

## The Original Sin Question

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Sometime in mid December of last year Evelyn and I decided to watch a movie. I believe it was on a Sunday evening that we did this, and the movie was "The Sound of Music." We once again enjoyed the music, combined with an uplifting story. I do not know how many times that we had actually seen this movie, perhaps maybe a half dozen or so since it came out in the theaters, I believe in about the mid 1960s.

Lo and behold, about two weeks later I turned my computer on in the morning, and it always comes up to the MSN news page, and I saw in a smaller type headline that declared the death of the eldest of the Von Trapp family. It was the Von Trapp family that was the source of the activity on the screen of "The Sound of Music" movie. So I decided to read the article that was written there about this Von Trapp family member, and I was in for some very interesting surprises. Let me begin by saying the first time this lady witnessed "The Sound of Music," not as a film but as a stage play in New York City, at the end of it she was crying. I will tell you now why.

The first thing is that I always thought that the eldest daughter's name was Liesl, since that is what she was called in the movie. She was the one who was "16 going on 17" depicted in that movie. She was the one who was shown dancing with her telegram-delivering boyfriend while a thunderstorm was going on. The first surprise was that her real name was not Liesl, but Agathe, and the next surprise coming right on the heels of that was that she was not the oldest child in the family. There was an older boy by the name of Rupert. Agathe was named after her mother whose name was also Agathe. As I continued reading, she never had a boyfriend at that age, and a 16-year old boy did not deliver telegrams in Austria on bicycles then either. They did not deliver them at all. That was a job for a man.

Next I learned that Maria, played by Julie Andrews, did not come to the Von Trapp home as a governess. She came there as a tutor to teach one of the other daughters, whose name incidentally was also Maria, because Marie Von Trapp had fallen ill with rheumatic fever, and as a result it left her too weak to walk the 45 minute walk to school. Did you catch that? The Von Trapp children walked to school 45 minutes each way. Not only that, I learned that Maria, the so-called governess, did not teach the Von Trapp children the ABCs of music. They already knew a great deal, because their father had insisted that they learn things pertaining to music at a very early age.

Next I learned that the Von Trapp children disliked the movie intensely, especially Agathe. And then I learned that of all the things in the movie that gave the Von Trapp children distress was the complete total mis-portrayal of Georg von Trapp's personality. They all agreed that he was far from a detached, cold, hard, aloof patriarch who disapproved of music as he was portrayed, especially early in the story. They report that he was actually a gentle warm-hearted parent who loved musical activities with his family.

Next the family did not make a stealthy escape from their home by pushing their automobile silently out of the driveway onto the street where they were apprehended by the Nazis. Once on the street

they were diverted into participating with the Salzburg music festival, which was also going on at the same time. Not so, according to Agathe. Though they did win a Salzburg music festival first prize in 1936, it did not happen as depicted on the silver screen.

First, they did not escape through a Catholic convent's graveyard with the help from nuns. Agathe stated that they just walked across the street and got onto a train, along with their music director, Franz Wasner, who was a priest, and the train went to Italy, not to Switzerland, and not over the mountains by walking.

Next, you may remember, that in the movie the family escaped from Austria shortly after their father and Maria married and returned from their honeymoon. No so, said Agathe and the other daughters. Georg and Maria married in 1927. They did not leave Austria until 1938, and when they left they had already hired an American musical agent. In other words, they were working up contracts in the United States.

Not only that, Maria, as portrayed by Julie Andrews, was pictured in the movie as a very sweet person. Actually, she was a great deal more like that as pictured in the movie from the song, "How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria?" Remember that song? Maria von Trapp reported, that though they generally got along well, she was also described as being like a thunderstorm. She had a terrible temper. From one moment to the next you did not know what hit her. She had erupted in angry outbursts that consisted of a lot of yelling, throwing things, and slamming doors. Incidentally, the family consisted of 10 children—7 from the first Mrs. Von Trapp (Agathe) who died in 1922 of scarlet fever, and 3 from Georg and Maria, who married in 1927.

