

NATURE OR NURTURE? (*What Really Determines Who We Are?*)

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” (Joshua 24:15)

DNA. Ever since its discovery, and the visualization of its chemical construct, DNA has played a prominent role in the understanding of the genetic makeup of man and the identification of individuals genetically in forensic science. DNA, today, has become a household word.

DNA’s double-helix corkscrews its way into our physical makeup, chemically distributing various traits such as the color of one’s eyes and hair and hundreds of other human genetic characteristics. DNA holds the secret of ancestral markers into which every cell is stamped. There are an estimated 20,000-25,000 human protein-coding genes. This, too, is by God’s design.

We, humans, can do and understand remarkable things. We launch spaceships, build incredibly fast computers, erect skyscrapers which reach into the clouds, and create gorgeous works of art—but our 3.2 billion pieces of DNA may be too much for our minds to fully comprehend in the end. During human progress, it has been far easier to understand the things we make rather than what makes us.

Fascinating as it is, DNA’s power in the genetic makeup of man can lead one to erroneously conclude that every action and attribute of man is all “in the genes.” This stumbling block of presumption leads one down a path of believing we are only what we are based on our DNA’s composition. However, being born with certain chemical markers which destine an individual to have blue eyes and blonde hair is one thing, but to say that DNA’s power also extends to control of the will and fate of man is quite another thing.

Nurture, indeed, plays an even greater role than nature in the makeup of the heart, mind, and spirit of man. If this were not the case, we would only be mere chemically programmed robots and not agents of free will. No, God, Who is the Divine Architect of man, designed man to not only have inherent markers from his ancestors which stamped themselves into his makeup, but God also designed man to be independent, from being cast-molded—and without free will. God created man with a conscience. A conscience that either condemns or approves his thoughts and actions and thereby deeming him answerable to God for himself.

How the heart, mind, and spirit of man is nurtured has much to do with the actions and decision-making of that man. It is then not so much what is “in the genes” of his DNA nature but rather what is in the “genesis” of his nurturing. “Train up a child in the way that he should go...” is a Biblical principle that clearly demonstrates God’s design for human moral development. Nurturing, correct, and godly nurturing, that is, leads its student to the betterment of his personal makeup. Poor or spiritually unguided nurturing, of course, results in a poor and unguided heart, mind, and spirit of a man. Nurturing, therefore, is the prime mover in the spiritual personality of man, while nature is the dominant factor in the physical makeup of man.

Nurturing has far more influence on the things which truly matter, and it is for this reason that God encourages us to “come and reason” with Him and why God chose “preaching to save them which believe.” The Holy Ghost is given to us whereby we may be nurtured thereby and teaching us the things which pertain unto righteousness. Nature gave us the human vessel—Nurture, godly nurturing, gives us spiritual veracity. The “Who” we are is seldom about our physical bodies but rather about the state of our heart, mind, and spirit.

Once we see the vital action of the Church in the nurturing process, we begin to place far more value on its contribution to our spiritual welfare and less value on the institutions which cater only to our physical needs. While our physical needs are legitimate, we understand its lower priority in the scheme of things. To be “carnal” is simply the case of reversal of priorities—getting the carcass ahead of the heart.

Physical deformities can and do sometimes occur at birth; however, spiritual perversions are not problems inflicted by nature but rather results from improper nurturing. Homosexuality is not some fluke of the DNA construct. It is a fault of destructive nurturing—this also applies to all perversions of sexual nature. These perversions are, in fact, a revolt not only against DNA (nature does also teach us) but against The Creator as well. Society today is fast becoming deaf to both God and nature!

This same principle is not only applicable to our “untoward” ways but also to our “righteous” ones as well—we are products of not just our genetics but also, and more importantly, of “how” and “what” we have been taught, believe, and practice. It is, therefore, more important, or should be, to concern ourselves with the things which have eternal consequences and not with the things of temporal value—indeed, our eternal soul over our temporary body.

Ultimately, who we are is the result of our personal choices made of our own volition. While nature and nurture exert their own particular influences, we, however, are the final custodian of our deeds and thoughts. We all, at some point in time, shall stand before God to give an answer for deeds done in the flesh. Who we are is who we choose to be. May we choose life and not death. “Whosoever will, let him come.”

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.” (Gal. 5:16-17)

=jlg=

ecclesiasticalresearches.com