

# The Crooked and Perverse Generation

By Doug Hamilton

## VI. The Heart Through the Eyes of the Crooked and Perverse Generation

We have reached the end of our series *The Crooked and Perverse Generation*. We have expanded Philippians 2:14-15 “*Do all things without grumbling or disputing; <sup>15</sup> so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world...*” We have and always will be living in a *crooked and perverse generation*. Jesus said that His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). We are told by His apostle John to not love the world nor the things of the world (1John 2:15). We are warned by Paul in Romans 12:2 to not be conformed to this world. That is the real danger of this world, for the world has a way of desensitizing the Christian into thinking they are not being influenced by the world when they are. It is called deception. That is the point of the series of lesson which we have been covering.

We have analyzed what the Bible teaches concerning 1) Parenting 2) Human Life 3) Marriage and Sex 4) Material Goods and 5) Truth. In each of the categories we also covered what the world is teaching about the same. We concluded each lesson on how we can shine as lights in the world. In the last lesson we will examine the human heart in the same pattern.

### A. The Biblical View of the Heart

#### 1. Man’s Heart is Rotten to the Core.

a. The Bible is very clear that man is rotten to the core and bad to the bone. The heart of man is very corrupt in nature.

- i. Jeremiah 17:9-10 “The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it? <sup>10</sup> “I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds.
- ii. Jeremiah 10:23 I know, O LORD, that a man’s way is not in himself, Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.
- iii. Matthew 15:19 “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.
- iv. Eccl 9:3 “...the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives.”
- v. One would be hard-pressed to persuade a reader of the scriptures that all mankind does not have a heart problem.

b. Our best attempts always fall short.

- i. Romans 3:10-12 as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; <sup>11</sup> THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; <sup>12</sup> ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.”
- ii. Romans 3:23 “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”

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- iii. Is 64:6 “For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment...”
- iv. We can try with all our ambitions to pretend that we are good at heart, but we only are deceiving ourselves.

### 2. Man Must Have Their Heart Addressed By God.

#### a. This was predicted long before Jesus came.

- i. Ezekiel 36:26-27 “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.
- ii. Jeremiah 31:33 “...I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

#### b. Jesus spoke of it as well.

- i. Matthew 5:8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
- ii. Luke 6:45 “The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil *man* out of the evil *treasure* brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.

#### c. The apostles taught it.

- i. James 4:8 Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.
- ii. 2 Thessalonians 3:13 says he wants to establish our hearts without blame in holiness.

### 3. Man Must Surrender Their Hearts to God. Why is this a true statement?

#### a. God understands our heart.

- i. Acts 15:8 says that God knows the heart.
- ii. Proverbs 21:2 says the Lord weighs the heart.
- iii. 1 Thes 2:4 says He examines our heart.
- iv. Psalm 44:21 says He knows the secrets of our heart.
- v. Luke 9:47 confirms that He knows the reasoning of our hearts.
- vi. Hebrews 4:12 confirms that it is through the word of God that can discern the thoughts and intentions of our heart.
- vii. God understands our heart even better than we can do for ourselves.

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- b. God can fully penetrate the heart.
  - i. Acts 2:37 says the listeners were “pierced in the heart”.
  - ii. Romans 2:29 says that Christians have a “circumcision of the heart” and Colossians 2:11-12 identifies this occurring at the point of a believing baptism.
  - iii. Psalm 147:3 says God heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.
  - iv. Nobody can touch a heart like God. He can reach the depths that no human being could ever do.
  
- c. God wants our heart for Him.
  - i. Matthew 22:37 And He said to him, “YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.”
  - ii. Psalm 105:3 Let the heart of those who seek the LORD be glad.
  - iii. Mark 7:6 Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.
  - iv. God wants our heart to be fully dedicated to Him. That demonstrates the deepest love for us.

### B. The Worldview of the Heart

#### 1. The World Defines Man’s Heart As Innately Good.

- a. We have a humanist perspective in our land today that teaches man is good at his core. The problem with that is the evidence.
  - i. Hitler killed millions; Stalin killed millions; Mao killed millions; Pol Pot killed millions. In the last century mankind in all their “tranquility” committed genocide more than 100 million times. This did not happen because man’s heart is good.
  - ii. Kids being shot in schools, passenger planes being blown out of the air, people murdered in the street, car-jackings, hit men, robberies, fraud, rape, perjury and lying becoming all too common.
  - iii. Muslims killing Christians; Hindus killing Muslims; Communists killing seekers of freedom. People coveting after all the things of their neighbor, greed, selfish ambitions, power-seeking and lusts are all too common. This is because the same God Who said to “love Him with all your heart, soul and mind” also said “love your neighbor”. If you get rid of the first, then the second must go as well.
- b. Back in the early 1800s a Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville, came to research America and attempt to figure out why it was so successful,

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being only a relatively new country. Spending five years walking the land and observing the people, he commented about the religious spirit of the nation as the first thing he noticed. *Upon my arrival in the United States the religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention; and the longer I stayed there, the more I perceived the great political consequences resulting from this new state of things. In France I had almost always seen the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom marching in opposite directions. But in America I found they were intimately united and that they reigned in common over the same country. "Democracy in America".* He would go to conclude that *"America is great because she is good. If America ceases to be good, America will cease to be great."* America has long since turned her heart away from God and is reaping the consequences.

### 2. The World Defines Her Own Morals.

- a. We watch the television shows and Disney productions that tell us to "Follow Our Hearts". We live in a society that tells us to "Just Do It" and to *"do what is right in our own eyes"*. The humanistic perspective is that man can govern himself by the internal programming in their biology. Nothing could be further from the truth.
  - i. Jeremiah 10:23 I know, O LORD, that a man's way is not in himself, Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.
  - ii. Proverbs 14:12 There is a way *which seems* right to a man, But its end is the way of death.
- b. The world tells Christians that "You have no right to impose your morality on me." What they are really saying is "Don't let you morality stand in the way of my immorality."
  - i. Ephesians 4:18-19 says of the world that they "...darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness."
- c. They say that "You can't legislate morality." What are they doing when they use a humanistic principle to impose their values? Somebody's morality must be legislated!
- d. They end up defining bad values as good values.
  - i. Is 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil..."
  - ii. 2 Timothy 3:1-4 "But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. <sup>2</sup> For men will be lovers of self, lovers of

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money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God...”

### C. How can we shine as lights in the world?

We are told that as a man thinketh, so he is (Proverbs 23:7). Your mindset in light of a crooked and perverse generation is imperative to being effective. Therefore it is important to focus your mind in the right way. Here are three mindsets to have.

#### 1. Set your mind on things above.

- Col 3:2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.
- Phil 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.
- If we want to stay on track in this life, then we must allow the characteristics of God to dwell in our lives.

#### 2. Set your mind on your salvation.

- Romans 6:17-18 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed. <sup>18</sup> and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.
- It does the heart good when you know that your soul is taken care of. When your soul is right with God the level of confidence shines.

#### 3. Set your mind on the reward of heaven.

- John 14:1-3 “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also.
- What good is eternal life without someone to share it with? You have a church family, the heavenly host and God Himself to look forward to for eternity.

If we will just set our minds in the right way, then we will become a light for the crooked and perverse generation to find their way. When they see this, they will want the confidence which we have, but only if we will show them.