I went into this expose of "The Sound of Music" for only one reason. This is to briefly establish that one cannot take for granted even such a simple entertainment vehicle as a movie that has not been left untouched by the god of this world. Deceit and lying has touched every aspect of this world. Why could they not have left the movie as truth? It still would have made a good story.

Now, is it possible for one to live in this world without being touched by the evil of this vile creature whose every waking moment is bent toward the destruction of God and His purpose through promoting sin and death? The answer is no. It is not possible, and this fact impacts heavily on Christian life.

The sermon takes a bit of a turn here, and I am going to begin in Luke 14. I will eventually get back to "The Sound of Music" if I get that far in the sermon and I do not get too windy in my delivery here.

In Luke 14 Jesus gives a warning, an admonition to all those who choose to follow Him.

**Luke 14:25-27** Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

A quick overview of why sin is an ever-present reality is contained in this statement, that a disciple of Christ must bear his cross. Generally, "cross" is considered as that which is an instrument of death, and it is something that must be borne by the one to be crucified, as it were. Every Christian, who is a devotee of Jesus Christ, is going to have to bear what Jesus calls here "a cross."

This what we all have to bear as the principle of sin, because it is now part of humanity's makeup. It is right there. It is in the heart, and just because we are converted does not remove it. It is still there, and it still has to be fought, and it still has to be overcome, and unlike the world, the Christian knows what is in his heart. He may not like what is there.

When God converts a person, He simply does not take it all away. We will get to more of that a little bit later, but everybody who is aware of sin, everybody who is truly converted, knows that sin is with him at all times. You are all familiar with Romans 7, and you know what the apostle Paul said there. We will get to that just a little bit later too.

Just to prove that to you, we are going to turn to Matthew 15 and look at a couple of verses there. Jesus said to those listening at that time:

**Matthew 15:17-20** Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.

Jesus warned us in Luke 14 that a Christian has to bear up under the principle of sin, which is in his heart. He knows it is there, and in a sense, it is like he cannot do anything about it. He can fight it. He can overcome, but it is always going to be there until we are in the Kingdom of God. So Jesus is warning, "Do you want to face the weight carrying sin that you are well aware of around with you?" In addition to this, God inspired Jeremiah to say that our heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, but it must be dealt with. God Himself has willed that all must face and overcome Satan.

This sermon will go into a different direction for a while, but eventually I will get back to the movie, and hopefully we will understand why it is this way as it right now, why sin is such an overwhelming problem.

The world has a doctrine of original sin, which states that all babies born, beginning with Adam and Eve, are automatically infected from conception onward by an evil nature placed there by God. Did you hear me? Their doctrine of original sin says that this rotten, foul nature that we have was placed there by God, and that it is transferred during the sexual processes that produce a human being, and so the baby is born already infected with what we call a carnal or human nature.

Let me make a statement here as we go on. In effect, mankind, with this kind of doctrine, is justifying its sin by shifting the blame to God. You know who the author of that lie is. Mankind is shifting the blame for its sinful nature to God. How convenient. Thus, man can accuse God by saying, "Oh, I would not be this way except You set me up as the fall guy by strapping me with sin." There is no doubt that God is involved to some extent, because He is sovereign over His creation, and it is true that He has pretty much permitted Satan a great deal of free range. But mankind's apparent innocence is not that easily justified, as I have just stated, and neither is there very much room for blaming God, as we will see as we proceed.

Let us go on to the book of Romans in chapter 5. Here is the beginning of the heart and core of the world's doctrine of original sin.

**Romans 5:12-14** Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

Let us look at this, because it is a key portion of this original sin doctrine held by many organizations. They use other scriptures to bring into their argument for support of their concept, but these other ones are the ones that are most frequently used as their smoking-gun proof statement.

First, why is Adam the one who is mentioned? Why is Eve not even mentioned here, in this case, and he undoubtedly bears the greater responsibility?

We are going to leave here and we are going to go to I Timothy 2.

