

The real remedy for humanity's problems

In Process

by Glen Doss, Major –

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This is what the Lord says: “Cursed are those who put their trust in mere humans and turn their hearts away from the Lord” (Jeremiah 17:5 NLT).

As our ambulance screeches to a halt, I am astounded at what I see—the bunker where I had hunkered for protection against the initial onslaught of the night has been blown to smithereens! The broken bodies we see in the glow of our headlights are those of my hooch mates, my friends, with whom I yesterday played cards, traded jokes, shared a beer!

Taking in the scene, I freeze; I feel I am about to lose my composure—to scream and cry out in protest at the top of my lungs, to sob like a baby—when my newfound friend—stoicism—in what I understand to be a most gracious act of charity, abruptly steps into my mind, slams the door shut upon my emotions and locks it securely.

Now I am able to move among my dear friends smoothly, unemotionally, much as if in a dream, securing their spilling entrails, halting the gushing blood, hoisting them efficiently onto the stretchers. Helping lift and move and bandage them, I recognize Bill and Steve and Jim and Mark. As we lift them I address them by their names. Some answer; yet some do not and cannot for all time. Moments later, speeding back through the darkness to the dispensary, several of us are sobbing—and not just the wounded—yet I am not among them. I am cold, completely numb, protected from the fear, sheltered from the grief. I will never give in to it, I tell myself. Never! For I am too big a man!

As the sense of deepest loss enveloped me in Vietnam, a realization dawned which was to prove fundamental to my salvation years later. Before this I had foolishly assumed the following: (1) We humans are amazing, worthy of the greatest reverence—haven't we made it to the moon? Just give us time and we will explore the galaxies as well; there is nothing we can't do once we set our minds to it; (2) We can and will cure all humanity's ills—material, psychological, social. Haven't we found a cure for polio? Soon we will rid society of war itself! Whatever problems exist today, just give us time and



we will solve them all.

I had, in fact, subliminally made the following mental leap: “We humans are most certainly worthy of deification; therefore, I will set myself up—that sample of humanity with which I am most familiar—as my very own god!” In the war, however, seeds of doubt were planted about the veracity of this belief, that would lead me eventually to suicidal depression—but later, by God’s grace, prompt me to open up my mind to the true God, who most certainly wasn’t me!

A thorn pierced my flesh and remained there, “a messenger of Satan, to torment me,” for 18 long years—until I finally got the point (2 Corinthians 12:7). That thorn in the flesh was two-fold: (1) An increasing awareness of humanity’s tremendous shortcomings, which repeatedly result in conflicts and wars; (2) A growing realization that we humans will never fix ourselves—no secular correction has ever been found for the primary human flaw: a compulsion to look out first and foremost for number one—no matter how many others one must step upon en route to that goal!

I have consequently come to see that the only real remedy for humanity’s defects is a spiritual one, for our God is “not a God of disorder but of peace” (1Cor 14:33 NIV). Announcing Christ’s birth the angels sang, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests” (Luke 2:14 NIV).

Dear God, before I opened up my heart to you I hurt so many, all innocent bystanders, due to my allegiance to myself alone. Yet, amazingly, my life was preserved, and I did not die while in Satan’s grasp. I was this dirty thing you plucked out of the world to shape to suit your own purposes. You gave me a second chance—you put the wrong on Christ who never did anything wrong, so I could be put right with you. Today I am thrilled to be one of your ambassadors to the world! We implore others on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God! (2Cor 5:20-21).