

Your Children-FUTURE GODS?

Do young parents realize the supreme blessing — and responsibility — of having children? New knowledge is revealed in this article — even more important than a matter of life and death!

By Herbert W. Armstrong

THE REAL TRUTH ABOUT marriage and the FAMILY relationship has not been realized — even in God's Church!

To understand, you need to know all about the spirit in man and how it operates. You need to know precisely what is human nature. You need to know how SATAN operates — especially on children. You need to know in what manner God has set you — AND YOUR CHILDREN — apart from this world.

You need to know at what age Satan gets into your child's mind. You need to know whether your child has access to God — when Jesus said, "NO MAN CAN come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44) — and God draws only the VERY FEW He is specially calling to a commission preparing for the KINGDOM OF GOD!

But if you — a husband and wife — are in God's Church, have you realized that places your children in a DIFFERENT CATEGORY WITH GOD?

God has revealed exciting, IMPORTANT NEW KNOWLEDGE! It will take several articles to cover it and reveal this wonderful new knowledge to YOU! So have patience. Receive it

Proper family relationships are vital to the growth of future Sons of God! Here Mr. Armstrong details the special opportunity God gives children of Church members. In the next article, Robert Fahey offers some guidelines on the spirit in man and how it relates to childrearing.

EAGERLY, even as I have. Much of what follows has never before been known or taught in GOD'S CHURCH — or in any other!

While other people — not members of the true Body of Christ — and all other children are CUT OFF from access to God, YOUR CHILDREN — IF YOU ARE A TRULY CONVERTED MEMBER OF GOD'S CHURCH — *can* believe in Christ — are not cut off from God — and much of God's truth, even though as yet too young to be converted. But they are a SPECIAL TREASURE to God!

So READ CAREFULLY in this article — and in others to follow on this subject. REALIZE what a special sacred TREASURE your children are!

Catholics claim that if they can have a child from birth through its first six years, he will always be a Catholic. That is true in a large percentage of cases. WHY?

First of all we need to realize how Satan injects his attitudes into children — and at what age.

Mankind cut off

When Jesus said, "NO MAN CAN come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," He was merely emphasizing the fact that God CUT OFF ALL HUMANITY FROM HIM except the VERY FEW He would call for special duty preparing for the KINGDOM OF GOD.

Start at the beginning. Understand this NEW KNOWLEDGE *thoroughly!*

After the great archangel Lucifer had turned a third of the angels into rebellion, and Lucifer himself had become SATAN, God embarked on HIS GREATEST UNDERTAKING! He began the process of REPRODUCING

HIMSELF by creating MAN (and woman) out of dust from the ground! Man was first, as of then, made of MATTER — not spirit.

Now GOD is a Spirit, composed of spirit! God is immortal — has always existed — always will! Lucifer and angels were made of SPIRIT — therefore they are IMMORTAL — but on a lower plane than God. Yet, although God formed MAN of the dust of the ground — physical matter — God has given MAN a far greater potentiality than angels.

In MAN, *God is reproducing HIMSELF!*

Man has the potentiality of becoming GOD!

MAN shall, when his spiritual creation is completed, JUDGE ANGELS (I Cor. 6:3). Few indeed have ever really GRASPED the marvelous breathtaking potential of MAN! By the very fact that God, through man, is reproducing Himself, we know MAN, when his SPIRITUAL creation is completed, shall actually become GOD! Only, God the Father will always remain supreme in authority and command, and Christ second in command, above all else.

The first man — Adam

To understand this NEW knowledge we must go back to the beginning. Man's physical creation began with Adam. Man's spiritual creation began with Christ — the "SECOND ADAM."

Look, for the moment, to man's PHYSICAL creation in ADAM and EVE. They were created suddenly, in the afternoon of the sixth creative day (Gen. 1:26) as whole and complete ADULT HUMANS! They were suddenly

Photo by Roland Rees



created with adult MINDS — as yet unfilled with knowledge.

They were suddenly created with minds capable of *receiving* knowledge — of reasoning, making decisions. So God began communicating to them KNOWLEDGE of His GOVERNMENT — His great MASTER PLAN for man's ultimate spiritual creation — the way of His spiritual law of outflowing LOVE.

God did not allow Satan to contact Adam and Eve in any way until God had revealed His basic knowledge to them. Then Satan turned Adam into rebellion against God through Adam's wife Eve. Eve was deceived — but Adam wasn't.

Let me here repeat once again the vitally important incident, when God said to Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:22-24), in effect (in today's language): "You have made the fateful decision for all mankind — you have rejected me as your GOD, as your LAWGIVER AND RULER, and as Revealer of KNOWLEDGE!

