

## **No hope within, but every hope in the Lord**

**"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jeremiah 17:9,10).**

The life of man cannot gain the victory over death, for it is death itself. Sin is natural to the heart of mankind. But the heart is the seat of life, "for out of it spring the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). Therefore, since sin is death, and sin in all its various forms springs from the heart, it follows that the very source of man's life is poisoned with death. The life of man is but a living death.

The apostle Paul, after bemoaning the utter sinfulness of the natural man, cried out, "O

wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom. 7:24).

Since righteousness, and that alone, is life, man can have no hope of life from himself, for he can get no righteousness from himself. He has only evil in his heart by nature, therefore he can bring forth only that which is evil. The Scriptures give abundant witness to this.

"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). "They have all gone out of the way: ... there is none who does good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:12). No matter how much the awakened soul may wish that he could do what he knows is right, he has no power in himself to do it.

Since only evil can come from evil, and the heart of man brings forth only evil, it is a denial of the Scripture to claim that man can of himself do any good thing. First, the Bible says that he cannot. Second, whoever says that there is any power in man to do good thereby denies that there is evil in man. There cannot be some evil and some good in

man by nature. A fountain cannot send forth both sweet water and bitter. A little poisonous water will taint the entire fountain.

So, if there is any evil in man by nature, he must be, as the Scripture says, wholly evil. Christ has told the truth about man in the words, "Without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). [1]

**Note:**

1. Waggoner, *The Gospel in Creation*, pp. 52-54.