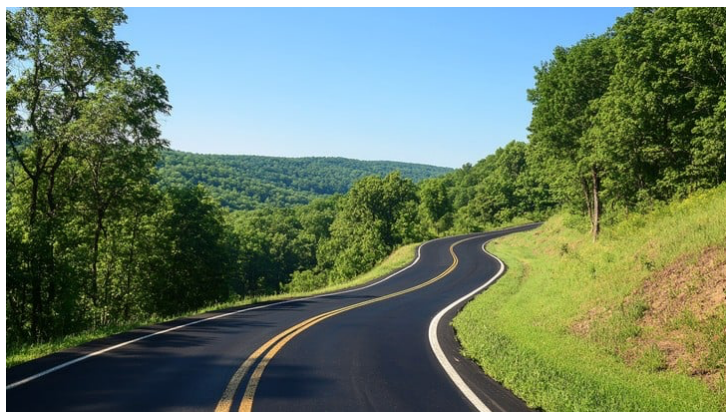




The Only Road that leads to Heaven



We have all heard people saying, but I don't hurt anybody, I'm a good person, I will help anyone in need, and God sees that, so I won't have any problems getting to heaven!

Let us begin by defining a Human Being, according to the definition of the Cambridge English Thesaurus: A good person, action, etc.

These words describe people or actions that are morally right.

A good person is kind and helpful because it is morally right to be kind and helpful.

A good action is morally right.

She is a good woman who goes out of her way to help others.

He believes that children should be encouraged to do good deeds.

The opposite of **good** is bad.

There are a lot of bad people in this world.

For more opposites of **good**, see the article at bad.

Virtuous and righteous are more formal ways of saying that someone behaves in a morally good way.

I believe that humans are, despite their flaws, capable of virtuous conduct.

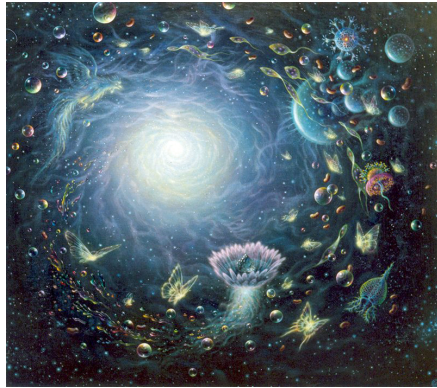
He refused to stray from the righteous path.

A person who obeys the law is honest.

He was a hardworking, honest family man who was only trying to do his duty.

Let us see an array of worldly views on Man:

Pantheism Says:



Not only is man good, man is god.

We just need to recognize the fact.

Like naturalism, pantheism doesn't allow for a personal God inside or outside the physical universe.

Traditional pantheism sees god as an infinite impersonal force that encompasses all of reality.

All is one, all is god.

Americanized pantheism, or the New Age Movement, adds an evolutionary element.

It sees men and women becoming one with the universal mind as a continuation of material evolution through the animal kingdom.

Unlike naturalism, pantheism sees man's problem as a spiritual one.

Somehow, mankind has collectively forgotten its oneness with the universe.

This separates man from understanding the true nature of things and, according to New Age teaching, visits upon him all the suffering of our current world and leaves him without the power to make reality conform to his bidding.

So, man is basically good.

We've just forgotten our oneness.

The solution is education.

We need to be enlightened.

We need to have our spiritual eyes opened so we can visualize world peace.

Naturalism Says:



Man is the product of his environment.

As the product of evolution, man is just a more highly evolved animal.

Therefore he is the product of his environment.

This was the underlying assumption of behavioral psychologists like Pavlov, Maslow and Skinner.

When it comes to the nature of man, they were the most consistent naturalists.

Skinner said that the mind was a myth—that thoughts were simply chemical processes responding to physical stimuli.

Man simply responds to his environment.

As such, man does not have free will.

Therefore, if you find yourself committing a crime, it's not your fault.

It's because of the way you were raised or because of your present circumstances.

Therefore, you shouldn't be punished.

Does this sound familiar?

We hear that a lot in our culture.

Remember my example from the first lesson?

I heard a news story where some school children had defaced or destroyed some school property.

The teacher being interviewed said, "They are basically good kids, but they ...come from under-privileged homes..." That statement reveals what that teacher's view of human nature is.

Man is basically good, but society makes them do bad things.

There are a couple of logical problems with this view:

Would it not also be true, that if you dive in front of a car to save someone, it's not your fault either.

So, you wouldn't want to accept any praise or reward for saving that person.

Very few naturalists are intellectually honest and consistent with their world view when it comes to human nature.

They pick and choose what they want and borrow from the Christian world view.

They want to take credit for their good deeds, and they want to believe that they are in control of their own destiny.

But they are quick to say that man is basically good, and things like poverty, ignorance, abuse, etc. make him do bad things.

If this is true, then creating the perfect society will end crime, abuse, etc.

