Man in Search of Himself

A study of man's nature, origin, value and perfectibility raises significant, important questions. Is he the "measure of all things" and made just "a little lower than the angels"? Or has he been reduced to his biochemical components, the quintessence of dust itself? Is it even possible for a man to know "himself"? Is he the glory or the shame of the universe? Or both? Does he even belong here, or is he an interloper—the missing link between his primal ancestors and the really humane being of tomorrow? Is man different from animals and things? How so? And if so, how and why is he different? These are some of the questions considered in this essay, the answers to which create a great divide among people and how they view the reality we all share.

Difference in Degree or Kind?

First of all, if man is to be considered different or unique, how so? Is it a difference in *degree* or *kind*?

Difference in Degree

Some would argue today that man is only different in degree, like the size of the angles in obtuse triangles are different from each other, or like the difference of molecular motions observed in hot and cold water, or the difference between 1 and 100. The concept of difference in degree *only* is at the heart of original Darwinian theory, which sees man as arising from non-man. According to this view, then, man is different only in degree, not kind, from animals, plants, and things.

Others would modify this view, suggesting that observable distinctions or kinds are really only apparent in the complexities of organic and inorganic development on the planet, and the passage from one qualitative state to another is synthesized with an underlying continuum of degrees which

lead to threshold. For example, the link between liquid H_20 and gaseous H_20 is a change in temperature. Or the link between acidic solutions (colorless) and basic solutions (pink) is a color indicator, the change of pH. Lorenz and other ethnologists would view man in this light, an observable expression of the continuing processes of mutation and selection. The primatologists doing language studies with chimps and gorillas are conducting their research primarily under the same assumption.

Both of these views have some devastating consequences to man, who continues to resist their implications. The first view suggests that things and animals may assume what has up until now been considered exclusively "human" rights. Adler points this
out in by quoting John Lilly:

> *The day that communication is established the [dolphin] becomes a legal, ethical, moral and social problem. . .They have reached the level of humanness as it were! (Brackets mine)*{1}

Of robots, Adler cites a similar conclusion by Michael Scriven:

> *If it [a robot] is a person, of course it will have moral rights and hence political rights. (Brackets mine).*{2}

The mixed imagery of man, machines, and animals portrayed in the "bar scene" of *StarWars* was getting at the same thing, depicting a world where this distinction was removed. And such historians as Arnold Toynbee and Lynn White argue that this very exclusivity of man for rights now denied to animals and robots is that which has brought about an arbitrary and destructive dichotomy between man and the rest of nature:

> *Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and*

> *Asia's religions, not only established a dualism of man and nature, but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends.*
>
> *When the Greco-Roman world was converted to Christianity, the divinity was drained out of nature and concentrated on a single transcendent God. Man's greedy impulse to exploit nature used to be held in check by his awe, his pious worship of nature. Now monotheism, as enunciated in Genesis, has removed the age-old restraint.{3}*

Failure to remove this "dichotomy," they say, has caused men to live *above* nature and to exploit it for selfish ends. Their solution is to erase it and invite man to become "one" again with nature. Herein lies part of the present attractiveness of Eastern, monistic thought to the contemporary Western mind.

It is, however, noteworthy that attempts to eliminate the dichotomy have brought about varying results in both East and West. In the West, the dignity and value of human life has generally lessened in importance during the past 100 years. This despairing theme has been a dominant force in art, music, drama, and literature of the twentieth century. One of the uncomfortable but inescapable by- products of technological advancement and the exactitudes of scientific measurement is pointed out by Adler, who predicts a new (or old?) kind of dichotomy which divides human *from* human:

> *We can, therefore, imagine a future state of affairs in which a new global division of mankind replaces all the old parochial divisions based upon race, nationality, or ethnic groups—a division that separates the human elite at the top of the scale from the human scum at the bottom, a division based on the accurate scientific measurement of human ability and achievement and one, therefore, that is factually incontrovertible. At this future time, let the population pressures have reached that critical level at which emergency*

> *measures must be taken if human life is to endure and be endurable. Finish the picture by imagining that before this crisis occurs, a global monopoly of authorized force has passed into the hands of the elite—the mathematicians, the scientists, and the technologists, not only those whose technological skill has mechanized the organization of men in all large scale economical and political processes. The elite are then the de facto as well as the de jure rulers of the world. At that juncture, what would be wrong in principle with their decision to exterminate a large portion of mankind—the lower half, let us say—thus making room for their betters to live and breathe more comfortably?{4}*

Thus, Planet Earth becomes the private playground of the planned, the privileged, and the perfect!

The second view is equally unacceptable for two reasons, one of which is related to the material just stated. How can value and dignity originate from the Arbitrary? Is a liquid more valuable than a gas? This approach is a merely subjective, decision-making process which asserts that dignity and value exist on one side of the threshold and not on the other. Utilitarians would answer the question in teleological fashion, saying, "It all depends upon the context: what is happening, what is needed, and what is intended."

Unhappily, the underlying assumption in this answer is an optimistic, flattering one which idealizes man and his intentions. History has not yet confirmed this. Man will not always do the good and right thing, even when he knows what it is. We will return to this issue later. Another consideration is that of the reversibility of this approach. With no compelling reason for advance, man could undergo a "devolutionary" process as easily as an "evolutionary" one.

Difference in Kind

A third possibility is that man is truly different from animals and things; he is different in *kind*. By definition, we mean that with respect to some property, two things differ in that one *has* the property and the other *lacks* it. A triangle and a square are different in kind, though both are geometric designs. The same can be said of the differences between a zero and a one, or man and non-man. In making this distinction, it is important to remember that "difference" does not imply "better" or "worse"; therefore other criteria are necessary before there would be legitimate reason to treat people better than things or animals. Are such criteria present? This is a crucial question.

It appears that in defining the question of man's place and purpose (if any) on the planet, one available option is to view man, along with animals, plants and things, as the accidental result of impersonal, cosmic processes. Under such an assumption, man therefore could not possess any superior claim to dignity and value. In fact, values in this line of reasoning must be relegated to the realm of *what is*, since there *is* nothing else. In true Sarterian fashion, man is condemned to be free—all is permitted and possible. The process is ultimately and totally arbitrary. "Ought" is only opinion, whether expressed publicly or privately by a majority or a minority. Thomas Huxley himself admitted that evolution leads to "bad" ethics.{5}

Ethics built upon nature, it would seem, must ever face the difficulty of how to move from the *descriptive* to the *prescriptive* and still maintain its own consistency as a system. Konrad Lorenz attempted to answer this by asserting that human behavior traits and "values" are linked to human physiology, and they have simply been passed on because of their survival value.

An alternative answer to the above is that *all* things—plants, animals, and people—are valuable, not because they have so designated themselves to be, but because they are the true and

real (though finite) expressions of an Infinite Creator. Their value has been assigned to them by a transcendent One. Man thus has worth and is different because his creator ascribed it to him. No one questions man's "downward" relationship, his identification and similarities to animal, plant and thing. Granted, he shares his "finiteness" with them, and in varying degrees of complexity, his biochemical make-up.

But is this man's *only* relationship? Is it possible that man's differences, dissimilarities, and dignity can never find adequate explanations "downward" but might find their source in a second "upward" relationship? This would be the main difference between the Monist (materialism) and the Dualist (theism/transcendence). Both have their philosophical and theological difficulties. The monist must find his solution within the box he has created by his position (the *cosmos*, observable reality, and nothing beyond).

The dualist claims there *is* something outside the box, but human reason and sense perception cannot tell you much (if anything) about it. Both positions are faced with a dilemma of sorts. It would seem that the criteria to establish special, human value is not possible within the framework of monism, and would only be possible in dualism if the "Transcendent One," the Creator, through self-disclosure (revelation), had made this human value assessment known to us.

The Uniqueness of Man

If we grant the assumption that man is different in kind—qualitatively different, in what ways is he so? The late Francis Schaeffer often used a term to describe this difference: the "mannishness" of man. This uniqueness falls into several areas, including the anatomical, physiological, cultural, psychological, and moral.

Physical

Anatomically, man's erectness is unique. There is no observed evolution between primates and man. Primates don't have feet; they literally have four hands. Primates also lack a circulatory system which would support an erect animal. Man, on the other hand, possesses knees that lock. His head is balanced on his shoulders. His spine is curved in four places for comfort in a wide variety of positions. His arms are short and his legs are long. Primates have the opposite proportions.

