

Lesson 2
GOD'S REMEDY

MAN'S PROBLEM

Our problem is spiritual in nature. It is incorrect to think that you sin because of your genes, or a mental illness, or a disease of any kind. Christians flatly reject such unscientific, speculative notions. Just as Adam ran from God in the garden, we, as his descendants, by nature also ran from God. Instinctively, we all pass the buck. However, we cannot blame our problems on our circumstances.

Some of our common excuses are: "I had a father who didn't love me." Or "I was abused as a child." "All of my relatives are alcoholics so I am too." "I come from a dysfunctional family." It is part of our "Adam" nature to shift blame. (Genesis 3:12-13) Blameshifting cannot heal our sinful condition.

WHY DO WE NEED A REMEDY?

Because of our sinful inclinations, we need freedom from the power that sin has over our lives. All of us received our earthly life source from Adam, and it was in depravity and deadness. Our need then is to get a new life source, not merely a modified behavior, but a new nature no longer enslaved to sin.

One man illustrated it this way: "You can teach a parrot to say, 'Hello, how are you?' That is, you can modify its behavior, but no matter how much you modify its behavior (to talk) it is still a parrot." It cannot have a rational conversation like a human being. It would need a supernatural change to receive a human nature in order to relate to human beings. In the same way, mere behavior modification, making changes to my life on my own, is unable to remedy my real need.

Jesus rebuked the religious leaders of His time for this very thing. He said, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness" (Matthew 23:27-28).

We need a new work to take place inside of us. We need a new nature that desires to love and please the Lord—rather than loving and pleasing ourselves first.

THE REMEDY GOD HAS PROVIDED

God sent His only Son to become the Head of a new race outside of Adam's race. Adam was the head of all who are born after the flesh. As long as Adam is my head, I am still under the power of sin and death. I may be able to "kick the habit," but I have only dealt with the symptoms. I have not dealt with the root of the problem, which is sin and idolatry. It is only a matter of time before other symptoms arise. I am still bound for eternal destruction. I need to be taken out of the parentage (race) of Adam and born into a new race, and under a new Head, which is Jesus Christ.

One Step to Freedom
Chapter 2: Initial Restoration

BORN AGAIN OF THE SPIRIT

Just as Adam's actions affected all who were related to him, Jesus' actions affect all who become related to Him. Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again'" (John 3:6-7). I must be born again by the Spirit. Only Jesus can remake a person to please God and give him eternal life. When I am born into this new race under Jesus Christ, His righteousness is imputed to my account in the place of Adam's sin. I also receive a new nature that causes me to want righteousness—and to live righteously.

When you are born again, you enter a new dimension. Those "in Adam" can't understand this. It's like if you were born blind. You have never seen colors, people, the sunset, or anything else. People try to describe it, but you are unable to comprehend. In the same way, it's hard to describe being born again until you have had your spiritual eyes opened.

Who is your head? Are you "in Adam" or "in Christ"? In Adam, you are under the power of sin. In Jesus Christ, you are liberated from sin. The choice is yours. David the psalmist wrote, "O taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him." (Psalm 34:8) No matter how deep your pit, God's grace is deeper to save and keep you.

1. Who are "in Adam" and who are "in Christ"?"
2. Is your addiction physical, mental, or spiritual in nature? Explain.
3. When Adam sinned, what happened to his relationship with God?
4. What is the remedy for man's condition? See John 3:7.
5. Why must a person be born again? Refer to 1 Corinthians 2:14.
6. How can a person be free from an addiction—or any sin—and live righteously forever? Write out 2 Corinthians 5:17.