

#18 Northside Natter

22 July 2020

Today I'm briefly looking at **Human Nature**.

In 2020, we saw Emergency Service personnel and hospital staff put their lives on the line to attend the sick. Many businesses offered discounts for services or started payment plans to help out their customers. There has also been a plethora of free classes online to keep isolated people occupied, with mental health or upskilling being a key consideration. People were determined to keep each other distracted from what was happening outside their front door. They cared.

We've also seen instances of aggressive groups with political agendas using the pandemic to create societal divisions (schisms) and unrest through large public protests, resulting in a further spread of the disease. We've witnessed unfounded vicious Media attacks on politicians, Prime Ministers, and Presidents around the world. Now one country uses the pandemic as a smoke screen while all its neighbours are literally fighting for their lives due to disease. This country's military is inching its way across all borders on both land and sea and hoping to get away with it.

Why is there such a contrast in human behaviour when everyone is experiencing the same conditions? Why do some people react with compassion and hope while others react with hate and greed? Personality has a lot to do with it, but I know there is something even stronger than that at play.

The Bible tells us that we are made in God's image or likeness (Genesis 1:27) which means humans started out from a pretty good position. **Genesis 1:31** *And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good.*

Even so, this did not mean that humans are perfect creatures. Humans are like a blank USB waiting for data to be uploaded to them. This data is provided by the human experience, and depending on the quality of the data, either for good or bad.

Humans have the capacity for great love, compassion, kindness, patience, faithfulness, courage, and justice. They also have the capacity for arrogance, aggression, jealousy, rebelliousness, hatefulness, pride and vengeance. The latter capacities are entirely due to sin.

Does this mean that those who cause social divisions, stir up hatred towards others, or who forcefully take what is not theirs are operating under sin? Yes. One pastor I knew used to call this 'the DOS' (Devil's Operating System); he liked computer terminology. Sometimes it's easy to see those who are using the DOS. Other times, it can creep in unawares. Let's look at a Bible example of this.

Jude 1:3 urges the saints to '*earnestly contend for the faith*' entrusted to them.

Jude 1:4 *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, **ungodly men**, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

This verse was to point out the false teachers among the saints who turned Grace into a license for immorality. They used the doctrine of 'justification by faith' to free themselves from the obligation to obey the Laws of God. Their arguments would have sounded quite plausible to the fledgling saints (who didn't know Paul's letter to the Romans), but this kind of thinking also requires God to be easily manipulated while making Jesus's role of no practical value.

Romans 6:1-2 *what shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

Perhaps another capacity of humans to be listed should be gullibility. We need to be so careful about swallowing any new concept others may toss our way. It's often wrapped in biblical terminology and presented in a perfectly reasonable way which then creates confusion in the minds of 'younger' saints who have a lesser degree of stability in their walk.

The gullibility of humans is often exploited by ungodly men which is why so many people are fooled. The solution is education. The more we know the less we will be fooled. The more we understand of Bible principles and Godly ordinances, the less confused we will be and our stand will be sure.

For example: if we thoroughly understand all the scriptures that relate to same-sex relationships we will not be confused when 'ungodly men' attempt to appeal to our compassionate nature by saying things like, "everyone deserves to have someone who loves them." Of course, everyone deserves to have someone who loves them. But that's not the agenda of the group; that's just the heart-tugging wrapping. Another saying often flung about is: "Everyone deserves to be treated with respect." Well of course they do! But once again, that is not their agenda – just the pretty wrapping. It's the bit that gets you nodding and saying yes. Agreement at the start almost ensures agreement at the end. Beware of the traps! Many religious organisations rely on the tiniest amount of truth to sway people into believing they preach the whole gospel. Always check the scriptures for yourself.

Human nature is continually exploited for the purpose of others. This is not the life God intended for his children.

Matthew 5:37 *but let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh, of evil.*

Have you ever been sold something from a silver-tongued, charismatic-type Snake Oil Salesman? It seems an honest person is hard to find. Even the local grocery store will sell you things they call fresh, but within two days the items are limp and rotting. These events are motivated by greed and are sin.

Humans were not created with the capacity to sin. Sin was introduced into the world by Satan way back in the garden of Eden. How? He convinced Adam and Eve to eat from the Tree of Knowledge which developed in them a sense of right and wrong. Thus, sin was born. The Lord quickly put loathing (enmity) between Satan and Adam & Eve and then put the hapless pair out of the garden. The enmity created a division between sin and first man and woman. Adam and Eve were encouraged to seek only righteousness and to shun sin. But why did they have to be put out of the garden to do that? If they had stayed, they would have eaten from the Tree of Life and lived forever - in a state of sin. There is no

remedy for that in the immortal realm as the fallen angels can attest. God acted swiftly to save humans from that unredeemable future.

People behave badly because of fear, hate, jealousy, a feeling of injustice, greed, yearning for what others have, blaming everyone else for their poor choices. The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence until you get there. Any old cow will tell you the same thing – moo!

As saints of the Most High God, we must be careful of our human nature and those who will exploit it for their own ends and means. When we feel confused about something, we cannot keep it in. Go to the oversight or pastor and discuss the matter until you have full clarity and conviction of the truth. Do not walk away from that discussion until you know in your heart that the scriptures make sense to you. This will equip you with the shield to protect you from those who would convince you otherwise. As Jude says: *earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*