

# The Salvation Process

## WHO is Going to Rule?



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**THIS BOOKLET IS NOT TO BE SOLD. The information provided is for the benefit of former members of the congregations of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), and of current and prospective members of God's Church.**

*In most people's mind, sin is what will keep them out of God's Kingdom, but sin can be forgiven. There is something else that will indeed make it impossible for you to ever be saved. What is it? You need to make certain that you are not setting yourself up to lose your salvation.*



## *Preamble*

**Please Note:** All comments in brackets [ ] or in parentheses ( ) as well as highlighted text (bolded and/or in blue) are from the author of this study. Bible quotations are in maroon.

I think it is essential to clarify the question of the “Holy Spirit” before we begin this study. If we say that who or what is the “Holy Spirit” is the question that needs to be answered, we are starting from the assumption that there exists such a being as the Holy Spirit and that it is a separate and distinct being from God and the Word. The question which should be asked is who are the beings the Bible tell us are holy, whose composition is spirit and who have existed eternally? Either the Bible plainly tells us who are the separate and distinct beings that existed from all eternity who created all things (spirit beings and the material universe) or we have no way of getting an answer to our question.

### **The Holy Spirits of the God Family**

The Bible tells us in Gen 1:1 that:

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

The Hebrew word translated “God” is “Eloheem” which is the plural form of “Eloah which means “God”. The word “Eloheem” refers to “gods.” It is a uniplural noun like family, group, team, etc. In the beginning, there was therefore more than one God being in existence but how many were there?

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth there was God and there was another being with God who was also God, the Word. How can these two beings both be God; isn't that impossible?

The word God indicates the kind of existence of these 2 beings: their nature is to be God in the same way that all human beings have the same human nature. However, having the same nature does not mean that all human beings constitute a single being; indeed, they are all separate and distinct beings with their own personalities. God and the Word have in common the same nature or, level and type of existence, but they are separate and distinct beings just like all human beings who have the same human nature are separate and distinct beings.

### God the Father

We read in the Bible that God became a father when the Word became flesh (Php 2:5-8) by being born of woman after having been conceived in the virgin Mary by the holy spirit being called God (Luke 1:35). God from that point on became God the Father and the Word, who was born as the flesh-and-blood Jesus of Nazareth became God's Son or the Son of God. He was both fully God (his father was God and fully human (his mother was the virgin Mary).

Jesus was God the Father's only begotten son at the time when He was conceived in Mary's womb but He was not to be the only one begotten of the Father. God the Father is the holy spirit being in the Godhead that calls men to salvation.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Joh 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

Joh 18:9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou [God the Father] gavest me have I lost none.

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,



### God the Word and Spokesman

The Bible term for being called is to be spiritually begotten by God the Father (1Pe 1:3). When we are begotten, we become a spiritual embryo that can be born again as a glorified spirit being with eternal life. Those begotten of the holy spirit God the Father who follow their calling are then able to come to the holy spirit being called the Word and Spokesman (John 6:44; 65; 18:9) who then teaches them. The glorified Jesus-Christ as God the Father's Word and Spokesman is the holy spirit being that works in the minds of God the Father's called and chosen ones.

Joh 7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Jesus had to first be glorified for it to be possible for Christians to have access to the holy spirit called the Word and Spokesman because the glorified Christ is the holy spirit being who works in the minds of God's saints (John 14:17) in the same way that Satan is the evil spirit that works in the minds of the children of disobedience (Eph2:2).

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he [Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [On the day of Pentecost, it would be in them and in all true Christians.]

Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, [Satan] the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

The holy spirit God the Father calls men and those who follow their calling are then taught by the holy spirit called the Word and God the Father's Spokesman.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

## The Holy Ghost

The expression "Holy Ghost" used in the Bible is in error as there are no ghosts in the Godhead but rather 2 beings that are holy (John 17:11; Isa 6:3) and spirit (John 4:24).

Joh 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

Isa 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy**, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Joh 4:24 **God is a Spirit**: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

These 2 God beings who are holy and spirit are the holy spirit beings of the God family who existed in the beginning at the creation of all things.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

And, the Word who was with God is before all things i.e., *nothing* existed before He created them whether made of spirit or matter.

Col 1:15 **[Christ]** Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

Col 1:16 For by him [the Word who became Jesus-Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

In the beginning before anything either physical or spiritual was created, there was God and the Word who existed before all things and no other being is mentioned as having existed with them. There is no bib-

lical evidence that there ever existed a third, separate and distinct personage in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit” who dwelt in eternity with God and the Word.

### God is a Family

Throughout the Bible we can find many verses which clearly indicates the existence of family relations between God and the Word and God’s called, chosen and faithful.

Mat 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Mat 12:50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Joh 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but o to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

God is clearly a family in which many can be ultimately born again by a resurrection from the dead to eternal, glorified spirit life in God’s Kingdom.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [\[God’s Son\]](#) might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Col 1:18 And he [\[the glorified Christ\]](#) is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Christ was the first to be born again by a resurrection from the dead to be followed by many brethren.

### Bible Writing Convention

The practice in the Bible has been to simply use the expression “the Holy Spirit” without indicating which God personage in the Godhead the expression represents. Over time, because of this practice, just about everybody has come to believe that the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct God being in the Godhead but, there is no single verse or group of verses in the Bible that prove the existence of such a third being in the Godhead. The words “holy” and “spirit” are adjectives that describe the nature of

God the Father and of God the Word i.e., they are holy beings made of spirit.

Whenever we encounter the expressions the “Holy Spirit” or simply the “Holy Spirit” in the Bible we must look at the context to determine of which holy spirit being of the Godhead the Bible is talking about: the holy spirit, God the Father or the holy spirit, the Word and Spokesman.

The Word is the holy spirit being in the Godhead who carries out the instructions and wishes of the holy spirit, God. He is the faithful son who seeks to do his father’s will in all things. He is the member of the God family that did the work of creating the heaven and the earth, who ruled over ancient Israel through Moses and his human successors, He is the one who became a man who suffered and died to be God the Father’s perfect sacrifice for sin and make the salvation of mankind possible, etc. and He came to reveal the Father to those who follow the Father’s calling.

### **Making Things Clearer**

In this study, when referring to God’s spirit who, depending on the circumstances can be the holy spirit personage called God the Father or the holy spirit personage called God the Word and Spokesman, I will not capitalize either of the adjectives “holy” and “spirit”. This is in order to not perpetuate the false impression in the minds of readers that there is a 3rd being in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit.” Instead, I will refer to either of the holy spirits in the God family as being God’s spirit without capitalizing the word “spirit” to make it plain that we are not referring to a third God being in the God family called the “Holy Spirit” but to one of the 2 God beings in the Godhead.

God’s family is presently made up of 2 holy spirit beings to which are to be added thousands and possibly millions of other holy spirit beings when God’s plan of salvation for mankind has reached its end. The saints that endure in the faith until the end of their natural human life, will be resurrected as individual holy spirit beings in God’s Kingdom when it is established.

There are two studies which you can read regarding what is the “Holy Spirit” and decide for yourself in light of the Bible-based evidence offered if such a being exists in the Godhead. These studies are: [What is the Holy Spirit? Cliff Notes Version](#) and [Who or What is the Holy Spirit?](#)





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### **The GREAT risk of creating beings with mind power and absolute free moral agency.**

**W**hat follows is an explanation of the real reason men lose their salvation. Astonishingly enough and contrarily to what is customarily believed, sin is not the main reason why men lose their salvation; sin can be forgiven. There is something else which cannot be forgiven and which leads to loss of salvation. That is the topic that will be explored in this study and hopefully, I have aroused your curiosity.

#### **God's Plan to Grow His Kingdom – Spirit Beings**

God and the Word have eternally existed and at some point in time, God made the decision to bring into existence other beings that would be created in such a way that they could become part of His kingdom which was then composed only of Himself and the Word.

The Bible reveals that God first created spirit beings and to make it possible for them to have a relationship with Him and the Word and each other, God gave them minds similar to His own but with less power. God also created them with free will which makes it possible for them to have individuality and personality, to be separate and distinct from Him and have their own minds, think their own thoughts, and make their own decisions. Free will is sometimes referred to as free moral agency

which means that such beings have the ability to make their own decisions because no other being has the power to force them to change what they have chosen to believe or to change their thoughts. Free moral agency makes them completely responsible for their decisions. It then becomes possible for God to judge them in accordance with what they do once they are given the knowledge of what it is they should do. They become fully responsible for their own fate which they freely choose using the mind power and free will given them. They can choose to obey God or not and there is no power in the universe that can force them to choose one way or the other against their will.

And, what was the biggest decision that the angels had to ultimately make. They had to come to a point in their existence when they would have to decide whether or not to place themselves under God's rule. That would be the decision that would complete their spirit being creation and which once taken could not be changed as spirit once fully created is unchangeable.

This ultimate decision would forever establish the character of individual angels as either being in submission to God or being in rebellion against Him.

Angels had to be [beings of character](#) for them to ever be able to become part of God's Kingdom and this is only possible in beings that have free will and mind power.

What is character?

Character in a being is the ability to freely choose to follow one course of action over another which seems more attractive and satisfying to it but from which it must refrain in order to obey God. This being makes the knowing and conscious decision to restrain itself when it is entirely free not to do so in order to willfully submit itself to God because through its ability to think and its free will it has decided to do so; it is its decision.

The angels individually created by God are beings that all had to make this ultimate decision. The Bible reveals that the angels placed on the earth including Lucifer decided to rebel against God and not be subject to Him. The other angels referred to in the Bible as the holy angels made the decision to submit to God's authority and are forever part of God's Kingdom.



### God's Plan to Grow His Kingdom – Creation of Man

After the completion of the creation process for spirit beings God decided to create other beings who would not only have mind power and freedom of decision making similar to God's (Gen 1:26 "..... **Let us make man in our image....**") but much less powerful and through which He could reproduce Himself. These beings would be created in such a way that their level of existence could be elevated to the same plane as God's. They would be able to acquire the very nature of God and become God as God is God upon meeting the conditions established by God.

These beings could become actual sons of God having the same nature and become part of the God family which grown large is God's nation and kingdom. They would be born of the flesh with the possibility, while human beings, to be spiritually begotten by the holy spirit God the Father (conceived, not born) through a process where the holy spirit God the Father dwells with them and reveals to them spiritual truth (God level truth) which is otherwise impossible for man to know.

As a flesh-and-blood human beings it is impossible to perfectly obey God in all things (1Jn 1:8-10).

1Jn 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

1Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1Jn 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

But they would be considered as sons of God by God imputing Christ's perfect holy righteous character or sinlessness to them (Psa 32:2; Gal 2:16).

Psa 32:2 Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD **imputeth not iniquity**, and in whose spirit there is no guile **[deceitfulness]**.

Gal 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified **[the forgiveness of sins]** by the works of the law, **[by keeping the law]** but by the faith of Jesus Christ, **[His perfect holy righteous character imputed to Christians]** even we have believed in Jesus Christ, **[that He was the Son of God whose death on the stake paid for the penalty of the sins of mankind]** that we might be justified **[our sins may be forgiven]** by the faith of Christ, **[His righteousness**

imputed to us] and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. [Keeping God's law will not forgive any sin we may commit.]

This is what will make it possible for Christians to be born again like Christ by a resurrection from the dead (Rom 1:4) at the time of Christ's 2nd Coming when the resurrection of God's saints occurs.

Rom 1:4 And [Christ] declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

God through His creation power (Rom 8: 10-11) will put life back into those who have died in Christ and raise them from the grave as glorified holy spirit beings having the same nature as His own and in whom will dwell immortality.

Rom 8:10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Rom 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he [God the Father] that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [give immortal life] your mortal bodies by his Spirit [God the Word] that dwelleth in you

Mankind was given similar mind power and freedom of thought as were the angels and for the same reason i.e., to make it possible for them to become part of God's Kingdom. Those men who one day will be part of God's Kingdom are those who after having been given to know the truth, freely and voluntarily choose to submit themselves to God's authority and to try to the best of their abilities to resist the lust of their mind and of their flesh (Jas 1:14-15) in order to fulfill the requirements of God's commandments.

Jas 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Jas 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

This attitude of obedience maintained while flesh-and-blood human beings will become permanent in the resurrection to glorified holy spirit life. This will ensure there will never be another rebellion against God as occurred with the angels that sinned and it will ensure that all the

different members of God's Kingdom will be one with God the Father as is God, the Word and Spokesman (Joh 10:30; 14:10; 14:20; 1Co 12:20).

