

The Defining Moral Essence and Inward Heart Commitments of

All Human Beings According to the Bible¹

The Biblical Path from Being Under God's Eternal Condemnation to Eternal Life

[Box A. → Box C. → Box D.2.]

The Moral Nature of a Human Being		
	<p>A Person's Defining Moral Essence is Evil (Sinful) (The person in this column is sinful at the level of his foundational moral nature.)</p>	<p>A Person's Defining Moral Essence is Good (Perfect) (The person in this column is morally perfect at the level of his foundational moral nature.)</p>
The Heart of a Human Being	<p>Unbeliever and Non-Christian (exists in only the present age)</p> <p>Box A. This is the <u>sinful</u> human being in the condition in which he is born in the present age. And he either remains in this condition or becomes inwardly changed in his heart by the Spirit of God, so that he transitions to C. below.</p>	<p>Non-Existent Person</p> <p>Box B. It is logically possible but biblically impossible for this person to exist. A person can never be morally perfect in his defining moral essence who is also unwilling to be committed to goodness in his heart.</p>
	<p>Believer and Christian (exists in only the present age)</p> <p>Box C. This is the <u>sinful</u> and <u>mortal</u> believer of <u>changed heart</u> who exists in this present age, even during the millennial kingdom, and who is guaranteed to transition to D.2. to the right. Sometimes he obeys God, and sometimes he unavoidably disobeys Him.</p>	<p>Jesus and Eternal Human Beings (exist in the present and future ages)</p> <p>Box D.1. This is Jesus as he existed as a <u>mortal</u> and <u>morally perfect</u> human being <u>before</u> his death and resurrection.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓ By way of the cross</p> <p>Box D.2. This is Jesus as he exists now as an <u>immortal</u> and <u>morally perfect</u> human being <u>after</u> his resurrection, AND this is any former <u>sinful</u> believer as he exists as an <u>immortal</u> and <u>morally perfect</u> human being in the eternal Kingdom of God when and after Jesus returns.</p>

Color Legend

BLUE characterizes a person who is **EVIL** at some level (or both levels) of his being.

RED characterizes a person who is **GOOD** at some level (or both levels) of his being.

PURPLE characterizes a person who is a combination of **GOOD** and **EVIL**.

GREEN characterizes a person for whom it is **BIBLICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO EXIST**.

The **RED ARROWS** show the path that a sinful person must follow in order to gain eternal life.

BLACK is for TITLES and DESCRIPTIVE STATEMENTS of the above three colors.

¹ Based on the chart by Jack Crabtree in his document Toward a Biblical Philosophy: Notes on the Content of Biblical Philosophy, May, 2016, page 58

Explanation of the Chart

The above chart presents the four kinds of human beings within God's eternal plans and purposes, including Jesus of Nazareth, the Jewish Messiah and God incarnate. It also shows the path that sinful humans take in order to escape God's wrath and condemnation so as to obtain His **eternal** mercy, forgiveness, and life through Jesus and the Holy Spirit and to become morally perfect human beings. This path starts with the color **BLUE**, transitions to **PURPLE**, and ends with **RED**.

Introduction to the Colors **BLUE**, **PURPLE**, **RED**, and **GREEN**

- Jesus, the morally perfect image and icon of God was, is, and always will be categorized by **RED**.
- The rest of us as sinful human beings begin our existences on this earth as wholly **BLUE**, transition to **PURPLE** if God changes our hearts so that we become authentic believers in God, and then we change again and remain completely **RED** when we enter the eternal Kingdom of God after Jesus returns.
- As listed in the Color Legend below the chart, **BLUE** words and labels are a description of an **EVIL** characteristic of sinful human beings, and **RED** words and labels are a description of a **GOOD** characteristic of Jesus and some sinful human beings in the present age, as well as sinful human beings who have become morally perfect in the eternal age.
- The box with **PURPLE** words and labels refers to a sinful human being who is a **combination** of a **GOOD** characteristic and an **EVIL** characteristic.
- The box with **GREEN** words and labels refers to a kind of human being who never exists within God's plans.

The Two Labels Above and to the Left of the Chart

Notice the label above the chart — **The Moral Nature of a Human Being**. The word “nature” refers to what the Bible indicates is our very essence and beingness. It is who we are. For example, as human beings, we have human nature, while animals have animal nature, and the two are very different. For example, as human beings, we can think and act rationally and according to what makes sense. We have a rational intellectual nature, so that we know and can articulate that $2+3=5$. In contrast, animals think and act instinctually. They have a non-rational intellectual nature, so that they make choices on the basis of fixed patterns as they encounter circumstances in life. Another example relevant to our discussion is that we human beings have a moral component to our human nature, that can be deemed either good or evil. In contrast, animals have an amoral component to their animal nature, that is neither good nor evil. It lacks that which allows us to judge our human nature and actions morally. If a bear kills a human being, it is not performing a moral action. Its behavior is amoral. We do not concern ourselves with judging the bear's action to be morally good or evil. In contrast, if a human being murders another human being, his action is morally evil and fits appropriately in a moral category. In summary, our **Moral Nature** as human beings is who we are morally.

Notice the label to the left of the chart — **The Heart of a Human Being**. The word “heart” refers what the Bible means by our fundamental desires and commitments, those desires to which we are more dedicated and moral loyal than all other desires. It is what we ultimately want. If someone asks us, “What do you **really** want out of life?”, our answer reveals our heart and what is of central and primary importance to us. It shows what our **basic and rudimentary** inner, existential commitments are, those commitments that indicate what is really going on inside us and what we desire more than anything else. On the one hand, if our answer is, “To be happy and maximize my bodily pleasures until the day I die,” then we are most committed to making choices that satisfy all the desires we have for experiencing sheer, physical joy while do everything we can to avoid any kind of pain and discomfort during our short existence on this earth. On the other hand, if our answer is, “To be biblically moral, to obey God, and to gain eternal life,” then we are most committed to making choices that will result in performing good, moral thoughts and actions during this life in order to enter into the eternal Kingdom of God afterwards, regardless of what circumstances, good or bad, we encounter in the present realm.

Therefore, God's having made us a **combination** of a **Moral Nature** and a **Heart** allows each of us to ask the question, “Who am I morally and what do I want to be and do morally?” As we will see, our **Moral Nature** and **Heart** can *both* be **EVIL**, or they can *both* be **GOOD**. Or our **Moral Nature** can be **EVIL**, while our **Heart** is **GOOD**. However, our **Moral Nature** can never be **GOOD** while our **Heart** is **EVIL**.

Detailed Explanation of Box A., Box B., Box C., Box D.1., and Box D.2.

Box A. – Unbeliever and Non-Christian

Box A. This is the *sinful* human being in the condition in which he is born in the present age. And he either remains in this condition or becomes inwardly changed in his heart by the Spirit of God, so that he transitions to **C.** below.

