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Telephone: 503 292 4352

• Internet: www.askelm.com •

E-Mail: askoffice@askelm.com

The Repentance of God and Influencing God

by Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., 1995, 1998

Edited by David Sielaff, September 2017

Read First the [September 1, 2017 Commentary](#)

Then read the accompanying [Newsletter for September 2017](#)

The Repentance
of God, and
Influencing God

Editor's Note: God repents when He sees fit to do so. Moreover, God can be influenced by us. Only YHWH, God the Father, alone has the free will to fully repent and change His mind when influenced.¹ These are the related topics put together in this article. Dr. Martin wrote two separate articles, but I put them together so you can learn their relationship to each other. These two articles demonstrate Dr. Martin's growth in grace and in knowledge of Scripture. Some may wish their Bible teachers to know everything all at once, but scholarship and spiritual growth do not operate that way.²

[Part One: The Repentance of God \(1995\)](#)³

Dr. Martin: *No biblical teaching is more misunderstood and avoided by theologians and preachers than the doctrine of God's repentance. Yet, it represents one of the foundational revelations of the apostle Paul*

¹ Dr. Martin's articles: "[Does Man Have a Free Will](#)," "[Free Will and Predestination](#)," "[God's Reconciliation With Man](#)," and my Commentaries: "[Free Will and Salvation](#)," "[You and Free Will](#)," and "[Universal Salvation and Free Will](#)" give additional perspectives on the issues in this combined article. DWS

² No one learns algebra before he learns arithmetic. Likewise, you must learn algebra before you can graduate to more advanced mathematics like geometry, trigonometry, and later calculus. Spiritual growth is similar. You cannot advance in understanding the plan of God's salvation for you until you learn about the Gospel presented by Jesus for all mankind: His birth, righteousness, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, crucifixion, resurrection, glorification, and ascension.

Likewise, the Old Testament (the Old Covenant) explains the necessity for Jesus' acts of salvation on behalf of you and everyone else in the world, from Genesis through Second Chronicles. The last book of the Hebrew canon ends with the words "**Let him go up**" (2 Chronicles 36:23). In that verse, Cyrus the King of Persia (Iran today) makes his decree to rebuild Jerusalem. The Old Testament ends by pointing to Jerusalem, where Jesus the Messiah will appear to actively work for salvation to every human being. This was God's and Christ's purpose from before the foundation of the world (John 17:5, 24; 1 Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2; and 1 Peter 1:20). DWS

³ The original title of this August 1, 1995 article was "The Repentance of God in the Bible." DWS

and other biblical writers. It shows how mankind becomes reconciled to God and also (importantly) how God becomes reconciled to mankind. This is one of the most significant teachings of the Bible that humans should comprehend. It represents nothing less than the bedrock teaching of God's atoning power and his authority in granting salvation to mankind. What we discover in the Bible is that not only should humans repent of evil, but believe it or not, the Holy Scriptures also reveal that God himself "repents of evil" that He intends to do. This Doctrinal Report explains this essential truth.

One of the principal teachings of Christian ministers in most fundamentalist churches is that of man's need to repent and get right with God. Since the Bible emphasizes this essential requirement for coming into a proper relationship with God, it is reasonable for Christians to consider this doctrine in detail and be aware of its prime characteristics as they are stated in the Holy Scriptures. Truly, mankind sincerely needs to repent to God for the sins that mankind (all of us) have done against God. What mankind needs to do is be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:20).

There is another side of the coin in the doctrine of man's reconciliation to God. True, we certainly need to repent and get reconciled to God, but what about God being reconciled to mankind? Have you ever wondered about that part of reconciliation? Indeed, the Bible shows most clearly that God will also repent of His ways in the manner in which He has dealt with mankind in order for Him to become thoroughly reconciled to mankind as well. This is the other part of repentance and reconciliation and the Bible deals with this matter in a clear way.⁴

You see, the word "reconciliation" in its meaning demands the restoration of a harmonious relationship between two parties at odds with each other. It is for both sides to take part to create a reconciliation. Both have to forgive and forget. It is not a proper reconciliation if one party forgives and forgets about the wrongs that caused hostility between the two parties, while the other party does not also forgive and forget. There must be the action of repentance and forgiveness among both parties to avoid further hostility in order for a true harmony to come back into force between the two. The Bible shows this is precisely what God will do with us. He not only demands repentance from us for our ways against Him, but He will equally repent of His ways that we have thought are against us. Thus, a true reconciliation can take place between God and ourselves. The Bible shows plainly that this will indeed take place.

Preachers Are Unaware

How many sermons have you heard that illustrate the biblical teaching that God will equally repent and be reconciled with mankind? I dare say most readers have not even heard that such a teaching is in the Bible. But that doctrine is of paramount importance in the biblical revelation. As a matter of fact, it is one of the most important doctrines in showing why Christ came to earth to live and die for all men.