A big problem with this view is this: If man is basically good, how did we get a bad society to start with?

It would seem the first society would have been made by good people, been perfect from the start, and stayed perfect.

There is obviously a logical problem with this, but that doesn't deter anyone.

We've already seen there is a logical problem with the idea that society causes evil, but does this match up with reality or your experience?

Did you abuse your two year old or was he naturally selfish, disobedient, etc.?

Do smart, rich people commit crimes?

I think it is very enlightening to lay our world view grid over the realm of politics.

It will help you understand why certain political systems believe certain things and why people buy into them.

Marxism, Communism and Socialism are prime examples of the naturalist world view.

Evil is defined as capitalism where the wealthy oppress the poor.

If everyone in society is equal, then everyone will choose to act properly.

They will work to the best of their ability and take only what they need from the community.

Does Marxism, Communism or socialism work?



We've already seen the Soviet Union abandon it.

China is abandoning it.

In practice, a few rule and oppress the masses – keeping them in poverty.

Taxes go way up, and productivity goes way down, etc.

People are basically selfish and don't work for the good of society.

It's only those in leadership, with all the privileges, who tell everyone else how wonderful Marxism, Communism or Socialism is.

A French political philosopher recently said that nowadays when he wants to debate a Marxist, he has to import one from an American university.

So why are there so many socialists in America?

They are just being consistent with their world view—at least in theory.

Since they live in a society based on capitalism and the morals of Christianity, they can push their philosophy and not have to live it.

So, naturalism relieves man of guilt. He is just the product of his environment.

Let's look at another aspect of evolution...

There is a tendency towards improvement

Naturalism and evolution teach us that there is in Nature an inherent tendency towards improvement.

People don't just apply this principle to the physical world.

How do they apply this premise to their view of human nature?

Answer: We should be good and getting better.

What are the Bible's, principles on entropy, and history teach?

Answer: To put it simply—Things tend to fall apart without an external force maintaining it.

In the moral and spiritual realm, that external force (really an internal force) is the Holy Spirit.

Despite what the rationalists say, you can't just teach morality and expect men to follow the rules.

People don't usually do what they know is right.

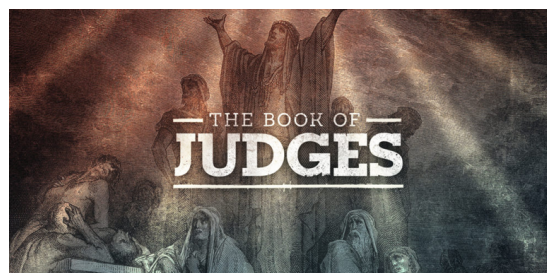
They do what they love to do.

They do what makes them feel good, what gives them power, etc.

Education doesn't make people be good. It just makes smarter sinners.

Anyone who studies history knows that nations may start good and grow for a while, but then immorality sets in, everyone does what is right in their own eyes and the society fails.

We see it over and over again in the Bible, especially in the book of Judges.



And in secular history --Babylon, Assyria, Greece, Rome.

And we are repeating this cycle in America.

The first part of the gospel is that man is a sinner and needs a savior.

If you take away the gospel, then you don't have people getting saved.

Jesus becomes just an example to follow.

You don't have the Holy Spirit indwelling/controlling people and making them "want" to do good.

There is no fruit of the Spirit, because there is no Spirit.

They are selfish, and they do what is good for themselves.

So, for example, instead of a politician doing what is good for the country (others), they do what is good for them, what will get them re-elected, what will give them more power, what will give them more money (pleasure), etc.

So, we might be angry, but we shouldn't be surprised with what's going on in Washington.

Of course there are altruistic people.



Since we are created in the image of God, we are capable of doing good.

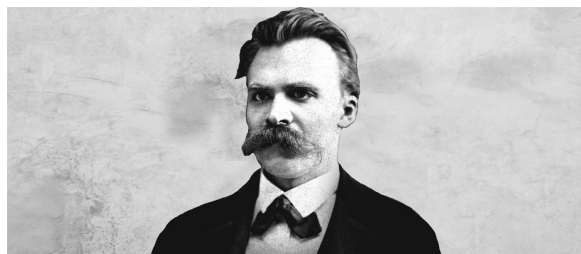


Being depraved doesn't mean we are always as bad as we can be.

Altruism was coined by Auguste Comte, the French founder of positivism, in order to describe the ethical doctrine he supported.

He believed that individuals had a moral obligation to serve the interest of others or the "greater good" of humanity.

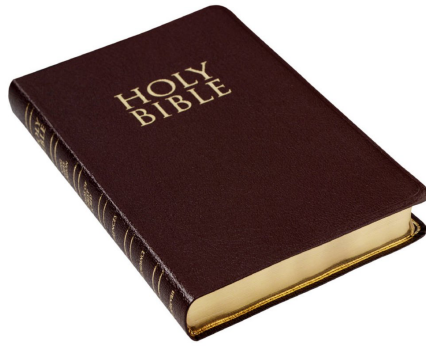
Nietzsche supported egoism and pointed out that such a position is degrading and demeaning to the individual.



