

Total Depravity

Romans 8:7-8

Romans 8:1–8 (NKJV)

8 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. ⁷ 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 (NKJV)

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Introduction:

The phrases in these verses

“the carnal mind is hostile toward God”

the carnal mind “is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be”

and

“those in the flesh cannot cannot please God.”

are unambiguous absolutes that speak to the Doctrine of Total Depravity.

This is the teaching of Scripture that refers to mans sinful condition and its effects in his relationship to God.

The degree to which you get this right will affect your understanding of the extent of the Grace of God

Another way to say that is

Does man have the ability to do some good that will please God.

Is man really evil, all the time, is there any good in man.

Can man change himself without a supernatural work of God

Does man have a free will.

Does God do all he can to save man and then leave it up to them to make a choice to be saved.

A wrong view of man Biblically or a wrong view of Biblical Anthropology or wrong view of mans sinfulness and its effects is the Achilles heel for error in the Doctrine Salvation

The Achilles heel

In Greek mythology, when Achilles was a baby, it was foretold that he would die young. To prevent his death, his mother Thetis took Achilles to the River Styx, which was supposed to offer powers of invulnerability, and dipped his body into the water; however, as Thetis held Achilles by the heel, his heel was not washed over by the water of the magical

river. Achilles grew up to be a man of war who survived many great battles.

Although the death of Achilles is predicted by Hector in Homer's *Iliad*, it does not actually occur in the *Iliad*, but is described in later Greek and Roman poetry and drama^[3] concerning events after the *Iliad*, later in the Trojan War. In the myths surrounding the war, Achilles was said to have died from a wound to his heel,^{[4][5]} ankle,^[6] or torso^[4], which was the result of an arrow—possibly poisoned—shot by Paris.

The Achilles heel of Christendom (True and false church) is the Doctrine of Man. The church and its larger context that it exist has been greatly affected by the culture that says that man is basically good and can muster up the ability to do what is pleasing to God.

The view one holds about salvation is directly affected by how historically orthodox he remains to Scripture.

This is where the train either stays on the tracks or derails,

The great debates of the past of
Augustin and Pelagius
Luther and Erasmus
Calvin and Arminius
Whitfield and Wesley

All find there origination at this point, just how bad is man and how able is he to respond to the gospel command.

Churches are now filled with men and women who have a Joel Olsteen Anthropology.

Many really believe that man is basically good. Psychology has also fueled the flamed already ignited by errant theology.

Then add to that the Charles Finney view that mans will is not enslaved and has the ability given the right conditions to respond to God

Mix all this together and you have
“ American Evangelism.”

This predominant view today, is not however the recognized Historical orthodox view. All major confessions of faith have affirmed to one degree or another the view of
“Total Depravity”

Some today have chosen to use the term Total Inability because to often, Total Depravity has been misunderstood to mean men are as evil as they can be.

But, even Total inability falls short. Because it seems to be all negative referring to what man cannot do

i.e.

cannot to good,

cannot obey

cannot seek after God etc.

But where it does not go far enough is the positive side, the active hatred, active suppression of truth, active hostility toward God, the active evil inclination of the heart etc.

So where you use the Term Total Depravity or Total inability

there needs to be a few clarifications

What we are not saying is.

1. Man is not created in the image of God

Genesis 1:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

We are Rational, Volitional, Emotional creatures that have eternal souls.

2. That man is a evil as he can be

Genesis 6:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.

Romans 1:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,

Romans 1:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.

Romans 1:28–31 (NKJV)

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;
²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, ³⁰ backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, ³¹ undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;

3. That man cannot do morally good.

Matthew 7:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Luke 6:33 (NKJV)

³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.

Matthew 5:46 (NKJV)

⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

4. That man cannot make choices

Romans 7:15–21 (NKJV)

¹⁵ For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. ¹⁶ If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good. ¹⁷ But now, *it is* no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. ¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find. ¹⁹ For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice. ²⁰ Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

²¹ I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.

I. The Expression

II. The Extent

III. The Effect

I. The Expressions

1. Dead- spiritually Dead
2. Blind—Perception and Understanding

3. Bondage- Desires and Will

1. Dead

This affects the Spiritual life

Pelagianism says you are alive and well

Arminianism says you are sick

Reformed Theology says you are Dead

We are spiritual Zombies

Your body is alive but your soul is dead in all its spiritual faculties toward God.