Joh 10:30 I and my Father are one.

Joh 14:10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Joh 14:20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

1Co 12:20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

God's Church is made up of many members but they constitute and are parts of one body.

1Co 12:27 Now ye [true Christians] are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

In order for God's plan to have a kingdom made up of other similar beings with whom He could have a relationship, it was necessary that these beings, spirit or flesh, have mind power and free will so as to be separate and distinct from God as individuals while sharing the very same God level or kind of existence.

But there is a huge risk to allowing created beings to have mind power and free will.

### **Possible Misuse of Mind Power and Free Will**

God knowingly took a great risk in creating beings with mind power and free will. Will this creature or creation choose to be the ultimate authority in its own life deciding for itself good and evil or will it freely and willingly subordinate its will to that of its Creator who will define for it good and evil?

In beings with free will and mind power there can be no assurance that they will make the decisions that their creator would want them to make. The Creator in granting free will and mind power to the beings that He created knew there was a real possibility that some of them would decide to not subordinate their wills to His but this is the chance that had to be taken to make it possible for these created beings to be

separate and distinct entities able to think and acquire knowledge for themselves; in brief, for them to be stand-alone, independent entities with their own personality with whom God could have a relationship and grow His family into a great nation and kingdom.

### Angels that Disobeyed

God first created spirit beings. They are individually created sons of God. They are sons not as a result of a begetting process by God the Father but simply as a result of God's power to create such beings which He did on an individual basis. The only way for more angel beings to come into existence is for God to create more. Angels do not have families, do not marry, do not and cannot reproduce and their number is limited to that which God created. Also, the angelic realm can never be part of God's family (see Heb 1:5 below) nor can angels ever have the same nature as God. (Heb 1:5)

The following Scriptures make this clear.

1Co 6:3 Know ye not that we shall judge [\[rule over them\]](#) angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

Heb 1:5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

Heb 1:6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. [\[Christ is the first begotten of God's plan of salvation for mankind, many more humans are to become sons of God by the holy spirit God the Father begetting them and all the angels were to worship Him as they will all of God's glorified holy spirit beings i.e., God's saints in the resurrection when they become God as God is God.\]](#)

Heb 2:5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, [\[the new heaven and the new earth\]](#) whereof we speak.

Heb 2:6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Heb 2:7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou

crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

Heb 2:8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. [\[including angels\]](#) For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

All angels are not the same with some being higher in ability and authority than others such as archangels and this is in accordance with the governmental order as set up and designed by God for spirit beings as He has created them.

Originally, the angels were created with the power to think, and they were not under the influence of any evil spirit beings pushing their minds in one direction or another. There was only God and the Word, and them.

Today, as Christians we say that those who are misbehaving are doing so because of the influence of evil spirits in their minds BUT what influence if any caused angels and Lucifer to sin since there was no other power that existed to influence them to sin i.e., go against God's law and in Lucifer's case, seek to overthrow God and replace Him on the throne of the universe. The Bible is clear that the source of temptation is not God.

Jas 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

It is unknown if the angels were created with a knowledge of God's law and of the results of following it or not or if that knowledge was given them after their creation; whichever way it occurred, the angels had to first know about the law and the consequences and rewards for breaking or keeping it. You cannot be held responsible for willful disobedience to a law which you do not know exists, and this is why the unconverted world is not now under judgment.

1Pe 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: [\[because it knows the truth\]](#) and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

What caused the angels and Lucifer to disobey God when there was no evil influence or spirit being affecting their minds and pushing them to disobey God?

Once we know this, we will know why during the Millennium even with Satan being put away there will still be a massive number of individuals who will not follow their calling or who after having followed their calling, will not remain converted.

### **Why Lucifer Sinned**

How did Lucifer come to be found with iniquity; what caused him to sin?

Essentially, Lucifer after a while began to think of himself as being as capable as God and that He would be able like God to rule over the universe and that there was no reason why he should be in a subordinate position to God. He could be God as God is God and all he had to do was overthrow Him and take over His position as ruler of the universe. God would then become one of his subordinates.

Basically, Lucifer after an unknown period of time decided on his own, and not as a result of another spirit being working in his mind, that he wanted to have God's authority. He wanted to be the Supreme Being in the universe and he was so sure he could do it that he actually tried to overthrow God with the help of the 1/3 of the angels that were placed on the earth with him.

In Ezekiel 28, we read God's description of Lucifer and of how he came to sin. The story begins by talking about the King of Tyrus then shifts to a description of Lucifer and of how his downfall came about.

Eze 28:11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Eze 28:12 Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. [\[Lucifer as created.\]](#)

Eze 28:13 Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone *was* thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

Eze 28:14 Thou *art* the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee *so*: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God;

thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

Eze 28:15 Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou *wast* created, till iniquity was found in thee. [Lucifer had independent mind power and could make decisions that were contrary with God's will and this was as intended by God. He sinned or iniquity was found in him when he made a certain decision which we will see below.]

Eze 28:16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

Eze 28:17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

Lucifer's developed a very high opinion of himself because he was a being of such high perfection. He became filled with so much pride that it affected his thinking. He began to see himself as being just as able as God to rule the universe and essentially, that the creature could replace the Creator.

Pride can and does interfere with our ability to think logically and to make conclusions based on a correct evaluation of the facts of a matter. The Bible has much to say about how pride is the starting point for bad decision making. Pride causes us to do things which we would otherwise not do, and which are often to our detriment. Pride falls in the domain of emotions and feelings which psychologists call the crazy aunt or uncle living rent free in our heads and of which we have to be wary.

Pro 8:13 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

Pro 11:2 When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.

Pro 13:10 Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.

Pro 14:3 In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.

Pro 16:18 Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

Pro 29:23 A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

Mind power involves not only the ability to think but also the ability to have emotions which can interfere with our ability to think clearly. We are not beings of pure logic; if we were, we would be like robots with all our actions constrained by what is objectively logical and we would not have the freewill needed for us to be individual beings of character. We are to be on our guards all the time to make sure our emotions do not overpower our logical mind; they are an important and necessary part of our minds and there is a time for emotions to be felt and expressed but we must be careful not let ourselves be overwhelmed by them.