**I Timothy 2:14** And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

The first reason that Adam is listed here but not Eve is because Adam was not deceived. Adam's sin was deliberate. It was presumptuous. Eve's was not. Eve was deceived, and out of her weakness she then sinned. And so because Adam's sin was of that quality, he had to bear the greater responsibility. His sin was deliberate and presumptuous, and therefore he was judged more sternly. God inspired that, and that is the reason Adam is mentioned.

There is a secondary reason, and we will see that in I Corinthians 15.

**I Corinthians 15:21-22** For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

**I Corinthians 15:45-48** And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly.

We put this together, and this is what comes out, for the second reason is different from the first. The book of I Corinthians was written before the book of Romans. Here in I Corinthians we see that Paul is already using an illustration comparing Adam to Christ. What they have in common is that each was the first of a new creation: Adam, physical; Jesus Christ, spiritual. And so what Adam did affected others, because he was first. What Jesus Christ did also affects others. The difference between the two is that one is negative, the other is positive, and good. One pulls people down. The other lifts people up and gives them hope and opportunity.

And so then, writing the book of Romans *following* I Corinthians—maybe within about two years or so—it had already been established, because the epistles made their way around through the congregations. It had already gotten across the idea that Adam was really, in one sense, a type of Jesus Christ, and Christ was a type of Adam. So these two fit together in what Paul is teaching here very closely, the difference being the impact of what they did.

Now back to Romans 5 once again. Let us look a little bit more closely at what it says in verse 12.

**Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.

Now what does it say there? Paul said death *entered* the world through sin, and it spread to all men. Why? Because they sinned too. They emulated Adam's behavior, his conduct. What Paul is doing as he goes here, is establishing the fact that the wages of sin is death. Look at Romans 6:23. Here Paul reaches a conclusion that he began to show there very clearly in Romans 5.

Adam sinned. Adam died. All who followed Adam also sinned, and they died too. Do you see here what Paul was doing? He establishes right at the very beginning here that every person is responsible for his own death; not Adam. He was just the first one to do it.

Now Adam does play a part. What Adam did does play a part. We will get to that in just a little bit. But what you want to understand from verse 12 is that Paul is not removing each person's personal responsibility for sinning by blaming those sins on somebody else. We are going to see this in Ezekiel 18. This we will see here in Ezekiel 18 is very clear biblical proof. God is speaking.

**Ezekiel 18:19-20** "Yet you say, 'Why should the son not bear the guilt of the father?' Because the son has done what is lawful and right, and has kept all My statutes and observed them, he shall surely live. The soul who sins shall die.

That is exactly what Romans 5:12 said. Death passed upon all men because all sinned.

**Ezekiel 18:20** The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

That is pretty clear, is it not? Look at verse 30.

**Ezekiel 18:30-32** "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to **his** ways," says the Lord God. "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions, which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord God. "Therefore turn and live!"

In Romans 5:12, Paul does not remove a person's responsibility. Adam did not make people sin. That is plain and simple. He did not *make* people sin by what *he* did.

**Romans 5:13-14** (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come

Adam was a type of Christ. Christ is a type of Adam. Both were the beginning of a new race of people. The important thing here is this: If you will notice at the beginning of verse 13 there is a parenthesis. This parenthetical statement goes all the way to the end of verse 17. You will see the

final words in that parenthetical statement are "Jesus Christ." We are not going to consider that entire parenthetical statement at this time, only its beginning—verses 13 and 14—because these are the two most important verses in this section.

Why would Paul put that big parenthetical statement in there? The commentators believe he put it in there to answer a question that might be asked by an Israelite who was well aware of the covenant and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. Now what kind of a question would an Israelitish type person come up with? He might say, "Well, the law was not even given until Mount Sinai. That was two thousand years after Adam, and yet people were dying left and right, and yet they didn't sin like Adam did."

