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UNDERSTANDING CORRUPTION: ITS ROOTS

A. Introduction

How come corruption continues to find a place and thrives among us, when most people agree on the fact that it is evil? How is it that we continue to have corrupt leaders when we know that the health of our society demands that we do not vote for such? Corruption is, indeed, an intricate problem. Examining this problem from the view of God's Word would help us see that it is deep, with roots in the hearts of men right from the beginning of humanity. If we would understand corruption, so that we can effectively prevent and respond to it, then we must do so from the roots. Otherwise, it will always abide with us.

B. The Beginning: Genesis 3:1-14

1. Observe the chain of events in this story.
2. What do you think motivated Adam and Eve to disobey God by eating the fruit?
3.
 - a. In what ways are we like Adam and Eve in our nature and desires?
 - b. How do these similarities contribute to corruption in individuals and institutions?

C. The Result: Jeremiah 17:9-11

1. What does this passage say about the nature of the human heart and what it leads to?
2.
 - a. What does it mean to have a deceitful heart?
 - b. How does a man who acquires wealth unjustly compare with a partridge that hatches eggs it did not lay?
3. Human nature is complex and difficult to understand. From your observation in the passage:
 - a. How does the message of this passage help you to understand the problem of corruption in our society?
 - b. Have you ever acquired anything dishonestly? What led you to do this and what have you done about it?

D. Memory Verse: Jeremiah 17:9, 10.

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? "I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve."

E. Point of Reflection

Having explored the roots of corruption from these passages, take a moment and reflect on the state of your own heart; that central part of you from which your attitudes, values and all actions flow. What is the state therein? Are there things that make it fertile ground to breed corruption? Ask God to help you deal with it now and in the days to come as you go through these studies.

Additional Passage

Genesis 3:20-24.