

# The INTERCESSOR

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

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## How do Good and Evil fit into God's Plan?

by Norman Grubb

*To experience victorious living, writes Norman Grubb, we must see all things as God sees them. In the following excerpt from The Deep Things of God, Norman presents God's unifying principle underlying all of life's circumstances that unlocks the positive attitude of faith that moves mountains.*

Moving on now into the problems of daily life, I want to underline the attitude of faith which unties every conceivable knot, and leaps over every high wall. It is really only a reiteration of what we have already seen, for faith is always just faith; but it concerns the problem of our divided outlook.

It is obvious that life is a mixture. As we have already seen, both good and evil are to be seen everywhere, in nature, in man, in politics, in industry. We never meet with one without the other: health–disease: prosperity–adversity: riches–poverty: love–hate: kindness–cruelty: life–death. We meet with these right in our personal lives; in our own hearts, in the family, in business, in church fellowship. Now it is human nature in us to want to embrace the one and flee from the other. But we can't solve life's problems that way. We can't escape the inescapable. Victorious living, indeed, means the ability to handle life's adversities as suc-

cessfully, redemptively, and with as much understanding as life's prosperities. To do this, once again, we must go to the root of things. We must see all things as God sees them. It must be God looking through our eyes at our (His) problems, God thinking His thoughts in our minds concerning them, and God working in us to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Let us go back once again to the beginning. We have our book of revelation—the whole Bible—so it is not difficult to trace the revealed mind and ways of God. He has not left us in bewilderment. His purpose and plan of grace is plain from Genesis to Revelation: all is centred in His Son. He was before all things, all was created by Him, and all is for His own pleasure (Rev. 4:11i). But He also foreknew the long, long trail to that final consummation, when He will gather together in one all things in Christ, in the new heavens and new earth wherein will dwell righteousness.

### The Necessity of Paired Opposites

We have already seen that nothing exists without its opposite: to say yes to one thing is to say no to its opposite: to love one thing is to hate its opposite: light can only shine visibly in contrast to darkness: life

“swallows up mortality.” But when the Creator in His purpose of love and grace brought into existence His own “opposite,” created beings in His own likeness, that their emptiness should be swallowed up by His fulness, their weakness manifest His strength, their darkness radiate His light, He foreknew and foresaw what might and did happen—that a great rift would appear in the harmony of His universe. As all negatives are the hidden, submissive partners to their

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positives, as the female to the male, as minors to majors, in the union of the two all life in thought and action being reproduced, so were we to be as the created to our Creator, as bride to Bridegroom, as servants to Master, as sons to Father.

But as free selves, we could do what no other pair of opposites could do, we could refuse to keep this “first estate” of creature to Creator; we could aspire to be as God, the minor as the major, the darkness as light, the weakness as strength; and we could upset the equilibrium of our world. This is what God foresaw that we should do, and Lucifer and his angels before us. It meant the appearance of a whole principle of evil not in existence before, a negative that defied its positive and would replace it, a darkness that would be as light, an evil that would claim to be the good, a devil (and man) who would be God. The prophet boldly said of God that He “created evil” (Is. 45: 7), and it is true in the sense that a created being has the potentiality, the freedom to refuse to keep its own estate, and in refusing, to bring into manifestation the negative kingdom of evil as a power, “the power of darkness.”

This was the warning God gave Adam and Eve: Beware of the tree of the knowledge of good *and* evil. Good they knew already, for all that God had created He pronounced to be “very good.” The not-good (evil), the hidden opposite to good, was unknown to them. Let them beware: the existence of such an actuality as evil (in Lucifer and his hosts) was there before their eyes in the symbol of that tree. But into the trap they fell. No longer was the world within and without a world of pure goodness. Another spirit was working in them, the negative spirit of disobedience, infecting them as it infected all nature. There was not only the Yes of God’s goodness around

them, but the No of God’s wrath on evil; and life had become a dichotomy, the clash of arms resounded through nature, the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness in mortal combat.

But both are still *God’s* kingdoms, the kingdom of His Yes, the kingdom of His No; the kingdom of His grace, the kingdom of His wrath. We quickly begin to lose our way, if we are deluded into thinking that the foes in this war are of equal status. That never has been, nor could be. Major and minor, positive and negative, and so on down the line of all pairs of opposites, can never ultimately move from their created relationships, no matter how a satanic or human self may try to inflate itself from a nothing to a something. It is only bluff, self-deceit, false imagination, although it may and has caused all temporary upsets and discords in our world, and ends in an actual sphere of outer darkness for those who continue in it. No one has ever been on the throne of the universe but the perfect God Himself, perfect in foresight, perfect in plan and action, perfect in power, perfect in love.

Therefore to Him, and this is all-important to us, there never has been an unmanageable division, a dichotomy. He works all things after the counsel of His own will, *evil as well as good*. Evil serves His purposes as much as good. The devil is His agent.

### **God Uses Evil**

The Bible makes it plain that, not only did He foresee the invasion of evil, but that He actively intervened to use it for His glory. Of us men in our evil ways it says that He hardens us (for we are all Pharaohs by nature), and is glorified in the hardening and its consequences (Rom. 9:17): not indeed that He may destroy us, but that by making us sample the fruits of our rebellion, as many as possible of us may repent of our

ways and be saved, for “He hath concluded us all in disobedience, *that* He may have mercy on all.” Of the inanimate creation travelling in pain, we have already pointed out that it is God *Himself* who has subjected it to its present condition, not of its own volition, but in deliberate anticipation of the glorious deliverance to come (Rom. 8:20). There is then this connection here, in the whole creation, between experience gained through suffering and subsequent glory, a lesson which we humans can learn intelligently and accept willingly. Good is faced with evil, and only by conquest of it becomes established goodness.

This is how God is establishing His eternal Kingdom which shall never be moved (Heb. 12:28, 29). He Himself has planned and produced a creation which could and did go into reverse. It split wide open the positive goodness of all things and exposed the hidden opposite, bitter to sweet, lie to truth, hate to love, selfishness to unselfishness.

### God’s Plan of Restoration

And how did God meet this revolt? By Himself becoming the opposite to Himself—God becoming man, the Strong becoming the weak, Spirit taking flesh, and finally the Sinless becoming the sinner, Life becoming death. As captain (pioneer, trailcutter) of our salvation, He led the way by being perfected in the sufferings we suffer and by conquest of them. God tasted the duality of good and evil, tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. But in being tempted he was totally victorious, in suffering His faith never failed, “faithful to Him that appointed him in all His house”: and tasting the final form of evil, death for every man, He drank the cup to the dregs in the perfect obedience of faith, and thus destroyed in His resurrection him that had the power of

death, that is the devil, and delivered his bondslaves from the fear of him. That is to say, He deliberately embraced evil, the worst evil Satan has it in his power to inflict. He permitted it to strike Him with all its force, and indeed to overcome Him in the flesh. He died at the hands of the evil one.

But He died in the inner triumph of faith. This is revealed to us in Heb. 5, where

we read that at Gethsemane He obeyed His Father to the limit, but in accepting the coming Calvary He first prevailed with Him by strong crying and tears that He should be saved out of death, “and was heard” because of His filial faith. By this means, by obedience and faith, He turned the evil back onto its perpetrator, and instead of being destroyed Himself, by His resurrection from the dead He destroyed the

## Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this magazine is to further the great high calling of the Lord Jesus to carry His Gospel to the whole world. This calling is known in the Christian world as the Great Commission. Our interpretation of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ is the second member of the Trinity, fully God, made manifest in the flesh. He was tempted in all points as we are, but totally without sin. He was crucified for the sins of the world, was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He gives the power to become the sons of God to all who receive Him.

Beyond this forgiveness of sins, *The Intercessor* is committed to proclaiming to every creature the mystery of the Gospel, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27). The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church at Pentecost means that Christ has joined Himself to us as one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). Thus we see that Christ has reproduced Himself in our flesh, and we Christians are really Christ living as us (Gal. 2:20).

Therefore, there is not only the forgiveness of sins but also a life in Christ of knowing we are dead to sin (Rom. 6). Furthermore, we are dead to the Law (Rom. 7), since the power of sin is through the Law. Christ is the only Lawkeeper (Rom. 8), and there is no independent human nature that can keep the Law, though we are continually tempted to believe so.

Belief in an independent human nature is Satan’s lie and the root of sin. Non-Christians are really Satan-indwelt, expressing his lusts (John 8:44), just as we have come to learn that Christians are Christ-indwelt, expressing His righteousness (2 Cor. 6:16). Humans have no moral nature of their own, meaning that we are simply expressions of the indwelling deity nature, either of Christ or Satan (the fallen created being who is the spirit of error). Sin in a Christian is a result of believing again Satan’s lie that there is a human nature which can do good or evil.

Our full restoration, then, is to see ourselves as Christ in the world and to labor and travail to see Christ formed in others according to the mighty working of the Spirit. This is “intercession,” the definite laying down of our lives to present every man perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28). *The Intercessor* is committed to this great and thrilling commission, the cost of bringing it about, and the resurrection joy of reaping the harvest!

destroyer. He turned evil to good—by faith; and as the first pioneer on the road of salvation which we tread (Heb. 2:10), He made a way of faith possible for all of us who will go through, believing Him in like “evil” circumstances. For us also, then, our evil will be our good. That is why in the same chapter, the writer says that the spiritually mature will, by going victoriously through life’s experiences, learn to “discern both evil and good.” When we are in spiri-

tual infancy we judge things by outward appearances. If a situation is pleasant, it is good; if unpleasant, evil. But as we grow in the Spirit, we learn that all that comes to us is good if accepted in faith, and the only evil in the world for us is our inner unbelieving attitudes. Good and evil are not in our circumstances, but in ourselves, according to our reaction to them.

—*The Deep Things of God*

## Editor’s Note

As we continue our series working our way systematically through the themes and topics of what we boldly call the Total Truth, we come to the problem of evil. Man has long been troubled by some form of the question: “Why do bad things happen to good people?” Many believers would simply answer that we live in a fallen world and that bad things and evil things are inevitable, tragic consequences of the fall of man. But the problem of evil becomes even more challenging when the starting place is, as we established in previous issues, that God does not merely permit bad things but He determines ALL things—even the schemes of Satan. And so Satan is merely God’s convenient agent in God’s master plan of redemption.

We see the greatest example of this in the death of Christ. Satan wanted Jesus dead and gone, and it appeared that Satan got what he wanted in the moment Jesus breathed his final breath on the cross. But remember what Jesus had said just hours before as he struggled in agony in the garden at Gethsemane: “Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?” (John 18:11, emphasis added). Jesus knew that this was and always had been the will of His Father, for He was

“the lamb slain before the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8). His death came at the hands of Satan, but it came from the will of his Father.

Knowing God’s will did not change how Jesus felt in his humanity. As he agonized in the garden, Jesus cried out in anguish that there might be another way. But He saw through the worldly appearances to His Father, the author of all things—God as Love using this apparent horror to redeem lost humanity. And so Jesus was able to say “not My will, but Yours, be done” (Luke 22:42).

Likewise, when confronted with hardship and difficulties and evil itself, we are to see through the circumstances, through our soul feelings, even through evil to God Himself—God who is love and who works all things together for good (Romans 8:28).

Keep reading as we take on this difficult topic to discover how the Biblical truth of God determining evil can make a revolutionary difference in your life. Learn the secret of seeing through outer appearances to the spirit reality of God’s redemptive purposes in ALL things. As Norman Grubb would say: “Everything that comes to us is God coming to us.” When we see with this single eye of faith (Matt 6:22 KJV), we are equipped to give thanks in ALL things. What glorious freedom, joy, and peace!

## Norman Grubb

Christian missionary, teacher and author



Norman Grubb was a well-known evangelical Christian missionary to Africa, following in the footsteps of his father-in-law C.T. Studd. The son of an Irish clergyman, he became a decorated war hero for his service as a lieutenant of the Bloucester regiment in World War I. After the war, he attended Trinity College, Cambridge, and married Pauline Studd. During his time as a missionary in the Belgian Congo, he translated the New Testament into the African trade language, Bangala. Norman ultimately became the British and General Secretary of the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, serving in that capacity until 1965. He was instrumental in the formation of the Christian Literature Crusade and the beginnings of InterVarsity Fellowship.

Mr. Grubb is the author of *Rees Howells*, *Intercessor*, the acclaimed and inspiring biography of the Welsh coal miner who became the founder of the Bible College of Wales. Mr. Grubb authored more than twenty five books and pamphlets. He spoke at the Presidential Prayer Breakfast and taught at lay conferences such as Faith at Work.

The central concentration of Mr. Grubb’s later works is “Christ in you, the hope of glory,” and it was his drive to bring the reality of this truth to seekers after “the deep things of God” within the body of Christ.

Following many years of teaching, writing, and travel, Mr. Grubb died at age 98 on December 15, 1993, in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania.

