

# Back to Basics

The wisdom of man has been manifest throughout the ages as folly. Ever since he chose to ignore the law and counsel of God (which he deemed foolishness) in the garden of Eden, we have had suffering and sorrow through defeat, failure and loss. Indeed, choosing to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (whether one were to take it literally or figuratively) has not been a wise choice at all.

Mankind seems to have accomplished much...

Yet after thousands of years of experimentation, the vast majority of humanity still thinks it can and will prevail by its own wisdom in the end. We hear so many "positive thinkers" speak of the marvel of technology, of how we have developed ways to do things by our own cleverness and research and how we can do anything as long as there is the will and commitment.

Indeed, mankind seems to have accomplished much, especially in the last few centuries and especially in the last half century and perhaps especially in the last decade. We are really moving! The industrial revolution expanded our horizons and performed results initially deemed as miracles. Even before that period, things like gunpowder were literally taking the world by storm. We had the Gutenberg press to mass produce the printed word and enlighten the masses as far and wide as never before the 15th century.

In the last century, automation gave us swift transportation to shorten journeys from what once took years to months to weeks to days and even hours. Indeed, journeys in hours today were impossible in any amount of time not long ago for many. When we put men on the moon, we were drunk with euphoria and nothing seemed impossible to us. Were not educated men scoffing only a century ago at the notion of man flying?

Now we have high technology, biotechnology, nanotechnology, robotic technology, genetic engineering, quantum physics, you name it. We are living in the Information Age in which, it seems, we can learn all we wish at the touch of a button. Marvelous! We imagine the expressions on the faces of inventors, scientists, philosophers, political and military leaders of bygone eras viewing our accomplishments and we glow with pride.

But how are we really doing? Notice we haven't done much with the moon since. We either use for war that which we invent supposedly for peace (as with Albert Einstein's theory of relativity and the invention of the atomic bomb) or we invent for the express purpose of war and defense in war as with Reagan's "Star Wars" program. Was it not war among ourselves that propelled us to accomplish much of what we have today?

## ...but how are we really doing?

The invention of gunpowder may or may not have been invented for war initially, but its primary purpose is for war now and has been for centuries. Hitler's tinkering with rockets brought us to the moon and to the capability of high-tech, computerized armaments to blow away populations thousands of miles away in minutes. The chemicals used in the Great Wars have been enlisted to serve (and kill) us in almost every area of physical life including the production, processing, storage, and preservation of the food we eat and the water we drink.

How are we really doing? Let's look at war in a wider sense. We speak of wars on disease, famine, drugs, and poverty.

The invention of antibiotics was thought to be the beginning of the end of disease. Today we have the same old fatal diseases returning, striking fear in the hearts of scientists and leaders the world over. Why? Because we have used antibiotics too frequently and where they should not have been used, especially in our food chain, feeding it to our animals.

We declare war on illegal drugs and are inventing expensive legal drugs that arguably kill more people than the illegal ones. Psychopathic beasts called corporations have the rights of individuals and fewer of the responsibilities, and run roughshod over society.

Has famine been eliminated despite the use of high-tech agricultural practices and chemical aids in fertilization and weed and pest control? On the contrary, our productive lands are being raped as we use what we've been sold to compete with our neighbors.

GMO Frankenfoods are taking over our fields and polluting everything we grow. As a result, pests in "new and improved" varieties are gaining with a vengeance, our chemical methods used to fight them backfiring. We try everything possible to produce cheaply, quickly, bountifully. And it's killing us.

When I was a child, we didn't use chemicals on our farm until the fifties, and cancer wasn't at all common. If someone was dying of cancer, it was significant, albeit sad, news. Today, there is hardly a family left untouched by the scourge. I have lost a brother, two cousins, three aunts, and two uncles to cancer. My mother-in-law had it and survived.

Besides cancer, what about all the heart disease, diabetes, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's, Lou Gehrig's, Alzheimer's, asthma, and a host of illnesses we have never heard of? Can there be any doubt that these diseases gain the advantage over us because our immune systems are crippled by ignorant, foolish, and unnatural lifestyles including our sedentary habits, our treatment of

foods from field to fork, polluting the planet and losing it for gain? We're eating our children in the siege.

