

Evening Worship September 30, 2018
"Total Depravity" Ephesians 2:1-3

1. *The doctrine of total depravity is described in these verses, and summed up in this Biblical phrase – ...dead in trespasses and sins... (Ephesians 2:1)*

Three views of unregenerate man:

1. *Pelagianism – man is not dead at all. He is perfectly able to save himself, if he even needs salvation. God would not give us the Ten Commandments if He did not expect us to keep them.*

A. *Christ's death is not necessary for our salvation, except as an example to follow.*

B. *We do not, according to this view, need God's help to be good. We are said to learn evil, it is not part of our nature.*

C. *This view implies many men and women, not only Christ have lived sinless, perfect lives and is in direct contradiction to many verses in the Bible, including Ephesians 2:1-3 and Romans 3 –*

As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ There is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. (Romans 3:10-11 NKJ)

2. *Arminianism – man is mostly, but not all dead in trespasses and sins ...*

In reference to Ephesians 2:1 who were dead in trespasses and sins, People with this viewpoint believe we are partially or even mostly dead, meaning also slightly ALIVE.

What is meant by this is man's flesh, maybe his heart has been infected by sin, we are hindered by sin. However, according to this view we are not totally depraved, we are not dead spiritually, but at least one part of us is still alive, usually our will or maybe also our conscious?

According to the Arminian viewpoint the human will, even in its unsaved state is sinless, and therefore able to make a good decision for God. God throws us a lifesaver, but we have to reach out and take it.

We have that ability without God's special grace. So, the only difference between the person in Heaven from the person in Hell is not what God did, but what I did.

According to this viewpoint, our salvation is something God makes possible but the still alive part of us, our will or our conscious makes real, this is in direct contradiction to Scripture –

¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:12-13 NKJ)

3. *Calvinism, dead means dead, it does not mean that men are as bad as they could be, even Hitler did not murder his mother, but it means we are bad in every part of us, including our will and conscious, even these parts have been impacted by sin, leaving man helpless to save himself and unable even to cooperate with God in our salvation –*

A. *Dead implies a moral inability caused by sin for us to do anything good to save ourselves or live righteously before God, it is backed in Scripture by –*

Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? *Then* may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil. (Jeremiah 13:23 NKJ)

"but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (Genesis 2:17 NKJ)

For the wages of sin is death, ... (Romans 6:23 NKJ)

B. *This inability includes an inability to come to God without His drawing and special help –*

• *Certain people are certain to come, those the Father gives*

"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. (John 6:37 NKJ)

• *People cannot come without the father's drawing –*

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. (John 6:44 NKJ)

C. *This inability includes seeing and entering God's kingdom – Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3 NKJ)*

Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:5 NKJ)

D. *This moral inability is also accompanied by a moral distaste or maybe better referred to as an immoral hatred from God –*

Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.⁸ So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (Romans 8:7-8 NKJ)

E. *This moral inability includes not seeing, not appreciating, not desiring the things of God –*

But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."¹⁰ But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.¹¹ For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.¹³ These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.¹⁵ But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is *rightly* judged by no one.¹⁶ For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2:9-16 NKJ)

Eyes not seeing, ears not hearing refers to natural man - :14, it is the natural man, in contrast to the spiritual who is referred to here

He the natural man does not receive the things of God, why? Because he counts then foolishness - :1.

II. *This depravity is such that it is only overcome by the power of God –*

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, **but of God**. (John 1:12-13 NKJ)

1. *The of God-ness of our salvation, according to John 1:12-13 is communicated as opposite of the will of man. The verse does not say God, plus man's will brings salvation, but of God!*

2. *That God raises the dead is communicated throughout Scripture, Ezekiel is questioned by God –*

The hand of the LORD came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones.² Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, *there were* very many in the open valley; and indeed *they were* very dry.³ And He said to me, "Son of man, **can these bones live?**" So I answered, "O Lord GOD, You know." (Ezekiel 37:1-3 NKJ)

Pelagians would answer, Yes, they are alive

Arminians would answer, Yes, because they are slightly alive

Calvinists would say Yes, because though they are dry God is able to make them alive.

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see.

Amazing Grace is a Calvinistic Hymn that recognizes total depravity – Things would have to change if it was not:

1. *Wretch would not be a total wretch, but a wretch with at least a sinless, still alive will, able to choose God!*
2. *Saved would have to be changed to helped me to help myself.*
3. *Blind would not be totally blind but still able to see enough to decide for God! This is not what Scripture says -*

And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins,² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),⁶ and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God,⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:1-10 NKJ)

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