What is Paul saying without saying it? He is saying that just because it appears that the law was not expressed to man until Mount Sinai, it is not that the law did not exist. The law *did* exist. That is what Paul is saying. The wages of sin is death, and people were dying because they were sinning even though it was not the same kind of sin Adam had. They were bringing the death penalty upon themselves because the law already existed when Adam and Eve were created. That is why Mr. Armstrong had to put out that booklet, "The Law Before Sinai." Of course the law was there. If there was no law, then there could have been no sin, and the very fact that people were dying, Paul was saying, is proof that the law existed.

Now he is going to come up with another proof. Turn to Romans 2, verses 11 through 16. The book of Romans is really a rich book for basic understanding. Let us notice what Paul said, three chapters before chapter 5.

**Romans 2:11-12** For there is no partiality with God. [He is talking about judgment. God judges people fairly.] For as many as have sinned without law. . . .

A better translation is more understanding as "apart from law." In other words, apart from what we would call a clear knowledge of the law. Who would that be? The Gentiles. The Israelites knew. They were not apart from the law.

**Romans 2:12** For as many as have sinned without [apart from] law will also perish without [apart from] law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law.

What is he saying here? The Gentiles, though they did not have the law revealed to them like the Israelites did at Mount Sinai, are still held guilty of breaking that law. Remember, God judges without partiality. How can He do this? Verse 13.

**Romans 2:13-16** (For not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

I will explain very briefly. Paul said, on the authority of God's word as inspiration, that though these people were not at Mount Sinai, God has put enough knowledge of His law in them, that by nature they know it is wrong to murder. They know that it is wrong to steal. They know that it is wrong to lie. If they did not know, God could not judge them.

Are you going to believe that God said He has put this knowledge of the law in people's minds? Yes you are, because God does not lie. Can the Gentiles blame Adam for their sin? No they cannot. Got has them nailed right to the wall. "I gave you enough knowledge of My law that you should have known, and you went and sinned anyway."

Back to Romans 5 again.

**Romans 5:15** But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

**Romans 5:17-19** For if by the one man's offense [Adam] death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.) Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

Those verses appear to blame Adam for all of these deaths. Do you know what? Adam *is* to blame, but it is really in an unusual circumstance a bit of biblical logic that is strange to you and to me, but I will show you.

The logic is that because Adam is the father of a new race—mankind—he is the father and the progenitor of all of mankind. Paul, and thus also God, holds that, in this case, all who have ever been born since were already within Adam's body when he sinned in Eden. Did you hear what I said? All of mankind was affected by Adam's sin because, when Adam died, everybody within his body also died. They did not sin like Adam did, but because Adam sinned, and they were inside of him, they died too.

I am going to give you another place where Paul uses this same kind of reasoning in a little bit different situation. It is in the book of Hebrews, chapter 7. The main subject here is a change in the priesthood, and Paul is using what Abraham did as evidence for the reasoning he is using in his argument.

**Hebrews 7:8-10** Here [meaning right here and now] mortal men [the Levitical priesthood] receive tithes, but there [meaning the time when Melchizedek received tithes from Abraham] he receives them of whom it is witnessed that he lives. Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

What is the reasoning Paul uses? It was because Levi was still in Abraham's loins when Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. Because Levi was there, he also paid tithes to Melchizedek. Paul's

argument is that Levi is nowhere near what Melchizedek was. Melchizedek is the greater. Therefore Levi, the lesser, paid tithes to the greater, Melchizedek. Levi did not come along until four generations later! That is a bit of biblical reasoning that is strange to you and me, but Paul has used it twice—in Romans 5, and now here in the book of Hebrews.

The logic is strange, but since it is in God's Word, God considers it justifiable in this instance. Thus, when Adam sinned, the penalty passed on to all who were born of him afterwards. As I said earlier, when Adam sinned everything inside of him including his sperm died, and so Adam's sin passed on to all those who were inside of him.

Let me explain this in another way. It occasionally occurs that whenever a person sins, others are very drastically affected, sometimes even to death. Somebody does something stupid, and somebody just standing there dies as a result of that sin. That is the kind of reasoning Paul was using, only in this case those who died were inside of Adam. In one sense, they were there, so it is acceptable.