"You have *taken to yourself* the KNOWLEDGE of what is good and what is evil. Therefore I cut you and all humankind that shall spring from you OFF FROM ALL CONTACT with me for 6,000 years — EXCEPT the *VERY FEW* I shall specially call into my service, preparing for my Kingdom!"

That, in modern language, is the sentence God pronounced on HUMAN-KIND for 6,000 years!

HOW Satan has deceived

In Revelation 12:9 we read that ALL NATIONS have been deceived by Satan. God has called to Him a very few — for definite SERVICE preparing for His KINGDOM — yet MANKIND as a whole has been CUT OFF from all contact with God.

Those who have been specially called, up to our present time, have had TO OVERCOME SATAN AND SATAN'S WORLD. When God calls EVERYBODY, during the Millennium and the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-12), those called in those latter periods of time will have no Satan to overcome — they will live in a world that is CHRIST's world — not Satan's.

Now how about CHILDREN?

In the present evil world God calls only a VERY FEW adults into His ser-

vice, to perform a definite SERVICE in preparation for the KINGDOM OF GOD. They must overcome not only Satan, but SATAN'S WORLD — he is the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4).

How does Satan keep his world brainwashed into his false beliefs and ways?

Satan begins his work of deception WITH LITTLE CHILDREN! Now let's see PRECISELY HOW!

There is a SPIRIT in every human being. This spirit is NOT part of the person — it is something *IN* each human, just as (for illustration) a human might swallow a marble. The marble is something *IN* the person, yet not PART OF that person. This spirit in man is something that is *IN* him (or her) from birth throughout this life.

I have written much about this spirit in man. It imparts the power of intellect to the physical brain. Yet this spirit cannot see. The brain sees through the eyes, hears through the ears, etc.

When the ancient Cyrus, king of Persia, ruled the world, God wanted a colony of Jews to be sent from the land of Babylon back to Jerusalem to build the second temple. This was 70 years after Solomon's temple had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

HOW DID GOD CAUSE CYRUS TO DO WHAT GOD WANTED? God did not speak to him direct. He did not speak to him as to prophets, by a dream or a vision. But God "STIRRED UP THE SPIRIT OF CYRUS" (Ezra 1:1). God is a spirit. God therefore was able to stir up the spirit that was *IN* Cyrus, and thus cause him to issue the proclamation sending the colony back to Jerusalem.

Now Satan also is A SPIRIT being. And in like manner Satan is able to put thoughts, attitudes, impulses into human brains through the spirit that is in each human.

Satan does not wait until humans are mature. As soon as a human baby begins to use the reasoning process — in the very first year — Satan pumps into the child through the human spirit, attitudes of selfishness, competition and strife — the desire to GET — to have, to possess. By the time the average child is 15 or 16, in many cases Satan has gotten in his

work. THAT IS WHY SUCH A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF ALL CRIMES ARE COMMITTED BY TEENAGERS!

Obviously a little child, fully absorbing Satan's attitude of selfishness, resentment and strife, is not yet old enough to be called to special service by almighty God the Father. God may call a few by 16 or 17 — but usually those whom GOD calls are more mature than that.

God first calls us to REPENTANCE. Then He calls us to FAITH in Christ. Those of us who have been called — truly called *and converted* — have had to *repent* of the ATTITUDE Satan had injected through the spirit in each of us. We have to turn FROM Satan's attitude to GOD's attitude of LOVE OUTFLOWING!

The CONVERTED young couple

But when a young man and a young woman — perhaps in the early 20s in age — fall in love — IF they are both converted, and they marry, THEIR CHILDREN COME UNDER A SPECIAL CATEGORY NOT FULLY REALIZED IN GOD'S CHURCH BEFORE!

We in the Church of God did not realize this because a particular passage of scripture was unclear to us until our in-depth research leading to a change in divorce and remarriage problems.

In I Corinthians 7 Paul first speaks to the unmarried (verses 8-9). Next he speaks to those already married (verses 10-11). Then he speaks "to the rest" (beginning verse 12). Here he is speaking to men or women in the Church married to unbelievers (those outside the Church). Then he says, verse 14, "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified [set apart in a special category] by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: *else were your children unclean.*"

The Moffatt translation here is "Otherwise, of course, your children would be unholy instead of being consecrated to God." This does not mean the children of a believer are converted or "saved" — but rather, that they are consecrated — that is SET APART as in a different category.

In other words, just as NO MAN CAN come to Christ except the Father specially draws him (John 6:44), once
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"drawn" by God through the Holy Spirit, the man MAY, if he is willing to repent and believe, be converted. In other words, once called by the Father, such person is no longer CUT OFF FROM GOD!