# The Key to Everything



By Norman Grubb

*The following excerpt from Norman Grubb's Who Am I? explores the only way God could fully condition and establish His sons to be joint heirs in His Kingdom of out-poured love.*

We shall now move on to the heart of things which we can call the key to everything. We have now come full circle to where we started. We said at the beginning that our total revolution is our return from being matter-people to what we really are—spirit people. And the extent of that revolution is beyond all words, and reaches right down to the tiniest detail or the greatest mountain in our lives. We took a brief glance at the raw fact that either the Bible is an unreliable record, or the men of God from earliest years to the final happenings listed in Hebrews 2, lived in a dimension right in the middle of this earthly world, in which things took place which cannot be accounted for by human reason. Having already referred to a number from Old Testament records, we need

only look at the life of Jesus, who the Bible makes plain in Hebrews 2 became wholly one of us, a true human. It is plain that He did not see earth events as we see them. He did not look at them but through them—to what? To the reality of which they were only external distorted shadows. He did not look away elsewhere to call His Father on the scene. He saw Him already always there at the hidden part of the apparent condition of the need. He saw the One of whom it is said, “Who is above all, and through all, and in you all,” and, “By Him all things consist.” The distortions had their origin in our fallen human beliefs, which in their grab and grasp, had brought need, disease, and disharmony into God’s perfect world, so that we have to live out in a world of thorns and thistles by the sweat of our brows.

So how did Jesus act? In the coolest possible manner He continually saw right through the lack or disease. Did they fish all night and catch nothing? He held no

prayer meeting, but just said, “Launch out and let down your nets for draught... and they enclosed a great multitude of fish.” They were on the lake when a big storm arose and the boat was filling with water. When they called out to Him and woke Him from sleep, He actually rebuked them for being afraid they would drown. Have

withered. It is only if you see through to a whole hand with God’s life in that man, that you could tell him to do such a thing. He actually only saw sleep when we see death. He said of Jairus’ daughter, “She is not dead, but sleepeth.” And they laughed Him to scorn! Who wouldn’t! They bring Him five loaves to feed five thousand. No concern, no

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we any better faith today?! Don’t we still see at storms and fear them? And all He did was to see through the storm to the Father of all weather and all calm, who is at the heart of the storm because everything is a form of Him, and spoke that word of faith, “Peace, be still.” We see diseases and death. He evidently did not. You don’t tell a man with a withered hand to stretch it out, if you see it is

going aside to pray, just in order to get the people settled down in rows of fifty. Meanwhile He “Lifted His eyes to heaven” (it was necessary that they all see the source of power to be beyond Himself), blessed, break and “they were all filled.” And so water was turned to wine, money came out of a fish’s mouth, and all the healings of blind, lepers, deaf, dumb. And Peter picked up this way of

faith and boldly asked to walk on the water, and walked. Evidently Jesus took no account to the laws of gravity! And Peter followed through after Pentecost and said to the lame man by the gate of the Temple, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Such as he, Peter, had—not God! You see what I am saying? I am not saying, "imitate Him!" Faith is not imitation, but action on our level.

But I am delving into this

to our spirits, we are no longer matter-people, but spirit-people. "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you."

Now that means a totally different outlook on every detail of life, small or great, insofar as I recognize the falseness of my natural outlook and practice the habit of changing it. That is why we say it is the key to everything—everything. Nothing is outside its reach. It does not make us less practical or sensible, but quietly

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**Let us deliberately affirm, against all appearances, that this is not the difficulty it appears to be. Instead of looking at the situation, let us look through—to God, again not afar off, but the very situation being He in disguise.**

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key fact, that God is not limited to laborious matter-means of production based on human reasoning. It is the Fall which bound us down to human thinking; and Jesus said we are not to live by "taking thought."

God is the spirit, matter is only a condensed form of spirit, and we have tied ourselves down in our race-outlook to matter, and matter being the reality. But in Christ, by union with Him in His death and resurrection, and by His Spirit joined

seeing and approaching everything from a new dimension, or rather as being in that new dimension. It is also wholly logical if it is true, as I believe and there is all Bible evidence that it is.

Say a thing is just some small household or business problem, or some major world situation. I start by the way I am looking at it, for this is our whole first point, that we are inner people and are controlled by the way we inwardly see a thing, in other words by

our believing. Now I always am meant, as a practical human, to start seeing it as it outwardly appears. I have mislaid something. There is a financial need. There is a relationship problem. There is sickness or tragedy. Of course, I begin by believing it as it appears to be. That means I am bound by a sense of helplessness, or a drive to try somehow to clear it; but my spirit is clouded by my negative outlook; or of course in a thousand things it never even occurs to me that there could be another way of looking at it. What is more, I am confirming and strengthening the condition that is bothering me by my attitude of believing in it as it is. This is our whole realm of outlook on all life, and any other outlook is merely phony.

But now, supposing the real truth is that this outward situation is only an outward appearance. Really only a shadow. Suppose the real fact is that, as there is only God in the universe, this situation is God in disguise. It is He in some outer clothing of need, tragedy, problem. There are the distortions of God's perfect world, but they are only distortions. God's perfection is the only reality, and, as He did by Jesus, by the authority of the faith of His believing sons, He manifests

Himself today in His perfection through the outer appearances of imperfection. This Paul says has always been His own planned purpose for the world (Romans 8:19-21)—through His sons to complete the replacement of its present "bondage of corruption" by "glorious liberty;" in this we sons can do today in our local situations, as Jesus our elder brother did.

So we are daringly saying that whenever there is a need, small or great, wherever there is a disturbed or tragic situation, God is not just looking on and to be called upon to intervene. No, God is the Real One right in the situation, and it is only His distorted clothing; and we preserve the clothing by believing it to be the real.

Now, in utmost simplicity, without changing an outward thing, let us transfer our believings. That's all. Let us deliberately affirm, against all appearances, that this is not the difficulty it appears to be. Instead of looking at the situation, let us look through—to God, again not afar off, but the very situation being He in disguise. He with supply, He with solution, He with change, where we only see the opposite.

-From *Who Am I?*

FROM

# NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE BELIEVING

BY NORMAN GRUBB

Universal seeing and knowing, with no further double vision—that is what matters. That is the only key to a believing with no kinks in it. While we see Good and Evil as two powers—which was my trouble—we will naturally have a seesaw believing.

The first principle of faith in action, then, is that inner seeing must come before proper believing. Now in this world full of evil and problems, we will always, as humans, start by “seeing things as they are”—as they appear to be—and that means seeing and believing in something that disturbs us, which we call evil, and so it may be. This is “negative” believing...and what we are inwardly seeing, and therefore believing, is what we outwardly transmit to others. We can’t help it in our looks, words and deeds, for all we share with others is ourselves; and if we see things as evil we transmit negative believing to others—we transmit darkness, not light; death, not life.

Is there an alternative? Yes, there is—and that was what settled into me, once I saw God as all: that there cannot be two powers, for He is one, absolute and supreme. But how, then, can I include the workings of an evil power, of which the world and people are so full, as an expression of the one power which is God, who is love?

For that I had to find my solution, and of course I turned to the Bible. There I found the plainest state-

ments, which did link God with evil. The prophet Isaiah said plainly (45:6-7), “I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil [Hebrew word *ra*—adversity, calamity]; I, the Lord, do all these things.” That statement is total enough. But there are plenty more. To Moses, God said (Ex. 4:11), “Who hath made...the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord?” When Jeremiah spoke of God’s coming judgment on

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rebellious Israel with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, he said that God had called the heathen king who would destroy them “Nebuchadnezzar, My servant” (43:10)! The Assyrians God called “the rod of My anger” (Isa. 10:5). All the destructive plagues of insects that destroyed harvest after harvest in the days of Joel the prophet, “the palmer-worm, the locust, the canker-worm, the caterpillar,” God spoke of as “My great army which I sent among you” (See Joel 1:4 and 2:25). There are dozens of such sayings by the prophets.

We all know about Joseph, and he went even further.

He left no room for us to say that God “permits” evil things to happen but does not direct them; for, even though he had suffered thirteen years by being sold as a slave by his brethren and then being thrown into prison because of the false accusation of Potiphar’s wife, still he told his brethren, “Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good” (Gen. 50:20). Meant it! To “mean” is not to “permit.” It is direct purpose and planning.

Peter, in a startling statement in his speech on the day of Pentecost, when referring to the greatest crime in

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history, told the crowds: “Jesus of Nazareth...Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain” (Acts 2:22-23). Determinate counsel—there’s no possible permissiveness there! And when the believers in those early days of persecution were praying together, they said in their prayer: “For of a truth, against Thy holy child, Jesus,...both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done” (Acts 4:27-28). What could be stronger? Jesus Himself,

above all, when He stood before Pilate, and Pilate had said “Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?”, answered, “Thou couldest have no power at all against Me except it were given thee from above”! From above? We would say, if we believed in two powers, “from beneath”!

But Jesus saw only one power. At the Last Supper, as Judas left the table to betray Him, Jesus merely said to His disciples, “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.” Nothing! Jesus did not see Satan as having any inward footing in Him. And He said the final word when the soldiers were come into the garden to arrest Him, and He told Peter, “Put up thy sword into the sheath; the cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?” And what was that cup? Satan’s taking Him to Calvary.

I had the answer to God “meaning evil” when I saw that a person is a person only because he is free. Therefore, when God created persons in His own image, they could be persons only by being free, as He is free. And as we have seen manifested in the history of our human family, that had to include our freedom to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree, which in turn had to include its tragic consequences, the sorrows that God in His faithful love told Adam and Eve would come to them. So in creating persons like Himself, who would be free to manage His universe, they must be free and responsible. He could do no other, or they would not have been persons. As freedom involves the necessity of making choices, He therefore created them with the possibility of choosing the opposite to Himself, the evil—and they did. In that sense, therefore, God created evil, because, as we have seen, there cannot be consciousness without opposites.



It does not mean that God is the doer of that evil. As Paul said, "God forbid!" (Rom. 9:14). And James said, "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man" (1:13). God does not sin; nor is He responsible when we sin. He created freedom, and it is in freedom that there must be this possibility of the alternative choice, and thus in that sense alone He created evil. Satan himself was God's created being, of the highest order. In his freedom he rebelled, and founded the kingdom of darkness of which he is the god. But he is still forever God's Satan, and God deliberately used Satan, for instance, to bring Job to the final end of himself (as He uses him in all our lives!). And that is one of the great recorded evidences in the Bible that God is manipulating Satan, not Satan God (Job 1:8 and 2:3). Stretch this out, and (without excusing Satan for his evil designs) we find in all human history we can boldly call Satan "God's convenient agent." We have already sought to make plain that if Satan had not first been free to take us the wrong way, we would never now be safely settled in the right way through Christ. Watch carefully, and see God continually using evil for good purposes: "meaning" the evil as the product of our freedom, but using it for His overcoming grace.

In that sense, then, the Bible says that God "intends" the consequences of evil, whether referring to its corruptions within our personal lives or to all its horrors of disease, disasters, death, cruelties, "man's inhumanity to man." To think that God is taking pleasure in these things, however, is utterly untrue. We know that our fallen, evil condition so pierced His heart that, to redeem us from it, He came in the person of His Son to be perfected in suffering, right up to "tasting death for every man."

But it is necessary that we do recognize that, in another

sense, He does "mean" evil in all its tragedy, and understand why He means it. Only by that recognition can we be firm and strong—and praising!—when the storms of evil are blowing around us. If, when distressing conditions hit us or our neighbors, we only can say that God "permits it," we seem to imply a weakness in God as if He is sorry about such things but can't help it. However, an element of disturbing incongruity keeps us from ever picturing God as sitting back and leaving the devil free to do his damndest.

**...there is no other way except that we humans must reap our share of the sorrows of life, and that God purposes exactly what has come to us, we then can accept these trials in a totally opposite way—as all joy, instead of all horror. For we know this is the negative background for His great design of perfect love. All is perfect, and He is working out everything "after the counsel of His own will."**

So what is the result? When we have these solid grounds for knowing there is no other way except that we humans must reap our share of the sorrows of life, and that God purposes exactly what has come to us, we then can accept these trials in a totally opposite way—as all joy, instead of all horror. For we know this is the negative background for His great design of perfect love. All is perfect, and He is working out everything "after the counsel of His own will." It is always "the good pleasure of His goodness." And if good and enjoyable to Him, we know it is good and enjoyable to us.

—Yes, I Am

# *We Only Know* **Right** *Through* **Wrong**

By Norman Grubb

*The following excerpt from Norman Grubb's Who Am I? explores the only way God could fully condition and establish His sons to be joint heirs in His Kingdom of out-poured love.*

Now we come down to ourselves. We have seen God's purpose—to “bring many sons unto glory,” glory being to total fulfilment, a vast family of sons brought to their highest conceivable destiny as co-sons and co-heirs of the universe with His own Son. He had this in hand before the creation, “according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world,” and this meant one thing—that the sons must be mature, capable sons, not a crowd of irresponsible little children, but knowing who they are as persons, knowing how to function as sons, and thus knowing their destiny and able to fulfil it. That means training and development from little children to sons, and thus to sons who can represent their Father and take over His business for Him. And

this is the history of the human family.

