

## “Programmed”

---

by Bill Crews

**I**n totalitarian states it is not uncommon for some dignitaries from other countries who are temporary guests of those states to be given controlled “tours.” The visiting dignitaries are taken to limited places and areas where things have been carefully prepared. The citizens have been forcefully told how they are to act. The visitors are to be given certain impressions which they would never receive were they allowed to move about freely. It is all one of those disgusting games that some men play with other people’s lives in the name of international politics.

With certain limitations people can also be controlled through hypnosis. Under hypnosis they will do many of the things they are told to do, and their mind and actions can be controlled to some degree after coming out from under hypnosis through “post-hypnotic suggestion.” There are also other forms of mind-control and behavior-control, such, through the use of drugs, in which individuals are “programmed” and led to some degree to behave “robot-like.” But why bring up such worldly matters in a church bulletin designed to teach spiritual truth as found in the Bible?

I bring it up because there are apparently those who think that God made a mistake in making man the sort of creature he is. To use the words of Paul, “*Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why didst thou make me thus?*” (**Rom. 9:20**). Reason some: “If there is a God who made man, and who wants man to do right, why did He make man capable of doing so much wrong, and why did He make temptations to sin possible and wrong things so appealing?” “Why did He give us such strong desires that cry out for so many things that God has forbidden?” “It seems to me, if there is a God, that He would not have put Adam and Eve in a garden with something they couldn’t have and forbid them to have it knowing that would make them want it and even knowing they would choose to do so in spite of His prohibition and warning.”

In response let me say: (1) That if there were no God, there could have been no cosmos (a word meaning “order” which we use to denote our universe) with man in it. (2) That if there were no God, there would be no standard for human conduct and no such thing as right and wrong. (3) That God allows man to be tempted, but He is not the author of any temptation to sin (the devil is; see **James 1:13; Jn. 8:44; Matt. 4:1, 3**). (4) That God will not allow any man to be tempted above his power to resist; Satan provides the temptation, but God provides the way of escape (**1 Cor. 10:13**). (5) That God is not the author of error or false doctrine, but He allows it to exist and to make its appeal to men; those who do not want or love the truth will always have error as an alternative (**2 Thess. 2:10-12**). (6) That if there seems to be much more error than truth and much more sin than righteousness, remember that every genuine article has many counterfeits (**Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Jn. 4:1; Gal. 1:6-9**). (7) That the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life are not of God, but of the world; man can love or not love these things, and they are the things through which Satan makes appeal (**1 John 2:15-17; James 1:13-15**).

What some men think they would prefer is for man to be a programmed creature, a mere robot, acting out the role that God had predetermined he would act out. They think God has placed too much upon them, and they seek to justify the mess they have chosen to make of their lives; they refuse to accept responsibility and blame. But if man could not choose to do wrong, he could not choose to do right either; and if he could not choose to do right, there would be no right. There would be nothing beautiful about a robot-like man “praising God” and “doing His will,” but there is something extremely beautiful about man looking at all the alternatives, consequences, and evidences and choosing to do God’s bidding. There is surely something very beautiful about the Creator

concluded on page 361804

361803