Without the understanding of this point, one could hardly comprehend the nature of God; why He does what He does among humans; or why He sent Jesus Christ to earth some 2000 years ago to rescue mankind from their sins. The apostle Paul explained the matter clearly and in a way that shows its importance. If one is willing to believe Paul's teaching, we will see that God sent Christ into the world as a first step in showing God's own repentance to mankind. And God's repentance to man is the real means He devised to grant salvation to all humanity within a true harmony to Himself.

An Important Favor to Ask

I would now like to ask a favor of you readers. The information in this article may be so new (even revolutionary) to some that I ask all of you to first read the material before making any judgments on the matter. What I show in this article will be backed up by the scriptural revelation. But most of us (including myself) have been so wedded to a wrong appraisal of God and His ways in dealing with mankind, that many

⁴ See my Commentary "[Reconciliation and Forgiveness](#)," and my articles "[Forgiving God](#)" and "[Are YOU a Misfit?](#)" DWS

of us have missed this foundational teaching of the Holy Bible. Though a book-length treatment of the subject is essential for a full understanding of the subject,⁵ this article is designed to reveal the essence of this most beautiful and awe-inspiring doctrine of the Bible — the doctrine of the “Repentance of God.”

A Prerequisite Teaching

There is one biblical teaching that must be understood before we proceed. We must realize that God is the sovereign of the universe and that He is in total control of everything that exists within the whole of His creation. In a word, the sovereignty of God must be acknowledged as fact. God reigns supreme in the universe. He dominates all things whether they are visible or invisible, whether they are spirits or humans, whether they are animal or inanimate (Colossians 1:15–17).

The fact is, God created the totality of things and He rules among His creation as the supreme power over all. And what most people have not understood is the fact that for God to be the ruler over all, He must also control all the forces on earth and in the universe. Those forces produce both good and evil things. But God is in charge of them all.

“Yours, O YHWH, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom. O YHWH, and you are exalted as head above all.”

• **1 Chronicles 29:11**

“You, even you, are YHWH alone; you have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, the earth and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and you preserve them all; and the host of heaven worship you.”

• **Nehemiah 9:6**

“O Lord God of our fathers, are not you God in heaven? and rule you not over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in your hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand you?”

• **2 Chronicles 20:6**

God Also Rules Over Evil

Most people do not realize that God controls evil and He rules over it.

“Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and YHWH has not done it?”

• **Amos 3:6**

The point is, Almighty God is responsible for all things that happen in the universe whether they are good or evil. The Bible teaches this. On occasion, God even creates individuals to waste and destroy.

“Behold, I have created the smith that blows the coals in the fire, and that brings forth an instrument [a tool] for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.”

• **Isaiah 54:16**

These scriptures — and many more⁶ — show that God is the sovereign ruler of the universe. His superintendence embraces all activity within the entirety of creation even to the numbering of hairs on a human head (Matthew 10:30). He is also in charge of all human political activity.

“Jesus answered, ‘You could have no power at all against me, except it were given you from above.’”

• **John 19:11**

⁵ Dr. Martin provided this information and a vast amount of other fascinating insights from Scripture in his book [*The Essentials of New Testament Doctrine*](#), free, complete online, as well as for purchase as a 550-page printed book. DWS

⁶ For example, read Isaiah 10:5–6, 15, 37:26, 46:11; Exodus 9:16; Proverbs 16:4; Daniel 4:34–35. DWS

“A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.”

• *John 3:27*

Even the destinies and boundaries of nations (both past and present) are under the control of God.

“[God] has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed [predestined] and the bounds of their habitation.”

• *Acts 17:26*

To make it even clearer, all things that God has allowed to happen to nations or individuals in the past, present, or future are precisely known by God.

“Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”

• *Acts 15:18*

Importantly, God knows **“all His works,”** even those that are evil. Nothing escapes His supervision. Yes, evil works are also within the creative activity of God.

“I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I YHWH do all these things.”

• *Isaiah 45:7*

The ancient Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, who destroyed the Temple of God and the city of Jerusalem [killing both the guilty and the innocent], was called **“my servant”** by God (Jeremiah 25:9). The pharaoh of the Exodus was prevented by direct intervention of God from letting the Israelites leave Egypt because God hardened his attitude (Exodus 4:21, 7:3, 14:4). Pharaoh was more than willing to release the Israelites but God stepped in to change his mind and to harden his heart. People may be shocked to learn such things, but they are true. God does these things to fulfill His purposes.

This may appear to be an “evil” action in some people’s eyes but it is clearly the teaching of the Bible. And why not? God has continually used “evil” when it suits His purpose. For some eye-opening examples of this, read Jeremiah 11:23; 16:10; 19:3, 15; 21:10; 32:42; 40:2; 44:2, 27, 29; 45:5, as well as Daniel 9:12–14; and Micah 1:12.