There is one facet of mature experience which is often missed, yet it lies at the roots of capability on any level and none can be sure of himself and his proficiency in any profession without it. A thing is only a thing because it has its opposite. It has a right and a wrong, and the one has overcome the other. Sweet has overcome or swallowed up bitter, smooth rough, soft hard. Life swallows up death, said Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:4; and it gets its strength from having an opposite which it has swallowed up. You cannot say a certain yes in a decision, until you have first canvassed the alternatives and said an equally certain no to each of them. The strength of the yes is in swallowing up the noes! Not in having no noes, not in ignoring their existence, but in facing them and replacing them by the final yes. Then only is the yes a strong and certain one.

Proficiency is not in ignoring the wrong way of doing a thing,

still less in denying that there is a wrong way; but proficiency is in having known the wrong way and tried it out and learning once for all that it doesn't work that way. Then the yes has its strength in swallowing up its no. A carpenter, to be proficient, must first have learned that you don't use your chisel this way, or make your measurements that way, but then these are the right ways. No housewife can be confident in her kitchen until she first knows you don't cook that meat at this heat, or mix those ingredients in those proportions, then she is spontaneously at ease in her good cooking. And so through every conceivable activity of life. You must know the wrong way and have proved it wrong, before you are secure and confident in the right. The one must “swallow” the other up.

And here we have God's perfect wisdom in the birth of the human race, and in having a convenient opposite, the wrong one, the evil one, through whom He would bring his vast family of sons to maturity. This was His first way of making the devil His convenient agent. To have sons, they must find themselves in their freedom. They must discover that to be a person is to be conscious that there are alternatives and make their free choice; and ultimately their right choice through having first made the wrong one, and tasted the consequences. And the wonder of our perfect God is that He knew this was the way His predestined family of efficient sons must take, from wrong first and then to right; and He knew the suffering that entailed

for them with its possibility of a lost eternity. So he took it upon Himself to go that same way to its total final end, and in the person of His own Son, Himself in His Son form, to participate in the sufferings in their fullest measure. So Peter said we are redeemed with “the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world”: and the writer to the Hebrews takes it even further by saying that this involvement to the full in the sufferings of humanity was the only way the perfect Father, to be perfect, could go so that “it became Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, to make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” Tremendous!

So we find our first parents in the garden, and placed between two trees, one to give life and the other death. Why did not the Father just put them there conveniently with only one tree? It wasn't very kind of Him to put the two! We might just have eaten of the tree of life—and then been what? A crowd of helpless babies who knew nothing and could do nothing! No, the first parents of these destined sons must first discover themselves, learn their potentialities, misuse themselves—and then they are ready to be reliable ones.

And at that tree of death the deceptive voice of that “old serpent, the devil” came to them, and what

it did for them was to awaken them to discover what it is to be a self. Enormous awakening with its vast potentialities. Thank you, devil. Through those tempting suggestions to have what she would like, Eve found she was a person! She had appetites in wanting to eat that fruit, with all that goes with them in making us vibrant humans. She had the awakening adventure of

**Eve, as representing us all, could only find and know herself by being solicited to be herself for her own self-ends. But more than that. She took that dangerous step which cut her off from being what we were created to be, sons in spirit-union with the Creator Son and the Father, and thus sons of self-giving love.**

new discovery through sight when she saw the fruit was “pleasant to the eyes,” all the limitless avenues of exploration in the visual arts and sciences. And the awakened mind, the topmost of all, by which she would know the truth of things and at the end of the long trail would “know even as we are known.”

Eve, as representing us all, could only find and know herself by being solicited to be herself for her own self-ends. But more than

that. She took that dangerous step which cut her off from being what we were created to be, sons in spirit-union with the Creator Son and the Father, and thus sons of self-giving love. Instead, in chosen separation from God, she, her husband and we all, became self-loving children of the god of self-centredness.

We became misused selves. We had to discover and experience what it is to be a wrong self before we are conditioned to be a right self. We have to learn misuse before we can settle into right use. One Person became a real human and did not go that way, and that was God's Son “manifest in the flesh.” But He, to be a person had to be confronted with the devil and come under the temptation of the “evil” way of self-interest. By that means He found His human self as a self, with all its normal capacities and reactions.

Therefore we must say that Adam and Eve could have made the necessary discoveries concerning themselves by temptation without responding to it. They could have replaced the attraction of the wrong fruit by taking of the right one, as Jesus did by answering the devil with the word of God; but as they did fall, we need waste no time in theorizing!

So we partook of the tree which brought the human self into manifestation in the form it was never meant to be—the self-loving self, the evil self. Indwelt by the serpent-spirit of error, it appears as a

rival and attempted conqueror of the human self in its true eternal form—indwelt by Christ as the self-giving self. It has reversed the true order in which the self-loving form is swallowed up and ultimately unknown to the self-giving form it becomes in Christ, and progressively in us as we find our-selves in Him.

This tree of death has divided between good and evil and put evil in the ascendancy; but in so doing it has given us to drink of the full draught of its bitterness to fit us to reach out to the water of life. The tree of life, of which we are now able to partake, since that cherubim's sword of judgement which kept us from it, was plunged in His side instead of ours, puts evil back into good. It restores us from the curse of the divided two-power outlook to the single eye, by the glorious discovery of how God uses the evils of this world to His and our good ends.

We have become children of the devil, who, we say again, is quite simply the created being who brought into manifestation the potential there must be in freedom, of being the opposite to God; and if God is self-giving love and love is good, then Lucifer, Satan, is that opposite self-loving love, the evil which, if it had not been exposed, lies hidden eternally, swallowed up in the good. And we have eaten by choice of that divided tree, and participated in this exposed opposite. But by doing so, we have gone along a necessary road by which a person must know and reject mis-

use before being established in the right use. And here is the meaning of the Fall, and its value.

### What is God's Wrath?

But it is important to realize that there is a fundamental difference between the fall of Lucifer and the fall of Adam and Eve, our fall. Lucifer had made his ultimate choice from his center, his spirit, where he totally rejected God and replaced Him with himself. He chose to be his own god. But Eve was tricked by the serpent (1 Timothy 2:14). She did not intend

## It is our guilt that projects wrath on God, as if that was His chief characteristic, and which still so distorts our concepts of God as if He is a monster.

to reject her Creator, but just to bypass Him with an act of self-indulgence, hoping He would not notice! Her sin was of the flesh, not spirit; and Adam followed. So, thank God, the human family are prodigal sons, and have never lost the inner consciousness of having missed the way, and knowing by the inner law of their being what they ought to be. Slaves of the devil, branches of the false vine, children of the devil, caught up in the devil's destiny, but not yet sons of the devil who by free choice become devils like their father.