Johnathan Edwards had a powerful sermon on Matthew 23:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men’s* bones and all uncleanness.

His Thesis: Wicked men’s bodies are as it were sepulchers of their souls

Abraham Kuyper said,

“ Man is like a mummy wrapped in self-righteousness, concealing an ugly corpse”

Christopher Love states,
“Man’s heart by nature is a slaughter house to holy motions”

Arminianism, incorrectly states, that man is drowning, but is still alive and can call for help.

But as Edwin Palmer correctly stated

“The sinner is drowned dead and sunk at the bottom of the Pacific Marianas Trench, at 35,000 feet deep, the lowest point on the earth, with...tons of water over him, being there a thousand years, and the sharks have eaten his heart”

He added, “In the Fall, we are not bruised but are like a man fallen from the empire state building who is splattered on the pavement. Dead”

Being dead in sin, does not mean you cannot do anything, it means you cannot do anything spiritual good.

As one author put it.

A corpse cannot sing, but it can stink.

A sinner cannot get better, but he can get worse.

Ephesians 2:1–3 (NKJV)

2 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.

Matthew 8:22 (NKJV)

²² But Jesus said to him, “Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”

Luke 15:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry.

Luke 15:32 (NKJV)

³² It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.’ ”

John 5:21 (NKJV)

²¹ For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.

1 Timothy 5:5–6 (NKJV)

⁵ Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. ⁶ But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives.

1 John 3:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love *his* brother abides in death.

Revelation 3:1 (NKJV)

3 “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, ‘These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.

Romans 5:12 (NKJV)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

1 Corinthians 15:22 (NKJV)

²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

Colossians 2:13 (NKJV)

¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,

2. Blind

The affects the Mind and Understanding

John 3:3 (NKJV)

³ 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 1:5 (NKJV)

⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

John 12:37–40 (NKJV)

³⁷ But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, ³⁸ that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke:

*“Lord, who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been
revealed?”*

³⁹ Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

⁴⁰ *“He has blinded their eyes and hardened their
hearts,
Lest they should see with their eyes,
Lest they should understand with their hearts and
turn,
So that I should heal them.”*

Deuteronomy 29:2–4 (NKJV)

² Now Moses called all Israel and said to them:
“You have seen all that the Lord did before your
eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his
servants and to all his land—³ the great trials which
your eyes have seen, the signs, and those great
wonders. ⁴ Yet the Lord has not given you a heart to
perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this
very day.

Jeremiah 5:21 (NKJV)

²¹ ‘Hear this now, O foolish people,
Without understanding,
Who have eyes and see not,
And who have ears and hear not:

Matthew 13:10–15 (NKJV)

¹⁰ And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”

¹¹ He answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. ¹² For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. ¹³ Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. ¹⁴ And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:

*‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand,
And seeing you will see and not perceive;*

¹⁵ For the hearts of this people have grown dull.

*Their ears are hard of hearing,
And their eyes they have closed,
Lest they should see with *their* eyes and hear with
their ears,*

Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and turn,
So that I should heal them.'

2 Corinthians 4:3–4 (NKJV)

³ But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

2 Corinthians 3:12–14 (NKJV)

¹² Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech—¹³ unlike Moses, *who* put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. ¹⁴ But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the *veil* is taken away in Christ.

John 8:12 (NKJV)

¹² Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

Acts 26:17–18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ I will deliver you from the *Jewish* people, as well as *from* the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

Psalms 119:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ Open my eyes, that I may see
Wondrous things from Your law.

Psalms 146:8 (NKJV)

⁸ The Lord opens *the eyes of* the blind;
The Lord raises those who are bowed down;
The Lord loves the righteous.

Luke 4:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;*

*He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;*

John 9:39 (NKJV)

³⁹ And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, ...

3. Bondage

This Affects the Desires and the Will

Luke 4:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;*

Romans 6:6 (NKJV)

⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

Romans 6:16–18 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? ¹⁷ But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. ¹⁸ And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

Romans 6:20–22 (NKJV)

²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹ What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things *is* death. ²² But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

John 8:31–34 (NKJV)

³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

³³ They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How *can* You say, ‘You will be made free’?”

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

Titus 3:3 (NKJV)

³ For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.

2 Peter 2:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.