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**THE FALL AND RESTORATION OF MAN – Part 1**

By Ralph Werrell

This background is necessary to understand the way my mind works, because without this information about my education it will be hard to understand my thinking, and why the questions that led to this article came to be asked and answered.

In my first Junior School we had children from slums, poor homes and, in the 1930s my father was the only one who had a car. At seven we were taught learning was fun, if it was not it was not worth doing. We were explorers, like Livingstone standing on the edge of darkest Africa and going into the unknown. Exams had nothing to do with your future, they were only of value to you – they marked the milestone you had reached today, and it was unimportant if you had covered one mile or one hundred miles in a year as long as you had gone your own maximum distance. You must always have a target, and a target must never be hit – the only target worth having was the carrot in front of the donkey’s nose, you could reach it in a day or two, but when you reached it the target had moved on. Every child in that class could read, write, do their sums and everything else, we were all driven forward by our desire to do better. At eight we learnt about Greek philosophy – I can only remember this because of the question in the playground afterwards. “What is the difference between a stoic and a cynic? – The stoic brings the baby and the cynic is what you bath it in!” We also had to learn about economics – in the Middle Ages, England was wealthy with the wool trade, then the financiers took over and we had the South Sea Bubble. We became wealthy with the Industrial Revolution, then the financiers took over and we had the Wall Street Crash. The only value of the financial markets was to save you taking a sheep into a shop, buying the goods you need and going out carrying the goods in one hand and six hens change in the other. As eight year olds, our minds boggled at the thought, of trying to carry six hens in one hand! To save those, like myself, getting bored because we were not going fast enough; we had slower children to help with their learning, and this benefited the whole class.

Then, at eleven, sitting on the floor of the Hall, wondering what Grammar School was going to be like. The Headmaster spoke to us – he told us there were only two things to learn about every subject, it was to teach us how to think and how to question what we have been taught. This methodology, starting in our first year at Grammar School, was the same as the methodology for my research doctorate.

It was through this methodology I was led on the first three steps in the 1940s, when I was thirteen or fourteen, to my becoming a Christian. I was interested in astronomy and the expanding universe. I thought, what if we put the expanding in reverse, and some 20 years before the big bang theory, I had a mass of gas in one place. Where was this before it started expanding? I needed a creator. About the same time we were learning about evolution, and here my problem was again scientific. I knew that entropy always increased – but, if evolution was a fact, the entropy decreased. I needed a designer who created all forms of life. My third step was reading a book by a leading atheist: he wrote that our sense of justice demanded a life after death so that we could put right the injustices in life. My query was, “If we can’t put it right in this life, how could we put it right in another. Who is the judge?” Within a year I was invited to join a Crusader Class, and I found the answer to all those questions.

*(Due to lack of space the above introduction was not included in the article published in Cross†Way magazine.)*

When I was researching William Tyndale's theology for a forthcoming book I kept finding questions that I wanted to ask Tyndale – there were pointers as to where his thoughts were coming from that were tantalising. As Tyndale constantly reminds us, theology depends on the Scriptures alone; this means that there are questions we want to ask, but must not. *“The secrets pertain unto the Lord our God and the things that are opened pertain unto us and our children for ever.”* (Deuteronomy 29.) After I finished research into the roots of Tyndale's theology,<sup>1</sup> I had an opportunity to follow up those questions. If Tyndale had written a theology, like that of Calvin, instead of leaving me to draw out his theology from his many writings, I feel that these articles would have been incorporated by him into his theology. I dedicate these articles to William Tyndale and trust that (if he could read it) he would agree with what I have written.

It is with the Fall that we must begin. God created everything perfect, Adam and Eve had the responsibility to look after and care for God's creation. They knew all they needed to know – they knew *good* – they knew God, they knew the wonder and goodness of God's creation. However, there was one thing they must not do, they must not eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, or that day they would die. The Devil came and said, *“God is just scaring you – you will not die, but be as knowledgeable as God.”* They believed the Devil and ate of the tree, and they knew *evil*, they knew that what they had done was wrong, and they had to hide themselves from God.

Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden, and physically they did not seem to have changed, life seemed to be normal. But in fact everything had died; body, soul, mind and strength were dead – even though, in time, Adam lived and died at the age of 930. In order that he could not physically return to the Garden of Eden and to life: the way was guarded by cherubim with flaming swords.

It was not just Adam and Eve who had died there were many changes for creation had been dragged down by them. Pain in childbirth for women, and her children were born as dead as she and Adam were. Adam had a hard battle to grow food with weeds growing making agriculture difficult. Death, sickness and every other human ill was man's lot. The goodness of God's creation had been lost, and Satan had, through man, gained control of all life. Before the Fall, Adam and Eve were spiritual beings, and it was this state which died, leaving them but flesh. There are many places in the Bible where the difference between flesh and spirit are clearly taught; especially when Nicodemus visited Christ. Jesus said to him, *“Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. ... That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew.”* (John 3:3-7.) Tyndale picks up this difference in his Prologue upon Romans.