The word “evil” when it is associated with God is not to be reckoned as “sin.” It is impossible for God to “sin.” He can do as He pleases and no one could ever call Him a sinner. Indeed, it is God who determines what “sin” is. We humans have nothing to say in the matter.

It may be surprising to some but even Satan the Devil was created by God to be an evil spirit. Jesus said of Satan that he “was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth” (John 8:44). From the very start of his creation, Satan was a liar. He was a sinner. **“The devil sinned from the beginning”** (1 John 3:8). There is much nonsense being taught about the origin of Satan. Some think he was once an angel with utter spiritual perfection until, after many long years, he began to let vanity creep into his life and then he became a sinner. This is not true. Satan was a liar, a murderer, and a sinner **“from the beginning.”** That is what the Bible teaches.⁷

The truth is, Satan was created by God to be Satan, an adversary of God who does sin and evil. Satan was not created first as a righteous angel. God said: **“I have created the waster to destroy”** (Isaiah 54:16). Satan was brought into being by God to perform a purpose for God. He is completely under the control of God.

God Actually Afflicted Job

When Satan wanted to destroy the children and property of righteous Job, Satan had to get permission from God to do it (Job 1:12). When Satan finally wanted to injure Job himself with great afflictions, he again had to obtain an allowance from God to impose those sufferings upon Job. Even then, God put limits on Satan

⁷ See Dr. Martin’s article [“Assumptions About Satan,”](#) [“Lingering Idolatry in the Temple of God,”](#) and my short Commentary [More on Lucifer and Satan.](#)” DWS

by telling him not to kill Job himself (Job 2:6). God could easily have stopped Satan from doing any of his works against Job, but He did not do so.

This shows, in reality, that God was responsible for afflicting Job. True, God did it through the agency of Satan, but God ordained it. This example, among others, shows that God even uses supreme sinners, murderers, and liars to perform His purposes when He so desires. Since He is in charge of the universe and nothing escapes His superintendence, God can do as He pleases with the creatures He created, in a manner that best suits Him. He even sends spiritual powers to earth to lie (tell falsehoods) to certain people at times:

“And YHWH said, ‘Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead?’

And one [spirit] said on this manner, and another [spirit] said on that manner.

And there came forth a spirit, and stood before YHWH, and said, ‘I will persuade him.’

And YHWH said unto him, ‘Wherewith [by what means]?’

And he said, ‘I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’

And he [God] said, ‘You shall persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.’”

• **1 Kings 22:20–22**

It seems incomprehensible to some people that God would allow such a thing as lying to be done in His name, but God ordered it and the example just given shows it clearly. Even the prophet Jeremiah admitted that God was responsible for allowing the people to be deceived.

“Then said I, ‘Ah, Lord YHWH! surely you have greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, You shall have peace; whereas the sword reached unto the soul.”

• **Jeremiah 4:10**

- Even in the period just prior to the Second Coming of Christ, the apostle Paul tells us that **“God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie”** (2 Thessalonians 2:11).
- God will use and direct the ten evil kings who are associated with the Beast of Revelation in accomplishing His purpose (Revelation 17:17).
- God has even given statutes and ordinances to mankind that were not good for humanity (or for Israel). YHWH said:
 - **“I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live”** (Ezekiel 20:25).
- God even gave people over to do evil:
 - **“God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient”** (Romans 1:28).
 - **“God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven”** (Acts 7:42).
 - **“So I gave them up unto their own heart’s lust: and they walked in their own counsels”** (Psalm 81:12).
- God actively and deliberately deceived people and then judged them for being deceived.

“And if the prophet be deceived when he has spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.”

• **Ezekiel 14:9**

The interesting thing about these deceptions and evils just mentioned is the fact that God commanded us not to commit any of them. But He uses these tactics quite freely whenever He deems it best to do so. Now, this may seem at first very unfair (and even unjust), but do not make too harsh an opinion yet. There is much

more to the story that all of us need to realize. The fact is, God could not be God unless He had control over evil as well as good. Let us look at more ways in which God uses evil devices to bring judgments upon men.

God's Use of Evil in Prophecy

The Book of Revelation and many prophecies of the Old Testament show precise historical occurrences which will happen in the period of seven years just prior to Christ's Second Advent. Some of those prophecies were made about 3500 years ago, while those in the Book of Revelation about 1900 years ago. No human (or groups of humans), no spirit (or groups of spirits), no Satan (or all the Satanic forces in the universe) can change one iota what God has decreed will happen in the future!

When God prophesies something, the only person who can change His mind about the matter is God Himself. It is true that God indeed "repented" of some of His intended actions in the past (Jeremiah 26:13, 19, and 42:10), but that "repentance" came to pass because God wanted it. So, if the prophecies of the Book of Revelation (which are mostly future to us) are "repented of" [and He does not allow them to happen], it is because God wills to change His mind. But up to now, there is no indication that God will release the world from the great traumas that God prophesied will occur in the years ahead of us.

