


Why
Were You
BORN?



by
HERBERT W.
ARMSTRONG

Copyright © 1957 by Ambassador College
All Rights Reserved

NO LONGER do news commentators, top military men and scientists say "if there is a World War III"—now they speak only of *when*, and *how* it shall come!

Leading world scientists say frankly they are frightened!

With atomic bombs by thousands—with other newly-invented means of mass death and destruction said to be even more horrible than the hydrogen bomb—imagination-defying weapons—an *appalling* picture is presented which *ought* to make everyone SHUDDER!

No one thinks, now, that MEN swayed by passions and partisanship and greed, and with competitive national aspirations and interests to work for and protect, will be able to prevent the world-cataclysm which experts tell us may blast human life from the earth!

Gloomy picture? Yes, but it's REAL! It's the picture *we have to FACE!*

This is the world we shall have to LIVE IN—or DIE IN!

WHY Does God Permit Such Horror?

Is it any wonder so many people—if and when they *do* begin to think of the Almighty in this connection—ask: "WHY, if there *is* a God, does He *permit* war? WHY does God allow such unadulterated HELL on earth among men?"

"Surely," they reason, "if God is *good*—if He is LOVE—He would not *wish* people who are innocent victims to endure this indescribable anguish and if He is ALMIGHTY, then He certainly *could* prevent it! *Why doesn't He?*"

Of course, that's a slightly unbalanced conception of God. It emphasizes His love, His tender mercy and compassion, and His power—but it overlooks God's *righteousness* and His *wisdom*; and it fails utterly of understanding God's great PURPOSE in putting human beings upon this earth!

But people have a right to the true answer!

War, of course, is not *caused* by the Almighty. It is caused by ambition and greed—by the wrong thinking and acting of men, swayed by human

passions. It is the result of *evil*—of SIN. Still,—*God permits it!*

The PURPOSE Being Worked Out

Former Prime Minister Winston Churchill actually gave the answer when he said, regarding the war, before the American Congress: "There is a PURPOSE being worked out here below." Of course, he implied a HIGHER POWER, above, doing the working out! World War II was really a part of the working out of that PURPOSE!

But man, it seems, fails to understand that PURPOSE!

Naturally, it has to do with the Plan of Redemption. But even that Plan is not very widely understood today, nor rightly preached!

WHY, let us ask, *and understand*, should man need any redemption?

The popular teaching is that one is "saved" *at the time* he accepts Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. Well, WHY is it, then, that God does not then and there *remove* him from this unhappy world of SUFFERING? Why not take him *immediately* to his happy reward? WHY, after he is "saved," must he *live on* in this life of suffering?

WHY is it, that once a man is converted, "*many* are the afflictions of the *righteous*;"—"all who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer persecution*;"—"it is *through much tribulation* we must enter the Kingdom of God." WHY?

WHY, 1st) does God permit *the world* to suffer so much; and 2nd) WHY must even converted *Christians* go on suffering?

WHY is there such a thing as sin? We hear it came from the "*original fall of man*." Well, WHY the *fall*? WHY didn't God prevent that?

All these questions we shall answer. Let us come to UNDERSTAND these basic and most important questions of all life.

WHY did God create the human family? WHY did He make us *different* from and superior to all other creatures?

God is Supreme CREATOR—not supreme Destroyer!

Satan is the Destroyer!

What is God's work? For He does work—Jesus, you know, said, "My Father works, and I work." His work is that of CREATOR! God, then, *creates!*

Now look about you. Look at all the species

and forms of living creatures. How many of those whom God created and started living are able to think, plan, devise, and then bring about, by making or creating, that which was thought out, designed and planned?

What You Can Do

Of course none but God Himself can *create* in the strictest sense of bringing into existence that which did not even exist. But changing existing materials, and putting them together in a new and different way—in other words, MAKING things—is akin to actual creating and often called that.

How many creatures can think, plan, design, and then execute the idea into MAKING things? By instinct beavers build dams. But all these dams follow the same pattern. The beaver cannot think out some new, different pattern and make some new and different thing. Ants may form ant hills; gophers, snakes and rodents dig holes; birds build nests. But they always follow the same pattern. There is no originality, no thinking and designing of a new idea, no new construction.

Man can design and build great dams such as Grand Coulee. Man can build the great tunnels under mountains or the Hudson River. Man can invent and build automobiles, airplanes, battleships, submarines. Man *alone*, of all God created, is capable of approaching real CREATIVE powers.

But God has limited man's powers!

Why?