He also pointed out that altruism was very rare until the advent of Christianity.

So, again it seems that we have people with non-Christian world views borrowing from Christianity and trying to be moral without the proper foundation. And it doesn't work.

The Bible Says:



Gen. 1:26 – God created man in His own image.

This does not mean physical likeness.

God is Spirit.

Although the Bible speaks of the “hand” of God, it also speaks of being “sheltered under his wing.”

These are just word pictures to help us understand concepts about God.

Being in the image of God refers to our personality, intelligence, conscience, awareness of right and wrong, etc.

We are individual and moral creatures.

Because we are in the image of God we are capable of loving, doing good deeds, sacrifice, etc. So, creation explains why we are capable of great good.

We've seen what the three major world views say about man's basic nature as it relates to being good or bad.

But let's look at another aspect of the nature of man.

Man is unique from animals in his ability to think logically, reason, etc.



Although an animal might learn how to navigate a maze and do so faster and faster each time he is put into the maze, animals don't engage in abstract thinking.

They don't form different types of governments.

They don't develop advance technologically.

A beaver house looks the same now as it has for thousands of years.

A bird's nest looks the same now as it always has.

If man is just a more highly evolved animal, how does naturalism explain this huge leap in intelligence?

But if we were created in the image of God, then his vast difference from the animals makes sense.

Gen. 2:8, 16, 17 – God put them in a perfect environment with everything they needed. (Remember that naturalism says, if we just had a perfect environment, everyone would be good.) He gave them a command to obey.

God didn't create or want robots.

He wanted creatures who chose to have fellowship with Him.

Gen. 3:1-24 – Man disobeyed.

We see their guilt (vs 7).

We see that the world was affected (vs 17-18).

The result was immediate spiritual death and eventual physical death.

Because of the fall, the image of God was corrupted.

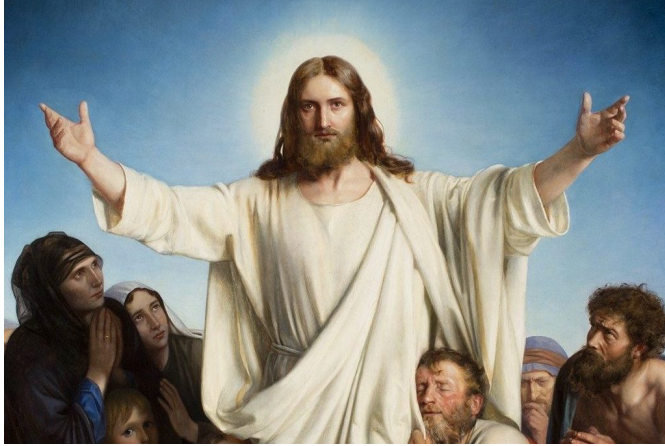
And the Bible teaches that Adam's sin was passed on to the whole human race.

Rom 5:12 says, "So then, just as sin entered the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all people because all sinned."

In Ps 51:5, David says, "Look, I was prone to do wrong from birth; I was a sinner the moment my mother conceived." So, the fall also explains why man is capable of great evil.



Rom 3:23 says that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, but they are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.



Otherwise, the penalty for sin is death (**Rom 6:23**) So, man sinned, but God provided a way to make things right by sending His Son to die and pay the penalty for sin.

Pantheism says there is no guilt because you are god and just need to recognize it.



Through the process of karma and reincarnation you'll eventually figure it out.

Naturalism says there is no guilt because you are just responding to external stimuli and your environment made you do it.

Those religions that teach that there is guilt all have a system by which you can earn God's approval.

Christianity is unique because it recognizes the guilt and it recognizes we can't do anything about it on our own.

Guilt is good because it drives one outside of himself to seek a solution.

That solution is Jesus Christ.

God has provided a way to take care of our guilt by accepting Christ's payment for the guilt on our behalf.



Conclusion

A person has to recognize he is a sinner before he sees the need for a savior.

I think the main thing we need to recognize, is that the idea that man is basically good strikes at the very heart of the gospel message.

It keeps a lot of folks outside the church from coming to Christ.

And it even keeps a lot of folks who go to church and think they are Christians from recognizing their sin and need for Jesus.

1 John 1:9 (NIV):

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

John 14:6 (NIV):

Jesus answered, “**I am the way and the truth and the life.** No one comes to **the** Father except through me.

Romans 10:9-10 (NIV):

9 If you declare with your mouth,
“Jesus is Lord, ” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For it is with your heart that
you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess
your faith and are saved.

Acts 2:38 (NIV):

38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit..



Please remember friends, that You can't buy your way into heaven or out of hell.

Rev. Jesus Del Rio, ED