Some of those occurrences will involve plagues, curses, earthquakes, upset weather conditions, economic chaos, and even death. They will happen to the guilty (adults who know better) and to the innocent (such as infants in arms who do not know better).

Besides disastrous prophecies concerning the future that are destined to happen upon mankind, look at our own recent past and the matter of Hitler. Within a recent generation of ours, Hitler systematically killed millions of Jews, Poles, Russians, Gypsies, and others (including infants and young children). God allowed it to occur. True, we have no record that God commanded such, but the fact that He is all-powerful and has all things under His control means He was still responsible.

Why should we consider God to be responsible? Simply because God had (and has) the power to stop all the carnage being done in the world, both today, in the past and in the future, but He has not yet stopped it nor is He prophesied to stop it as far as the Book of Revelation is concerned. Indeed, look at ourselves. Even Christians have many problems.

"For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now. And not only they [the world], but ourselves also [even Christians], which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies."

• *Romans 8:22–23*

Paul said that Christians are no more exempt from pain and anguish at present than any others in the world. True enough, God sometimes responds to our prayers and releases us from specific problems from time to time, but not in every circumstance. God will aid us if it is in accordance with His over-all will.⁸

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he hears us."

• *1 John 5:14*

The truth is, God does not always want His children to have utopia here on earth. Under various circumstances, even we are subject to pain and groanings.

Reconciliation Is Promised

God, however, does promise us something very wonderful. We shall have relief (and later so will the whole world) at the time of our redemption — when our bodies are changed into spirit.

⁸ See Dr. Martin's article, "[The Essentials of Prayer](#)" and my Commentaries, "[Prayers for Those in Authority](#)" and "[Praying in Jerusalem](#)." DWS

“The creature [creation] itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ... waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

• **Romans 8:21, 23**

A redemption and a reconciliation will come from God and it shall embrace the whole world.

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them: and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”

• **2 Corinthians 5:19**

One of the major commissions that God gave Paul was to preach this word of reconciliation. It was to be a reconciliation between mankind and God. God Himself began the reconciliation by having His son die on the tree of crucifixion for all the sins that mankind has done against God. Then God commenced the reconciliation while mankind was reckoned to be God’s enemies. Paul spoke of this in Romans.

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

• **Romans 5:10**

We were not reconciled to God when we became righteous. We were reconciled to God when we were His enemies and ungodly.⁹

God Will Soon Change His Mind

God could stop all the evil on earth in an instant if He so willed. He has not yet willed it. But thanks be to God, He has prophesied that He will change. He, Himself, will “repent” of the evil that He has allowed mankind to undergo. This does not mean that God will have to get down on his knees before man and ask forgiveness of His ways. Of course not! All that God does is entirely justifiable because of who He is, but He does say that He will change His ways of action concerning His human creation on earth and His spiritual creation in the heavens. Does it seem odd to say that God will repent of His ways towards man? He has repented of evil He caused in the past, why not in the future?

“Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God; and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he has pronounced against you.”

• **Jeremiah 26:13**

This “repentance” of God is an essential doctrine of the New Testament revelation. Indeed, the apostle Paul made the “repentance” on God’s part as one of Paul’s cardinal teachings. It is found in the Pauline doctrine of “reconciliation.” Let us now look at this important revelation of the Bible. Once it is understood, it can be seen clearly why it was necessary for Jesus Christ (the Son of God) to come into this world some 1900+ years ago, to live, and to die for mankind. It shows God totally loving mankind.

The Doctrine of Reconciliation

God the Father sent Jesus Christ into the world to reconcile the world to Himself because He loves mankind supremely. Note the apostle Paul’s words.

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• **2 Corinthians 5:19**

One of the major commissions God gave Paul was to preach this word of reconciliation. It was to be a

⁹ I deal extensively with the subject of why evil afflicts believers and the very important discussion in the epistle of Second Corinthians in my article “[Forgiving God.](#)” DWS

reconciliation between mankind and God. He further spoke of this in the epistle to the Romans.

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

• **Romans 5:10**

The first step in the reconciliation process between God and man was made by God Himself. He sent Christ to die for us (out of His great love for us) while we were enemies of His (Romans 5:10), while we were sinners (verse 8), and while we were ungodly (verse 6). Paul said that at the time God stepped in to make amends to mankind, mankind was not yet willing to make amends to God. When God because of His love for mankind started the reconciliation process by sending Christ Jesus and having him die for all mankind, mankind was still God’s enemy. They were also ungodly and all of them were still active sinners. That is what Paul said. None of us wanted to be in harmony with God when the Father commenced His reconciliation process.

This means that the reconciliation was at first completely one-sided. It was on God’s part alone. After all, while mankind (as Paul said) was ungodly, sinners and enemies of God (Romans 5:6, 10), one could hardly say that man wanted to be in harmony with God. However, the word “reconciliation” always signifies that a harmony must exist, though the reconciliation is still one-sided on God’s part as far as all humanity is concerned. God began the process off by sending Jesus Christ to die for mankind and to cleanse us of all sin. [Note: God’s reconciliation involves the totality of the world, not just a select few.] **“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself not imputing their trespasses unto them”** (2 Corinthians 5:19).

But why has mankind been at logger-heads with God? It is simple. Though God is Almighty and could make mankind have all blessings right here and now, God has not yet willed to do so.

- He allows evil (as well as good) to permeate the environment of the earth.
- He permits diseases to afflict mankind.
- He allows and causes famines that have hurt mankind whether they are guilty or innocent.¹⁰
- He allows and causes wars of great magnitude (and even commanded them) which cause much pain and death to many people.
- God has even said He hates people before they were born, people who had done nothing bad or good.

“For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand. ...

As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”

• **Romans 9:11, 13** [quoting Malachi 1:2–3]

This “hating” of Esau by God was ordained by God even before Esau was born. This may seem a very unfair thing (and from a human point of view it is), but Paul came back quickly with a following statement. **“What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid”** (Romans 9:14). The point is, God can do anything He wishes with His creation. There is no one who can hold Him accountable for any wrong deeds that mankind might think He does. Yet it must be admitted that Esau got (what we humans would call) a raw deal. He was even chosen before his birth to be hated of God.

Some misinformed people cannot believe that God would ever do such a thing to a person, but they are avoiding all scriptural teaching when they make such statements. They say that God really did not “hate” Esau; He only loved him less. Oh? The word used by Paul was *miseo* and is used throughout the New Testament as meaning complete antipathy, disdain, and hatred. One should read Matthew 5:43–44; Mark 13:13;

¹⁰ Natural disasters that kill multiple thousands should be added to the list. DWS

John 15:18; Titus 3:3; 1 John 2:11; etc.¹¹

God Will Repent of His Ways

God will change this method of dealing with humanity. He is going to stop allowing man to be afflicted with diseases and pain. He will soon cease His permission for wars or for ordering them to be done.

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.”

• ***Revelation 21:4***

In a word, God will soon **“repent of the evil”** which He has allowed mankind to undergo. He has repented of such things in the past. Read again what Jeremiah said to the elders of Judah back in the 6th century BC.

“Therefore now [1] amend your ways and [2] your doings, and [3] obey the voice of the Lord your God; and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he has pronounced against you.”

• ***Jeremiah 26:13***

Yes, the Bible clearly says that God repents of evil.

“If you will still abide in this land, then will I build you, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up: for I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you.”

• ***Jeremiah 42:10***

And though this “repentance of God” pertained only to the Jews of Judah in the 6th century before Christ, Paul makes it clear that God is now willing to be reconciled to all in the world (and even all the universe) if they will but do one thing. What is that action that must be done by mankind? Since God has already started the reconciliation from His point of view by sending Jesus Christ to die for all the sins of the world (even when we were ungodly and enemies of His), He will now forget all our trespasses **“not imputing their trespasses unto them”** (2 Corinthians 5:19). The apostle Paul then said:

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, BE YOU RECONCILED TO GOD.”

• ***2 Corinthians 5:20***

There it is! God started out the reconciliation of Himself to man by first sending Jesus Christ to die for our sins and to wipe our former paths clean: and by **“not imputing their trespasses unto them.”** He did this while we were ungodly, sinners, and abject enemies of Him; mankind has never liked the way God has treated them over the years. But now, Jesus Christ has started something for all mankind. God’s reconciliation in Christ shows that God really does love mankind. Though it may not appear so on the surface, considering the things that God has allowed to happen to mankind that cause us harm, God has done the things He does since in God’s infinite wisdom He knows this is the way to learn love.

“All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

• ***Romans 8:28***

“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will.”

• ***Ephesians 1:11***

For some reason known to God, sufferings and afflictions, which are allowed by God, or even on some occasions commanded by Him, in the long run are the means of creating love and concern in people. The

¹¹ For more information see [“Chapter 7: God’s Use of Evil and the Allotment,”](#) in Dr. Martin’s short book *ABCs of the Gospel*, available only online. DWS

Scriptures tell us that even Christ learned by His suffering (Hebrews 5:8).

One of these days, however, all the suffering God has permitted or caused to happen will cease. He will change His mind and “**repent of the evil**” over which He superintended while we have been on earth. We will come to acknowledge that God has all along known what He was doing to and for mankind and we will discover that all of what He has done was for our ultimate welfare. What God requires of us is for us to repent of our evil ways. On His part, God will “repent of the evil” that He has done or even plans to do. Remember, God never sins when He uses evil, but He has allowed evil to exist among us. Remember also, He demands of us that we also repent of our ways. Even in our repentance, however, God is the One who inspires us to perform:

“For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

• **Philippians 2:13**

One of these days, we will thank God for all the things He has allowed (or even ordered) to happen to us. We may not always like what is occurring at the present time, but one day we will find that God has allowed these things to happen so He can show His infinite love to us. God has promised He will indeed “repent of the evil” that He now allots to mankind. He started the process by sending Christ to live and die for all mankind as a token of that repentance and reconciliation. Now, He asks you to respond to His gesture of reconciliation by your own reconciliation to Him (2 Corinthians 5:20) done by your own free will which the Holy Spirit inspires you to perform (Philippians 2:13). When this is done, the reconciliation will be complete.

Part Two: Influencing God (1998)¹²

Dr. Martin: *It is the easiest thing in the world for a human being to influence in a positive manner the divine Father of the universe whom we call “**God the Father.**” All we humans have to know is how to do it. That’s right! It is essential that you possess the proper knowledge on how to accomplish the task. In this Doctrinal Report, I will disclose to you the proper way you can influence God to do what you wish and you will always be successful if you utilize the knowledge of how it is done, and you can always express a boldness in your actions. If you set out to influence God the Father, there can be no guessing in any detail of the procedure. There can be no halting or wavering in intention or sequence of steps. There can be no wishy-washy approaches.*

God the Father expects and demands that you encounter Him in a particular way. If you do, you will always get His attention. The strategy that you use may even cause Him to change His mind in your favor on certain matters that may be important to you. But to reach His attention (and it is not difficult to do) requires you to approach Him in a correct and proper manner.

Remember, when Aaron the High Priest in the time of Moses positioned himself before God, he had to do it with a great deal of preparation and in a manner that God the Father prescribed. You should follow a similar procedure. Of course, you should try to discover what His will is and to work within it (1 John 5:14), and we should abide by His will even if He decides to change His mind (as He has done on numerous occasions, see for example Jeremiah 18:6–10).¹³

Let me mention a few things as an introduction. There are divine teachings in the Holy Scriptures that show that Jesus Christ presently sits on the right side of the Father, directly next to Him. To speak with the

¹² The original title of this June 15, 1998 article was “How You Can Influence God.”

¹³ Jeremiah 18:6–10:

“O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? Says YHWH. Behold, as the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are you in mine hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

DWS

Father, Christ simply has to turn His head to the left and begin His dialogue. In doing this, the Scriptures show that Christ certainly influences the Father in what He says all the time. Paul's discussion in Romans 8:18–39 is directly relevant to this matter. Read it all and you will understand why.

Indeed, these verses in Romans show that Christ speaks to the Father about matters that are engendered through His own will and by the exercise of His own ideas and notions. Conversely, God the Father can turn His head to the right and enter into a dialogue with Christ. He also influences Christ Jesus with His own will and His own ideas and notions.

In fact, the two divine beings are so close in their ways of thinking that there is a natural congeniality and unanimity between them. Their dialogues are always consistent and harmonious in every factor encountered within their discussions. And, even if you would desire to engage in a similar discussion with each or both of them, they would allow you to do so if they found that your discourse was worthwhile and productive. They will listen to you with the same consistency and harmonious attention that they enjoy themselves.

The Oneness of God the Father with Christ Jesus and with All of Us IN CHRIST

We are informed in the Scriptures that Christ Jesus is not only in the image of God the Father, but He is in **“the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high”** (Hebrews 1:3). In Christ's role as our substitute in all things that pleased the Father through obedience to Him or that were demanded by the Father in payments for our sins, Christ became **“the captain”** (Hebrews 2:10) of all of us who inherit our individual salvations **“in Christ.”** Christ became a substitute for each of us. Indeed, as Christ is now called the Son of God (Hebrews 1:5), also the firstbegotten (verse 6) as well as the **“firstborn among many brethren”** (Romans 8:29), so are we also reckoned to be His own personal and intimate brethren.

“... He [Christ] is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, ‘I will declare your name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church [the *ekklesia*, God's divine community of brothers and sisters] will I sing praise unto you. ... And again, I and the children which God has given me.”

• **Hebrews 2:11–13**

These children are both males and females: **“You shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty”** (2 Corinthians 6:18, paraphrased from 2 Samuel 7:14 and Isaiah 43:6). This whole congregation of brothers and sisters (with Christ as our Elder Brother) is called **“the general assembly and *ekklesia* of the firstborn”** (Hebrews 12:23). In fact, the original Greek is plural: **“firstborn ones.”**

Legally speaking, we Christians are right now sitting on the right hand of the Father **“in Christ”** (Ephesians 2:6). We are now considered to be exactly like Christ (to be firstborn ones of the Father). When the Father sees Christ sitting on His right hand, He also sees each of us (individually and collectively) sitting on the same right hand throne **“in Christ”** (Ephesians chapters 1 through 3).