Now Adam's sin did not make them guilty, but they were caught up in what Adam did, and they died. So in a way we can say Adam was responsible, because death passed upon all men. But Paul made sure that everybody knew, as he began his explanation, that when it comes down to the practical fact, everybody dies for his own sin.

We are going to begin to clarify a very important aspect of this original sin doctrine, and why is it that our human nature is so vile, so unbalanced, so self-centered, so proud, so violent, and so selfish. Adam and Eve passed their violence onto all of their progeny. There is no indication whatever of anything even closely similar to human nature shown in the first three chapters of Genesis.

God did not make Adam and Eve sin. Do you understand that? They *chose* to sin. He did not set them up so that they had to sin. Is that not correct? I will give you biblical pictures here in just a minute. It is this very fact that makes a mockery of free choice if indeed God made them sin. He did not. They *chose* to sin. He created them. He instructed them as to their responsibility, and thus got them started in the right direction.

He showed them the Two Trees that clearly gave them choices as to which way they had the opportunity to go, and the three of them—Adam, Eve, and God—lived in harmony without sin for a period of time not given in Scripture, and this continued until a fourth personality—Satan—entered the picture. His approach to life was entirely different from God's, our Creator, and things went downhill fast.

God did not create the sinful nature we possess. He did create a mind, a heart that could accept alternatives, adapt to them, accept or reject them, and actually magnify them. Human nature is in reality a Satanic nature adapted to humanity, and this production in mankind did not begin until Adam and Eve began their association with Satan and the resulting submission to him. That nature of Satan has flourished in mankind to such an extent mankind is enslaved to it, and because of it Satan is the god of this world and the father of all the unconverted.

Is this nature passed onto each generation through the natural birth processes? Absolutely not. It is passed onto each generation in the same way that Adam and Eve were affected, and that is through association with Satan, his spirit, and his community of demons' spirit, an already infected people.

Adam was responsible for sin and death only because he was the first to do so. Everybody has since followed his lead and has sinned, even though it was not in exactly the same manner as *Adam's* sin. God is not saying that we receive a sinful nature because Adam sinned and the sinful nature was in Adam. This is where the world has gone awry. When Adam and Eve were in Eden with God, Eden was the entire world. There was only God. There was Eden. There was Adam and Eve. And then boom!—this fourth personality shows up. That was the entire population of the world. Eden *was* the world. That was it. The world consisted only of the Father, the Creator, Adam and Eve, and Satan and his demons.

Get a picture in your mind. There is the Garden. Adam and Eve are there. Satan invites himself in. "Hey! I've got something for you!" and he sold them on his way of life.

Now what was the result of their submission to him? He became their god, and now he was the god of the entire population of the earth—all two of them. He was the god of the world. This is how it got started. It started small. Mr. Armstrong used to say anything with God starts as small as you can possibly get, and it begins to grow from there.

Let us fill this in with scripture. We are going to begin in II Corinthians 4.

**II Corinthians 4:3-4** But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

Nothing has changed between Adam and Eve in Eden, and II Corinthians 4, except time has gone by and the population of the earth has spread from these two to the billions who now live on earth. Every one of these people born has become infected like Adam and Eve became infected, as I will continue to show you. So the population of Satan's kingdom, in terms of humanity, keeps growing as people are produced through the natural process, but that nature does not come to them through the natural process. The nature comes as a result of the same process as it did with Adam and Eve by contact with Satan, his demons, and the world.

There are a couple of things we do know about Satan from God's Word. One is that Satan is neither omnipresent like God is (who can be everywhere at once), nor is Satan omnipotent either. Satan is like you and me. He can be only at one place at one time. All he had to do, as this process began, was just be there in Eden.

Cain and Abel were born, and then others. If you say that Adam and Eve had 56 children, Satan began to infect everyone as they were born. This becomes easier and easier, and the reason is, as he infects people, they also infect each other and promote the same kind of attitudes, the same kind of conduct, the same kind of spirit that they got from Satan.