Why Man's Powers Are Checked

It is only now, mid-twentieth century A.D., that man at last learns a little about the use of atomic energy. Now man is experimenting, striving desperately to develop jets, rockets, and means of flight and transportation which might take him to other planets.

Why has man been restrained?

Are we blind? Look at what man has actually *done* with the things God has allowed him to devise and to make. Thousands of years ago he learned to deal in iron, steel, and other metals. He made implements, constructed buildings—but he also made swords and spears and went out to DESTROY!

Man learned how to *organize* his kind into cities, groups, nations. But to what use did he *put* the organization he controlled? He organized the

able-bodied of his men into armies, and set out to conquer, to destroy, and to acquire by TAKING, not by producing and creating. And, even in those peaceful cities, states and nations not at war, those men who run the government seek greedily to fatten their own pockets at the expense of their fellows, and the smell of graft and illegal influence ascends to high heaven!

Man invents and makes ships that carry him over seas, then he arms them and turns them into weapons of conquest. He makes tractors, trucks and automobiles, then converts them into armored tanks. He learns how to build airplanes and fly swifter than any bird, then bends all his scientific, inventive, and creative genius into producing mightier carriers for atomic bombs, swifter jet and rocket fighters. He discovers that the powers God gave him allow him to produce explosives, so that he could move mountains if necessary—but soon he is exerting the most frenzied energies of his nation, at cost of billions of dollars, endeavoring to develop atomic bombs faster than his enemy, and now producing the hydrogen bomb, a thousand times more destructive!

A philosophic country doctor once said to me it was his belief that everything man's hand ever touched of God's creation man had polluted, befouled, besmirched, and ruined. That statement seemed radical then. But I have been observing, since he said that over twenty years ago, and I am almost persuaded he was right.

For example: GOD gave man the wonderful grain of wheat—the perfect food, containing every element needed to nourish man, and in perfectly-balanced alkaline-acid proportion; and now, in his greed for million-dollar profits, the big flour miller grinds up this precious wheat, takes it apart, ruins it, and sells it to us in a form that produces rheumatism, colds and fevers, kidney diseases, impaired digestion, heart troubles, and ills too numerous to list here. The sugar refiners do the same to sugar. Today it is almost impossible to obtain any food, unless a farmer raises his own, which has not been rendered partly or wholly foodless, often poisoned, by man. Thus man DESTROYS health, which is only another way of saying he destroys *man!*

I need not go further. Just look about you, and observe. If you are a thinker, you'll see how man, endowed with a portion of God's actual CREATIVE POWER—and the *only* being which has it—turns this power of devising, planning, inventing, and producing into DESTRUCTIVE channels!

Science Running Amuck!

Look at the great factories of American industry, of which we boast. Here hums and roars the CREATIVE activity of mankind! Man has made some slight approach toward actual GOD-powers, and GOD-activity, in his tremendous industrial development.

But there is one deadly fault with all this.

Man has learned to exercise scientific, inventive and mechanical powers *in excess of his development in ability to direct the product of his efforts into right and constructive channels!*

And in that he is *defeating* the very purpose of his being!

WHY did God place mankind here? WHY did God endow humanity with a slight proportion of God's own creative power? WHY, in a word, *were you born?* And WHY were we born *mortal?*

WHY has God allowed mankind to turn his near God-like mind and powers into perversion and destruction? WHY has God allowed mankind to bring on himself all this sorrow, unhappiness and suffering?

Many attribute all this rebellion—this SIN—to what they call the "original fall of man."

A Repairing of the Damage?

Let's dare frankly to examine the common teaching about that "Fall."

The common teaching, as believed and taught by most denominations, is that God created man *perfect and complete*, in the very image of God—and placed him in the beautiful Garden of Eden. It is believed that GOD'S CREATION WAS FINISHED, COMPLETED! Everything was perfect.

And God was able to do all this, and to start our first parents out all right, when lo and behold! Satan succeeded in invading that peaceful and blessed retreat. He successfully *overthrew* the man. Satan succeeded in thwarting God's will—upsetting God's Plan for a happy and peaceful life for his perfected humans—alienating the man and woman from God—introducing the dreadful consequences of SIN—marring, wrecking, God's creative handiwork!

And now, according to this popular view, God's plan for a happy life and beautiful environment for His created humans was all disarranged! Now God had to commence all over again, and formulate a *new Plan*—a PLAN *to repair the damage!*

Redemption, then, is pictured as God's PLAN for *repairing the damage* caused by Satan in that "original Fall" of man!

And ever since, God has entered into a furious CONTEST with Satan. For six thousand years, God has desperately been trying to *redeem* humanity—to save, and RESTORE mankind back to a condition as good as God had originally created him, before the "Fall."

What's WRONG With This Picture?

That's the popular idea being widely preached today!

WHAT'S WRONG with that picture? When stated so plainly, we can see quite clearly something is wrong!

What are we going to do with the "fall of man?" If this popular teaching is correct, it makes Satan more powerful than God. It makes Satan able to wreck God's perfected creation, to thwart God's will.

And, after God in desperation has devised a Plan of Redemption, and spent some six thousand years trying to restore the original Edenic perfection, where does this picture leave us today? Why, with Satan winning the contest by a pitifully lopsided score! At least *half* the people who populate this earth today *know nothing about Jesus Christ*—are blinded by false heathen religions! Only a very small percent of humanity could claim today to be "saved."

Can't we see that at every turn this belief *presents Satan as more powerful than GOD?* WHAT, then, IS THE REAL TRUTH?

Could GOD Be Responsible?

Now if Satan did *not* succeed in thwarting God's will, wrecking God's perfected and completed Creation, then the only alternative is to say that it all happened *according* to God's will—*exactly as God Himself originally planned!*

But do we DARE make God Himself responsible?

We have but two alternatives! Either Satan got in there *against* God's will, and in so doing proved himself mightier and more cunning than God—or else God Himself planned and permitted it all!

LET'S UNDERSTAND THIS!

The True ANSWER to These Questions

The real answer was brought out by Job. "If

a man die, shall he live again," Job asked,—and answered: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my *change* come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: *thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands!*" (Job 14:14).

The latter part of his quotation, most often overlooked, is the key to this whole riddle! Read it again!

"*Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands!*"

STUDY THAT! Job knew he was merely the work of God's Hands! Merely a piece of divine workmanship in the Hands of the CREATOR! Merely a piece of plastic CLAY in the hands of the Master Potter! And in calling us forth from the grave, in the resurrection, God is having a DESIRE to FINISH this WORK OF HIS HANDS!

Even the RESURRECTION, then, is a final completing of GOD'S CREATION!

Adam's Creation NOT COMPLETED!

Now we come to the WONDERFUL TRUTH!

The first chapter of Genesis does *not* record a COMPLETED creation at all!

Adam's creation was not finished!

Read that amazing statement again! Be sure you *understand* it!

CREATION is *still going on!*

SALVATION is *not* a "repairing of the damage,"—a frustrated effort of God to restore man back to a condition *as good as* Adam, before the "Fall"!

Satan *did not* break into the Garden of Eden in spite of God—did not do one single thing contrary to God's great PURPOSE! All that has happened had been planned before of GOD—and all is progressing *exactly as* GOD WILLS.

Oh, what a WONDERFUL TRUTH!

What God actually is creating in us humans is the SUPREME MASTERPIECE OF ALL HIS WORKS OF CREATION! Millions—yes, *billions*—of perfect, SPIRITUAL CHARACTERS! It is a *spiritual creation*. And God is bringing it about in *two phases!* This DUALITY, in fact, carries through every part and sequence of this tremendous work of creation!

The *model*, from which the finished spiritual product is to be moulded, is material substance—just mortal, human CLAY!

The creation described in Genesis 1 is the first

phase of this creation—the MATERIAL creation, only. And that is merely the *beginning*—the bringing into existence of the SUBSTANCE out of which a *model* may be moulded for the finished Masterpiece!

God formed man, *not* out of Spirit, but “of the dust of the ground.” To the man whose creation is described in Genesis 1, and 2:7, God said, “DUST thou art.” Not immortal spirit—just DUST. Man is MORTAL, not yet immortal!

Adam *did not have* God’s HOLY SPIRIT!

He was a PERFECT physical specimen, yes! Whatever GOD creates is perfect, not imperfect. But what God created, in Adam, was a FLESHLY MAN—a mortal man of *flesh and blood*!

Adam, in other words, *was not complete*!

One vital thing was lacking—and this one thing he was made to NEED—to hunger and to thirst for!—the indwelling of GOD’S HOLY SPIRIT.

But God provided for that. In the Garden of Eden was one “tree” which would have supplied it! And this, God freely offered the man. But Adam and Eve had to make a CHOICE between this “tree” which would have given them LIFE—GOD’S SPIRIT—the one thing that would fill that void, that longing in the soul—and the “tree” which symbolized the ways of SIN. Adam made the wrong choice as, of course, God knew he would! HE NEVER RECEIVED GOD’S SPIRIT! OUR FIRST PARENTS NEVER RECEIVED IMMORTALITY!