The first kind of human being has the label **Box A.** He is the **Unbeliever and Non-Christian**. The Bible describes this person as *sinful* and *evil* at **two** levels. One level, represented by the first column under **The Moral Nature of a Human Being** is labelled **A Person's Defining Moral Essence is Evil (Sinful)**. The apostle Paul in Romans 7 & 8 uses the words "flesh" and "the members of our body" to indicate this level. He is referring to our **Defining Moral Essence**, which is *naturally evil* for all human beings other than Jesus. I am also calling this level our **foundational moral nature**.

For example, Paul writes in Romans 7:5, 17-18, and 21 –

Romans 7:5 For while we were **in the flesh**, the passions of sins, which existed in the light of the Covenant, were at work **in the members of our body** to bear fruit for death.

Romans 7:17 So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but **sin which dwells in me**. **7:18** For I know that **nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh**. For the desire to do good is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

Romans 7:21 I find then the principle that **evil is present in me**, the one who wants to do good. [emphases mine]

Paul is saying that we simply *are sinful* in our human nature and that we remain such until God completely changes us—if we later enter the eternal Kingdom of God. Thus, our evil and *sinful* moral beingness is the same as our **Defining Moral Essence** and **foundational moral nature**. As the parenthetical statement says underneath the label, we are definitely **Evil** and *sinful* at this level of who we *are* as human beings. Also, this level never becomes good before Jesus' return, which is when God will change us into *morally perfect* human beings with a *morally perfect* human nature. We will consider this change when we look at the box with the labels **Box D.1.** and **Box D.2.**

The apostle Paul comments on our "flesh" in also Ephesians 2:3 –

Ephesians 2:3 Among [the rest of the unbelievers] we too all formerly lived **in the strong desires of our flesh**, acting on the desires **of the flesh** and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. [emphases mine]

Paul is indicating that our "flesh" produces "strong desires" that we can characterize as all kinds of powerful, evil passions and cravings that run counter to God's definition of moral goodness in the Bible. He also says that we acted on these desires and chose to satisfy them. Therefore, our **foundational moral nature** is not only evil, but it inclines us with its evil desires to *choose* to do what is immoral and disobedient to God.

There are at least two passages where Paul explicitly lists the "strong desires" and actions of the "flesh," in Romans 1:28-32 and Galatians 5:19-21 –

Romans 1:28 And just as [unbelievers] did not acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to **a defective mind, to do those things which are not proper,**

1:29 having been filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, lack of moral boundaries, evil. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice. They are gossips,

1:30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,

1:31 without understanding, untrustworthy, lacking normal affection, and unforgiving.

1:32 And although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

Galatians 5:19 Now **the actions of the flesh** are evident, which are: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,
5:20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,
5:21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

In the verses of Romans 2, Paul attributes the evil actions of sinful human beings to their “defective mind.” He means that not only is the “flesh” of these people evil, but also their hearts are, too. We will address this issue in a moment. In Galatians 5:19-21, Paul describes this same kind of sinful behavior as “the actions of the flesh.” Therefore, the question arises, “Are we always compelled to give in to the immoral condition and inclinations of our nature, so that we always do explicit and obvious evil?” In other words, does our “flesh” always oblige us to do that which is obviously evil and sinful? Certainly, the answer is, “No,” because even unbelievers can and do engage in acts of kindness and generosity in their lives. Yet, Paul’s terminology and this question do bring us to consider the second level of what it means to be a human being, as represented by the first row to the right of **The Heart of a Human Being** and is labelled **A Person’s Heart Renders Him Unwilling to Include God and All His Truth in His Understanding of Reality**. Paul refers directly to this condition in Romans 2:5 –

Romans 2:5 But because of your stubbornness and **unrepentant heart** you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. [emphasis mine]

Paul is saying that, because we are born sinful, we naturally acquire an inner, immoral “stubbornness” that is the same as an “unrepentant heart.” The Old Testament authors use the word “heart” approximately 630 times, while the New Testament authors use it approximately 170 times. Typically, it refers to that part of us as rational and moral human beings where our fundamental desires and primary, existential commitments reside. These are the things which we ultimately want out of life, our deepest and most basic desires that *overall* set the course of our lives and bring about what we think, believe, and do. However, because we begin our existences as human beings with “unrepentant” hearts, they prevent us from wholeheartedly committing ourselves to God. Therefore, we begin our existence on this earth unwilling to face into the depth of the problem of our sinfulness. In other words, we are unwilling to admit that our most basic desire is to be anti-God, which obviously is sin itself. We refuse to own up to the fact that our **foundational moral nature** is entirely sinful and that, as a just and appropriate consequence, we deserve God’s condemnation. Plus, we are unwilling to acknowledge that we are completely incapable on our own of making ourselves acceptable to God.

As I have written in the parenthetical statement in the chart, the persons of **Box A** refuse to be wholly dedicated and committed to God, His truth, and His definition of moral goodness. As a result, we are unwilling to repent of this deepest and fundamental sin and to submit ourselves to Him. We refuse to change our minds about the truth of the Bible, that it declares us to be sinful and calls for us to long to be good and, therefore, to pursue moral goodness according to God’s instructions. In other words, we human beings of **Box A** are unwilling as sinners to change how we should think and act according to God’s moral commandments in the Bible. This lack of wholesale dedication to God results in our never choosing as unbelievers to submit ourselves completely to Him. Instead, according to our own *personal* agendas and apart from God, we pursue fulfilling our evil desires that come from our “flesh” and **foundational moral nature**. Thus, by not having a fundamental desire to be wholly dedicated to obeying God, our behavior reflects this in what we do as our sinful desires lead us to ignore God and His truth. We make act charitably towards others, but our basic desire is still grounded in an unwillingness to submit ourselves to God **with our whole being**.

Therefore, the Bible is saying that we are sinful **both** in who we are, in our **Defining Moral Essence**, **and** in what we do, by the choices we make that result from our **unrepentant hearts** and the fact that we are unwilling to be fully committed to God in our **beingness, thoughts, and actions**. Certainly, some people manifest their sinfulness with more numerous and/or more heinous sinful actions than others. But the fact that all unbelievers and non-Christians have an evil **foundational moral nature** AND an **unrepentant heart** means that they deserve God’s eternal condemnation as depicted in the chart by the intersection of the above two levels in the box labelled **Unbeliever and Non-Christian** and **Box A**.