*FLESH and SPIRIT mayest thou not here understand as though flesh were only that which pertaineth unto unchastity, and the spirit that which inwardly pertaineth unto the heart: but Paul calleth flesh here, as Christ doth, John iii., all that is born of flesh; that is to wit, the whole man, with life, soul, body, wit, will, reason, and whatsoever he is or doth within or without; because that these all, and all that is in man, study after the world and the flesh. Call flesh therefore whatsoever we think or speak of God, of faith, of good works, and of spiritual matters, as long as we are without the Spirit of God. Call flesh also all works which are done without grace, and without the working of the Spirit, howsoever good, holy, and spiritual, as they seem to be: as thou mayest prove by the fifth chapter unto the Galatians, where Paul numbereth worshipping of idols, witchcraft, envy, and hate, among the deeds of the flesh; and by the eighth unto the Romans, where he saith that the law by the reason of the flesh is weak; which is not understood of unchastity only, but of all sins, and most especially of unbelief, which is a vice most spiritual, and ground of all sins.<sup>2</sup>*

Today people, including Christians, do not recognise that man is flesh; that is, spiritually he is dead; after all, we can do so much, look at all the progress man has made, and is still making. In other words we are saying when God said, *“In the day you eat of it, you shall surely die,”* he was telling

us a lie. We believe the Devil was right when he said, *“You shall not surely die: for God knows that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”* We are confusing Life and Death in God’s sense, and we believe the Devil’s lie because we can do so much until eventually death comes to us. In one sense, Satan was telling the truth; Adam and Eve did not die, the flesh still lived, but they were no longer spiritually alive. Their descendants have filled the earth, and all kinds of advances have been made in our way of life; and, as Satan told Adam and Eve, *“You will be as god – able to know good and evil.”* Adam and Eve had learnt what evil is, and they had learnt the hard and bitter way. The Christian Church is faced with many theologies and philosophies, Tyndale faced up to the challenge this created for Christians,

*“In so great diversity of spirits, how shall I know who lieth, and who sayeth truth? Whereby shall I try and judge them? Verily by God’s word, which only is true. But how shall I that do, when thou wilt not let me see the scripture?”*<sup>3</sup>

Therefore Paul wrote, *“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ”* (Col. 2:8). Tyndale pointed out that men denied creation – as so many do, in the name of science, today. Man believed that he was basically able to choose to do what is right. Man believed that his good depends *“in riches, health, honour, worship, friends, and authority.”* He wrote, *“How, I say, couldst thou understand the scripture without philosophy, inasmuch as Paul, in the second to the Colossians, warned them to ‘beware lest any man should spoil them’ (that is to say, rob them of their faith in Christ) ‘through philosophy and deceitful vanities, and through the traditions of men, and ordinances of the world, and not after Christ.’”*<sup>4</sup>

However, St. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, *“You were dead in trespasses and sins”* (Ephesians 2:1). What are we to make of that phrase – was God right and Adam and Eve died when they sinned? Or was the Devil right and they were not really dead. William Tyndale wrote, concerning that text, *“The text is plain: we were stone dead, and without life or power to do or consent to good. The whole nature of us was captive under the devil, and led at his will.”*<sup>5</sup> Against that, Calvin’s commentary was, *“Some kind of life, I acknowledge, doth remain in us, while we are still at a distance from Christ.”* (Commentary, Ephesians 2:1)<sup>6</sup> The *Canons of the Synod of Dort* basically follow Calvin. *“There remain, however, in man since the fall, the glimmerings of natural light, whereby he retains some knowledge of God, of natural things, and of the differences between good and evil.”*<sup>7</sup> I have wondered why the Synod of Dort statement depends on the result of Adam’s sin for its justification? For it was Adam’s sin, in believing Satan’s lie, that enabled him to know *“good and evil.”* With Calvin and the Synod of Dort, what has happened to the Word of God? *“But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”* (Genesis 2:17.) Their theology, and most Christian theological systems, depend on God’s word to Adam and Eve being wrong – man can hear the gospel preached and has enough life remaining so that he can respond by faith to the Gospel call. Man sets the agenda for his salvation – and (it seems) God has to obey. Man has got confused because he has taken some scripture texts and omitted others that do not seem to make sense unless man died when Adam and Eve sinned. Often the Church has listened to the wisdom of the fallen world: man has made scientific discoveries; man’s knowledge has advanced, and the Church has accepted man’s wisdom rather than God’s.

*“The fall of Adam has made us heirs of the vengeance and wrath of God, and heirs of eternal damnation. And has brought us into captivity and bondage under the Devil. And the Devil is our Lord, and our ruler, our head, our governor, our prince, yea, and our God. And our will is locked and knit faster unto the will of the Devil, than could a hundred thousand chains bind a man to a post. We consent unto the Devil’s will with all our hearts, with all our minds, with all our might,*

*power, strength, will and lust.”*<sup>8</sup>

**To be continued .... in the next issue.**

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Endnotes:

- 1) Due to be published August 2011 as *The Roots of William Tyndale's Theology* (James Clarke & Co. ISBN 0227 67985 7)
- 2) Tyndale, *PS-1, Romans*, p.494
- 3) Tyndale, *PS-1, Obedience of a Christian Man*, p. 153
- 4) Tyndale, *PS-1, Obedience of a Christian Man*, p. 155f
- 5) Tyndale, *PS-2, Exposition of the First Epistle of St. John*. p. 199
- 6) Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians*, p. 220
- 7) *Canons of the Synod of Dort, Third and Fourth Heads of Doctrine, Article 4*. p.45. Doctrinal Standards added to the end of *The Psalter*, United Presbyterian Church.
- 8) Tyndale, *1525 New Testament (Cologne Fragment)*