For this same reason the Father

revisits them in their disobedience, I always like that beautiful statement: "They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day"; and because they were God-conscious, they "hid themselves." But it is our guilt that projects wrath on God, as if that was His chief characteristic, and which still so distorts our concepts of God as if He is a monster. Still our unenlightened eyes, including, I am ashamed to say, many liberal theologians, regard the Old Testament as the record of an avenging God, instead of the same unchanging God of grace shining through from the Garden of Eden, to the call of Abraham, and through Moses and the revelation of the Tabernacle of continuing grace, to the full sunlight of His grace in our Lord Jesus Christ. But the wrath of God is only manifest in those who have the wrong relationship to Him. It is not Him as He is, who is all love. But it is what

He must appear to be to those who run counter to the law of His being. The wrath operates in them, not in Him. If I have a right relationship to an electric switch and turn it on as I should do, I get a pleasant light. If I defy any warnings and stick my finger in the apparatus, I get a nasty shock. The shock is what I feel within myself through my unlawful contact. So it was not God who hid from the disobedient couple, it was they who hid from Him. They projected on Him a rejection which was really in themselves. And this is the wrath of God. All He said was, "Where

are you, Adam? Come out from your hiding, I haven't changed." And when they came, He talked with them, not in judgement and wrath, but in mercy. All He told them was that they would experience the inevitable effects of the discords self-loving self always brings on itself. Sorrow was what they would have, sorrow in the man's life, sorrow in the woman's life. Sorrow is an inner reaction, for we are inner people. It is our inner response to suffering. Because we have fallen into our false material concepts of life in its outer forms, and have brought about total disruption in our outer living by our grab-and-hold and dog-eat-dog activities, life is a continual suffering: wars, diseases, poverty, anxiety, wrongdoings, and we regard it as if those sufferings are our problems, and why does God "allow" them? But we are on the wrong foot. Sorrow is our problem, for sorrow is our inner reaction to suffering, and we are inner people. Change our sorrow into inner joy, and outer sufferings are turned to praise.

So it was the Father's special mercy, not wrathful judgement, when He told them three times over that they would have sorrow. Why? Because sorrow would mean dissatisfaction with their earthly conditions, and desire for a better way. Thank God for sorrow. Thank God the world is restless, fermenting, dissatisfied, rebellious at its present conditions. That is its hope. That's the best thing the Father

could predict for His fallen children: and thank God, behind the sorrow and at its roots lies guilt for not being what we know we should be. But that was not all.

From that first moment of the Fall and its consequences, there was the pronouncement of deliverance; and the deliverance is in the seed of the woman which would bruise the head of the serpent. God said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed." What is the serpent's seed? The take-over of the human family created in the image of God by a

**Sorrow is our problem, for sorrow is our inner reaction to suffering, and we are inner people. Change our sorrow into inner joy, and outer sufferings are turned to praise.**

false father who would express his nature of self-centredness in them. Thus they would be the seed of the serpent. But they are still the seed of the woman, created in God's image, and into the woman's seed would come The One capable of destroying the works of the devil, and turning the devil's captives into His captives. And what is more, though He would come to do this in due time in human history, in God's timeless sight He was already, in the remarkable phrase in Revelation 13:8, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

Therefore, He was already the true Adam, the last Adam, progenitor of the new race, and could be found in spirit, as the mercy seat for sinners, from that first day of the Fall. He was so found by Abel and by the countless thousands who, like the seven thousand in the days of Ahab's apostacy God was pleased to tell Elijah, had not bowed the knee to Baal. Abraham rejoiced to see His day: Moses counted the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: Israel in the wilderness drank of that spiritual rock that followed them and that rock was Christ. So mercy flowed out from the Garden and has never ceased flowing.

So this first stage, downward, not upward, was the necessary preparation for that vast family of sons of God. By this they could learn once for all, and reject once for all, not to be fooled again, the wrong way before the right, the misuse of the glory of being created self before its right use. And it is as if God said to Satan, "You have deliberately turned your back on Me and founded this false kingdom of the negative, the power of darkness. So now I will use you to my great ends. Through you I will bring to maturity my vast family of sons to rule this universe. When they have well learned the lie from you, they will be safe followers of the truth, and not be fooled by you again. They may visit you at times, while within your reach on earth, but they will never live with you again. Thank you, devil."

—Who Am I?

# The Origin of Evil

By Norman Grubb

We often hear it said that the origin of evil is an unfathomable mystery, but, unless I am mistaken, I have not found it so. It seems plain enough. First, we understand evil to be the term we use as the opposite of good. But, good is the term we use of God who is love, for all that love does is good. Thus Jesus, when called Good Master by the rich young ruler, said, "Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but God!" So then, if good is the term used of the Living God who is the other-love, evil must be the term used of anyone who, as a person, is the opposite of God, and evil because he is self-love. Evil, therefore, is a person who, as a free person, has made the opposite choice to God and is fixed in it—a misused self rather than a right-used self.

## Freedom Involves Choice

This is why in Isaiah, God says, "I am the Lord... I create evil." The moment God creates persons like Himself, and, in

no other way can He have sons to develop His universe, they can only be developing persons by their freedom of choice; and fundamental choice is, shall I be an expression of God in His self-giving love, or shall I, in my freedom, separate myself as a person (though, of course, eternally having my being in God) and function as a self-loving self? To be such, the opposite to the Self-giving One, would be what we call evil.

Evil, therefore, is a necessary alternative in freedom. To be free involves the possibility of being evil. That is why it says that God creates evil. If He creates persons, He must create them free or they are not persons. If they are free, they can choose to become the opposite to Him in His fixed choice, and that is evil. Therefore, in giving freedom, God gives evil as a possible alternative.

And that, I think, is the eternal wonder of God's love in redemption, and the final revelation of the ultimate of love. In creating free persons, He created the possibility of the evil choice, yet He is not responsible if that choice was made. He could, therefore, have said, "Well, they made the choice for which I am not responsible. Leave them to it, and let Us make another race of persons," which is what He told Moses at the incident of the golden calf to stir in Moses the love-response he must have to handle Israel at this crisis. Exodus 32:9-14 and 32:32.

But love belongs to need. Love is the debtor and need always love's creditor, for need, as Paul said, has an inescapable claim on love, which exists to meet it. So God as love

has to go that second mile. Responsible for freedom, but not responsible for that wrong choice made in freedom, He says, "I will take the whole upon Myself, both the freedom for which I am responsible, and its wrong use, for which I am not responsible; and I will take that ultimate curse of that wrong choice upon, Myself, and remove it in the blood of My Son"—the Lamb ordained to death before the foundation of the world.