By the way, in addition to “heart,” the Bible uses the words “spirit”, “mind”, and “inner man” to refer to a person’s **inner commitments**, that is, to how he is spiritually oriented towards God, either away from

Him (labeled **Box A.**) or towards Him (labeled **Box C.** as discussed below). Here are verses from Paul's letters to the Romans and to the Ephesians that use these other words –

Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our **spirit** that we are children of God. [emphasis mine]

Romans 1:28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a defective **mind**, to do those things which are not proper. [emphasis mine]

Romans 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh set their **minds** on the things of the flesh [**Box A.**], but those who are according to the Spirit, set their **minds** on the things of the Spirit [**Box C.**].
6 For the **mind** set on the flesh results in death [**Box A.**], but the **mind** set on the Spirit results in life and shalom [**Box C. → Box D.**], **7** because the **mind** set on the flesh is **hostile toward God**; for it does not subject itself to the instruction of God, for it is not even able to do so [**Box A.**], **8** and those who are in the flesh cannot please God [**Box A.**]. [emphases mine]

Romans 7:22 For I joyfully concur with the Covenant of God in the **inner man** [emphasis mine].

Ephesians 2:3 Among [the rest of the unbelievers] we too all formerly lived in the strong desires of our flesh, acting on the desires of the flesh and **of the mind**, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. [emphasis mine]

Ephesians 4:17 So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility **of their mind**. [emphasis mine]

In Romans 8:5-7 above, I have identified the various boxes of the chart to which Paul's statements are referring. A person whose **mind** and **heart** are oriented away from God and towards the "flesh" resides morally in **Box A.**, while the sinner who has transitioned to being oriented towards God and His "Spirit" occupies **Box C.** and will eventually (when Jesus returns) become a member of the morally perfect human beings in **Box D.2.** This is the person who will experience "life and shalom"—authentic, permanent vitality as a morally perfect human being and an environment that will be wholly satisfying and fulfilling in the eternal Kingdom of God. This last box, **Box D.2.**, is obviously the same one which Jesus will inhabit (**Box D.1.**) as the permanent king and priest of sinners who join him in it by virtue of believing in him, his death, and his resurrection as God the Father required of him, because he is the Messiah.

Furthermore, the unwillingness of an "unrepentant heart" to be wholly dedicated to God of the **Unbeliever and Non-Christian** is what the Bible also describes as hostility towards God above in Romans 8:7 and the shunning of God (suppressing the truth) in Romans 1:18-19 below –

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men **who suppress the truth in unrighteousness**, **19** because that which is known about God is evident among them. For God made it evident to them [emphasis mine].

The word "hostility" in Romans 8:7 is *ekthra* (ἐχθρα) and includes the idea of opposing someone with intense dislike, even hatred. Paul is saying in chapter 8 of Romans that sinful human beings have a natural antipathy towards God that continues throughout their lives—if He does not change their heart and "spirit." However, when He does bring about this change, sinful human beings genuinely love Him and are fundamentally willing to please Him by desiring at the most basic level of their heart to be morally good and to seek to obey His instructions in the Bible, including the commandment to repent of their sin. In this way, they acquire a revised and new repentant "heart," which we will consider more closely when we get to **Box C.**

The word "shunning" in my statement above is the rudimentary meaning of the important Greek word *asebeia* (ἀσεβεία) that is translated in Romans 1:18 above as "ungodliness." *Asebeia* (ἀσεβεία) is a combination of *a* (ἀ), which means "not" or "no" and *sebo* (σεβω), which means "worship." It therefore refers to a lack of respect or regard for God and the things of God, which is the same as an unwillingness to ascribe to God the attention and obedience that He deserves as our creator and source of life and instruction. Paul goes on to say in chapter 1 of Romans that sinful human beings, because of their *asebeia* (ἀσεβεία), naturally and slavishly draw their understanding of reality from only themselves and

what they see and experience around them. They acquire a worldview by studying and learning about the things of this earth and universe, but they rebelliously stop there. By disregarding their transcendent creator God, they shun and ignore the vital importance of expanding their worldview first by inferring from the creation that there is a Creator and second by studying and learning the Bible, which He has given us. They willfully keep their understanding of reality dangerously too small, regardless of how much they think they know about themselves and the rest of the creation.

In chapters 1 & 2 of Romans, Paul also explains two ways in which sinful human beings with “unrepentant” hearts manifest their shunning (*asebeia*) and hostility (*ekthra*) towards God. In chapter 1, Paul states that people substitute false gods for the one true God *that results in their performing and condoning external actions that are easy to see as being contrary to and outside the boundaries of God’s moral commandments*, e.g., murder, sexual immorality, stealing, lying, deception, etc. I provided above the full list in Romans 1:28-32 of what happens with the **combination** of an evil **Defining Moral Essence** and an “unrepentant heart.” Additionally, in Romans 1, Paul also uses the obvious example of homosexuality as characteristic of people’s shunning and ignoring God’s instructions. He says –

Romans 1:26 [Because sinful human beings worshiped the creation instead of the Creator], God gave them over to degrading passions. For their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,

1:27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

Then, in chapter 2, Paul describes people’s shunning God by their taking the biblical message and turning it into **a religious system of external deeds**, with the expectation that that they can use them to earn God’s favor and blessings while claiming to obey His moral commandments appropriately. Obviously, this second way of manifesting a disregard for God is not quite so easy to detect, because religious people to a degree can look just like authentic worshipers of God. They attend synagogue or church, they sing appropriate songs to God, they pray appropriate prayers to Him, and they perform activities they find in the Bible such as Passover, the Lord’s Supper, and baptism. However, as Jesus admonished the Jewish Pharisees of his day, these people honor God with their words and religious actions, but their **hearts** are far away from Him.

Accordingly, Paul writes about the Jew who has turned the Mosaic Covenant into a mere religious system that he is using to impress God with his righteous actions. First, we need to realize that God intended the nation of Israel to obey the Mosaic in exactly the same manner that He requires that all sinners believe in Jesus as the Messiah—with hearts that have been changed. We are getting a little ahead of ourselves, because the matter of a changed heart is what **Box C** explains. But, to make chapter 2 of Romans more understandable for us, I quote from two places in Deuteronomy where Moses initially exhorts the Israelites to change their hearts and then indicates that God eventually will do this for them –

Deuteronomy 10:12 “Now, Israel, what does Yahweh your God require from you, but to fear Yahweh your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve Yahweh your God with **all your heart** and with **all your existence**,

10:13 and to keep Yahweh’s commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?

10:14 Behold, to Yahweh your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it.

10:15 Yet on your fathers did Yahweh set His affection to love them, and He chose their descendants after them, even you above all peoples, as it is this day.

