

ONE STEP

CHAPTER 2: Initial Restoration

Lesson 2

MAN'S CONDITION

*“O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?
I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Romans 7:24-25a)*

What is the underlying problem of man and the remedy? If we fail to understand the nature of the problem, we will misdiagnose it. Jeremiah, the prophet, rebuked the false prophets of his time for overlooking the seriousness of the people's problems.

Write what the prophet said in Jeremiah 6:14.

We want to avoid giving superficial help that does not get down to the matter of the heart.

1. What proceeds from the heart according to Matthew 15:19?
2. What is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked according to Jeremiah 17:9?

Self-help groups have an appearance of help, but they can only put a Band-Aid on a cancerous condition. As we learn God's perspective on the origin of our problems, then we can deal with the root cause in our hearts.

3. How did we get a sinful heart? See Romans 5:12.

God tells us that when Adam sinned, every person inherited his sin, since the entire human race is a descendant of Adam. Herein lies man's condition: because of sin, we will all die—physically and spiritually.

4. See Genesis 2:17.
5. See Genesis 3:3.

OUR CONDITION “IN ADAM”

Adam was a perfect man, living in a personal relationship to his Creator. Since real love is not forced, Adam had the choice to remain obedient to God or to pursue “self-enlightenment” through the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Upon being tempted by Satan, both Adam and his wife, Eve, ate of the forbidden tree and sinned.

EVERY PERSON IS NATURALLY SELF-CENTERED

Adam's sin corrupted him. Originally, he loved to please God; however, his inward person (that is, his human nature) was marred by sin. From then on, his natural inclination was to please his flesh independent of God. All of us as Adam's descendants have inherited a corrupt, sinful nature.

In the garden, God-centeredness was replaced with self-centeredness, self-interest, and self-desire. Now, every single person is fully motivated in the direction of what pleases his or her flesh, instead of being motivated to please God.

6. See James 1:15.

According to the Bible, sin controls us and we cannot escape this control on our own. Jesus tells us we are all slaves to sin.

7. See John 8:34.

First, sin brings physical death, and secondly, it brings spiritual deadness where we are unable to relate to God. Without God's Holy Spirit, we are spiritually dead and powerless. This is why people are so bound and broken.

8. See Genesis 1:26a, 27.

Man was created to reflect the image (or likeness) of God through a loving personal relationship with Him. Instead, we are more concerned about our own self image.

We seek an identity apart from God on our own, but man is incomplete apart from a personal relationship with God. This is why we experience loneliness, dissatisfaction, emptiness and a fear of death. All unbelievers are bound for eternal destruction.

But physical death is not the end; the soul (consciousness) of man will exist throughout all of eternity. Death literally rules over those "in Adam" as king. Its rule is inescapable apart from some outside supernatural, miraculous provision—Jesus Christ.

9. See 1 Corinthians 15:21.

10. See Romans 5:17.

GOD'S REMEDY

Through Adam's offense, judgment came to all people. But God gave us a remedy for our condition: His Son, Jesus Christ.