At this point, I feel there is a critical need to elaborate on the emotional component of our minds which can and do greatly affect the decisions we make as we go through life. This is going to be somewhat long but necessary for us to really come to correctly understand why Lucifer sinned, why Adam and Eve sinned and why so many do not follow their calling or if they do follow their calling, in time, turn away from it.

### **The Emotional Component of the Mind**

Let's go back to the book of Genesis and review how God created mankind as it will allow us to understand the mind of not only of men but also of spirit beings.

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Whenever this verse was read, the ministry always explained that man was created in the character image of God i.e., with a mind like God's mind but which is of course much less powerful and in the likeness of God i.e., man's physical appearance is like God's appearance but here



again with this vast difference that God is composed of spirit (See John 4:24 below) and man is made of the dust of the ground (See Gen 2:7 below).

John 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Gen 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

How much does man look like God? John 14:9 makes it plain.

Joh 14:8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

Joh 14:9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

We can see in the Bible that God's mind is capable of emotions such as wrath, disappointment, frustration, hope, etc. God is not a being of pure logic nor of pure emotions; the ability to reason logically and to feel and express emotions are part of God's mind and they are part of ours as we have the same kind of minds as God (Gen 1:26).

What follows is a listing of Scriptures where we can see different emotions expressed by God.

Gen 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.

Gen 6:6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. [God was disappointed to see how man had turned out so much so that He decided to kill all of mankind by a great worldwide flood except Noah and his family and start over again with other humans for which conditions would be changed; men would no longer live hundreds of years.]

Exo 32:11 And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great pow-

er, and with a mighty hand? [God was very angry with Israel that He had just delivered from its Egyptian slavery because while Moses was receiving the 10 commandments, they were having an orgy and creating idols for them to follow thinking that Moses had been gone for so long that he had died.]

Num 14:11 And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them? [God can be provoked as men can be and He can be frustrated saying : “.... how long will it be ere they believe me ... “]

Num 14:12 I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they. [God decides to disinherit Israel (it was to become His holy nation and kingdom of priests). He would instead use the descendants of Moses. God was discouraged with Israel not obeying Him despite all the signs He had given them.]

Examples abound all throughout the Scriptures showing God can have emotions like humans have emotions or should I rather say that humans can have emotions like God has emotions as they are made in God's image. As we have just seen in the case of Israel, He became so frustrated, disappointed and angry with their continued disobedience that He had decided to destroy them all except Moses. God is not a being which is insensitive to or who cannot feel emotions or who cannot at times be driven to action by emotions. The Day of the Lord is God's wrath upon the nations; the seven last plagues fill up his vengeance.

Rev 15:1 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

Rev 15:7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

Rev 16:1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

Heb 10:30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

God's actions can at times be, as ours are, driven by emotions. After the Great Flood He promised never to again destroy mankind by a great worldwide flood and put a sign in the sky as a reminder to Himself of His promise never to do so again should mankind in the future become as wicked as in the days before the Great Flood. Should He again become as disappointed with mankind as He had been then and want to send another deluge, the rainbow in the sky would remind Him of His covenant to never again do so.

Gen 9:12 And God said, This *is* the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations:

Gen 9:13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

Gen 9:14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

Gen 9:15 And **I will remember my covenant**, which *is* between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

Lucifer and the angels created by God also have mind power and as we will see in the description of how Lucifer became Satan, emotions played a role in his decision making.

Let's go back to Ezekiel 28.

### **Lucifer's Mind**

God clearly says that Lucifer's heart (the Bible term for "mind") and in this instance, his perception of himself, was increased beyond what it really was because of his beauty and because of the great abilities that he had been given, his brightness.

Eze 28:17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

Why did Lucifer sin or why was iniquity found in him? He came to think based on his own evaluation of who he was; because of his beauty and brightness or, his appearance and mind capabilities that he could be like God and even replace Him. The wisdom that he had been given by God

was corrupted or contaminated. Lucifer became filled with pride (an emotion) and obsessed so much about wanting to rule over God's creation that his emotional mind overcame the warnings of his logical mind. This led him to becoming blind to the limitations of his abilities as compared to God's and in time, he convinced himself that he could replace God on the throne of the universe.

As we know from reading it in the Bible, Lucifer's mind was not diseased or otherwise impaired (Ez 28:15). Lucifer's mind was not dysfunctional in any way.

Eze 28:15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

Lucifer was not, as God is not, and as we are not, beings of pure logic where our minds will always prevent us from acting in ways that are not beneficial to us.

Lucifer's decision was not the result of a purely logical and objective analysis of who he was and of the mission given him by God. His ultimate decision resulted from his thinking being affected by emotions and he allowing emotions to override the logical part of his mind. God says that Lucifer became filled with pride because of his beauty and that this pride (being lifted up because of his beauty) affected his ability to think logically and he started to no longer have a correct understanding of the truth and training he had received at God's throne. He came to erroneously think of himself as being as capable as God and to be able to overthrow Him. He allowed his pride to grow to the point where it so clouded his judgment that he made a bad decision with lasting adverse consequences for himself and all the angels that followed him.

Eze 28:17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

Emotions like other capabilities of man's mind can be both a blessing and a curse depending on how we choose to use them. The emotional component of our minds needs to be kept under the control of our logical minds, but this is easier said than done. Emotions are hard to control all the time and they will sometimes take us on wild rides.

Lucifer and the angels placed on the earth with him sinned when there was no other beings or external power influencing or driving them to sin.

Therefore, we can safely conclude that for sin to occur **it is not necessary** for there to be a malicious external spirit influence affecting the mind. Making wrong choices or bad decisions **is one of the possible outcomes of having been given independent thinking ability**. There was no outside force pressuring Lucifer to obey or not obey God. Lucifer was free to obey or disobey and he chose disobedience. Lucifer, as can happen to us if we are not vigilant, allowed his emotions (pride in Lucifer's case) to have an excessive influence on his logical mind and as a result, he made a bad decision which will result in eternal punishing for him and the angels that sinned.

Emotions played a part in Lucifer making the wrong decision but what is it that caused Lucifer to become dissatisfied since he was a being of beauty and brightness trained at God's throne and given a commission by God that if he had carried it out as requested would have been a stepping stone to being given even more responsibility over the universe and ultimately over all of it.

Where does temptation to sin come from?