Man's erectness has therefore freed him, but not to the extent that it explains his dominance over the entire animal kingdom. In fact, man has dominated in ways totally unrelated to nature's way of achieving dominance. Man is basically defenseless. He has no dependable instincts (by comparison), no sharp teeth, claws, camouflage or wings. He is physically weak. A 120-pound monkey is three to five times as strong as a man.{6}

Jose Delgado points out that even man's brain cannot explain his dominance. His brain is large, but whales and elephants have larger brains. Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon had larger brains. Whale brains are more convoluted than human ones. Monkeys are very intelligent, but they demonstrate little ability to dominate any intra-species animal.{7}

Other physiological uniquenesses include man's eating habits. He can eat nearly every type of food and is nourished by it. He is only 20% efficient and hence eats four times as much as is needed. He is also in a class by himself with respect to thermoregulation. In the cold, his body applies vaso-constriction, tightens skeletal muscles, shivers, and withdraws surface fluids. In the heat, man is truly unique in his thermogenic sweat glands over his body. The hypothalamus responds to a .01% rise in blood temperature. Horses, on the other hand, sweat only in response to stress and adrenalin in the blood. And primates (nearest to man?) are poor

thermoregulators.

Man is also susceptible to disease and slow to heal. He is unique in that his tight skin demands sutures when cut. As a sexual being, he can breed anytime and for a variety of reasons. Ovulation and heat do not necessarily coincide. He interbreeds easily with all members of his species. He is also unique in his nakedness and his “wasp” waist.{8}

Cultural

Culturally, man is global in his habitat. The adaptability explained above is largely responsible for this. He makes tools and fire; he uses language with concepts. He is creative, a maker of art. From the dawn of his history, he appears to have been religious. He is a social creature. His young are long in maturing, thus calling for high, enduring family commitment. The male is (or can be) a part of the family.

Psychological

Philosophers, biologists, and psychologists all have to come to grips with the problems involved in trying to explain all that we observe about man in terms of just physical origins and causes. To encompass the entire realm of the human powers of reasoning, the complicated strata of human emotions, the apparent use of “free will,” as well as the more irrational elements of human behavior within a purely physical explanation seems heroic, to say the least. Recent attempts to eliminate all distinctions between humans and higher animals, and therefore hoping to explain man entirely in terms of what is physical or animal, are far from conclusive.

A major effort has been made to demonstrate, for example, that

the use of language, long considered man's exclusive and ultimate claim to distinction within the animal kingdom, is now possible among the primates.{9} Chimps have been taught the American Sign Language for the Deaf and are reported to be using sentences and grammar as they put "sign" blocks in proper order, or punch out the correct order of signs on a computer keyboard.

What is being demonstrated thus far by these language studies is not language, but signaling behavior. . .the proper response to a physical stimulus. Many animals, including pigeons, dogs, cats, horses, rats, etc., use this behavior. Whales and dolphins are known to possess communicative abilities superior to monkeys (are whales a nearer relative to man?). But all of these animals fail to use actual concepts, which are the true test of language and grammar. While a chimp can learn "triangular" as a concept, there is still a physical stimulus to which the animal can relate. A true concept like "political science" can only be learned by man. Grammatical structure in chimps or the playing of a complicated song on a little piano by a pigeon are examples of chaining sequences, or shaping behavior by operant condition *a la* B.F. Skinner. The animal need not understand or grasp the pattern in order to use it. Further, chimps who have been given the tools of communication progress to a limit, and no farther. In other words, a chimp may be taught to communicate to some extent, but once trained, he has very little to say!{10}

In the area of man's emotions, studies have tried to show that emotions are totally produced by what is happening psychochemically in the body. But some research demonstrates that other factors enter in and affect the emotions. Drug studies with adrenalin produced different (joyful or sad) emotional states in subjects who experienced the same drug states, but different (euphoric or melancholic) social contexts. Human mental states, to some extent, apparently transcend physical states.{11}

Physiological models of brain function stress the idea that parts of the brain give rise to and control bodily motions, thoughts, and emotional states. Experiments where rats are eating out of control, or raging bulls are stopped dead in their tracks by brain manipulation, are used to demonstrate the absence of free choice, or self-control among animals or humans.{12}

Skinner felt that the environment "pushed the buttons" on man's computer brain. In either case, man's will is not to be considered to in any sense "free." When the buttons are pushed (from within or without), man and beast will behave accordingly and predictively.