## *Evil is a Person*

So we know where evil began. It was the first free person, not of this human race, but of the angelic order, who could only be established in his unique appointment as "the anointed cherub that covereth" (Ezekiel 28:14) by becoming fixed by choice as Lucifer, which means bearer of God's light. But, instead, he spoke his free word of faith which fixed him in self-in-

terest, self-seeking, self-exaltation (Isaiah 14:13-14). Evil, therefore, had its public origin in a person who became fixed in self-centredness, the opposite to God. This was "sin" which John explained as "transgression of the law," law being the way a thing works; and the way the universe works is by Him who is love. So sin is a person who is self-loving love, just as righteousness is the Person who is self-giving love. Both are persons, for the universe is the Person, and we, as persons, His sons in the Son, Head and Body. It is

in our separation from Him that we have come to speak of aspects of Him as things, as abstractions, such as goodness, love, power, peace, joy, etc., or alternatively of evil, sin, hate, envy, etc., whereas they are the Person who is these things. God is the Person. Evil is a created person who chose to be the opposite to God, and is called the god of this world because he brought into manifestation the opposite form of personhood. Sin is the root and sins are the product.

## *God's Convenient Agent*

*Evil is a created person who chose to be the opposite to God, and is called the god of this world because he brought into manifestation the opposite form of personhood. Sin is the root and sins are the product.*

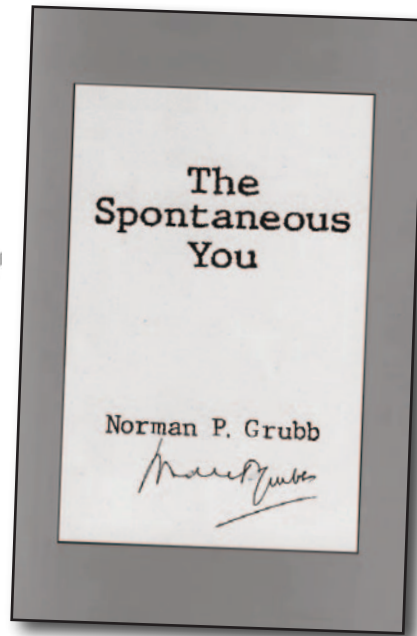
But what we are to note as we continue to trace humanity's history is that this evil one, called Lucifer, and Satan, is still and forever a rebel son, recorded in Job as among the sons of God presenting themselves to Him. He is still God's servant, though in rebellion, and still does God's will, and has his being in God, as all the universe had. This is important be-

cause owing to the illusory sense of separation from God which the Fall has given us, we find it difficult to recognize that Satan is not some separated person who goes about and does as he wills, and we have to, in a way, call on God to go and find and handle him. No, he is God's negative agent and we shall see how wonderfully he is God's convenient agent, and we learn to see through Satan to the One in full control of him, if we are to get all the distortions of life into focus.

—Who Am I?

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In *The Spontaneous You*, Norman explores man's fundamental questions: What is life? How do we live it? Why do we live it? and passes on the liberating answer to living free in the midst of frustrating circumstances. We can drive with confidence, as it were, the automobile of our daily living—and with zest and pleasure find the purpose in it, not for ourselves, but for others.

It is Norman's view that man's ultimate questions are not answered by external religious forms and the dogmas of a distant Deity. The answer is found within, not without—Christ in you, the hope of glory.

# Bible Bedrock

***“You intended to harm me,  
but God intended it for good.”***

— *Genesis 50:20 (King James Version)*

When the adventure of adversity is seen in its true perspective, it is found to be the doorway into God's most transcendent secret—that adversities and sufferings, which in their origin are the effects of sin and instruments of the devil, in the grasp of faith become redemptive. They are transfigured from the realm of merely something to be endured as an opposition of Satan to something to be used to conquer their author and redeem his victims. Faith in time of adversity makes the serpent swallow itself! Once again the supreme proof of this is that when Satan made his fiercest attack in history on the person of Christ, God used that attack, through the faith and endurance of the Sufferer, to bring about the world's salvation. God uses evil to bring about good—not causing it, but using it.

The consequences of a clear grasp of this fact, that Satan and all evil circumstances in our lives are God's most useful instruments for the fulfillment of His purposes, is obvious. All attacks of Satan are seen to be our blessings. We 'count them all joy.' We 'rejoice in tribulation.' We use them as special opportunities to see the manifestation of God's power, instead of merely enduring them with a struggle as 'judgments' or 'tests.'

— *Touching the Invisible*, by Norman Grubb  
(Published by CLC Publications at [www.clcpublications.com](http://www.clcpublications.com))



# Faith Notes

We replace all negatives (without condemnation for feeling the pull of them, and thus accepting Satan's right to pull) with the positives of Christ as us, and we as expressions of God as love, power, peace—recognizing who we are, Him as us, and we loving as He loves, walking as He walks, overcoming our world as He did by faith.

*-To All Believers...*

*It's as Simple as This.*

Whatever the outer situation, in our inner selves we can always believe and praise that this is God's perfection for ourselves; and then our outer prison conditions are found to be open doors to share the same secret with the many others around us in their desperate sorrows.

*-Who Am I?*

I look right through that practical need, or whatever, and I say, 'That is only appearance. That is real in the matter world level, but I'm not really living there.' In my real self, my inner spirit joined to God's Spirit, that need is not real to me. It is not there to me. I only see my God of all supply where my natural eyes see only the lack.

*-Who Am I?*

.....

We fear. We affirm His courage in us and go forward. We have doubts. We say, 'God is my God. That is settled for me.' We have not got what it takes. We say, 'God is my strength,' and do the job. We resent or object to a situation. We say, 'God's ways are perfect. I accept and praise.'