### **What about Adam and Eve?**

The 2 first human beings who had freewill and independent mind power also had, like Lucifer, to make the decision to submit or not to God.

When first created Adam was neutral in his attitude toward God; he simply obeyed God and did whatever God asked him to do. Then Eve was created, and they became a married couple with God performing the first wedding and thereby instituting marriage.

On the first ever Sabbath, God taught them the different outcomes that would result from their obeying Him or deciding to take of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Both Adam and Eve knew as clearly evidenced by the Scriptures that they were not to take of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as they would surely die. As always, knowledge must first be given before God holds man responsible for obedience or disobedience. This is why the world which does not know and cannot know God is not now judged (1 Pet 4:17).

1Pe 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Adam and Eve were created as perfect physical beings but their creation was not complete at the spiritual level. They had the kind of mind that could deal with physical matter but to come to the knowledge of God's spiritual truth; for there to be communication possible between their minds and God's, it was necessary for them to receive another spirit; to have another spirit added to their human spirit, God's holy spirit the Word and Spokesman who dwells in the truly converted.

The in-dwelling presence of the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman in true Christians is a free unmerited gift but to obtain it one must want it or choose it self-willingly and without any external physical, mental or other coercion forcing one to do so. After having been called by the holy spirit God the Father, men must choose to obey God to the best of their ability for the rest of their lives in full recognition that their choice is irrevocable, final, and unchangeable and, that failure to remain faithful to their choice means eternal death.

The seriousness and gravity of this choice would have been made plain to Adam and Eve before God allowed them to be tested by Satan in the same way the ministry makes it plain to all those being counseled for baptism in God's Church. The decision to commit to obeying God for the rest of our lives come what may, cannot be lightly taken and the ministry always made it clear to all those being called by God and seeking baptism what would be the consequence of their choice. It was emphasized repeatedly to them that they had to count the cost and make sure they understood the consequence of the decision they were considering making before going through with a decision that, if it is changed, will result in their eternal death.

Going back to Adam and Eve, after having been instructed as to the consequence of taking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God allowed Satan to give them a choice between obeying Him or deciding for themselves right and wrong. The first humans had to make the same kind of decision as Lucifer and the angels: would they accept to be ruled by God or would they rule themselves? [The choice given them was not to be ruled or not by Satan; the choice was whether they would rule themselves or place themselves under God's rule.](#)

Eve was deceived by Satan and she came to Adam asking him to take of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and to be like God i.e., they would determine for themselves good and evil and in this way be like God.

Adam knew that Satan had lied to Eve and rather than exercising his God-given authority over his wife and refusing to take of the tree of the

knowledge of good and evil and preventing his wife from doing so, he also, but knowingly, took of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

1Ti 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

He failed to rule over his wife; she ruled over him and as a result humanity was condemned to 6,000 years of being on its own without God intervening to guide and direct them.

Did Adam willfully disobey God and is he lost? No, he succumbed to his wife's insistence to take of the forbidden tree; he did not take of the forbidden tree as an act of rebellion against God which would have been unpardonable. Eve sinned and Adam sinned and are reserved unto the Day of Judgment, the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Last Great Day. Adam sinned knowingly but not willfully but at that time there was no sacrifice for sin and sin was imputed to Adam and Eve and all their physical descendants which as a result all die the first death (Rom 5:12; Heb 9:27).

Rom 5:12 Wherefore, as **by one man** sin entered into the world, and **death by sin**; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Heb 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: [the Great White Throne Judgment]

The battle was for who would be the supreme authority over Adam and Eve. Would it be themselves or God. Satan's goal was to thwart God's plan of reproducing Himself through mankind by having the first man and woman make the same decision he had made and that was to rule himself rather than to place himself under God's rule. It was God's will that they be made to decide one way or the other and all of mankind in time will have to make the same decision; will they be the supreme authority in their own lives, or will they freely and willingly submit to God's authority; will they choose life or choose death.

Deu 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

The critical decision facing mankind has always been about who is going to reign supreme in their lives, God or themselves. Having been given free will and independent mind power, mankind cannot be forced to submit to God; the decision to do so has to be a freely and willfully taken decision.

God will not force man to obey Him and Satan cannot force man to obey him.

Think, if Satan was able to force man to obey him then man would not be free to choose; he could never choose life when called by God if Satan has the power to force man to obey him. Man and spirit beings were given free moral agency which means there is no power in the universe that can force them to choose something contrary to their will.

God could force obedience to Him but He has chosen not to do so because if He were to force obedience, then men and spirit beings would no longer have individuality or personality; they would be simple extensions of His own mind; no one could have ever sinned and God would still be alone in the universe as men and spirit beings would be like computers not able to go beyond their programming. The absolute power to choose given man and spirit beings is what makes it possible for them to have individuality and personality and to be beings of character.

This is in accordance with God's plan that those that will be part of His Kingdom must be beings of character i.e., they obey Him because they have chosen to do so when left completely free not to do so. It is their freely taken choice which no power can change.

The battle of who is to rule over whom is one that has been going on since the creation of man; spirit beings have already made their choice. The thirst for power is the greatest temptation for a being with free will and independent mind power as evidenced by Lucifer's downfall. You will recall that the last and greatest temptation Satan used when trying to get Christ to submit to his authority was to tempt Him with power.

This same tendency is seen all over the world in which we live and is the principal cause of war between nations and of conflict between individuals. It is also the main cause of all the poverty, misery and suffering in the world. The desire to rule over others and to not accept the rulership of others over us is what prevents mankind from pooling its resources and creating a better world for all humanity. This is the downside of beings with free will and independent mind power. The only way to achieve lasting peace, safety and prosperity is through willful cooperation where men with different physical and mental abilities cooperatively combine their abilities rather than being in never-ending competition with each other as to who will lead the other. An ongoing and vivid example of this is what goes on at the political level where parties fiercely compete with each other to win the authority to rule over the population and once in power seeks to remain in power using all possible means, honest and dishonest, to do so.



Suffice it to say there is ample past and current evidence showing that the danger of having freewill beings with mind power is the desire to rule over others and the great resistance to accepting the authority of others. At the physical-material level this results in conflict between individuals and nations and at the spiritual level it results in refusing God's authority over our lives which results in the second death.

The essential nature of man being a free will entity with independent mind power and the ability to make wrong decisions will continue into the Millennium and the Last Great Day.