Let me make something clear here. I do not mean that each and every person has to be infected directly by Satan. The demons are there working with him too, so he has plenty of help infecting people with his mind, his heart, his attitude.

This thing about becoming god of the world was not hard at all. He had plenty of time. He lives, right up to this present time, and so he has plenty of time to do his dirty work. This is where God comes into the picture in that He permitted it to occur. He permitted it with a good reason in mind.

Let us go now to I John 5. We will see that John was one of the last ones to write.

**I John 5:18-19** We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps [guards, protects] himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.

So Satan is the god of this world, as confirmed by these verses right here. The world is that organized system Satan rules over and from which he challenges the people of God.

We are now going to add I John 2.

**I John 2:15-16** Do not love the world [Satan's system] or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

Therefore, all these things in the world are from Satan. Ah, "The Sound of Music" is beginning to come into the picture here. That is of the world. It was thoroughly saturated with Satan's lies. That was not even a damaging thing in terms of what real damage is, but it just goes to show you that even in entertainment he has reached into every part and made it worse than it ever was. Everything is tainted by his evil nature, and the basis of Satan's nature is why. It is already in the world. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father.

**I John 2:16-17** For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Are you with me? Do you understand how Satan is able to do this? Just beginning with Adam and Eve, and then Cain and Abel, and then all of their other children—one person after another—they are continually infecting the minds, the heart of people who are born.

I still have yet to prove to you that God did not give us an evil nature to begin with, but I am showing you how it *became* evil. If you want a short explanation, Satan did it.

Brethren, when does he attack you? When you are still a baby. He attacked Adam and Eve in their innocence, and he is still carrying out the same scheme. This is why (and it seems like a generation ago) that Mr. Armstrong said that the greatest gift that can be given to a newborn is to have both parents converted, and because of that conversion, because of the Holy Spirit, they are able to deflect some of the damage that Satan could very easily do. Oh, if we only knew what to do!

Turn now to Ephesians 2.

**Ephesians 2:1-2** And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, . . .

We all conducted our lives according to the course of this world. Who runs the world? We conducted our lives according to the mind of Satan, each one putting our own little stamp of our personality on his way.

**Ephesians 2:2-3** . . . according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

That is how he does it—by his spirit. He has an evil spirit, and by that evil spirit he infects others, and that spirit is alive and well out in the world. So God warns us, "Love not the world." That is the place of spiritual infection.

We are going to go to James 4, verse 5, which, according to commentators, is the most difficult verse in the entirety of the book of James. One went so far as to say in the whole New Testament. Let us look at what it says here.

**James 4:5-6** Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

I looked up this verse in at least eight or nine translations. Every one of them was different. Everyone had a little bit of a twist in it. As far as I am concerned, a couple of them I think came fairly close. It is interesting that the ones that came close were all modern translations. One of them had a pretty good translation.

However, the first one I am going to give is from *The Living Bible*.

**James 4:5-6** (TLB) "Well, what do you think the scripture means when it says the Holy Spirit whom God has placed within us watches over us with tender jealousy? And He gives us more and more strength to stand against all such evil longing."

Notice, they decided it was the Holy Spirit. The Greek does not say that. It simply says "spirit." It does not say "Holy Spirit." It simply says "spirit," but they took it upon themselves to insert the word "Holy."

Now this one comes from *The Jerusalem Bible*.

**James 4:5-6** (TJB) Surely you do not think the scripture is wrong when it says the spirit which He sent to live in us wants us for himself alone.

They changed the wording and interpreted rather than merely translated what it says, because they are trying to make sense out of it. That translation is not correct.

This next one is from the *Lamsa Translation*.

**James 4:5-6** (TLT) Or do you think the scripture says in vain the pride that dwells in us is provoked by jealousy?

They changed the word "spirit" to "pride" for one thing, and that that spirit is provoked by jealousy. That too is wrong.