And yet, even in the animal experiments, one wonders if the conclusions are accurate. How can the purely "mechanical" nature of even an animal's mental state be measured? A viewing of the film shows that when the bull charged Delgado in the bull ring, the electric jolt to the implanted electrodes in its head stopped the animal in its tracks, and it appeared to be stunned as if shot. The bull then wheeled around in bewilderment and pain; it did not turn into "Ferdinand" and begin to sniff the flowers!

Brain research with respect to human will is even more conclusive. Brain mechanisms apparently influence, but do not exclusively determine, human behavior, since moral and social factors have been known to overrule brain damage or brain control. A woman who experienced a damaged hypothalamus gained nearly 100 pounds after her accident, but one day she looked in the mirror and did not like what she saw. She went on a diet and lost the weight.{13}

Another woman suffering with epilepsy was able to override her emotions and her desire to get up and attack her doctor when he stimulated her amygdula with a brain probe. Other factors came to bear on her aggressive tendencies and modified her response. She admitted she felt like it, but she didn't do

it![{14}]

These two cases indicate that there are elements present within the human brain which transcend and sometimes do override what the physical parts command or demand. Human behavior can never be reduced and totally explained by physical brain function. Something more is present and inexplicable.

Moral

We now come to an assessment of the moral nature of man. There seem to be three basic positions offered to explain human moral notions or inclinations. And all three accept that man has this unique capacity. . .to distinguish right from wrong. The first is one that views man as **morally neutral at birth**. This was John Locke's view, that man enters the world morally ignorant with a "blank tablet." And therefore man's personality and his moral notions are shaped exclusively by his personal experiences and his environment.

J. B. Watson, the father of behaviorism, embraced this view when he said,

> *Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specific world to bring them up in and I'll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select—doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief, and yes, even beggar man and thief.[{15}]*

In "ink blotter" fashion, then, this view sees man's personality development as extremely malleable, and capable of being shaped dramatically by environmental forces. We do not here deny the strong force that environment can and does play in shaping a human being. But the question must be asked, however: Can *all* personality development be traced to

environmental factors? Is there no genetic contribution whatsoever beyond that of providing the "empty tablet?" And how "blank" is blank? Doesn't it seem that though a conscience must be educated as to specifics of moral behavior, the "tablet" already possesses a moral capacity to comprehend and differentiate moral alternatives? These questions constitute and remain major criticisms of behaviorist theory.

A second view of man presupposes man as essentially good, or on his way to *being* good. In the 19th century, Tennyson spoke to this issue when he wrote:

> *Move upward, working out the beast,*
> *And let the ape and tiger die.{16}*

It is well to remember that this view of Tennyson's was not inspired by Darwin's *Origin of the Species*, because it would not be written until ten years after Tennyson wrote these words in his poem, "In Memoriam." He, like many others, was caught up in the optimistic tide of the Industrial Revolution. His contemporary, Herbert Spencer, sounded a similar note when he said,

> *"The inference that as advancement has been hitherto the rule, it will be the rule, it will be the rule henceforth, may be called a plausible speculation. But when it is shown that this advancement is due to the working of a universal law; and in virtue of that law it must continue until the state we call perfection is reached, then the advent of such a state is removed out of the region of probability into that of certainty. . .*
>
> *As surely as a blacksmith's arm grows large and the skin of a laborer's hand becomes thick; . . .as surely as passion grows by indulgence and diminishes when restrained; . . .so surely must the things we call evil and immorality disappear; so surely must man become perfect." (emphasis mine){17}*

This spirit of optimism for an improving moral future was reinforced a little later by Darwin and others. With confidence about the progress of tomorrow, Darwin said:

> *Hence we may look with some confidence to a secure future of equally inappreciable length. And as Natural Selection [notice capital letters] works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental environments will tend to progress towards perfection. (comment mine)*{18}

H.G. Wells looked to the future with the same optimism when he wrote in his *Short History of the World*:

> *Can we doubt that presently our race will more than realize our boldest imaginations. . .in a world made more splendid and lovely than any palace or garden that we have known, going on from strength to strength in an ever widening circle of adventure and achievement? What man has done, the little triumphs of his present state. . .form but the prelude to the things that man has yet to do.*{19}

Two world wars and accompanying aftermath shook Wells, the Huxleys, C.E.M. Joad, Bertrand Russell, and many others to the core. Optimism turned to discouragement and then to disillusionment. Wells would later write:

> *Quite apart from any bodily depression, the spectacle of evil in the world—the wanton destruction of homes, the ruthless hounding of decent folk into exile, the bombings of open cities, the cold blooded massacres and mutilations of children and defenseless gentlefolk, the rapes and filthy humiliations and, above all, the return of deliberate and organized torture, mental torment, and fear to a world from which such things had seemed well nigh banished. . .has come near to breaking my heart.*{20}

Ironically, many leading humanistic psychologists (including

such notables as Karl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, Eric Fromm, Rollo May) who watched thirty or forty more years of the twentieth century pass by with Koreas and Vietnams, iron and bamboo curtains, cold and hot wars, famines, atrocities, etc., still do not recognize, admit, nor share Well's perspective, but rather have chosen to ignore the lessons of those years. This galaxy of individuals would still tenaciously hold to the basic conviction that man is **essentially and basically good.** Maslow, considered to be the father of Humanistic Psychology, wrote these words just before the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley and the Vietnam War. Speaking of human nature he said:

> *Since this inner nature is good or neutral rather than bad, it is best to bring it out, to encourage it rather than suppress it. If it is permitted to guide our life, we grow healthy, fruitful and happy.{21}*

And yet Maslow, with all his optimism, at the same time was forced to acknowledge a apparent weakness in man to demonstrate his goodness and how it might be brought into life experience consistently:

> *There are certainly good and strong and successful men in the world. . .But it also remains true that there are so few of them, even though there could be so many more, and that they are often badly treated by their fellows. So this, too, must be studied, this fear of human goodness and greatness, this lack of knowledge of how to be good and strong, this inability to turn one's anger into productive activities, this fear of feeling virtuous, self-loving, respect-worthy.{22}*

This brings us to the third view concerning man's moral nature, which sees him as **possessing some innate and ever-present propensity to self-centeredness and pride**. Plato early on recognized the presence and power of evil in human beings

when he said: “There is a dangerous, wild, and lawless kind of desire in everyone, even the few of us who *appear* moderate.” (emphasis mine){23} Aristotle admitted the same when he observed that most people did not pursue the good:

> *Their nature is to obey by fear, rather than by right shame; and they do not abstain from the bad because it is wrong, but because of the possible punishment. They live by emotion and pursue those pleasures that are related to emotion, and the means to these pleasures.{24}*

The entire Bible and all of the Church Fathers certainly take this view, although man’s cruelty is juxtaposed with a nobility which he is deemed to possess, and which is asserted to have resulted from being created in God’s image (*Imago Dei*). It is this second concept of nobility and goodness which provides a possible explanation for all those things mentioned above which distinguish and set man apart from all other animals, plants and things. Worship, rational thought, language, moral notions, and creativity are all components stemming from his upward link, not his supposed evolutionary past.

On through history we find other leading thinkers echoing this third view: Thomas Hobbes in *Leviathan* saw man as self-centered, competitive, stubborn, forgiving of himself and condemning others:

> *For all men are by nature provided of notable multiplying glasses, that is their passions and self-love through which every little payment appeareth a great grievance; but are destitute. . .of those prospective glasses. . .to see afar off the miseries that hang over them. (emphasis mine){25}*

Karl Marx shared the same perspective in describing “egoistic” man:

> *Thus, none of the so-called rights of man goes beyond egoistic man as he is in civil society, namely an individual withdrawn behind his private interest and whims separated from the community.{26}*

Sigmund Freud also acknowledged man's aggressive tendencies:

> *I adopt the standpoint. . .that the inclination to aggression is an original, self-subsisting instinctual disposition in man, and I return to my view that it constitutes the greatest impediment to civilization. (emphasis mine){27}*

B.F. Skinner denies any "innate" disposition, but he does speak about the future with foreboding unless great environmental changes are made:

> *It is now widely recognized that great changes must be made in the American way of life. Not only can we not face the rest of the world while consuming and polluting as we do, we cannot for long face ourselves while acknowledging the violence and chaos in which we live. The choice is clear: either we do nothing and allow a miserable and probably catastrophic future to overtake us, or we use our knowledge about human behavior to create a social environment in which we shall live productive and creative lives and do so without jeopardizing the chances that those who follow us will be able to do the same.{28}*

Skinner's contemporary, ethologist Konrad Lorenz, ignores possible solutions for the future through environmental changes, and simply acknowledges the fact that man's "inherited aggressive tendencies" are yet to be brought under control. To Lorenz, man is not finished; he's still under construction.{29}

We have considered the three major views concerning man's moral nature: man as (1) neutral, (2) basically good, and (3)

morally flawed or deficient. In the light of our discussion and abundant observations of man's behavior—both past and present—the third view appears to be the most accurate.