### **The Millennium and the Last Great Day**

Lucifer's unforced rebellion against God allows us to understand how it will be that during the Millennium and the Last Great Day there will be many that will lose their salvation even though Satan will not be there to influence their minds — not force obedience to him— to disobey God.

And, looking at things closer to us, we can see what happened with the Worldwide Church of God where after the death of Mr. Armstrong, the freewill and independent mind power of those attending services became clear for all to see. The many had remained members of the Church on the physical level only; spiritually, they had reasserted control and authority over their own lives and had ceased to accept God's authority over them and were no longer part of the spiritual organism that is God's Church though continuing to assemble with it on the physical level only.

As surprising as it may be, [Lucifer's rebellion makes it clear that having freewill and mind power with no external forces exerting any influence to obey or disobey God and, even in the absence of the weaknesses of the flesh which Lucifer and the angels did not have, sin is still possible.](#)

It is the very essence of having freewill coupled with mind power which allows man and spirit beings to make choices. The choice spirit beings created by God had to freely make was to come under God's rulership or not. All of mankind will eventually have to make the decision to put themselves freely and voluntarily under God's rulership or continue to be the supreme authority in their own lives. Despite the gravity and eternal consequences of the choice presented mankind, the pattern set by the first 2 human beings, Adam and Eve was to choose to become like God as promised by Satan to Eve and to rule themselves rather than have God rule them.

Gen 3:5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

As Satan correctly stated to Eve, God is the one that decides good and evil but the critical factor not mentioned by Satan to Adam and Eve is that man does not have the wisdom and knowledge required for them to be able to [correctly](#) determine good and evil for themselves. They would do so based on their limited mind power and knowledge and their decisions would result in suffering, unhappiness, conflict, war, destruction and death for themselves and countless others throughout the centuries of mankind's existence.

Pro 16:25 There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Satan will be bound during the Millennium and the Last Great Day but that does not mean that suddenly men will self-willingly, eagerly and voluntarily submit to God's authority when God calls them or that they will remain under God's authority once they have chosen to place themselves under it. Lucifer became Satan because of the free will and mind power given him which allowed him to choose to remain or not in submission to God; this was the last decision that spirit beings had to make to complete their creation. Mankind has that very same free will and independent mind power and is fully free to accept or not God's rule in their lives when they will be given the opportunity to choose. And, if the decision is made to come under God's authority, this decision must be maintained until death. It will be a constant struggle to remain under God's authority with the biggest impediment being the "self" wanting to assert itself over God as occurred with Lucifer and, with Adam and Eve.

### **The Source of Temptation**

It is commonly believed that Satan is the main agent responsible for the sins committed by mankind; but is he really?

Spirit beings were created neutral and there was no Lucifer to influence their minds, yet they were somehow tempted and succumbed to temptation and sinned. Remember that everything that God creates is very good as initially created; spirit beings nor human beings created by God were created with a weakness or natural tendency to be evil.

So, what would be the source of temptations that angels and men would have to resist?

For our answer we have to go to James 1:13-15 where we find clearly stated what was the source of temptation for spirit beings and what it is now for human beings. The angels were able to sin which means they had mind

power and free moral agency. Without mind power or free moral agency (like animals whose behavior is wholly constrained by instinct and who therefore cannot sin) which is being free from having our thoughts controlled by a superior power, sin is not possible as choice is then not possible.

The following verses are therefore fully applicable to both spirit beings and mankind. Lucifer and the angels sinned with no external power whatsoever pressuring them to do so in any way and mankind has been given absolute free moral agency by God which means that there is no higher power that can force them to choose something against their will. God through James tells us clearly, if we will believe our Bible, what is the source of sin in men and how it is that Lucifer and the angels that followed him sinned.

Jas 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

Jas 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his [own](#) lust, and enticed.

Jas 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

These Scriptures are clear: [Temptation in men comes from their own lust and temptation in spirit beings comes from their own lust](#). Did God create beings who were inherently lustful? Would that make any sense considering that all of God's creation is very good and perfect in its way i.e., for the purpose for which it was created.

Man and spirit beings were not created with a great character flaw which predisposes them to being lustful; rather, [man and spirit beings were created with mind power and free will which makes it possible for them to lust but which also makes it possible for them to exert their self-will to resist being lustful](#). There is no higher, superior, and stronger power that can force them to lust or to not lust. This is how they can be beings of character using their mind power and freewill to choose obedience to God voluntarily and freely when there is nothing forcing them to do so, and to freely and voluntarily resist the pull of other courses of action deemed more pleasant and satisfactory but which God's law says is sin. Resisting the lusts of our flesh and of our mind is the reason why the sinfulness of true Christians is always forgiven by God.

1Jn 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, [\[if our abiding attitude is to obey God to the best of our abilities\]](#) we

have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

1Jn 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

1Jn 1:9 If we confess [\[admit to God and ask for His forgiveness\]](#) our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

With the fall of Lucifer and of the angels God placed with him on the earth there is now an evil spirit that works in the minds of all human beings as Paul tells us in the following verses from the book of Ephesians

Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to [the prince of the power of the air](#), the [spirit](#) that now worketh in the [children of disobedience](#):

Eph 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

However, it should be noted that Satan and his demons' has the power to influence the minds of men but with no power to force men to obey them. If Satan and his demons could force men to obey them, then mankind could not be held responsible for its actions and God could not judge them. Satan would be more powerful than God and His plan of salvation could not be executed.

One last point before I move on is that Satan does indeed deceive the whole world with respect to the correct difference between right and wrong but as previously stated, Satan nor his demons can force men to obey them as then men would no longer have absolute free will and would no longer be responsible for their decisions.

Keep in mind that God gave man absolute free moral agency at the time of his creation. God commands man to choose and this command could only be made to beings to whom the power to choose had been given which is also referred to as "absolute free moral agency." For man to have the power to choose it is necessary that there be no other beings with the power to force man to choose something against his will. If there were such a power, then the choice made would be that of the higher power and man could not be held responsible for the choice made because it was not his own choice. In other words, if there is a higher power that can force man

to choose contrary to his will than man cannot be judged as none of the decisions he makes are his own; they are that of the higher power working through him.

This is why though Satan and his demons can indeed work in the mind of man they have no power whatsoever to force or compel man to obey them.

Now on to the main point and that is that temptation to do evil as stated to us by God through James comes from man's own lust. It does not come from Satan or his demons; it comes from man himself, his mind in the same way that the temptation to sin for Lucifer and the angels came from themselves, their minds.

### **The Lust of the Flesh and of the Mind**

Lust is a word that lends itself to different interpretations and it would be useful for our discussion to come to a common definition and understanding of what is covered by the word "lust."

As we have seen there is a connection between mind power, free will and lust. Basically, **mind power and free will make lust possible** through the absolute freedom given man to choose.

So, what is lust?

Lust is simply the use of something that is allowed in a way that is excessive or not in agreement with God's law.

### **Lusts of the Flesh**

As human beings we have physical needs crying out to be satisfied such as the need for food and drink.

It is a good, beneficial, and necessary thing to eat food, drink wine, enjoy sex, etc. but there are a number of conditions attached to doing those things in accordance with God's law. We can eat in moderation and in a controlled fashion so as not to cause ourselves health problems by becoming obese and breaking God's law by being a glutton. We can drink wine and strong spirits in moderation without putting ourselves in a drunken stupor and this is a rightful use of wine and strong drink. We can limit our enjoyment of sex to our spouse once married or choose to have sex with as many women as we can; in one case it is a good and rightful use of sex; in the other it is lust and sin.

We can choose to eat, drink and have sex as prescribed by God or we can let our physical appetites run wild and sin. It is a choice that we have the power to make and our decisions result in either a rightful use of our appetites or in sin. Satan nor anyone else is forcing us or can force us to sin; it is a decision that we freely and willingly take.

God has given us mind power and free will to make it possible for us to be or not to be, according to the choices that we make, beings of character. In other words, are we willing to exercise self-control to the greatest extent possible so as not to sin or will we choose to give free rein to our lust because we get pleasure from doing so while exercising self-restraint does not give us pleasure or enough of it to satisfy us?

That is the challenge Christians have to deal with until the end of their natural lives.

### **Lusts of the Mind**

As for Lucifer and the angels that sinned, they were also able to sin because of the mind power and free will given them. Their sin was not to become uncontrolled in the satisfaction of their physical appetites but in maintaining under control the passions of their minds. Men and spirit beings have passions of the mind. These are things such as the desire for power, to be important, to dominate others, to be loved, to be the center of attention, envy, pride, etc. They are not physical appetites but emotional needs that are a part of all individuals and which cry out just as much as our physical needs to be satisfied.

The sin of Lucifer and the angels who followed him was a lust for power. Lucifer became dissatisfied with only being in charge of the earth and thought of himself as being as capable as God and ready to rule over the universe. This is why he tried to replace God on the throne of the universe. He became obsessed with the idea that he should have God's power and ultimately he convinced himself and the angels that followed him that they should have it and that they could take it by force from God.

The temptation to sin came from within their own mind and because of the free will given them which made it possible for them to choose to become excessive in their desire for power to the point of trying to overthrow God.

Mind power and absolute free will, the absolute freedom to choose is what made it possible for angels and Adam and Eve to lust and therefore, to sin.

Consequently, sin finds its origin in the lust of which men's minds are capable. Satan can influence but not control the minds of men. Men are responsible for the sin they commit and it is wholly by their own decisions that they sin.

God has the power to control the minds of human beings but He has chosen not to do so except in a very limited number of circumstances as required to ensure the fulfillment of prophecy and of His great master plan of salvation for mankind.

### The Critical Criterion

The main challenge facing man when God calls him is to choose who is to rule in his life, God or himself.

Sin which is impossible for humans to avoid leads to the loss of salvation but God has provided a way to nullify its effect through the application of the grace that abounded from Christ's sacrifice but grace is conditional upon our maintaining our attitude of obedience to Him in all things after our calling and conversion.

Psa 32:2 Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD **imputeth not iniquity**, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile.

Psa 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Rom 4:6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God **imputeth righteousness** without works,

Rom 4:8 Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will **not impute sin**.

Sin is not the point of departure from God's grace; elevating our self-will over that of God lies at the very heart of the challenge all true Christians face when called and which they will face for the remainder of their life to maintain their conversion. By the way, deciding right or wrong for ourselves rather than accepting God defining good and evil for us is the kind of self-righteousness that causes loss of salvation. Sinners we will continue to be and the Bible makes it plain that anyone that says he has no sin is a liar and the truth is not in him.

1Jn 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

The struggle in the days of Adam and Eve and for all called out ones at the time of their calling and; if they follow their calling, is to continue to allow God to have rule over their lives as opposed to themselves being the supreme authority in their lives. We must never go back to being self-willed rather than accepting to be led by God. This was the challenge faced by the first humans and it is the challenge before all those called and all Christians through the ages.

Who will rule in our lives, us or God?

Sinners we will continue to be but that is not what will cause us to lose our eternal lives; going back to being the supreme authority in our lives after having been called or following our conversion is what will cause our eternal death.

Lucifer became Satan by wanting to elevate his authority over that of God; Adam and Eve chose to do the same thing. Those losing their salvation either refuse God's rule over them when called or go back to elevating their authority over that of God's after their conversion. After having chosen to be ruled by God they go back to ruling themselves.

When that happens, God no longer imputes Christ's righteousness to them; the sins they commit from that point on is imputed to them and the penalty for sin is death, the second death, the loss of salvation.