Here are three that come fairly close. The first one is from the *Revised English Bible*.

**James 4:5-6** (REB) Or do you suppose the scripture has no point when it says that the spirit which God implanted in us is filled with envious longing?

Ah! God gave us a spirit that is filled with envious longing. Until they got to the end there, they were doing pretty well. You see, if God gave a spirit with envious longing, that is evil. Envy is evil. God did not give us a spirit that is evil.

The next one is from the NIV, and it is a little bit better than the *Revised English Bible*.

**James 4:5-6** (NIV) Or do you think the scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us tends toward envy?

This one still comes out to the same thing: God gave us a spirit that tends to envy. What that did there was soften the impression somewhat, but it is still wrong.

Here is the best one I was personally able to find. It comes from the paraphrase from the Philips' translation.

**James 4:5-6** (Philips' Translation) Or do you imagine that this spirit of passionate jealousy is the spirit that he caused to live in us? [He asks a question, and gives the right answer.] No! He gives us grace toned enough to meet this and every other evil spirit if we are humble enough to receive it.

He at least came pretty close.

I am trying to understand this. I found that the two commentaries that were the most helpful were *The New Testament Commentary*, and *The Interpreter's Commentary*, which is a very modern liberal commentary, but they gave a pretty good idea. So what is the answer here?

Actually, the answer is pretty simple. First of all, please understand that the context of James 4 has to do with sin. This is one of the things in a way that misled these people in these translations. For instance, wars and fighting—these things were going on within the church. Whom were they blaming? They were blaming this on the spirit God gave to us.

Tell me something. Was there any fighting going on when Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden? Were they fighting with God? Not at all.

Probably the worst thing of all is that James points out that in doing these things, these people were showing their love for the world, and that is not good. Anybody who does that makes himself the enemy of God. That is what James says right there in that context, and that is the last thing in the world a church member should desire, but the sad thing is, in James 4, they were doing it.

What is the spirit that God gave to us? He did give us a spirit. That is very clear. What spirit is that? We are going to go to Job 37. Elihu, a young man, is speaking.

**Job 37:7-8** I said, 'Age should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.' But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding.

Whatever this spirit is, it was given by God, and brethren, it is telling us right in that verse this spirit God gave is what makes a man a man. It is what makes him a human being and separates him from animal. This is good. So good, that even a young man like Elihu could be given understanding that should be in the minds of old men. It gives wisdom. This is not anything that is evil. This is something good.

Let us go all the way back to Genesis 2.

**Genesis 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 being.

When we combine this with Job 37, and actually there are other places as well, we know that he not only became a living being, he became a living breathing *human* being, not just a superior animal. That spirit makes a human a human.

When in the creation week did Genesis 2:7 take place? It took place on the 6<sup>th</sup> day. What we see there in Genesis 2 is a look back on what happened before.

Now read verse 31 of Genesis 1.

**Genesis 1:31** Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.

The spirit God gave to Adam and Eve was *very good*. It was not evil one iota. There was nothing about it that was in any way tainted with anything that came close to the kind of mind, heart that Satan had. It was very good. So when we read through Genesis 1, 2, and 3, there is not a single mention of Adam and Eve sinning until Satan shows up.

There is not a single mention of any disagreement, any disharmony whatever with God. They lived in absolute peace and harmony with one another. And then Satan shows up, and bang! Almost in a moment things began to go downhill, and they went downhill fast. It was because of Satan and his heart, his spirit, his mind that changed the face of mankind from his heart out.

Now what happened there? When they chose to submit and fell to Satan, he became their god, and he began to be the one they looked to for guidance and direction, and they became submissive to him. This is what made man's spirit evil, because man's heart was then being fed by Satan. All of those other scriptures I showed you leading up to this point confirm that everything changed when Satan came on the scene, and he became the god of this world.

I see I am out of time. I am not quite finished, and maybe this gives me the opening for another sermon, and I will finish off why "The Sound of Music" became the way it is.