Now see how that applies to the children of converted parents. It does not mean they may be converted while still too young. It DOES mean they are NOT, like children of unconverted parents, CUT OFF from God. IT MEANS THAT THEY MAY BE TAUGHT ABOUT GOD BY THE BELIEVING PARENT.

Just as the converted adult is, as part of the BODY OF CHRIST, one of a SEPARATE AND PECULIAR PEOPLE (I Pet. 2:9). We live IN the world, but we are not OF the world. We labor to carry Jesus' Gospel TO the world, yet our fellowship is with God and Christ and other brethren — NOT with the world. HOW WONDERFUL!

A believing, converted parent places his or her children in a SPECIAL CATEGORY — apart from the world.

Let me make this CLEAR! The most widely believed ERROR in "Christianity" is that God is calling ALL to conversion, and Satan is trying to keep them "lost."

But Jesus said plainly, "NO MAN CAN come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." At creation, God CUT ALL HUMANITY OFF from Him, except for the VERY FEW He would specially call. And those few are NOT called *just* for salvation. They are called for special service preparing for the KINGDOM OF God. That special service is the REASON why they are called now.

Those NOT called now WILL BE CALLED TO SALVATION, either in the Millennium — if they still then live — or by being resurrected in the Great White Throne Judgment after the end of the Millennium.

Those called NOW — and for special duty preparing for the Kingdom — have SATAN to overcome. And *that's tough!* Those NOT called now WILL BE CALLED after Satan has been put away from humanity.

When Jesus said (John 6:44), "NO MAN CAN come to me, except the

Father which hath sent me draw him," He meant that ALL OTHERS simply CANNOT come to Christ as Savior, even if they wanted to — but in all cases I have observed the un-called DID NOT WANT to come to Christ — except the many who have been deceived by the false gospels of nearly all the sects of "Christianity." There is much *false* conversion.

Now look again at I Corinthians 7. For example, in this passage, in verse 16, regarding the unbelieving husband, sanctified by the converted wife, "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?" It is speaking of an unbelieving husband being "CONSECRATED" (set apart in a special category), whom the believing wife, by keeping the marriage intact, *may* save.

The same is true of your children. They are "consecrated," but that does NOT mean "saved." Yet it means they are in a special category where they MAY BE converted when sufficiently mature.

But WHAT A WONDERFUL TRUTH!

Your children are in a special (consecrated) category. You may TEACH THEM about Christ — about the things of the Bible. Their chances of being CONVERTED when sufficiently mature are MULTIPLIED!

Although Satan is going to influence your children, almost from birth, toward his rebellious attitude, YOU may counteract this by YOUR TEACHING YOUR CHILDREN THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD! And when sufficiently adult THEY WILL BE CALLED. None of this is true of children outside truly converted parents!

How precious is your child?

Jesus picked up little children — infants — and said that "of such is the kingdom of God," and except we repent and become humble as a very small child, we shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Brethren, God's Church is not showing even *half* the growth it should have from the oncoming generation of our members. This shows we have NEGLECTED the teaching of our children! When God has called YOU for special service in loyally backing the proclaiming of the Gospel to the world by God's Church, He intended that your *children* should also be called and enter into the Work of God's Church. □

God's Family

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mature Christians will only frustrate and discourage them.

Your child's servant

It is tempting to think you are more important than your child. That is how this world thinks. People always want to know, Who is the greatest? The oldest? The biggest? The smartest? But God says the greatest is the servant.

Your child's heart must be won! You can serve him most effectively if he knows you seek his welfare above all else. He should love and respect you for your wisdom, justice, high standards and mercy. It also helps if you are broadminded and have a sense of fun. Life shouldn't always be a heavy burden. A cheerful, positive spirit lifts everyone.

To win a young heart requires communication, affection, time. It can't be done overnight. Don't be a nervous novice and expect everything to be right immediately. You will drive everyone crazy. Have patience.

Most of you parents did not grow up in the Church. Yet you are still here, trying to do God's will. Your child must ultimately decide which way he will go. But God did not give him the spirit in man for nothing. God intends to make your child a member of His Family! Even if he goes the wrong way for a time, when he starts to return to God, as he is almost sure to, he will have a head start on what you knew when you started.

Your children could be among the pioneers of the world tomorrow — some of the first to live in Jerusalem under the rule of Jesus Christ and all His saints. Some time during the Millennium, they too will be changed from mortal to immortal and join you as full Sons of God.

There will be no such thing as age for you. You all will be fully mature members of the Kingdom of God. Picture a discussion you and your child might have then about your former physical lives together. What you want to be able to say then should have a significant impact on your relationship now. □