10:16 Therefore, **circumcise your heart**, and stiffen your neck no longer.” [emphases mine]

Deuteronomy 30:1 “And it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where Yahweh your God has banished you,

30:2 and you return to Yahweh your God and obey Him with **all your heart and existence** according to all that I command you today, you and your sons,

- 30:3 then Yahweh your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where Yahweh your God has scattered you.
- 30:4 If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there Yahweh your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back.
- 30:5 Yahweh your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. And He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.
- 30:6 Moreover Yahweh your God **will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants**, to love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your existence, so that you may live.” [emphases mine]

While it is clear that God, through Moses, is requiring that His chosen people, the nation of Israel, acquire changed (**circumcised**) hearts, and that, ultimately, only He can and will produce this change, Paul says in Romans 2 that his fellow Jews have turned the Mosaic Covenant into a means to impress God with their righteousness and righteous deeds. However, God is not impressed –

- Romans 2:17 But if you bear the name “Jew” and rely upon the Covenant and boast in God,
- 2:18 and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Covenant,
- 2:19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,
- 2:20 a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Covenant the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth,
- 2:21 you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?
- 2:22 You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you “rob temples”?
- 2:23 **You who boast in the Covenant, do you dishonor God through your breaking the Covenant?** [emphasis mine]

The answer to Paul’s last question is an unequivocal and resounding “Yes!!” Any sinful human being, Jew or Gentile, who fails to humble himself completely so as to repent of his sin in a genuine manner, while even adopting God’s moral and ritual commandments in the Bible as an outward means to impress Him, will not receive His blessing of the Kingdom of God and eternal life. Instead, like the person of Romans 1, who focuses only his own physical cravings, he will incur God’s condemnation. In other words, one of the “strong desires” of the “flesh” is to look and act religious, even biblically religious. Yet, this person is “dishonoring God” because he lacks a changed heart.

Jesus refers to the sinful, religious Jews of his day in the gospel of Matthew –

- Matthew 15:7 “You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you, 15:8 ‘This people **honors Me with their lips**, but **their heart is far away from Me**. 15:9 But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the instructions of men.’” [emphasis mine]

And,

- Matthew 23:2 [Jesus was] saying: “The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses;
- 23:3 therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them...”
- 23:23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.
- 23:27 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but **inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness**.
- 23:28 “So you, too, **outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness**.” [emphases mine]

By virtue of the Jews' hearts being "far away from" God and their taking the Mosaic Covenant and performing it with inwardness that is "full of hypocrisy and lawlessness," they are worshiping God "in vain," i.e., in a vacuous and empty manner where they are unwilling to take seriously God and His biblical instructions. Their outward behavior looks biblical, but their **unrepentant hearts** render them unwilling to include all of God's truth in their understanding of reality.

A third way not explicitly mentioned in Romans 1 & 2 that human beings express their disregard and antipathy for God is through bland indifference to Him. These people have a lackadaisical attitude towards God, even perhaps while living a rather moral and good life. They would probably never say that they are against God and the Bible, but neither are they *wholeheartedly* for Him and His project both of saving sinners from His eternal condemnation through Jesus and of granting them eternal life. We might think that bland indifference is quite innocent. Nevertheless, any refusal to become inwardly and *fully* committed to God and to acknowledge Him *completely* is sin, because it stems from an *evil* **Defining Moral Essence** and an **unrepentant heart**. Thus, all three ways of expressing disrespect and dislike towards God by ignoring the truth which He has conveyed through the Bible, so that, instead, we embrace false ideas about the nature of reality, is to be guilty of *asebeia* (an unwillingness to submit to God's authority), *ekthra* (hostility towards God), and an **unrepentant heart**.

The Bible also states that our sinfulness manifests itself in our mistreating other human beings whom God created to be like Him. They all possess dignity, a rational and logical intellect with a moral will, and the right to independent thought and action (as long as these are not contrary to God's moral commandments in the Bible). As quoted above in the long list of sins towards other human beings in Romans 1:28-32, Paul includes murder, strife, malice, gossip, slander, being untrustworthy, being unloving, and being unmerciful. However, sin is not just the willful and energetic doing of murder, strife, malice, etc. It is also moral weakness, which demonstrates itself in an unwillingness to commit completely to biblical morality and which, likewise, arises from the *evil* quality of our **foundational moral nature** and the lack of genuine repentance of our **hearts**. Sometimes we ambitiously and aggressively choose to do evil, and sometimes we are carelessly (or carefully) unwilling to do what is good and right. Both are sin.

Plus, even when a sinful human being in **Box A.**, whose **Heart** is not completely committed to obeying God, outwardly does something good, the fact that he is *evil* at the level of his **Defining Moral Essence** means that he still deserves God's eternal wrath and condemnation. Theoretically, this person could do only good, external deeds throughout his life. But the **combination** of his *evil* **foundational moral nature** AND his **unrepentant heart** means that his "goodness" obviously does not originate from moral perfection. Nor is its source an authentic, persevering, and settled desire to honor, worship, and obey God (**Box C.**). He may claim that he believes in God, worships God, has a zeal for God, and is following God's moral commandments, but, in the final analysis, he *is* evil and not choosing in **any biblically meaningful way** to resist desiring and doing evil. He is not good as the Bible defines a good human being this side of the eternal Kingdom of God, i.e., sinful but inwardly dedicated to God (**Box C.**) which we will discuss below. Therefore, he is not fundamentally committed to true, biblical goodness.

To summarize, a sinful human being begins his life with both his **Defining Moral Essence** as **Evil** and his **Heart** and **inward heart commitments** lacking a full and uninterrupted dedication to understand and obey God (**Box A.**, the **Unbeliever and Non-Christian**). The Bible calls this person a "sinner" (Romans 3:7), "unrighteous" (Matthew 5:45; 1 Corinthians 6:9), and "under sin" (Romans 3:9).

Box B. – Non-Existent Person

Box B. It is logically possible but biblically impossible for this person to exist. A person can never be morally perfect in his defining moral essence who is also unwilling to be committed to goodness in his heart.

As I say in this box, this is the **Non-Existent Person**. He is at the intersection of the column labelled **A Person's Defining Moral Essence is Good (Perfect)** under **The Moral Nature of a Human Being** and the row identified as **A Person's Heart Renders Him Unwilling to Include God and His Truth in His Understanding of Reality** to the right of **The Heart of a Human Being**. We will discuss the first label in more detail when we consider **Box D.1.** and **Box D.2.** But suffice it say that this person in **Box B.** never comes into being within the creation.

It is not that God could not make a person like this, but He certainly chooses not to do so. Therefore, because God Himself is rational and logical, it is logically possible that He could create a human being

who is morally perfect (and consequently is fundamentally committed to God and His truth) and, at some point in his life, chooses to be unwilling to know, obey, and be wholly dedicated to Him. Because God is the sovereign author of this story of created reality, all He would have to do is cause this person to make this change during his existence in the story. However, and fortunately, the Bible makes it clear that this will never happen. Thus, it is **biblically** impossible for the person of **Box B.** to exist, even though it is logically (and as a result, theologically) possible for him to do so.