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

• **1 John 3:2**

Legally, this incredible privilege to approach God through Christ is yours NOW!

How Long Have We Been In Christ?

We were allotted and chosen to be **“in Christ”** before the foundation of the world, or to put it another way, before Adam and Eve (our first parents) were ever created to become human beings. The apostle Paul wrote:

“Who [God the Father] has [1] saved us, and [2] called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus [when?] before the world began.”

• **2 Timothy 1:9**

This predestined award to us (and I mean the award to you personally) was not according to any works (good or bad) that we have done or would do, because none of us was in existence at the time. It was purely by grace (God's divine gift) that secured for us our individual and collective salvations. Or, as Paul explained it in his previous epistle to Timothy:

“Who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men [all men], the man Christ Jesus¹⁴; who gave himself a ransom for all [for all mankind], to be testified in due time [Greek: in its own time periods].”

• 1 Timothy 2:4–6

God Knows All Things from the Beginning

At the first Jerusalem conference of the apostles, James stood among them and gave a divine dictum that each of the apostles knew to be true. He said: **“Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world”** (Acts 15:18, with an allusion to Isaiah 45:21). God the Father and Christ Jesus were fully aware before the creation of mankind that all mankind are saved (they were saved before the world's foundation). Not all come to accept Christ in this life, nor in other ages of the past. But God has consigned His own **“time periods”** (see the Greek in 1 Timothy 2:6) when God the Father will dispense the knowledge of Christ and the full truth of His plan of salvation to each human being (individually and collectively).

Indeed, no man or woman can come to God and learn of His truth, and accept Christ Jesus as savior (as they are all destined to do at a time God has designed for each person).

- Look at John 6:44: **“No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I [Christ Jesus] will raise him up at the last day.”**
- See also John 6:65: **“Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me [Christ Jesus], except it were given unto him of my Father.”** However, all men will eventually be called in their **“own time periods”** (1 Timothy 2:5).

One's calling goes much further than simply making an opportunity available for people to accept Christ, and they in turn revere Him according to their own wills. In no way is this the case.

- Look at Philippians 2:13. **“For it is God which works in you both TO WILL and TO DO [to perform] of His good pleasure.”**

In this Scripture we are informed in the clearest of language, it is NOT your own WILL that accepts Christ. Your salvation was given to you by grace before the foundation of the world. It is God's WILL that grants you salvation. Not only that, it is NOT your own WORKS (that is, your own doing) that performs the necessary requirements to get you saved. Again, God performs the works and provides you with the will **“to do His good pleasure.”** These attributes are of divine (not human) origin.

God's Will and Ability Will Be Given to Us

In things that pertain to salvation or your relationship with God the Father or Christ, you have no will of your own to accept or to reject any inspiration of belief placed in you engendered by the actions of the divine Family. The WILL and the ABILITY to do things pertaining to your salvation are expressed by the supernatural will and ability that God attaches to you by His grace and power (Philippians 2:13). Though you may be completely unaware of it because of your physical limitations, it is God's will in action, not yours.

However, in all matters NOT pertaining to salvation (such as affairs of the family, job, sickness, health, money, relationships with others, talents, likes and dislikes, etc.), you can do as you like.¹⁵ Yet even here,

¹⁴ Paul still correctly called Christ a **“man,”** (*anthropos* in Greek), though when Paul wrote, Christ had been glorified after His resurrection and was restored as a member of the Family of God. *ELM*

¹⁵ Regarding the extent and limitations of human will, see the articles in footnote 1 on page 1. *DWS*

moreover, God is still in charge of your wills and abilities so that you can never accept or do anything that is contrary to His overall will for you and mankind. No one can ever thwart God's will either for good or for evil that He has devised (and remember God is the creator of both good and evil, Isaiah 45:7). In these matters, it is like God tying a horse to an iron pole with a twenty foot tether and to let the horse do as he pleases within that radius. But brethren, let us realize that even the pole, the tether and the horse (or say the human being) are also created and used exactly as God wants. There was never (nor is there now) any WILL of man involved in the creation by God of physical or spiritual limitations.

What makes each of us a unique individual is something that God gives to each of us by His singular creative power. It is what the Bible calls "the spirit of man."¹⁶ The apostle Paul clarifies the subject for us:

"For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God. ..."

The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

• 1 Corinthians 2:11, 14

Our abilities to do various things, or to show our likes and dislikes for some things in life are a reflection of God's own creative powers working in us. Let's face it, each of us is a product of God (fully and completely with all our idiosyncrasies, even the ones we may not like). We are not creations that we ourselves have devised.

Truthfully, I would have created myself quite differently than God made me (and I bet most of you would say the same thing). Even the things that we ourselves desire to create in our own lives have been supernaturally initiated and instilled within us by God.

