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EXPLANATION FOR HUMAN BEHAVIOR

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"But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies," Matthew 15:18-20.

"Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," Ephesians 2:3.

Introduction: Why do men act like they do? What is the explanation of human conduct? Why do men hate and make war against one another? Why do we have to have officers to keep the peace in a community? Why do we need policemen? Why do we have to have a courthouse with a judge and sheriff? Why can't we have freedom? Why can't everybody be let alone to do as he pleases? The enactment and enforcement of laws is a costly expedient, but everyone will admit that it is a necessary expense. And we would not want to live here without all this protection.

A good question for everyone: If everybody were just like me, would we need all this protection? What is the law for, so far as I am concerned? Is it to protect me from others, or protect others from me?

Why do men shun God and try to escape from Him? Why is man against his Creator and Benefactor? Why is it so difficult to get people to church, when we see them other places? Why are theaters filled when it costs money to attend them; and the churches are empty when it costs nothing to attend?

Many will answer, it is because the theater is interesting and the church is dull and boresome. But what makes the theater interesting, and why is the church so dull? Is the theater more important than the church? Are actors better people than the preachers?

What makes people go where they go and do what they do? What is it that controls human actions?

IS IT LAW?

There is no question that fear of the law fear of penalty does prevent a lot of crime. But it does not absolutely control the actions of men. We have a lot of crime in spite of all the laws. And to do away with law would open the floodgates of human iniquity. Law acts as a brake on the car of human iniquity but it does not stop the car altogether. Law keeps a lot of crime locked up in the human heart. Law is for the protection of human society, but it does not make men good.

IS MAN GOVERNED BY REASON?

Does reason control human actions? Man is a reasoning creature. He can think over things, reach conclusions, and pass judgment on himself and others. Reason is the use of intellectual powers. Is man controlled by reason? Does he do what his judgment dictates? The fact is that men do the most unreasonable things. No man will hardly claim that he has used good judgment in all he does. The drunkard, the gambler, the philanderer and everybody else will admit in his own heart that he has not followed the dictates of reason. Most every man admits the existence of God and then ignores Him. And this is the most unreasonable thing a man can do. God is the One with whom we have to

do. He cannot safely be ignored or sinned against in any way. No, man is not governed by reason.

IS MAN GOVERNED BY CUSTOM?

Custom does have much to do with how men live. "When in Rome, do as the Romans do," is a principle that affects all men more or less. The clothes we wear are largely determined by what the custom or style is. Men follow other men just like sheep follow the bellwether. One of the laws God gave to Israel was this: *"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil,"* Exodus 23:2. But custom does not altogether explain human conduct.

MAN IS CONTROLLED BY HIS DESIRES.

As a moral agent, man does what he wants to do, unless he is physically restrained. And a man's desires are determined by his nature. Everything acts according to its nature, both in the physical and in the moral realm. That is why the horse eats corn and hay. It explains why the bee buzzes instead of crowing.

Every moral action comes from desire. And the heart is the seat of desire. Heart stands for man's moral nature. Heart is never used in the Bible as pertaining to animals except in the sense of the bodily

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THE MEDIATION OF CHRIST

BY: C. D. COLE

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Timothy 2:5.

Jesus Christ is set forth in the scriptures under many titles and in many offices. Whatever may be the human need, Christ is equal to that need. If man is viewed as being under the curse of God's law, Christ is represented as the Redeemer from that curse. If the sinner is regarded as in danger of eternal punishment, Christ is the Deliverer. If the sinner be regarded as being sick unto death, Christ is the great physician and His blood is the specific. If the sinner is looked upon as perishing from hunger and thirst, Christ is the bread and water of life. If the sinner is viewed as a rebel against God's government, Christ is set forth as the Mediator. If we think of the sinner as being unrighteous and condemned, then Christ is his righteousness and the source of his justification.

WAR BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

Our text suggests war, war between God and man.

1. War of rebellion. There are different kinds of war. A war of aggression is where a strong country takes advantage of its weaker neighbor and makes war on it to get more territory to extend its boundaries. A war of defense is where a nation goes to war only to defend itself. A war of rebellion is where a group of subjects of a government creates a rival government and seeks to overthrow the established government as the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. This war between God and man is a war of rebellion men declared their independence of God and set up a rival government. Sin is man doing as he pleases rather than as God commands.

2. This war is dangerous to men. In most wars both sides lose heavily and victory for the winner comes at a terrible cost in lives and money. But here only men are in danger. In this war, there is no hope for the rebel. He is as helpless before God as an ant is before an elephant. Man seems to have super-

rior numbers, but Daniel 4:35 tells us that all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing.

The second Psalm gives us a picture of kings and rulers (human governments) in rebellion against God. *"Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."* And it tells us that God laughs at His enemies. This shows how secure God feels in the face of His foes.

3. This war is foolish on the part of man. Can poor, frail, puny, man hope to be victorious in his contest with omnipotence? Can the creature dethrone the Creator? Can the rebels take the reins of government out of the hands of God? To continue this war with God means the defeat of every rebel. It is said that the frown of Queen Elizabeth killed Sir Christopher Hatton, the Lord Chancellor of England. If the frown of a woman could do that, what will the frown of an angry and omnipotent God mean to sinners?

THE ONLY HOPE FOR MAN IS A MEDIATOR.

In this war between God and men, the only hope for men is in a Mediator, and such a Mediator that can secure terms of peace that will avert the ruin of the sinner.

A mediator is a go-between; a middle-man; one who comes in between two warring parties and makes a peace that is in the interest of both.