Rather, they were driven forth *from* the Garden of Eden, *lest* they now take also of the tree of LIFE and eat, and gain immortality (Gen. 3:22-24).

REDEMPTION IS CREATION

Creation was *not completed*, as described in Genesis 1. Rather, what God is creating is a SPIRITUAL CREATION, and God has mapped out a DEFINITE PLAN, allowing SEVEN THOUSAND YEARS for the process!

In His great purpose, the physical and material comes *first*, and always is the *type* of the spiritual. A day is *as* a thousand years to God, and a thousand years *as* a day. And, as God’s revealed Plan is allotted seven *thousand-year* “DAYS” for its completion, so God used just seven 24-hour days for the present creation—the MATERIAL creation described in Genesis 1!

So the seven literal 24-hour days are a TYPE of the seven thousand-year “days.” And in this

seven-thousand-year period, God Himself has deliberately ALLOTTED to Satan the first SIX of those days for *his labor of deception*—but the SEVENTH millennial day shall be the SABBATH of The ETERNAL our God, and in it Satan *shall not* do any work! God has set a limitation upon him! Satan shall be chained for that coming thousand years! (Rev. 20:1-3).

Christ Jesus will return to earth IN PERSON, as King of kings and Lord of lords, and “the earth shall be FULL of the knowledge of the Eternal” (Isa. 11:9)—to HIM shall *the Gentiles seek* (Isa. 11:10), and the final GREAT harvest of souls shall be reaped! Yes, THAT’S the GOOD NEWS of the KINGDOM OF GOD—Good News the devil does all in his power to suppress—Good News Satan’s ministers deny! But praise God! the light of HIS WORD still shines for those who will see!

So now let’s look briefly at REDEMPTION. *What is it?*

“By GRACE are ye saved through faith... for *we are His workmanship*, CREATED in Christ Jesus *unto good works*, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them!” (Eph. 2:8-10). Notice, there are GOOD WORKS to salvation! WHY do the preachers always stop quoting at verse 9, never reading this 10th verse!

The “*we*” in New Testament language always means *Christians*—those truly converted. WE, then, are GOD’S *workmanship*. Yes. “CREATED,”—*now being created*—to what objective—to WHAT PURPOSE? Note it! The PURPOSE Satan’s ministers DENY today—“UNTO GOOD WORKS”! Unto perfect spiritual CHARACTER!

Now Paul here is not speaking of Adam’s creation, 6,000 years ago. He is speaking of Christians, NOW, *being created*—UNTO GOOD WORKS! We are HIS WORKMANSHIP—the Creator is *still creating*! He is moulding, fashioning, CHANGING us, transforming us to His own noble, righteous, holy, spiritual CHARACTER! Yes, creating *in us* this perfect CHARACTER!

Salvation, then is a *PROCESS*!

The Purpose of Our Living

But how the god of this world would blind your eyes to that! He tries to deceive you into thinking all there is to it is just “accepting Christ,”—with “NO WORKS”—and presto-chango, you’re pronounced “SAVED”!

But the BIBLE reveals that NONE is yet

"saved"! "He that endureth unto the end, the same SHALL BE saved" (Mat. 24:13). Jesus, *alone*, of all humans, has so far been SAVED! By the resurrective power of GOD! When Jesus comes, at the time of the resurrection of those IN CHRIST, He then brings His reward with Him! (Rev. 22:12).

Christ, as the Lamb of God—our Saviour—was "slain from the foundation of the world"—it was all planned of God *from the beginning—yes, even before the "Fall"* (Rev. 13:8).

Those called, now, in this present age to salvation, were chosen *before* Adam was created! "According as He hath chosen us in Him *before the foundation of the world.*" And WHY? "That we should be HOLY and without blame before Him IN LOVE" (Eph. 1:4).

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, *he is a new creature*" (II Cor. 5:17). Yes, a NEW CREATION!

"And *be renewed* in the spirit of your MIND! and that *ye put on the new man*, which after GOD IS CREATED *in righteousness and true holiness*" (Eph. 4:23-24).

It all begins *in the mind*. Repentance, the first step in salvation, is a *change of mind*. The receiving and indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a *renewing of the mind*. Gradually, through Bible study, learning to live by "every Word of God," being continually corrected, keeping in constant prayer, the very MIND OF GOD is placed within the yielded man. And thus the NEW MAN—a holy, spiritual CHARACTER—is CREATED *in righteousness, and in true holiness!*

Born Again . . . HOW?