### **Summary of Main Points to Keep in Mind**

- God is faithful and will not leave us
- No power in heaven or on earth can separate us from God; it is something we do ourselves (Rom 8:35-39)

Rom 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Rom 8:36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Rom 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,



Rom 8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Sin cannot be avoided but does not cause loss of salvation by itself

Psa 32:2 Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

- Our individual and continuing attitude of obedience to God in all things; our submission to God's rule in our lives is the condition for salvation (all sins are then forgiven or, in other words, sin is not imputed by God)
- The biggest battle we face in achieving salvation is not Satan or his demons but our selves, the lust of which we are capable because of the freewill and mind power given mankind by God
- There is an emotional side to our minds which needs to be kept under control to prevent our emotions from clouding our judgment and causing us to make wrong decisions
- Lucifer and, Adam and Eve allowed the pull of their emotions to overcome them
- We must resist the desire to be gods unto our selves; to elevate our authority in our lives over God's authority; to do what Satan did and refuse to remain under God's authority
- Adam and Eve were tempted with the idea that they could be gods unto themselves if they rejected God's authority over their lives. This is the main and strongest temptation facing all men; being the supreme authority in their lives and accepting no one else's authority, not even God's
- God could but will not force man to obey Him; man has to freely and self-willingly choose to limit his free moral agency and come under the authority of God by choosing God's ways which means rejecting all other ways
- This explains why many are called but few are chosen; they prize their independent thinking abilities above God's authority; they do not want to let go of it; this was Adam and Eve's sin and in

Genesis God tells us what will be mankind's problem with salvation through the ages; refusing to voluntarily subordinate their free will to God's will [Mass Conversion of the Nations during the Millennium?](#)

- It also explains why so many take the broad way that leads to perdition after having accepted their calling; they seek to impose their will on God by trying to make their former ways acceptable to God; they want to re-establish themselves as the ultimate authority in their lives
- This is why there are so many, a multitude as great as the sand of the sea that come up against Jerusalem to destroy it at the end of the Millennium. They are spiritual Gog and Magog which is made up of those who were called and refused their calling and of Christians who took the broad way and lost their conversion; it will be a staggeringly great number of individuals [Mass Conversion of the Nations during the Millennium?](#)
- The Millennium sets the tone for what will happen during the Last Great Day. It will be basically humans with the same intense desire to rule themselves as those in the Millennium, and as those before the Millennium reaching all the way back to Adam and Eve. All will have the same difficulty in accepting not to be the supreme authority in their own lives and with most of them ultimately refusing to have someone else, even God, rule over them. The Last Great Day will not be different from the Millennium or what has been happening in God's Church since its foundation. It will be the few and not the many that will be saved and this always for the same reason: men refusing to accept or to stay under God's authority preferring to be gods unto themselves.

### Final Thoughts

When God allowed Satan to tempt Adam and Eve, they had to choose whether they would submit to and obey God or would they be the supreme authority in their own lives deciding good and evil for themselves. That was the decision they had to make. After Adam and Eve had made the decision to rule themselves, there was no more battle for their minds and that of their physical descendants. Their sin was imputed to all of mankind that would come after them and all would die the first death as a result.

Rom 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

But upon being called, for the first time in their lives, humans are given to know the spiritual truth of God and are given the opportunity to do what the 2 first humans didn't do and that is place themselves under God's authority. When God calls, the life and death decision that has to be made is who is to rule in our lives, us or God.

God makes clear to those He calls the consequences of choosing to continue to be the highest authority in their own lives or of coming under His authority; the consequence is eternal life or eternal death. Either decision once taken cannot be changed.

The holy spirit God the Father will leave the called out one who decides not to choose life and not return to make a second offer, there is only one calling.

As for those who follow their calling and become converted, they can still go back to ruling themselves at some point in the future, but if they do, the holy spirit, God the Word and Spokesman will leave them and never return and they will become as blind to God's truth as they were before their conversion.

Heb 6:4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

Heb 6:5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

Heb 6:6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

The battle then is not between Satan and God and it is not between man and Satan. When called, God reveals to man how he had been unknowingly sinning because he did not know the correct difference between right and wrong; and now, having been given to know the truth, man has the choice of coming under God's authority or of remaining the supreme authority in his own life.

Man is no more interested in having Satan rule over him than anyone else. Now, that he knows of Satan's existence and of his influence on him, he can choose to ignore him and God and make his own decisions based on his own understanding of right and wrong as was the choice originally offered Adam and Eve. That's all that needs to be done; there is no need

for Satan to spend a lot of time influencing men to do evil; they simply choose what is right and wrong according to themselves and most of the time they are wrong decisions.

All man has to do is reject God's rule over him and his salvation is lost as he is unable to not sin and the penalty for sin is death: the first death before being called and the second death after having been called and having rejected God's calling. All will be called and given an opportunity to choose life either in this life or in the resurrection of the Last Great Day.

Satan, as the Bible reveals, nevertheless works in the minds of men both converted and unconverted to influence them to do evil but once man after having been called makes the decision to rule himself rather than have God do it, he is lost.

Let's understand that Satan has no power to force anyone to sin; he can exert influence but he cannot force man to sin. Satan's goal was to have mankind do like he did and that was to rule themselves rather than accept God's rule over them. In doing so, man cuts himself off from God and his salvation is lost. This effectively thwarts God's plan of reproducing Himself through man and creating a kingdom made up of other God beings like Himself.

Sin is not the problem; it can be forgiven; rejecting God's authority is **THE** problem as there is then no possible forgiveness of sin. Sin is then imputed to us and we lose our salvation.

Rom6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We die the first death which is temporary because of the sin of Adam and we will die the second death which is eternal, because of our own sins if unforgiven. If we maintain our attitude of obedience to God, He does not impute any sins to us.

Rom 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

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Psa 103:10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

Psa 103:11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

Psa 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Psa 103:13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that **fear** him. **[whose attitude is to obey Him as best they can in all things]**

Psa 103:14 For he knoweth our frame; **he remembereth that we are dust.**

God's ultimate goal is to reproduce Himself through mankind but He will only do it with those who self-willingly agree to submit themselves to His authority and not be the highest authority in their own lives. Once becoming glorified holy spirit beings, it is this decision to accept God's rulership over them that will be an unchangeable part of their spirit creation which will ensure there will never be another rebellion as occurred with Lucifer and the angels that followed him. Those who are to become spirit beings and be given immortality this time will already have as part of their character an attitude of wanting to obey God in all things and this attitude will become an unchanging part of their character when they become glorified holy spirit beings at the time of the resurrection of God's saints.

Our biggest battle is with ourselves once we are given to know the truth in addition to having to wrestle against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Eph 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Satan and his devils can exert influence on our minds but they cannot force us to obey them for all the reasons already given you in this study.

Salvation as we have often been told is not something between us and the ministry; the only man a minister of God's Church can ever save is himself.

Our salvation is wholly between us and God. We must make and maintain until the end of our natural life, the decision to remain under God's authority and resist the temptation to be the supreme authority in our own lives.

This is as it was since the beginning and will be until the end of the existence of man whom God created for the specific purpose of reproducing Himself and having a family, a nation, and a kingdom.