To those who seek to address this issue, both its causes and proposed solutions vary greatly. They do, however cluster around several key ideas:

First, the evolutionists, like Lorenz above, argue that humans have had **insufficient time** to eliminate the primal aggressions from our evolutionary past. To them, it is a vestigial problem. Darwin, Lorenz, and much of humanistic psychology would fall into this category. Geneticists could also fit here, some of whom would perhaps like to help by speeding the process along.

One question that comes to my mind is if man is a part of Nature, as the evolutionist insists, then how has it come about that a method which is so successful in dealing with one part of Nature—the world *outside* of man—has failed so miserably in dealing with the other part of Nature—that which lies *within* him?

Second, a large group holds to the premise that a **proper environment** is the answer to man's moral ills. Plato would create his *Republic*. Hobbes would argue for a *Commonwealth*, Karl Marx a "classless" society, and Skinner would alter the environment through beneficent "planners." It might be well to remember that chuck roast sitting out on the counter *decays*. But what happens when it is placed in the freezer? It still decays, but at a much slower rate. Environment may check, or even improve certain behaviors, but there is growing evidence that, like the bacteria within the meat, man's basic moral problem is internal.

A third view would focus on **education** of some sort. Beginning with the Greek thinkers and up to Freud and Maslow, there are those who say man should be actively involved in the pursuit

of the good—knowledge and self-understanding. The assumption is that if a man *knows* or is shown what is good, he will *do* it. At this juncture, man unfortunately and negatively displays his uniqueness from animals. Where animals readily alter their behavior through simple "trial and error" methods, man will persist in repeating all kinds of behaviors detrimental to himself and others!

The point of agreement with each of these three views is that man's moral deficiency is the result of something lacking. The evolutionist says *time* is lacking. Behaviorists say a *proper environment* is lacking; the educators say that *knowledge* is lacking. But the crux of rightly assessing the moral nature of man is not what is lacking, but what is present and persistent about his behavior over the millenia. The Fall of man was down.{30}

In this regard, John Hallowell comments on Reinhold Niebuhr's insights:

> *One of America's most astute thinkers, Reinhold Niebuhr, has recalled to our consciousness a fact which both liberalism and Marxism have ignored with almost fatal consequences to our civilization. Evil, he points out, is something real, not an appearance only, and the proper name for it is sin. Its locus is not in institutions, which are but a reflection of human purposes, but in human nature itself. It is pride, self-righteousness, greed, envy, hatred and sloth that are the real evils and the ones from which social evils spring. When man is thwarted in his attempts to realize justice it is because he is thwarted by his own sinful predisposition. The recognition of this inherent predisposition to sin helps to explain why the best laid plans of men never quite succeed (emphasis mine).{31}*

Every academic discipline has a name for this problem of man:

> ***Biology** calls it "primitive instinct" or "primal aggression"*

> ***History** calls it "class struggle"*
> ***Humanities** calls it "human weakness" or "hubris"*
> ***Sociology** calls it "cultural lag"*
> ***Psychology** calls it "emotional behavior"*
> ***Philosophy** calls it "irrational thinking"*
> ***The Bible** calls it **sin**.*

The teachings of Jesus Christ underscore the truth of this internal flaw in man:

Do you not see that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him; because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach and is eliminated. . .That which proceeds out of a man, that is what defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of man, proceed the evil thoughts and fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from *within* and defiles the man.{32}

While largely unpopular at present, until society again comes to accept and embrace this assessment by the Founder of Christianity as the most accurate and true picture of human nature, no real progress can be made toward the building of a really "Great" society, much less a Global Community devoid of malice. And by their very nature, methodology, and presuppositions, science and philosophy will never recognize this truth, even when their own findings point in this direction, for they will not accept what God has revealed nor can they discover the truth by their own methods of inquiry.

Fifty years ago, from the decks of the great battleship, *U.S.S. Missouri*, General Douglas MacArthur accepted the unconditional surrender of the Japanese with these words:

> *We've had our last chance. If we will not devise some greater*

> *and more equitable system, Armageddon will be at our door. The problem is basically theological, and involves the spiritual recandescence and improvement of human character, that will synchronize with our matchless advances in science, art, literature, and all the cultural and material developments of the past 2,000 years. It must be of the spirit, if we are to save the flesh (emphasis mine).{33}*

MacArthur's prescription for humanity's future was essentially a religious one.