In this NEW CREATION God works in man, the man must be "BORN AGAIN."

God made Adam solely out of MATTER. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh IS flesh!" Then He explained we must be born *again*—not again of the FLESH—not again entering our mother's womb, as Nicodemus thought He meant—but *born of The SPIRIT*—BORN OF GOD! As we were born of the FLESH from a fleshly human father, so now we must be born of the SPIRIT by GOD, the heavenly SPIRITUAL Father.

And this process is brought about, in God's great PURPOSE, by a man first coming to see HOW WRONG are the ways of mortal humans, thinking and living CONTRARY to the revealed

LAWS OF GOD! The first stage is REPENTANCE! *Surrender* to Almighty God!

God sent His Son Jesus Christ into the world as a human being, to pay for us, in our stead, the *penalty* we have incurred by the transgression of God's spiritual Law. So the second step in our salvation—our SPIRITUAL CREATION—being BORN of the Spirit—is to accept Christ Jesus as personal Saviour, being baptized for the remission of sins. Then God's PROMISE is that we shall receive HIS HOLY SPIRIT. And that is the entrance of the very LIFE of God—the impregnating "germ," so to speak, of eternal life—the begetting of the life of GOD. We then compare to an unborn babe in its mother's womb. And, after the experiences of the Christian life, *if we overcome, grow in grace and knowledge*, and endure unto the end, then *at the time of the RESURRECTION*, this MORTAL shall be instantaneously CHANGED INTO immortality—this flesh and blood body shall BECOME a SPIRIT body! Then, and not until then, shall we be FULLY BORN OF GOD.

Then, and not until then, shall our CREATION be fully COMPLETED!

But we now are the "clay models," in the Hands of the Master Potter!

If in this life our thinking, our ways are CHANGED until we really do become—in character—*new creatures* in Christ Jesus, conformed to HIS WILL, then that clay model, worked over, fashioned and shaped as God would have it, is finally turned into the FINISHED SPIRITUAL CREATION!

— Begins and Ends in Christ

This ENTIRE CREATION begins *in Christ*, and is finished BY Him!

God created all things *by* Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:9). Jesus was the workman, then, who created the original Adam. But our SPIRITUAL creation begins in Him, too. He it is who became our living Example—who came into the world to lead the way—and became the *first-born* from among the dead—the FIRST completed, perfected spiritual MAN! Now notice:

"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 salva-*

tion perfect THROUGH SUFFERINGS" (Heb. 2:9-10).

Look at it! Turn to it read that in your own Bible!

Jesus, the captain or LEADER of our salvation—the one who *led off*, setting us an example—the *only* one so far completed—even HE was *made perfect*, and THROUGH SUFFERINGS!

"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" (Heb. 5:8-9).

There it is again! Jesus is the *author* of our salvation—He WROTE that salvation BY HIS EXPERIENCE, and that was the *first writing* of it—He was the *first* human ever to achieve it—to be perfected, finished as a PERFECT CHARACTER!

Jesus LEARNED! He SUFFERED! But out of it came PERFECTION!

Do you see?

Do you begin to UNDERSTAND?

Satan did not upset God's Plan. All that has happened, God foreknew and *permitted*—for a PURPOSE! *Redemption is not a repairing of the damage*—not a restoring to a condition "just as good." No, that was merely the *beginning*—the *material* creation. Redemption is the great SPIRITUAL creation! In it, God is creating in us something infinitely superior to Adam before he sinned.

Do you see now WHAT God is creating, *in you* and me?

He is creating something higher than angels or archangels! He is creating the supreme MASTERPIECE of all God's creation . . . HOLY, PERFECT SPIRITUAL CHARACTERS!

And *what is Character?*

What CHARACTER Is

Perfect Character, such as God is creating in us, is a person finally made immortal, who is a separate entity from God; who, *through independent free choice* has come to KNOW, and to CHOOSE, and to DO, what is *right*.

Inanimate rock will roll down hill by power of gravity. Water runs in its channels through creeks and rivers into oceans. Great planets, some many times larger than the earth, *must* travel in God's ordained course. These things are marvelous examples of the creative power of God. Yet these

things are *inanimate*—they have *no mind, no free choice*, NO CHARACTER!

Dumb animals do not sin. They do not know enough to sin! They act by instinct, or according to training of others. They do not have this Character!

CHARACTER is the possession and practice of *love, patience, mercy, faith, kindness, gentleness, meekness, temperance, self-restraint*, and *right self-direction*! Character involves KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM, PURPOSE, ABILITY, all properly controlled and developed, and through independent CHOICE!