By the way, this is why we need not be concerned that people who arrive at **Box D.1.** (Jesus) and **Box D.2.** (ourselves, if we are Christians and who are looking forward to eternal life and moral perfection), will ever sin after we have arrived in the Kingdom of God. No one on the eternal earth will sin, because God will never cause anyone to do so, and He ultimately will be in control of their **Defining Moral Essence** (**RED** because it will be morally perfect), their **Heart** (also **RED** because it will be perfectly committed to **God, Truth, and Biblical Goodness and Morality**), and their choices, which also will always be morally perfect.

Box C. – Believer and Christian

Box C. This is the *sinful* and *mortal* believer of changed heart who exists in this present age, even during the millennial kingdom, and who is guaranteed to transition to **D.2.** to the right. Sometimes he obeys God, and sometimes he unavoidably disobeys Him.

When God so chooses according to His predestination and sovereign plan, He causes certain *sinful* human beings to transition from having a **Heart** that is not committed to obeying God to a **Heart** that is committed to obeying Him, while their **Defining Moral Essence** remains *evil*. This condition at the level of their hearts is depicted in the chart by the third row and is labelled **A Person's Heart, Changed by God's Spirit, is Fundamentally Committed to Biblical Goodness and Morality**, along with the parenthetical statement which describes this kind of human being as "wholly dedicated" to God "at the level of his inwardness." Consequently, the "sinner" has now become a **Believer and Christian** and has moved from **Box A.** to **Box C.** The word **Believer** refers to an Old Testament person of genuine faith, such as Abraham, while the word **Christian** refers to a New Testament person of genuine faith and belief in Jesus Christ, the Jewish Messiah, whom the Old Testament predicted would be Israel's king, priest, and champion against their enemies. Therefore, the **Christian** is a *sinful* human being who exists in the present age that will eventually include the restored Kingdom of Israel after Jesus returns and until God destroys this realm and creates a new heaven and earth according to Revelation 20-22.

Notice that the **Believer and Christian** are still in the second column labelled **A Person's Defining Essence is Morally Evil**. Even though the **Believer and Christian** become **GOOD** in their **Heart**, they remain **EVIL** in their **foundational moral nature**. In other words, they are not morally perfect like Jesus and therefore are a mixture of **RED** and **BLUE** (= **PURPLE**), of **GOOD** and **EVIL**.

The Bible calls the person who experiences this transition from **Box A.** to **Box C.** "righteous", "holy", "blameless", and a "new creature." For example, Jesus says to his Jewish disciples in the audience of the Sermon on the Mount –

Matthew 5:44 "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,
5:45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the **good**, and sends rain on the **righteous** and the unrighteous. [emphases mine]

The "you" in the above verses are the same as the "good" and the "righteous," genuine followers of Jesus, each of whom he is assuming has a **Heart** that is **Fundamentally Committed to Biblical Goodness and Morality**. Likewise, these people's "enemies" individually has a **Heart** that **Renders Him Unwilling to Include God and All His Truth in His Understanding of Reality**. These are people who are "evil" and "unrighteous," who refuse to follow Jesus as the Messiah. In Jesus' life, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes become his and his followers' "enemies." The apostle John also speaks of the "righteous" person –

1 John 3:7 Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is **righteous**, just as that one is **righteous**. [emphasis mine]

The “righteous” person is also “the one who practices righteousness” in the same manner as “that one,” Jesus, because John, too, is assuming that God has changed the sinner’s **Heart** and inwardness (from and evil Heart and inwardness to a good Heart and inwardness), so that his greatest desire is now to submit himself to God and His truth and not to pursue his own selfish goals. In addition, the apostle Paul refers to this person as “holy” and “blameless” in these two passages in Ephesians –

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,
1:4 just as He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be **holy** and **blameless** before Him. [emphasis mine]

And,

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for her,
5:26 so that he might set her apart [make her **holy**], having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,
5:27 that he might present to himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be **holy** and **blameless**. [emphases mine]

Clearly, the “holy” and “blameless” person is the one whom God predestined to acquire a new **Heart** eventually in order to be “set apart” (the basic meaning of the Greek word *hagios* (ἅγιος) that is usually translated “holy”) and to enter into eternal life. Paul also describes this person in 2 Corinthians 5:17 –

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creature**; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. [emphasis mine]

The “new creature” is the sinful human being who is “in Christ,” meaning that his **Heart** has been changed by God so that his primary desire and commitment is to receive God’s mercy and to obey Him. Even though this person never becomes morally perfect and good in this life *at the level of his Defining Moral Essence*, he nevertheless *perseveres* “in doing good” *at the level of his Heart* and his inner commitments, as well as in his actions. Paul describes this dynamic in Romans 2:7 –

Romans 2:7 [God will grant] eternal life to those who by **perseverance in doing good** seek for glory and honor and immortality. [emphasis mine]

Only a person with a new **Heart** can (and will!) persevere in seeking an eternal existence of moral perfection by working hard to make choices that are good. In other words, because his **Defining Moral Essence** is still **EVIL**, the “righteous” and “holy” person, who is also “blameless” and a “new creature,” has to strive and struggle to be and do what is good. Yet, he genuinely and persistently strives and struggles because his desire for righteousness and biblical morality is greater than his desire to satisfy his sinful human inclinations. For example, the apostle Paul talks about his own desire to “please” people in contrast to his desire to “please” God –

Galatians 1:10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I **striving to please men**? If I were still **trying to please men**, I would not be a slave of the Messiah. [emphases mine]

In this context, Paul is putting his needing the approval of human beings in the category of sin, while his longing for God’s acceptance is righteous and good. As sinful human beings, we are notoriously people pleasers. Even a narcissist is more interested in pleasing himself (one of the people of this world) more than God. However, as a result of God’s having changed his heart, Paul’s greatest desire is to please God and not himself. We also see that Paul contrasts “praise...from men” with “praise...from God” in the very important passage of Romans 2:28-29 –

Romans 2:28 For he is not a Jew who is one **outwardly**, nor is circumcision that which is **outward in the flesh**.

2:29 But he is a Jew who is one **inwardly**; and circumcision is that which is **of the heart**, by the **Spirit**, not by the letter; and his **praise** is **not from men**, but **from God**. [emphases mine]

In these two verses, Paul is contrasting the Jew who is seeking to please God by means of his outward, religious actions in obedience to the Mosaic Covenant (an **Unbeliever and Non-Christian** of **Box A.**) with the one who has a changed inwardness by means of the Holy Spirit (a **Believer and Christian** of **Box C.**). The inwardness of this second Jew is his changed **Heart**, and an important characteristic he is manifesting is that he fundamentally wants to receive God's approval and not that of other sinful human beings. Rather than craving respectability and prestige from human beings in either his religious community or the culture at large, he "hungers and thirsts" for both **biblical morality**, as Jesus indicates in Matthew 5:6, and **God's praise**, while He also grants him eternal forgiveness and life.