And at the dawn of the 21st century, little progress has been made. We live in a much more unstable and troubled world today than existed sixty years ago even when Hitler and the Japanese were at the pinnacle of their power.

When one observes what is happening throughout the world right now, one must conclude that, in spite of great technological and economic advances, three fourths of the planet is still functioning at the Medieval Level:

- Ethnic Cleansing (a euphemism for genocide).
- Poverty and Famine.
- Governmental corruption and Moral Failure.
- IRS Quota Incentives.
- Ecclesiastical Corruption and Moral Failure.
- Conquest.
- Human Rights abuses, particularly of Women and Children.
- Child and Spousal Abuse.
- Gun Control.
- Lawlessness and Crime.
- Sexual deviants and predators.
- Serial Killers.
- Pornography.
- Prostitution.
- Slavery (Yes, it still exists).
- Corrupt Judicial and Prison Systems.

- Unprincipled, Capricious Juries.
- Drug Traffic.
- Environmental and Ecological Abuse and Corruption.
- Endangered Species.
- Global Warming.
- Weapons of Mass Destruction for Sale!
- Deforestation.
- Over-fishing/depletion of Marine Life.
- Aids and other Killer viruses.
- Reality of Chemical warfare.
- Terrorism—at home and abroad.
- Nuclear Reactors.
- Waste Products.
- Contamination.
- Teen Pregnancy.
- Slaughter of the Innocents.
- Babies for Sale!
- Fetal Tissue and Organs for Sale!
- Sperm Banks of the Rich and Famous for Sale!
- Divorces outnumber Marriages.
- Disintegration of Healthy Family Systems.
- Welfare Mothers.
- AWOL Dads.
- Drive-by shootings and Road Rage.
- Juvenile Killers.
- Teen Suicide.
- Race motivated Crimes.
- Patriot Groups.
- Ku Klux Klan.
- Skinheads.
- Cult Groups.
- Goddess Worship.
- Witchcraft.
- A Media which panders to the baser elements of humanity: Increased Nudity, Sex, Violence, and Filthy Language.
- Same for Advertisements.
- Dearth of Role Models—in Politics, Sports, Music, and

Film.
- Ditto Dads, Moms, Brothers, Sisters, Uncles, Aunts, andGrandparents.

Reflecting on the above reminds me of an observation made by someone. The person commented that it was easier for him to believe in the existence of the Devil than to believe that God exists!

The Raging Planet. It would be comforting if we could say that the above behaviors did not include the United States of America. But that is not the case. While the U.S. does not face many of the severe problems and abuses which plague much of the globe, she does, in numerous ways, contribute to the moral instability of the rest of the world. Admired and hated at the same time, America continually sends a mixed message to her neighbors. She has been both a blessing and a curse to the rest of the world, and it is not yet apparent which path she will ultimately choose.

But what *can* be said, in spite of the above, is that she and her citizens are still impacted by the Judeo-Christian heritage which the colonists brought with them from the other side of the Atlantic. The moral and spiritual mindset which they owned as part of their very lives, laid the foundation stones upon which they intended to, and did live in this new land. We today are still being impacted and conditioned by the values they brought with them. By nature, we still largely think and behave within the framework they left us. This was a legacy of honesty, integrity, hard work, individualism, fair play, dependability, and personal freedom.

Much of this behavior is still evident in America. But what is slipping away, the crucial ingredient that makes it all work, is the spiritual dimension in American life. MacArthur said "It must be of the *spirit* if we are to save the flesh." Jesus said, "All these evil things proceed from *within* and defile the man."

A young father was reading the newspaper and came across a map of the world. He decided to have some fun with his small son. Taking scissors, he cut out the various countries of the world and said to his son, “Bobby, here’s a puzzle for you. Take these pieces and put the world back together.” The father resumed his reading of the morning paper, and, surprisingly, in less than a minute, the little boy came back and said, “Daddy, come look! I’ve put the world back together!” The father was amazed that his little son could have accomplished this task so quickly. He asked, “Good for you, Bobby. How did you do it so fast?” The little boy said, “Well, I turned the pieces over and on the back was the picture of a man. I put the *man* together, and the world was right!”

Perhaps we should try it. Nothing else has worked.

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