Holy, righteous CHARACTER is something that is developed, *only through EXPERIENCE*! Experience requires TIME, and CIRCUMSTANCES! And so God creates Time and God creates Circumstances which produce character!

And so God first formed out of the dust—out of 16 elements of matter—the flesh-and-blood man, in the IMAGE of God—(and "image" means form, or shape, not composition). And through seven thousand years of experience, God is taking the human family through a process, the results of which, even "as we have borne the image of the earthy (mortal Adam): *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*"—Christ Jesus immortal, "second" Adam—(I Cor. 15:49).

Yes, once fashioned, shaped, moulded according to God's Purpose, even WE shall be LIKE HIM, *for we shall see Him as He is!*

WHY All This Human Suffering?

There are just two broad principles of life—God's Way, or God's Law, summed up in the Ten Commandments, and Satan's way of competition, greed, vanity.

All suffering—all unhappiness, fear, misery, and death, has come from the *transgression* of God's Law! *Living* by that great Law of Love, then, is the only way to peace, happiness, and joy.

God placed man on this planet to *learn that lesson*—to learn it through generations of EXPERIENCE!

Yes, we, too, LEARN by suffering! God has REVEALED the TRUE way—His revelation always has been available to man! But man, given the right of free choice, always has turned his back on God, and on God's true WAY. And even though man as a whole still refuses to see or

learn the lesson, *he has written this lesson indelibly in the history of human experience!*

We learn through EXPERIENCE! And through SUFFERING! This, then, is the very stuff CHARACTER is made of!

And *that's why* we are not taken immediately to our reward—away from all the unhappy circumstances of this world—just the minute we "accept Christ," and are converted. Yes, *that's why* "many afflictions" visit the righteous, even as God sent affliction upon Job—tho the Eternal delivers us out of them all! *That's why* God permits Christians to suffer—why God even *chastens* every son whom He loves! It strengthens us—develops us into the CHARACTERS God is creating! It teaches us to *rely on God*—and reliance on God is the very foundation of Character.

Jesus suffered, was made perfect through suffering!

Paul suffered! WE suffer—to the end that we shall learn. We are *being created*, in true righteousness and holiness, *unto GOOD WORKS!* Unto perfect CHARACTER!

And so it is that in His matchless WISDOM God has *permitted* man to sin. God *permits* nations to go to war! For almost 6,000 years God has *permitted* Satan to sway this world, to deceive it into transgression of His Law, that it might learn by reaping that the *results* of Satan's way are not good! The RESULTS are the staggering mountain of woe and human misery, the fear, the heartache, the injustice and the suffering in this world today! A comparatively few true Christians have learned that GOD'S WAY is good!

The DANGER of Hugeness

God has given us powers approaching the creative, that we might learn, through them and through years, centuries and millenniums of experience, to CREATE—not to destroy! That we might learn to direct creative powers into peaceful, useful, PRODUCTIVE channels—not toward harmful, destructive, evil results.

The PURPOSE of life, then, is *not* to learn to create, devise, plan, and set in motion *more* and *greater* forces—but to learn to *control* the powers at our disposal—to learn to guide them into beneficial uses—to learn to direct them toward DOING GOOD, to produce peace, and happiness, and joy! In other words, to develop Godly CHARACTER!

Once this great principle is seen and grasped, it will be realized that the quantity—that is, the vastness of the creative development, is not the true measure of value or the yardstick of real progress. The important thing is the *direction* of that development.

Thus, the greater the nation's industrial might, the greater is its retrogression *if* that productive energy is directed toward destruction and evil.

That's another way of saying that POWER alone is good or evil according to how it is used. Power uncontrolled, or wrongly directed, becomes DANGEROUS, and the greater the power the greater the danger and the evil.

Money, in this world, is power. The *love* of money is only a form of lust, and when the power of money is directed lustfully, it becomes, truly, a root of all evil.

But MONEY is not evil. Employed in right, useful, wise and godly channels, money becomes a great blessing, and the more so used the greater the blessing.

We were not put here to see how GREAT man can develop the powers GOD permits him to utilize. The important thing is RIGHT DIRECTION—WISE CONTROL—PROPER USE! So far as mere SIZE goes, all the great industries and projects of *all nations combined* are not a drop in the bucket compared to the greatness of the POWER OF GOD! (Isaiah 40:12-18.)

We are here for the express purpose of learning how to rightly direct the vast powers of GOD! Powers so tremendous the mind of man could not now conceive! If we are faithful in little things, God will entrust us with BIG things later on, when we're born into His Kingdom! This life is the training ground.

Now what powers are at *your* disposal! And how well are *you* learning to control and properly direct them?

What YOU Can Do

Well, start out by looking at your *temper!* Some tempers are mild, and others are quite powerful. Are you learning to control, and rightly direct yours?

Your voice is another. Do you use it like a wild, raucous, snarling animal—yelling, accusing, cursing perhaps—or are you controlling it and training it to speak softly, kindly, courteously, and only letting forth its real power when there's purpose in it?

Your personality is a power, if you develop and train it so as to charm, influence, persuade others rightly, to bring pleasure and encouragement and sunshine and inspiration to others, and to lead them as they ought to be led. Most people let their personalities stagnate. They never do one thing to improve or develop them—yet a charming, captivating, and persuasive personality is one of the greatest forces for GOOD with which an all-wise God endowed you.

The Power of Money

Your money—your income—is a power God lets you possess. Do you employ it only for the necessities of keeping alive, and for selfish pleasures and desires?

The *first* tenth of every dime or every dollar is NOT YOURS. All of it belongs to God, and that first tenth God reserves for His own use—for *His work!*

Every dollar of that money GOD Himself is using in this great work to reach, in dynamic power and with conviction, more than a thousand precious souls with His GOSPEL. Are you *stealing* some or all of that first tenth of God's money, withholding from His work, putting it to your own selfish uses? If so you are depriving thousands of other humans from hearing the ONLY MESSAGE which offers them real salvation, and eternal peace and happiness.

God has directed every one of us not only to pay His first tenth, but also to GIVE, liberally, of generous *offerings* besides. There are other ways in which still other portions of your income can be used to bring happiness and good to others, in addition to yourself and immediate family.

And if you are honest with God's tithe, faithful and generous with additional offerings, and diligent in finding still another portion of your income to be used for GOOD—then you are employing the power of money toward the purpose for which you were born.

And God always *prospers*, now in this life, the honest and faithful tithe-payer!

THINK For Yourself

From here on, THINK FOR YOURSELF!

Think out your own problem, according to your own circumstances. What powers, What opportunities, are now in your control?

Perhaps, through your job, your profession, your business, you have really important powers

to wield. Perhaps you have not much more than just your own self.

Analyze for yourself your own position and circumstances. Ask yourself, how are you using the powers you may have to use?

And ARE YOU DEVELOPING—GROWING—in self-control, in ability to restrain impulse, wrong desire, selfish motive, or vanity? If you had some really great POWER thrust into your hands to direct—perhaps thirty million dollars—perhaps a vast manufacturing industry with many subsidiaries—would you be able to direct and wield that power as you know GOD would have it used?

Are you sure? Well, the test is this:

If you are *now* rightly directing *little* powers in your control, such as your temper, your voice, your passions and emotion, or your present, possibly small, income, then you probably could be entrusted to control properly at least a slightly larger power. But if you have not yet learned to control and constructively guide even these little powers God has permitted you to use, then you are not at all qualified or fit to handle greater responsibilities!

Don't ask God for more money, more powers, bigger opportunities. First demonstrate your ability wisely to use the power of a CREATOR over the little powers and opportunities you now have. If you are not faithful even in the paltry unrighteous mammon, who will entrust to your care the TRUE RICHES, and the GREAT powers of God? But, if you are faithful over what God has already given you, He will say to you some day:

"*Well done*, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over MUCH!"

The True Repentance

Mankind, swayed by human nature, the devil and his demons, has followed the beaten path of destruction—of polluting, perverting, destroying whatever he has been allowed to handle and use and control. He has perverted the sacred Word of God, polluted his own mind, dissipated his body; he has failed to train or has mistaught his children; he has manifested resentment, envy, and hatred toward his neighbor, sought to get more out of life than he put into it, which is destruction rather than construction; perverted the human food supply; turned scientific and technological

developments into engines of destruction until now, unless God steps in, he would annihilate human life from off the earth!

Soon, now, Jesus Christ is coming again to earth, to FINISH His tremendous spiritual creation on the SEVENTH millennial day, just as He finished that of the present world on the seventh literal day. Satan will be restrained a thousand years. As Christ healed the sick and preached the Gospel on the literal Sabbath, so He will heal up these ugly wounds of the whole world during His Millennial Sabbath Day!

He shall rebuke strong nations, until they all beat their swords into plowshares, their spears into pruning-hooks, and the nations learn war no more—but rather find the way of PEACE!

Competition shall be abolished. The premium will no longer be on GETTING, but on SERVING. A man will no longer be adjudged successful by what he HAS—what he has been able to amass for himself—but rather by how well, and how much he has served—by how much *good* he has contributed!

People at last will find the Way to peace, the true source of happiness—they will be filled with JOY! They will learn God's laws of health, and they will be vigorous, filled with joyous vital energy! They will be active; they will come into a prosperity we can hardly imagine now! And they shall find salvation, and ETERNAL LIFE!

After a thousand years of this, we shall all look back and COMPARE:

We shall compare the actual RESULT of six thousand years of being deceived into living Satan's way of competition, of strife, of jealousy, bitterness, envy, greed, and vanity, with the HAPPINESS, the WORLD PEACE, the PROSPERITY, and the energized JOY of one millennium lived by GOD'S LAWS!

We shall have learned our lesson!

We shall have learned that all Power, all KNOWLEDGE and WISDOM, all GOOD comes alone from God. We shall have learned that we are not, ourselves, even capable of *knowing* which is the right way—which are the TRUE values—unless we go to God for that knowledge, and permit Him to reveal it. We shall have learned that the POWER to become strong and noble characters also had to come from God—that we have had to receive EVERYTHING from Him! But we ourselves shall have learned these truths, and *made our own decisions!* We shall

have had to WANT this righteousness of God with such fervent and burning desire that we have been willing to FIGHT our own selves, to suffer trying to control and to master our selves, and finally to throw ourselves on God's mercy, trusting in HIS power, in order to overcome!

GOD is the PERFECT character, and His purpose is to create in us, by development and with our consent and active determined effort, His very own perfection until we become like HIM!

Why You Were Born

The PURPOSE of life is that in us God is really re-creating *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*—we shall then be BORN of God—WE SHALL THEN BE GOD!

For the word "God" comes to us from the Hebrew word "Elohim," which means the Ever-living, Eternal Creating, All-powerful, Governing KINGDOM. "Elohim" means *one God*—not many gods. But that ONE GOD is 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; and we might segregate it and designate 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), but one BORN of God can!

Do you really grasp it? The PURPOSE of your being alive is that finally you be BORN into the Kingdom of God, when you will actually BE GOD, even as Jesus was and is God, and His Father, a different Person, also is God!

The first *beginning* toward fulfilling your PURPOSE on earth is to REPENT—repent of these wrong ways, customs and practices. Accepting Jesus Christ as personal Saviour, truly, means letting Him "who went about doing

GOOD" live your life for you henceforth—just as HE would live it! It means living henceforth by every Word of God—making the Bible your guide, your AUTHORITY in life. It means you now begin to develop CREATIVE instead of destructive powers. You are setting out on a training to become CREATOR—to *become* 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 the "bright lights" of 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!

• • •

KNOWLEDGE is of no value except as it is *used*. Not the hearers, but the *doers* of the law shall be justified. The command to STUDY is for the purpose of putting the instruction into action that we may "show" ourselves approved unto God. And it is written, "A good UNDERSTANDING have all they that *do* His commandments." Since the purpose of the knowledge is to *do*, the doing is the *condition* to acquiring right knowledge. Bible study is of value only in proportion as the knowledge revealed is incorporated into your character in actually *living* it.

READ:

The PLAIN TRUTH, a magazine of understanding, explaining the true significance of world events, making BIBLE PROPHECY clear, plain, understandable, *interesting!* It's FREE! No subscription price—but you must request it for yourself. Mailing Addresses:

IN THE UNITED STATES
HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG
Box 111, Pasadena, Calif. 91109

IN BRITAIN AND EUROPE
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
BCM Ambassador
London W. C. 1, England

IN AUSTRALIA
P. O. Box 345, North Sydney,
New South Wales,
Australia

IN CANADA
P. O. Box 44, Sta. A,
Vancouver, B. C.

IN AFRICA
P. O. Box 1060
Johannesburg, Transvaal,
Republic of South Africa

IN ASIA
P. O. Box 2603
Manila, Philippines

IN GERMANY
Postfach 1324
(4) Duesseldorf 1,
West Germany

IN FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND
91 Rue de la Servette
Casa Postale
Geneva 7, Switzerland

TUNE IN:

Herbert W. Armstrong analyzes today's news, with the prophecies of *The WORLD TOMORROW!*
Broadcast World Wide—on Every Continent!

HEARD DAILY COAST TO COAST IN U. S. A.,
AUSTRALIA AND SOUTH AFRICA
See Log in *The PLAIN TRUTH*

Printed by
Ambascor Press Pty. Ltd.
105 Miller St. North Sydney