

Part Two In A Series Of Seven

Evil In The World: Who Is To Blame And What Is The Solution?

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

- No One Is Innocent; We're All Sinners.
- The Person Who Claims To Be Innocent Cannot Be Forgiven.
- Something Sinister Is Feeding On Us.
 - Only Jesus Christ Can Save Us.

EVALUATION SHEET

Please go ahead and fill in the evaluation sheet attached.

CONTACT DETAILS

Web site: greatbarrchurchofchrist.org

Mobile: 0787 9444 267

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GREAT BARR
CHURCH OF CHRIST



GOD, LIFE AND PEOPLE

Part two in a Series of Seven



2. REBELLION

Evil In The World: Who Is To Blame And What Is The Solution?

'caring for **PEOPLE** for **PEOPLE** matter to God' **Romans 5:8**

SIN ISN'T LIMITED TO THE OBVIOUS

I. THE WORLD'S IN AN AWFUL MESS

1. Everybody knows there is evil in the world. Television, radio, newspapers and our own eyes tell us of sadistic cruelty, child prostitution and torture, wars fought for profit, millions who starve while prosperous nations destroy food and raving politicians who drag nations into poverty and bitterness to satisfy their offended egos.

We've read the figures on the number of victims (addicts and families) tortured by drug-bosses or the booze industry. We're amazed at the brutal muggings of very old people and the aborting of millions of defenceless babies.

2. Sin isn't limited to the obvious kinds of evil. Two of Christ's most devastating pictures of Sin are of a young man who wasted what he had (Luke 15:13) and two religious men who did nothing when they could and should have done something (Luke 10:31, 32).

Then there are 'respectable' sins – envy, bitterness, pride, revenge, smugness, snobbery, bad temper, cowardice and such like. You know what I mean, the kind of evils people shrug at as they say: 'Well, we're only human. At least I'm no drunken wife-beater!'

JESUS CHRIST SAYS: "I AM THE WAY OUT!"

SIN is feeding on us!

13. Science can't save us! Psychiatrists can't save us! Politics can't save us! Medicine can't save us! Armies can't save us! Police can't save us! Social workers can't save us! School-teachers can't save us! Philosophers can't save us! National leaders can't save us! We can't war, buy, bribe, threaten, talk, study, protest or educate our way out of this.

Christ comes confronting us with our Sin, telling us: **I'm the way out! (John 14:6)**. Instead of shutting God out of our lives, we must let him work with us and in us to deliver us from a sinister power that is much too strong for us.

What do you think about all this? Aren't you, like the rest of us, wrestling with evil? Haven't you found you are unable to conquer it and haven't you often thought that it all must be answered for some day somewhere to someone?

If so, you're hearing the voice of God! Don't ignore it – give it a hearing!

CHANGING THE X-RAY DOESN'T CHANGE THE TRUTH

11. The doctor loves us enough to tell us we have cancer. He might make alterations to the X-Ray so that the cancer spots don't show on it, but **would that change our condition? Would it change the truth to alter the X-Ray?**

A good doctor wouldn't do that – neither will a good God!

12. The Bible insists that Christ died for every one of us and that he died to rescue us from Sin (**John 3:16 and 1 John 2:2**). An evil more alarming than AIDS and more mysterious than all the riddles of the physical universe is devouring our race.

Like a parasite, buried deep in our inner being, it is feeding on us and will destroy us. Some **'wise'** men smile and tell us there's nothing to worry about, **but something's feeding on us!**

People are being brutally murdered in the streets, nations are being exterminated, and countless millions awake each morning to another day of torture and misery.

Our hearts are finding pleasure in perverse evils, we're watching more and more immorality and violence for entertainment, and we're abusing more and more of our children.

THERE IS SOMETHING THAT NEEDS EXPLANATION

II. WHO OR WHAT IS TO BLAME FOR ALL THIS EVIL?

3. Some blame our animal background. We just haven't outgrown our bad animal-traits, they tell us. Some say it's all a matter of our genes. We hate, love and hurt each other because our brains are reprogrammed to do that. Others tell us bad childhood experiences explain all our evil ways.

4. It's characteristic of people to blame someone else for their evil (**see this in Genesis 3:12**). We tell ourselves the world would be all right if **'they'** hadn't done or weren't doing this or that. And there are plenty of people, with Bible in hands, who want to lay it all on Adam. His choice, they tell us, resulted in our being born enemies of God and hating all that is righteous.

A condition, they tell us, that leaves us utterly incapable of doing anything good. Lots of people think God himself is to blame (**see Genesis 3:12**). **'If he hadn't made us,'** they protest, **'we wouldn't have gotten into this mess.'** However we **'explain'** it, we all admit there is something that needs explanation.

Sceptics and believers may not like the others' explanation but both offer something! We may argue about the origin or roots of evil but we all know it's here!

IN OUR BETTER MOMENTS WE AREN'T HAPPY

III. GOD INSISTS THAT WE ACCEPT THE BLAME FOR OUR SIN

5. God insists that we accept the blame for our sin! We can't keep pushing it off on to someone else (**not even Adam!**). After we've made all our excuses (**and some of them are reasonable**), after we've shown how bad our background has been, we know in our heart of hearts of evil and shameful things we're fully responsible for. In our better moments we aren't happy with how we've lived our lives. That's healthy and it's the work of God in us.

6. Psychologists used to spend most of their time telling people 'sin' is a Church invention, or that other people were altogether to blame for our sinful behaviour. But there's a growing realisation among them that no one is being helped by this and that the dark stain in Man needs to be treated as real! Evil is real! People are guilty! There is something to be confessed, to be ashamed and afraid of!

7. In Hitler's death camps millions of men, women and children were tortured before they were murdered. Those who ran the camps and supervised the torture and murder refused to take the blame. They said they were only carrying out their orders. We're all amazed at such self-excusing but in our own areas of lesser guilt we so often go the same self-excusing route. And God still insists: **'There is none righteous, no, not one!' (Romans 3:10)**

YOU CAN'T FORGIVE INNOCENT PEOPLE

IV. WHY DOES GOD INSIST THAT WE FACE OUR GUILT?

8. The answer is simple: If we don't admit guilt we cannot accept forgiveness. The man who says he isn't guilty can't accept forgiveness because forgiveness is only for guilty people! You can't forgive innocent people – **there's nothing to forgive!**

9. You can't walk up to an innocent bystander and forgive him for smashing your window – he had nothing to do with it! You can't forgive a totally innocent schoolboy for beating your boy up! Innocent people not only don't need forgiveness, they cannot be forgiven! As long as we insist on our innocence we can never accept forgiveness at the hand of God!

10. So God insists that we admit our guilt. He wants so much to forgive us because he wants so much to live with us in loving fellowship. But there can be no loving fellowship unless our rebellion against

God is dealt with and it cannot be dealt with unless we admit it exists. God loves us enough to confront us with our evil.