He created us the way He wanted us to be in the first place. Therefore, even our own creative powers are simply a reflection of God and His will and His creation. We have nothing to do with the issue. To teach us lessons in life, God can even punish us for using in an outward manner the potential for illicit desires and lusts which He placed within each of us, by our actions that are contrary to His teachings in the Holy Scriptures or to society in general.

Actually, God the Father selected all members of the human race to be His children before the foundation of the world. We were back at that time placed **"in Christ"** (2 Timothy 1:9) without even yet existing. We were not yet born nor had we become human beings. Still, the Father wanted us to have experiences to teach us to become educated and mature "children" of His. He gave His firstborn Son, Christ Jesus, the role of being the captain to give us teaching and leadership to bring all of us into the divine Family of God (Hebrews 2:10). That is what Ephesians and Colossians describe in detail. In the Gospel of John we discover some intimate details on what all of us individually and collectively are to become.

Pay attention to what Jesus taught His disciples from John chapters 13 to 17 inclusively. Summarizing those chapters in John 17:20–23, Jesus prays to His Father (and our Father) for His disciples:

¹⁶ Each child of the first Adam has a **"spirit of man"** which is unique to him or her alone. It is an important part of the God's creation and should not be misunderstood or minimized. Job's young friend Elihu correctly said in Job 32:8 and 33:4:

"There is a spirit [Hebrew, *ruach*, spirit, breath] in man: and the inspiration [breathing in] of the Almighty gives them understanding. ..."

The spirit [Hebrew, *ruach*, spirit, breath] of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty has given me life."

Its formation in Zechariah is likened in importance to the creation of the heavens and the earth, Zechariah 12:1:

"The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel, says the Lord, which stretches forth the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him."

The human spirit is clearly distinct from the spirit of animals, although it was not entirely clear to the author of Ecclesiastes where each goes at death (Ecclesiastes 3:21). Even though the human spirit was created by God and comes from God, the spirit of man is distinct from the Holy Spirit of God.

John 17:20–23	Comments
<p>“Neither pray I for THESE alone, but FOR THEM also which shall believe on me through their word; that THEY may ALL BE ONE; as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that THEY also may be ONE IN US: that THE WORLD may believe that you have sent me.</p> <p>And the glory which you gave me I HAVE GIVEN THEM: that THEY MAY BE ONE, even as WE ARE ONE; I IN THEM, and YOU IN ME, that THEY MAY BE MADE PERFECT IN ONE; and that THE WORLD may know that YOU HAVE LOVED THEM, as YOU HAVE LOVED ME.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “THESE,” the eleven apostles being taught, “FOR THEM” means all believers. • “THEY ... ALL ..., the apostles and all believers • “THEY” mean us and soon the rest of • “THE WORLD,” the whole system of human beings alive today, and through all ages. • “THEM,” all of us • “THEY” again, referring to all of us • “THEM,” again, everyone will be ... • “PERFECT” as God is now “perfect” • “THE WORLD,” all humans, “YOU” is God the Father, “THEM” means the apostles and all who ever lived or will live

We find being described in the above verses the ONENESS of the divine Family of God. It is the true “Godhead.” Note that it is ONE God, but it includes the Father, Christ, the apostles, and all the rest of us, and eventually all humanity. The modern pagan “Trinity” doctrine of Christendom falsely believes that the Godhead is God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. A true biblical “trinity” is (1) God the Father, (2) God the Son and (3) God the Us — the human race, selected to be “**in Christ**” before the world’s foundation.

So, How Can We Influence God the Father?

Even now (as human beings and with our lack of spiritual knowledge in many things), we are members of the divine Family of God. We represent the sacred “trinity”: God the Father, God the Son and God the Us. We are even now reckoned a part of the Godhead, as is Christ, and even as God the Father (but we are NOT the head, the Father is the head). The WILL and the ABILITY that we have to accept Christ and God’s ways are things supernatural that have been placed in us by the Head (Philippians 2:13). It is NOT our own wills in action; it is the Father’s will.

We as part of the divine Family are required to obey and to submit to the Head, because this is good for us. So, if the Father wants to change His mind (and He can do so if He pleases), the Father will inspire our Elder Brother (Christ Jesus) to motivate us to encourage God to go ahead and change His mind.

God grants this privilege to Christ and to Us. He will listen to US (and to Christ). He will change His mind since it is He Himself who inspired each of us (who are ONE with HIM) to have Him change His mind in the first place. Yes, we are that powerful. I hope that we use our privileges as His divine children to influence Him to do what He has planned to perform.

We can encourage Him to change His mind if He so desires. He will let us know when He does. It is then our duty to support Him. This is not circular reasoning. It is exercising our executive powers in the Godhead that sustains the universe. Brethren, we humans are (even now) an indivisible and an essential part of that ONE divine Family. Let us not give up our sacred inheritance by believing in erroneous beliefs and follies of mankind.

Ernest L. Martin, 1995, 1998
David Sielaff, September 2017