The struggle to be "holy" and different from the world, which is hostile to God, is how the apostle Paul also describes the Christian life in Hebrews 12:4 –

Hebrews 12:4 You [who are being persecuted for your Christianity] have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your **striving against sin**. [emphasis mine]

Literally the word "striving against" is "agonizing against." Willful mental, volitional, and emotional anguish is a vital part of what it means to be a Christian. And the striving is because the genuine **Christian** experiences his new **Heart** that is good in the midst of his old and persistent **Defining Moral Essence** that is **EVIL**. Nevertheless, to make every effort to avoid sin and evil is the chief, moral characteristic of the person with a new **Heart**. His greatest desire is genuine obedience to God, because righteousness and goodness are most valuable to him, and he looks forward to receiving God's eternal mercy and life. This is the same as saying that he is **Fundamentally Committed to God, Truth, and Biblical Goodness and Morality**. However, sometimes this sinful person fails to do what is good because the evil of his **foundational moral nature** obstructs and undermines his efforts in spite of his changed "inwardness" and fundamental **inner commitment** to obey God. Fortunately, he always remains dedicated to goodness by means of the inner work of God's Spirit, but there are times when he does evil. In Romans 7:14-24, the apostle Paul describes his own struggle to do what is good, and yet he fails in the midst of his chief desire for and commitment to goodness in his **Heart**, i.e., in his "mind." –

Romans 7:14 For we know that the [Mosaic] Covenant is spiritual, but I am **of flesh**, sold into bondage to sin.

7:15 For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing **what I would like to do**, but I am **doing the very thing I hate**.

7:16 But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Covenant, confessing that the Covenant is good.

7:17 So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but **sin which dwells in me**.

7:18 For I know that **nothing good dwells in me**, that is, **in my flesh**; for the **willing** is present in me, but the **doing** of the good **is not**.

7:19 For the good that I want, I do not do, but **I practice the very evil that I do not want**.

7:20 But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but **sin which dwells in me**.

7:21 I find then the principle that **evil is present in me**, the one who **wants to do good**.

7:22 For I joyfully concur with the Covenant of God in **the inner man**,

7:23 but I see a different instruction in **the members of my body**, waging war against the instruction of my mind and making me a prisoner of the instruction of sin which is in my members.

7:24 I am a miserable man! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

7:25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my **mind** am **a slave to the instruction of God**, but on the other, with my **flesh** the **instruction of sin**. [emphases mine]

It is not very encouraging that Paul identifies himself as a "miserable" Christian. However, this is the condition of the **Believer and Christian**, who has acquired a changed and good **Heart**. And the reason is because his **Defining Moral Essence** is still **Evil** and **Sinful**. Therefore, while the greatest commitment and desire of his **Heart** is to be and do that which is good and morally perfect, his "flesh" is still evil. As a

result, there are occasions when Paul truly wants to do what is good. Yet, his choices, behavior, and thoughts succumb to the strong desires of his **foundational moral nature**. During these moments, he simply cannot help himself and practices “the very evil that [he does] not want.” As Paul says, this is because “sin...dwells in” him, and “evil is present in” him, i.e., in his **Defining Moral Essence**. He is a *bona fide* Christian, albeit a “miserable” Christian, because it is as though there are two Pauls in him. One, at the level of his **Heart**, wants to do what is right. The other, at the level of his **Defining Moral Essence**, does not want to do goodness, so that, periodically and existentially, is *evil* **foundational moral nature** causes him to do what is morally wrong. His “flesh” overpowers his “heart” and moves him to choose evil instead of righteousness. In conclusion, Paul says that “with [his] mind” (and heart, and inner man, and spirit) he is “a slave to the instruction of God,” but “with [his] flesh” he is a slave to “the instruction of sin.” And this makes him “miserable,” which only becoming morally perfect eliminate. This will be the point (and God’s ultimate goal for sinners) of **Box D.2**.

We can say that Paul sums up the existence of the person of **Box C**. in Ephesians 1:11-12 –

Ephesians 1:11 In [Jesus] also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to [God’s] purpose who performs all things according to the plan of His desire,
1:12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

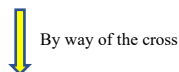
He says that the **Believer and Christian** has “obtained in inheritance” of moral perfection and immortality in the eternal Kingdom of God with Jesus. This does not mean that the person of **Box C**. has already taken possession of his eternal “inheritance,” but he knows that God has guaranteed it to him by His predestination and grace through Jesus’ death and the Holy Spirit’s inward work of changing his **Heart**. And this all happens because God “performs all things” within the creation “according to the plan of His desire.” There is not one detail of the history of the entire universe that God does not plan and control at every moment of time. This obviously includes the story of humanity, with Jesus as its primary person and with his followers who become authentic in their belief in and obedience to God.

Plus, God’s “end,” goal, and purpose is that the Jews, such as Paul and his apostolic co-workers, became “the first to hope in Christ” by His changing their **hearts**, so that they could bring about “the praise of [God’s] glory” and magnificence when He makes them the most powerful nation in all human history and when He transfers them to the upcoming and eternal earth as their final living place. By extrapolation, all Gentiles who acquire the same genuine belief with moral obedience to God will enjoy His gift to the nation of Israel and to all believers, both on the present earth and on the eternal earth.

In other words, the **combination** of a **Defining Moral Essence** that is **Sinful** and a **Heart** that is **Fundamentally Committed to God, Truth, and Biblical Goodness and Morality** will, without fail, result in a sinner’s becoming morally perfect and immortal when God brings about the Kingdom of God when Jesus makes his second appearance.

Box D1.1. and Box D1.2. – Jesus and Eternal Human Beings

D.1. This is Jesus as he existed as a mortal and morally perfect human being *before* his death and resurrection.



D.2. This is Jesus as he exists now as an immortal and morally perfect human being *after* his resurrection, **AND** this is any former sinful believer as he exists as an immortal and morally perfect human being in the eternal Kingdom of God when and after Jesus returns.

The third column of the chart depicts only human beings who are morally perfect at the level of their **foundational moral nature** and whose **hearts** also are wholly committed to biblical goodness and morality. The top box of this column labels these persons with **A Person’s Defining Moral Essence is Good (Perfect)**, along with the parenthetical statement indicating that he is morally perfect at the level of his **foundational moral nature**. The label in the third row is the same as that for the **Believer and Christian – A Person’s Heart by God’s Spirit is Fundamentally Committed to Biblical Goodness and Morality**.

Box D.1.

