiteful'. It is somebody who seems to be a big shot and he runs down others. He abuses others and is a violent person.

Then there is the sin of pride. Several words are translated pride from the Greek NT. The one word, *huperephainis*, comes from *huper*, above and *phainomai*, to appear. It is somebody who makes him or herself to appear above others. A word closely related is *tuphoo*. It means to raise a smoke or wrap in a mist. When you talk to people like this they give an answer to the most difficult of subjects in a such a cloudy way that you can't see through it. It sounds really big, but it is all a smoke screen. Another word translated pride is *alazonia*. This is a boaster, a braggart. This person always has something bigger or better to tell. This person puts on a show about himself.

Then there is the word disobedient. These are people who will not be convinced by argument that they are wrong though the evidence is there. Another sin is translated, 'without understanding.' These are people who do not discern between good and bad. It is not that they cannot. It is that they will not. You see, these are not weaknesses we are talking about, but SIN!

Then there is the matter of covenant breakers. These are people who do not keep agreements. Probably the covenant breakers we least think of in this is those who divorce. Those who divorce are covenant breakers. When you make an agreement, and don't keep it, you are a covenant breaker. It is a bad sin.

There is a closely related word to covenant breakers that is translated, 'implacable'. This word then is a synonym to covenant breakers. Bishop Trench says the difference is that one breaks the covenant but the other is not true to the covenant. This person is treacherous and must be watched.

Then there is the sin of being unmerciful. I define mercy as that feeling of sympathy that arises when one sees the pitiful condition of another. An unmerciful person can see another human in need but

in his bowels there is no response or a harsh response. This is contrary to God and human nature in general.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 includes these words. First, idolaters. This is anyone who falls under the influence of anything that robs God of that which He deserves. Idolaters are not only those who fall down before some statue and worship. Anything that robs the place of God in my life becomes an idol. It can be a tractor or a farm or money or a car or a house, or a business or husband or wife or children. When it consumes our time and energy, it has become an idol, and we have become idolaters.

Then there are thieves. We have recently had a message on the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." Stealing is taking for ourselves what belongs to another. There are many ways to steal. In our day of duplicating music and software for computers one can very easily steal.

Then there is the sin of uncleanness. This may speak of physical or moral uncleanness. Sensuality and evil doctrine are often associated with this word according to Vine. We speak of 'unclean' jokes. Here is the word. Christians are very susceptible to this vice. Do you want to glorify God? The next time you hear a dirty joke, don't laugh or even better, reprove.

Then there is lasciviousness. Vine's Dictionary says it denotes excess, licentiousness, absence of restraint, indecency, wantonness. Shameless conduct. Let me give a warning here on certain doctrines being taught in the church today. There is a doctrine that says that if you have ever truly been saved, no matter how you live after that, you will go to heaven. Once you are God's child, you can never unbecome God's child. Jude 1:4 gives this warning, "For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who *turn the grace of our God into lewdness* and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." The word translated 'lewdness' in the NKJV is this word lasciviousness. The wonderful grace of God that

delivers from sin or gives power over sin, is turned into license to sin.

Well, in these three passages there are yet the words, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations. There is also the verb *zeelow*, which means to burn with jealousy. Another word translated to be jealous is *phthonos*. This word, according to Vine speaks of, "...that feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others." This is a very prevalent sin.

One sin that probably should be preached on much more is anger. There are three Greek words for anger. *Thumos* is an anger that flares up easily and subsides quickly, that is it does not go on for days. Here is a sin many of us as men are greatly troubled by. Listen dads, do you deal with your children in anger? This is not weaknesses. It is a sin. These actions we call sin miss the mark of the perfect will and character of God. Can you ever overcome anger? Yes! The cross of Christ will bring anger out of a person if that person is but willing to confess and forsake every time it takes place.

In these three passages yet are mentioned strife, seditions, heresies, drunkenness, and revelings. Let me mention drunkenness briefly. Well, there are many more sins we have not looked at and there broad categories of sin we have not looked at such as transgression, iniquity, wickedness, ungodliness, disobedience, lawlessness and unrighteousness. All these are sin. So, let us conclude this sordid list by saying that anything contrary to the nature of God is sin, though it may not be listed in the Bible. The good new, the Gospel is that one can be forgiven all past sins by confessing and forsaking them in Christ and one can gain victory over every kind of sin or vice by confession and repentance.

And because we have a sin nature, we are sinners and as sinners we manifest all kinds of different sins. There is one solution, and that is death, the death of the cross. And to experience that, two things are required. One, repentance and two, faith in the finished work of Christ. Without these there is no forgiveness.

What is wrong with the world? The sin nature, working through the sinner, brings forth all kinds of sin. But there is another problem, and it is not the problem with the world, but a problem in the world.

B. The Saved

So, that is what is wrong with the world, but let us ask, ourselves as Christians, "What is wrong with me?" I don't suppose there is a person of any age that hasn't asked this question. I am almost 60 years old and a Christian and I still ask that. There is something wrong with me. I long for the day when this will be finally fixed. In the meantime I, as a Christian still ask, "What is wrong with me?" I don't want to do wrong, well, sometimes I even want to, and do." So Paul writes, "...oh wretched man that I am".

Not too many of us have been Christians for long before we identify with Romans 7. Paul, as a Christian writes in 7:15, "For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do." Now listen to him in 7:19-24, "For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" Do you identify?

There is a preacher that I have greatly appreciated. He had an IQ that would stagger most people. I want to quote to you what he has to say for himself. He writes, "I am not a good man. I am a - well you'd have to use slang to describe me. By nature I came that way and when I saw it in my boys I didn't blame them. I paddled them, but I didn't blame them. I can't go to God and say, 'God, I didn't do what that fellow did. I've done everything either actuality or in thought that could have been done. The devil himself couldn't have thought of anything that I

haven't thought of in my life-time.'" Do you know who said that? It was A.W. Tozer, in his book, "The Attributes of God."

I like Tozer. He helps me. Many preachers preach well enough but they would never admit something like that. But it helps me. I am a preacher too. I am not a good man either. God is still working on me. What is wrong with me? Why am I like that? I ask, why are even people like A.W. Tozer like that? These people with such great gifts, such high IQ's have an ability to out sin others. Why are people like that?

It is this: we have a sin nature. Even Christians have a sin nature. It is revealed through them in what the NT calls the flesh. Look at Romans 7:14-15 (read). The word translated 'carnal' means 'fleshly'. Then look at verse 18 (read). Now go to 1 Corinthians 3 (read 1-4). Again, the word 'carnal' is 'fleshly'.

I read preachers who say there is no such a thing as a carnal or fleshly Christian. But Paul, writing to the Corinthians, calls them saints, and yet calls them carnal! You see, there is more wrong with this world than just the unbeliever. There is a major problem with the believer as well. Carnality, this is what is wrong with the Church.

And what is the answer to the problem with the Church? Here it is: It is the cross of Christ! I, the self, must be crucified. We are a sinful lot. But the Bible does not leave us without hope, Paul says in Romans 8:24-25, "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God - through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

CONCL: What is wrong with the world? Sin! Sinners! Sinners with a sin nature! This is a dark place to end a message, but it is the answer to our question. And the Bible, not evolution answers this problem for us.

When Paul wanted to show what is wrong with the world, he pulled the Scriptures together into a doctrinal format in Romans 3:10-18 like this: "What then? Are we better *than* they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who

understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one. Their throat *is* an open tomb; with their tongues they have practiced 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; and the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes." And then he says, "For there is no difference (i.e., between Jew and Gentile); for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

That is what is wrong with the world.