What about the toll of mental and emotional stress resulting from our fast pace of life in getting and achieving? We're killing ourselves, along with our children.

Because of these things, famine stalks the world, taking out millions.

Speaking of getting, let's expand on the meaning of war still further. Let us speak of competition. We've been led to believe that competition is healthy and necessary. Truly, given the way humanity is at present, if it were not for the fact that one was not willing and able to provide a commodity or service for less than another, we would be paying more than we do.

It is the "I" generation: *I can do it, I deserve it, I owe it to myself.*

But is competition really necessary? I'm not a Communist, but I do await with great longing for the day when humanity concludes, as do those at AA, that we have a problem and can't lick it on our own. We need a Higher Power, not only in alcohol abuse, but in the general life abuse of which every one of us is guilty. We simply don't know how to live, though most of us think living is the most natural thing one can do, like breathing or circulating blood.

We are competing with our neighbors and countrymen for a bigger piece of the pie. We patent to gain control and profit at the cost of all those who "need" what we invent. We hope to have all the amenities of life and don't care a whole lot if many others don't gain the same. It is the "I" generation: *I can do it, I deserve it, I owe it to myself*, looking out for Number One, namely *Me*. We race to the garage sale, the auction, the estate sale, the limited specials at stores "before others get it all." We are selfish.

Through commercial and political warfare techniques called marketing, salesmanship, promotion, public relations, and advertising, we've been brainsoiled into thinking we can't live without chemicals, synthetic medications, vaccinations, chlorine, fluoride, cheap, mass-produced factory foods, modern conveniences, and a host of other things that mankind did without for thousands of years.

Wasn't it Henry Thoreau who determined to find out how much we really need to live comfortably and discovered it to be very little?

But now come the taxes. Half of our working hours are spent working for the government to pay for those who work for the government who charge us to support the government.

What does the government spend it on? Because we are always sick, the Canadian government provides us with sick care at great expense. Because we are sick, traumatized by the speed of advance (as Alvin Toffler wrote of in *Future Shock*)

and taxed to pay for all these things, we can't handle our necessities amply. We then collect "pogy" or go on welfare, which transfers more of the burden unto the shoulders of others in the form of higher taxes. We gullibly believe politicians who promise to "give" us more with our money.

I now doubt that anyone in Canada can any longer do what Thoreau proposed, given the present circumstances, but the idea he had was good and that is what we will be doing... **going back to basics.**

We will learn that God is Number One, and that He alone knows best.

Chemicals have not worked. Instead, they have killed. Though we live in the Information Age, we will eventually find that we can't eat microchips. What gain we have achieved by doing things big and fast has already been relinquished as we pay the piper through poverty, social welfare, sickness, medical care systems, and death. Through greed, we have had it all taken away on us. We are discovering the price tag to be much higher than we imagined.

What is so wrong with going back to treating the land with respect and TLC? After all, from the land comes our sustenance on earth and if the land is harmed, so are we. The fact is, we will all eventually learn the hard way that only the hard way is the easy way and the only way that pays.

We will pick and plough our weeds learning that if a chemical is harmful to one plant at any time, it can't be all that great for any other plant. We will treasure the microorganisms in the soil and the bugs that are there for good, like earthworms, dung beetles, and spiders. We will thereby refrain from scorched-earth tactics to rid ourselves of pests. We will recognize that birds which eat those insects, pests, and other birds are to be protected and respected, for our own good as well as theirs.

We will learn that our lives depend on good, clean living, or they will cease to exist as they exist now. We will realize that all of nature, from whence we come, is our caring cradle which we have converted to a corrosive casket.

We will learn that God is Number One, always has been and always will be, and that He alone knows best. Only love of neighbor will win the day for us all. (By love, I don't mean the religious mush you often see, but a genuine, unselfish, active, committed regard - with cost involved - for the other person, for our animals, for our plants, our food, our land, water and all things.)

We will learn to be satisfied with less, and we will have more. We will go back to basics and enjoy life, instead of fighting to stay alive. We may as well submit to it. That day is upon us. We have no other choice, except to destroy ourselves.

Victor Hafichuk