Box D.1. and **Box D.2.**, which depict this third (and fourth because of Jesus) kind of person at the intersection of the third column and the third row, is labelled **Jesus and Eternal Human Beings**. Let us first consider Jesus—the Jewish Messiah and God incarnate. He fits the description of being a morally perfect human being in two ways and at two different stages of his existence within the creation. During his first appearance, he was a mortal human being who died on the cross. The Bible indicates that death is a consequence of sin, so that sinful human beings die physically and eternally because they have sinned against God. However, as God planned the story which He is telling, Jesus' mortality and dying on the cross are not because of his sin. They are because of ours! God required that Jesus die in order to qualify to be our high priest and to intercede on our behalf for His eternal mercy.

Consequently, in the midst of his mortality, Jesus was fully committed in his **Heart** to obeying God, and he was morally perfect in his **Defining Moral Essence**. He always obeyed God perfectly, even as he died when he was crucified. Therefore, he was unique in all human history *in the present realm* in that he has been the only person who was perfect in both his **foundational moral nature** and the choices that he made from a **Heart** that was wholly committed to obeying God. And he has been the only person who died even though he himself was not sinful. Thus, I use the label **Box D.1.** to refer to him in his mortal and morally perfect condition during his first appearance before his resurrection.

The most concise description of Jesus' role within the creation is by the apostle Paul in Colossians 1:15-20 –

Colossians 1:15 [Jesus] is the **image/icon of the invisible God**, the firstborn of all creation.

1:16 For in regard to him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities. All things have been created with him in view and for him.

1:17 He is before all things, and all things have been put in their place in regard to him.

1:18 For example, he is the head of the body of the gathering. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he may be the one who takes preeminence in regard to the all,

1:19 because He was pleased for all the fullness to dwell in him,

1:20 and through him **to reconcile the all to Himself**, whether those on the earth or in the heavens, **having made peace through his blood of the cross.** [emphases mine]

First, Paul says that Jesus is the “image” or “icon” of God. Therefore, he is God within the creation, which must mean, too, that he possesses the same moral character as the uncreated and transcendent God—that he is morally perfect. Jesus' **Defining Moral Essence** has been, is, and will be absolutely **Good** into eternity. All the rest of us human beings, both those who have lived in a mortal condition **before** Jesus returns and those who will live in a mortal condition **after** Jesus returns and restores the Kingdom of Israel, have been, are, and will be **Evil** in our **foundational moral nature**. I say it this way because, when Jesus makes his second appearance, God will transform all **former** believers, whether still alive and lifted from the earth or dead and resurrected from the dead, into morally perfect and eternal beings.

Paul goes on to say in the passage above that Jesus is the most important person within the created reality. He is “the firstborn” of all the creation, the person who, along with all sinful believers throughout history, inherits the property which God has brought into existence—the universe, the earth, the land of Israel, and all believers, including the Jewish believers of the restored Kingdom of Israel and the Gentile believers of the world over whom Jesus will also rule after he returns. Thus, “all things have been created with [Jesus] in view and for him,” making him the reason why everything within the creation is in its place according to God's sovereign plan. This also makes Jesus “the head of the body of the gathering,” the leader and guide of all those throughout Christian history who gather to worship God and affirm one another in their belief in God and Jesus—*because of their changed hearts by the Spirit of God*. In this way, “all the fullness” of people, who comprise authentic believers in Jesus, metaphorically “dwell” in Jesus.

Paul finishes his description of Jesus by stating that God has assigned him the responsibility to “reconcile” to Himself “all” those throughout history who transition from **Box A.** to **Box C.** In other words, Jesus will rescue us believers from God's eternal condemnation by having died on the cross and by God's having raised him from the dead. Jesus' obedience to the Father's requirements that he be

rejected by his own people and suffer death renders him qualified to intercede personally on behalf of us sinful human beings who wholeheartedly embrace him as the Messiah, king, and high priest of sinners.

Paul speaks of this same activity of Jesus in Romans 3:21-26 –

- Romans 3:21** But now apart from the [Mosaic] Covenant the justification from God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,
3:22 even the justification from God **through belief in Jesus Christ for all those who believe**; for there is no distinction;
3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
3:24 being justified as a gift by His grace **through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus**,
3:25 whom God displayed publicly **as a propitiation by means of his blood through belief**. This was to demonstrate His justification, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;
3:26 for the demonstration, I say, of His justification at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has **belief in Jesus**. [emphases mine]

In this passage above, while Paul says nothing explicit about Jesus' moral perfection, he highlights his responsibility to be a "propitiation," a sacrificial offering through his death, for the sins of all other human beings—if they will but believe in God and him. And his sacrifice was "apart from the [Mosaic] Covenant" and the bulls and goats that God required the Israelites to offer on the altar of the temple in Jerusalem. Consequently, those who put their "belief in Jesus" acquire "redemption," i.e., freedom in the eternal Kingdom of God from both the presence and the consequences of sin.

Additionally, the two passages of Hebrews 1:1-4 and 2:17-18 present the facts of Jesus' **Defining Moral Essence** as **Good** and **Perfect**, along with his role as priest and sacrifice –

- Hebrew 1:1** God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers by means of the prophets in many portions and in many ways,
1:2 in the last of these days, has spoken to us by means of the Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, in view of whom He also made the ages,
1:3 **who is the radiance of His glory and the reproduction of His identity**. And in the midst of bearing all things with respect to His powerful utterance, **he himself made purification of sins and sat down at the right hand of the Great One in the heights**,
1:4 because he has become far superior to the *angels*, inasmuch as he has inherited a greater name than they. [emphases mine]

Hebrews 2:17 Therefore, he had to be made like his brothers in all things, **so that he could become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, that is, to make propitiation for the sins of the people**.

- 2:18** For since he himself was tested in that which he suffered, he is able to come to the aid of those who are tested. [emphases mine]

We see that the author of Hebrews (Paul, I think) is describing Jesus as "the radiance" of God's "glory" and the "reproduction of His identity." This is to say that he, like God the Father, is morally perfect in his **Defining Moral Essence** as a human being. Plus, his role during his first appearance of **Box D.1.** was to make "purification" and "propitiation" **through his death** "for the sins of the people," thereby qualifying to be their "high priest" before God and to obtain eternal mercy for them. Consequently, it is only Jesus, not the animals and the priests of the Mosaic Covenant, with both his perfect (yet mortal) **foundational moral nature** and good **Heart** that was fully committed to obeying God, who can act as an appropriate offering AND an eternal priest who intercedes for sinners.

Box D.2.

Box D.2. first refers to Jesus, who experienced death by crucifixion and then resurrection three days later in order to transition—from his mortal condition in **Box D.1.** to his immortal condition in **Box D.2.** In the quote from Hebrews 1:1-4 above, the author says that Jesus "made purification of sins and sat down at the right hand of the Great One in the heights." To sit at God's "right hand," metaphorically speaking, is

to rule over the creation. But the author is also implying that, after God raised him from the dead, Jesus became an immortal human being who is still morally perfect in both his **Defining Moral Essence** and his choices that come from a **Heart** that is completely committed to obeying God the Father.