Mediation is a difficult work, whether between men as individuals or between nations. Too often the peacemaker is turned upon by both parties. Some terrible tragedies have resulted in the effort of outsiders to mediate between husbands and wives.

WHY A MEDIATOR IS NECESSARY.

If the war goes on, the sinner will be ruined. If he surrenders, he will have to render satisfaction to his offended Majesty and this will mean ruin also. When rebels surrender they are usually punished for their rebellion. Many an outlaw or desperado dies with his boots on because he feels that to

surrender would mean death at the hands of the law. If there is no mediator between God and men, the sinner might as well fight it out with God and go to hell with his boots on.

CHRIST AS MEDIATOR.

Now let us look at Christ as Mediator.

1. He satisfies both God and man. He brings an honorable peace to God and hope to the sinner. He rendered satisfaction to the law of God, and then gave the benefits of that satisfaction to the sinner. He made satisfaction by giving His life. He gave Himself a ransom for sinners. He died that they might live.

God showed that He was satisfied with what Christ had done when He raised Him from the dead; and we show that we are satisfied when we look to Him and trust Him as Saviour. *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,"* Romans 5:1.

2. Christ's mediation makes it safe for the sinner to surrender, yea, the only safe thing he can do. When the sinner surrenders and lays down his arms of rebellion against God and looks to Christ as peacemaker, he is not punished he is saved. The two sides of salvation are repentance towards God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. In repentance the sinner hates his sins, confesses his sins, lays down his arms of rebellion, and in his heart runs up the white flag; and in faith he looks to Christ to take care of the results of his sins.

3. Christ makes it safe for the sinner to repent by giving His life a ransom price for the sinner. He came not to be ministered unto but to minister and give His life a ransom for many. Repentance and remission of sins are to be preached in His name. If He had not satisfied the law by paying our sin debt, there would be no safety in repentance.

It used to be a custom among the Romans when they besieged a town or fortress to put a white flag at the gate of the city, and if the garrison surrendered

while the white flag was up, the lives of the people were spared. If the ultimatum was turned down, then a black flag went up and when the city fell, the people were slaughtered. God's white flag is still up! Dear reader, won't you trust the mediation work of Christ before it is eternally too late?

...HUMAN BEHAVIOR

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organ. The horse has a bodily organ called the heart, but he has no heart such as man has morally. Man is a two-fold being: physical and moral. He has a physical heart which is tangible, and he has a moral heart which is intangible and invisible.

The Pharisees of our Lord's day were terribly confused as to the question of sin. They associated moral defilement with physical eating. They washed hands to keep moral germs from getting into the mouth, and defiling a man. Christ taught them the source of defilement was in the heart. *"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."* Sin is in the heart or human nature, and this nature controls human actions.

Sin is an attitude before it is an act. Sin is in the heart before it is executed by the hand or other physical organ. The physical organs are only instruments of human nature.

Sin is an attitude towards God it is a wrong attitude toward God. Every man has to have a god, but no man in his natural state wants the true God. Men are seeking a god, but when the true God is presented, they do not want Him, for he is not the God they love. Their nature is out of harmony with the true God.

The one and only God that can satisfy is the very God men, in their natural state, do not want. Augustine said: "Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee." Psalm 107:9, *"For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."*

CAN HUMAN NATURE BE CHANGED?

This is involved in salvation. Salvation, in the sense of conversion, is such a change of human nature that the person may have proper regard for God. This is to fear God and love Him.

The man who does not do right out of regard for God does not do right at all in the sight of God. For a deed to qualify as a good deed in the sight of God, it must be done out of regard for God. A good deed done for human reward will not be rewarded by God.

Salvation means the right relationship with God. And to be in the right relationship with God, two things must be done: sin must be forgiven and the nature or heart must be changed. Forgiveness is the legal aspect of salvation, and regeneration or the change of nature is the experiential aspect of salvation. And there is not one without the other. One is justification and the other is regeneration. In justification we have the right standing before God as Lawgiver; in regeneration we have a nature that is in fellowship with God.

To be in fellowship with God we must be in agreement with Him about sin and about His Son. To be in agreement with God about sin, we must hate it; and to be in agreement with God about His Son, Jesus Christ, we must trust Him and love Him.

Justification means safety--the justified man is in no danger of Divine punishment. Regeneration puts the love of God in our hearts regeneration gives new desires, desires after God, desires to please God, desires to glorify God. The highest and best motive of all good is the glory of God. I Corinthians 10:31, 32, *"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God."* Ghandi once said: "I would have become a Christian if it had not been for Christians."

We are living epistles read and known of all men. The Gospel according to me is the gospel the sinner reads.

The born again person has conflicting desires because he has a two-fold nature. The flesh lusteth or desireth against the Spirit, etc.

If Jesus Christ cannot make character, he can make nothing else. He **can**

change human nature. He found the greedy nature of Zacchaeus and he changed it. He found the nature of Augustine lustful and He changed it. He found the nature of Saul of Tarsus proud and boastful and He changed it.

Has He met and changed your nature? Can you say (as a former executive for a prominent London newspaper): "If you should ask me by what authority I talk about the power of Christ to change human nature, I should reply to you simply (and God knows without one word or thought of boasting) because he has changed my nature. I can look anybody in the face today my friends, my colleagues, and what, perhaps is most difficult of all, the members of my own household and family--and be sure that they know, as I know, that I am really and literally a new creature in Christ Jesus since the day when He came into my life."

Can you and I afford to say--can we dare say--*"By the grace of God I am what I am."*