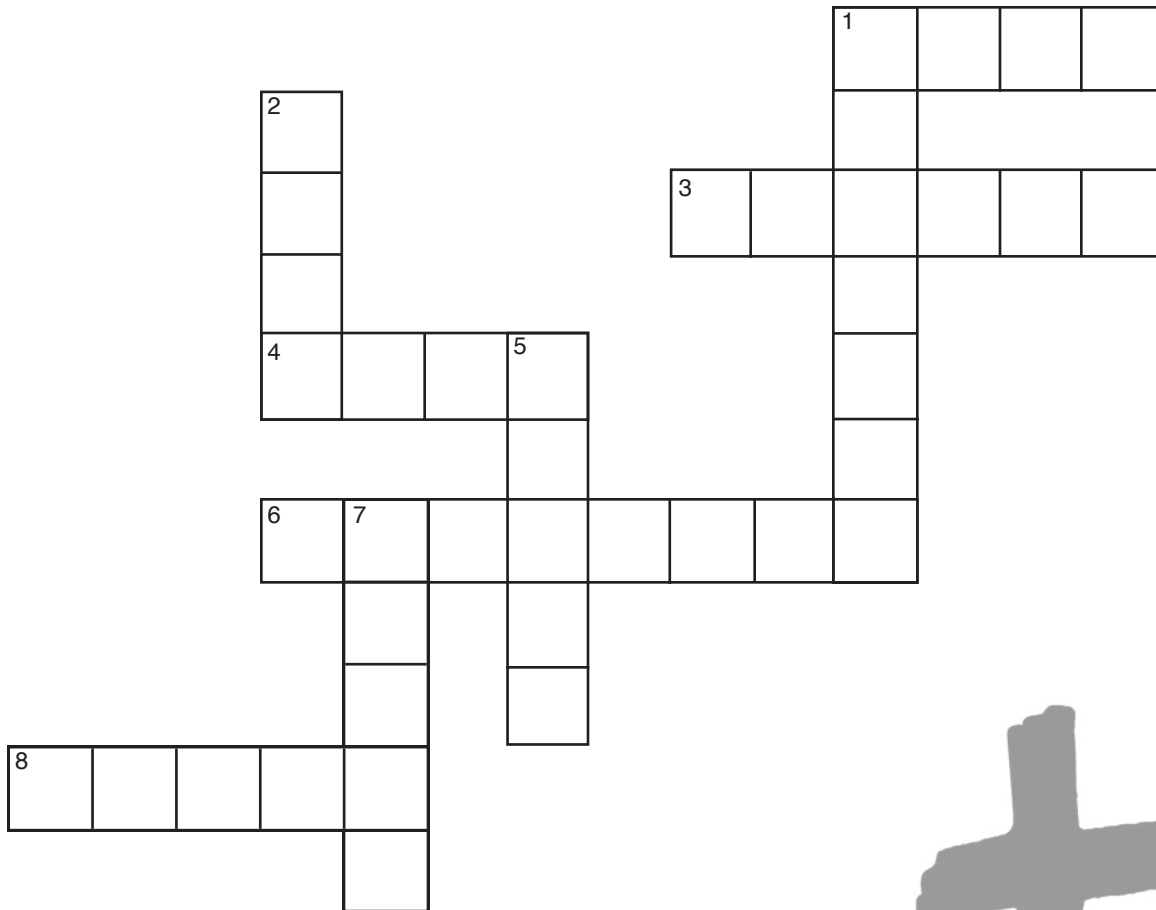
*-The Spontaneous You*

We don't work hard at pushing darkness out of a room. We turn our backs on the darkness and switch on the light—where is the darkness? We transfer our attention from the negative to the positive. That is the secret. Not resistance, but replacement.

*-The Spontaneous You*

# GOD DETERMINES FOR HIS PURPOSES

God is All in all. Everything that happens in this world, whether considered good or evil, ultimately serves to accomplish His perfect purposes for all of His creation. God gives man freedom and the consequences of that free choice to bring man to repentance and turn him to God for deliverance.



## ACROSS

1. Isaiah 10:5,6 shows that God means our consequences to follow our free choices, "Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hand is My indignation. I will \_\_\_\_\_ him against an ungodly nation, and against the people of My wrath I will give him charge, to seize the spoil, to take the prey, And to tread them down like the mire of the streets."
2. Praise God, for in John 3:16 He determined we have the free choice to believe upon His Son and the redemptive work of His death on the cross for us, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not \_\_\_\_\_ but have everlasting life."
4. 1 John 3:12 makes it clear that Satan does his wicked deeds by us because we choose to believe the lies of the evil one, "not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were \_\_\_\_\_ and his brother's righteous."
6. 1 Corinthians 11:29-30 warns us to examine ourselves and our beliefs that produce our conduct, "For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks \_\_\_\_\_ to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep."
8. 2 Timothy 1:9 speaks to God's sovereignty and determinate will, "who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and \_\_\_\_\_ which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began."

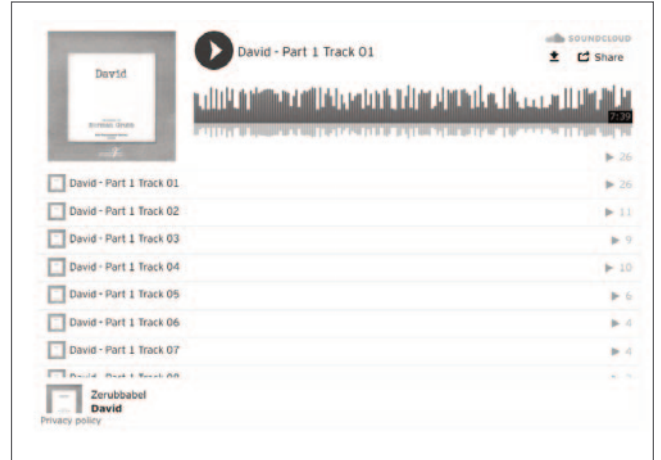
## DOWN

1. Jeremiah 43:10 speaks of how God uses whom He chooses to carry out His determined will, "and say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will send and bring Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My \_\_\_\_\_, and will set his throne above these stones that I have hidden. And he will spread his royal pavilion over them.'"
2. John 10:15 proclaims Jesus and the Father are One and determined that Christ redeem us on the cross, "As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My \_\_\_\_\_ for the sheep."
5. 1 John 1:5 says this about God, "This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is \_\_\_\_\_ and in Him is no darkness at all."
7. 1 Corinthians 15:28 confirms that all of creation is subject to God and His determinate will, "Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things \_\_\_\_\_ Him, that God may be all in all."

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### ACROSS

- 1. SEND
- 3. PERISH
- 4. EVIL
- 6. JUDGMENT

8. GRACE

### DOWN

- 1. SERVANT
- 2. LIFE

- 5. LIGHT
- 7. UNDER



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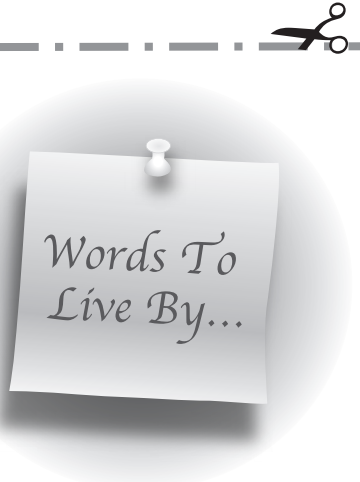
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