This is what both Jesus and Peter mean in Matthew 24:30 and 1 Peter 1:20-21; 4:12-13 respectively

Matthew 24:30 “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky **with power and great glory**. [emphasis mine]

1 Peter 1:20 For [Jesus] was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you,

1:21 who in light of him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead **and gave Him glory**, so that your belief and hope are in God. [emphasis mine]

1Peter 4:12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you;

4:13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also **at the revelation of his glory** you may rejoice with exultation. [emphasis mine]

Certainly, it makes sense that Jesus’ moral condition as perfect continues throughout his entire existence, including just after God “raised him from the dead,” according to Peter, and when he appears for a second time to restore the Kingdom of Israel and bring about the eternal Kingdom of God, according to both Jesus and Peter. Thus, both of them refer to the “glory” of Jesus after his resurrection and into eternity, where this word clearly means all that God has in store for Jesus, including his being the king, priest, champion, savior, and ruler of the Jews and the Gentiles during his kingdom on this earth and of all believers on the new and eternal earth. As a result, **Box D.2.** refers to him in his present and eternal condition. However, this is the same condition which all authentic believers in God throughout history acquire in the eternal Kingdom of God. Paul writes of their transition to this condition of moral perfection and immortality in Romans 2:9-10, Philippians 3:20-21, and Colossians 3:1-4 –

Romans 2:9 There will be tribulation and distress for every person who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek,

2:10 but glory and honor and shalom to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. [emphasis mine]

Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

3:21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of his glory, by the exertion of the power that he has even to subject all things to himself. [emphasis mine]

Colossian 3:1 Therefore if you have been raised up with the Messiah, keep seeking the things above, where the Messiah is, **seated at the right hand of God**.

3:2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

3:3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with the Messiah in God.

3:4 When the Messiah, who is our life, is revealed, then **you also will be revealed with him in glory**. [emphases mine]

While appropriate punishment for their sins leading to complete destruction will be the outcome of sinful human beings who remain unwilling to worship God, Paul indicates in Romans that God will grant the magnificence of moral perfection (“glory”), the status of being esteemed by God and others (“honor”), and a wonderful, satisfying, eternal existence (“shalom”) to those who reach eternal life by becoming authentic believers in Him and in His Messiah, Jesus. Indeed, God will change the mortal bodies of believers into immortal and eternal bodies. And, according to Colossians, this will happen when Jesus is

“revealed” and returns to restore the Kingdom of Israel with the Jews on the land which God promised them in the Abrahamic Covenant.

This means that a sinner’s **Defining Moral Essence** will change from **Evil** to a **Defining Moral Essence** that is **Good**, while his **Heart**, that is fundamentally committed to obeying God the Father, will remain the same—for those whose **hearts** God changes during the course of their lives. In the passages above, Paul is saying that God will “transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of [Jesus] glory,” which is and will be the perfect **foundational moral nature** of Jesus. We, as changed of heart believers, will obtain the same **Good Defining Moral Essence** as Jesus.

We also know that God’s purpose all along has been for us believers and Christians eventually to be made just like Jesus in his moral perfection, as described by Paul in Romans 8:28-30 –

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those **who are called according to His plan**.

8:29 For those **whom He foreknew, He also predestined** to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren;

8:30 and these whom He predestined, He also **calls**; and these whom He calls, He also **justifies**; and these whom He justifies, He also **glorifies**. [emphases mine]

Paul indicates in this passage that God has a “plan,” with which He has “foreknown” and “predestined” certain sinful human beings to become like Jesus, which is to take on his perfect moral character. As a result of predestining these people to gain such a moral condition, he “calls” and draws them to become authentic believers during the course of their lives. As we have seen from Romans 2:28-29, this happens when God’s Spirit changes their blue **Hearts** to red **Hearts** in the midst of their persistent blue and evil **Defining Moral Essence**.

And when these predestined people gain genuine belief that arises from their changed hearts, God “justifies” them so that they now have a standing before Him whereby they will acquire eternal forgiveness and life. Then, after they have completed their existences on this earth, God will “glorify” them with immortal and morally perfect bodies. Consequently, we see that God’s purpose, from before He brought the creation into existence, has been to create sinners, who begin life unwilling to worship and obey Him, to change their inwardness during the course of their lives, so that they believe in Him and in Jesus as the Messiah, and to cause them to become morally perfect human beings for the rest of their eternal existences in the Kingdom of God.

The point is that entering into **Box D.2.**, because God changed our hearts in the present realm, means that we have qualified for this box by having transitioned from **Box A.** to **Box C.**, resulting in our obtaining His forgiveness and eternal life, along with moral perfection. As a result, we will eventually shed our evil **Defining Moral Essence**, and God will make it morally perfect with a **Good Defining Moral Essence**, while we will retain our red **Hearts** that are fully committed to biblical goodness and morality. In other words, by God’s transforming us when Jesus returns, we will become morally perfect **just like Jesus** and share **Box D.2.** with him for all eternity. Therefore, **just like Jesus** during both his temporary, mortal appearance before his resurrection and his eternal, immortal existence after his resurrection, we will always choose to do what is good and right and never again commit sin. We will be **glorious** human beings, an experience which will never end as Peter says in 1 Peter 5:4 –

1 Peter 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, **you will receive the unfading crown of glory**. [emphasis mine]

The wonder of God’s love and grace is that, “when [Jesus] appears” for the second time, He will grant forgiveness, eternal life, and moral perfection to anyone who humbly and accurately says of himself, “I am evil, but I am committed to goodness.” This is the person who enters life as a person of **Box A.**, moves to **Box C.** in the present realm, and finally reaches **Box D.2.** for the rest of eternity. Indeed, it is to only this kind of person that God is merciful. On the other hand, the person who would accurately say, “I am evil, and I am completely unwilling to make a commitment to biblical goodness” will receive no mercy from God, but only His legal punishment and eternal condemnation. Therefore, our goal as sinful human beings should be to tread the path of **Box A.** to **Box C.** to **Box D.2.** so as to reach the same morally perfect **Defining Moral Essence** and **Heart** as Jesus, who is our crucified and resurrected advocate before God the Father.

Revelation 21:1-8

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth. For the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying,

“Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, 4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. And there will no longer be any death. There will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain. The first things have passed away.”

5 And He who sits on the throne said,

“Behold, I am making all things new.”

And He said,

“Write, for these words are faithful and true.”

6 And He said to me,

“It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. 7 He who conquers will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. 8 But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”