

Ps.14 (WCF 6) “All Turned Aside”

For the Children: Sometimes parents criticize their children. Why do you think they do that? Not just to make you feel unhappy or because they are angry. Hopefully, they do it so that you will learn to do better and to avoid making mistakes that lead to greater unhappiness. Why does God tell us again and again that we are sinners? Not just to make us unhappy. But so that we see we need to do better, though we *can't* do enough to save ourselves from sin. He wants us to see that we need His Son to save us from sin. And once we know the Lord Jesus, He wants us to seek His help to do better at resisting sin. **Questions:** What does Ps. 14 mean by the word “fool”? What does the Psalm teach us about the sin of the human race? Why should unbelievers be worried when they consider the church?

Introduction:

First Point: The Description of the Wicked Fool

- 1) A Description of Everyman: The Psalm describes everyone as foolish by nature – with the wicked foolishness that rejects the Wisdom of God, ultimately the Lord Jesus who is the Wisdom-made-flesh. Vss.1,2 and 3 have a strong “everyone/no one” contrast. This is the doctrine of “total depravity” – that “*all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom.3:23). Rom.3:10ff cites Ps.14 to prove that very point. All have turned aside, all have become corrupt.
- 2) The Lord’s Point of View: Man is not the one who can authoritatively declare the nature of man, or of good and evil; only God can do that. V.2 makes it clear that this description of “total depravity” is *His* view of the human race.
- 3) The Whole Man: Depravity is total also because it affects the whole person. The natural man says in his heart, his inner person (soul, mind and will), “There is no God.” He rejects the Living God inwardly, which colours everything he thinks and says and does – even when he is talking about religious themes. Therefore, “No one does good,” in God’s sight, even when they are doing things that are good-in-themselves. Of course, some go further in wickedness, committing “abominable deeds” (v.1) and actively persecuting God’s people (v.4). See especially WCF 6:2,3,4,6.

Second Point: Why the Wicked Fool Should Be Worried

- 1) Because of God’s People: Consideration of the Church’s history should lead the unbeliever to be very worried about his situation. For God is with His afflicted “poor,” when they seek refuge in Him (vss. 5-6). Every time Satan’s allies think they have destroyed the church, she rises again (Rev.11), causing dread to fall on her enemies – for it is evidence of Christ’s preserving grace; and that there really is a God who will one day judge the world.
- 2) When the Lord Restores: V.7 does not express a dubious hope of rescue; it conveys an assurance – “When the Lord restores His captive people.” The Psalm therefore ends with the joy of salvation, even in the face of opposition.
- 3) Where the Difference Lies: The reason for that joy is not that believers are free from sin. But the believer and the unbeliever have much sin. All sin deserves wrath, curse, and misery (WCF 6:6). What makes the difference between the believer and the unbeliever is the Presence of Christ with His “righteous generation.” The righteousness of His people comes from Him. We have no reason to feel better than others.
- 4) The Need of Christ: Ps.14 doesn’t go into the same detail about Christ’s work as we find in Rom.3. But it is pointing to Him when it speaks of God “with His righteous generation,” as our Refuge, Saviour and Restorer. The Psalm goes into detail on “total depravity” in order to show us our need of Christ and why we should be grateful to Him. That is also why we focus so much on sin, as well as grace.

Conclusion: