

Total Depravity

- Charles Spurgeon once said, “*As the salt flavors every drop in the Atlantic, so does sin affect every atom of our nature.*”
 - It is not possible to collect water from the ocean without having salt in it
- The process is called 'electrolysis' – separates the salt, oxygen, hydrogen, and the water
 - Sea water is taken into a tank and boiled.
 - The steam is collected into pure fresh water.
 - A strong DC current is run through the water
 - Oxygen is then collected
 - The hydrogen is collected and passed overboard
 - The oxygen is collected and compressed into the oxygen banks to be fed to the ships atmosphere as needed.
- Unfortunately, this process does not work with our own sinful human nature
- Every aspect of our nature is corrupted by sin
 - Just like the salt in the sea
- The doctrine of Total Depravity is a very serious and difficult doctrine to hear
- It is a difficult thing for believers and unbelievers alike to come to terms and accept the reality of their sinful condition
 - Dr. diagnosis / biblical diagnosis for all humanity

What Total Depravity is Not

- The word *depravity* used together with the word *total* gives the impression that people are as bad as they possibly can be
 - Or as evil as they can be
- Total depravity is not the same as absolute depravity.
 - Absolute depravity means that a person acts as bad as they can all of the time
 - All their thoughts, words, and actions are as vicious as possible.
- **Total depravity means** that natural man is never able to do any good that is fundamentally pleasing to God
- Totally depravity does not mean that a person is as evil as they possibly can be
 - *Rather the entire nature of a person is corrupted by sin.*
 - Example: A broken chain
 - Nothing that an unregenerate person does is good = out of faith towards God
 - People do “relative good” having the law of God written upon their hearts and because we are created in the image of God
 - But people never do good out of faith to please God
 - Evil is present in every part of our being.
 - **Isa 64:6** - *We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment*
 - Even the good that we think we do is rejected by God
 - **Heb 11:6** - *And without faith it is impossible to please him*
 - Who are the ones who please God? = those who have faith

- Because of the fall, all humanity has become spiritually dead, blind, and deaf to the things of God
- Humanity is unable and unwilling to choose spiritual good or determine their own destiny.

Verses That Demonstrate Total Depravity

- **Eph 2:1-5** - *And you were **dead** in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were **by nature** children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were **dead** in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved*
 - What does it mean to be spiritually dead?
 - Unwilling and unable to do anything that is pleasing to God
 - Someone who is spiritually dead has no desire for God
 - But rather animosity and rebellion towards Him
- **Rom 3:10-12** - *None is righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ no one understands; no one seeks for God. ¹² All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”*
- **1 Cor 2:14** - *The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned*
- What does it mean to be spiritually discerned?
 - Unable to examine with a view to find fault, judge, call to account, and discern in spiritual matters
- **Col 2:13** - *And you, who were **dead** in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses*
 - Our entire nature is corrupt
 - All aspects of our nature are corrupted by sin
 - This includes: Intellect / emotions / will / and reasoning thoughts / words / actions / intents of the heart
 - **Mark 7:21-23** - ²¹ *For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²² coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. ²³ All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”*
 - **Jeremiah 17:9** - ⁹ *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?*

How Man Become Totally Depraved - The Doctrine of Original Sin

- **Q. 16.** – Did all mankind fall in Adam’s first transgression?

- **A.** *The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity; all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.*
 - The Bible assures us that no descendant of Adam (born by ordinary generation) can possibly be anything other than corrupt in nature.
 - From the very first moment of our existence we are rebellious against God
 - It is not as if God takes innocent people and places them under Adam's sin whether they like it or not.
 - But rather they are under Adam's sin as soon as they come into existence
- **Rom 5:12** – *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—*
- **Psalm 51:5** – *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*

Q. 18. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

- **A.** *The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want (lack) of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called Original Sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.*
 - **Original Sin consists of:**
 - The guilt of Adam's first sin – Adam's sin passing down to all his offspring
 - The lack of original righteousness – even if our sins were forgiven, we still lack original righteousness to stand before God as holy
 - The corruption of our whole nature = Total Depravity
 - All actual transgressions which proceed from it = personal sin

Q. 19. What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?

- A.** *All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.*
 - Loss of communion with God = spiritual dead, blind, deaf, unable, and unwilling to have fellowship with God
 - Under His wrath and curse = awaiting judgment
 - Liable to the miseries of this life = the curse, sin, suffering, and death
 - The pains of Hell forever = eternal damnation
 - We have lost communion with God
 - We are spiritually dead from Him
 - We hate the things of God
 - We suppress the truth every time we hear it
 - We never seek after Him
 - The Doctrine of Original Sin is despised by the world and is also difficult for many Christians to grasp as well
 - As we see in this quote by Norman Geisler (Arminian):
 - *"We are born with a bent toward sin, but we still have a choice as to whether we will be its slave."*

- What he is stating here is:
 - Total Depravity does not equal Total Inability

The importance of having a biblical understanding of human nature

- Either we start from Gods point of view or we start from humanities point of view
- Starting from God's perspective –
 - Humanity chose to reject the communion bond God set up in the Covenant of Works and decided rather to become gods themselves
 - We brought God's wrath and curse upon ourselves by unbelief and rebellion
 - God is not obligated in any way to save any of us
 - When God looks down from heaven what He sees is rebellious sinners that hate Him
- Starting from humanities perspective –
 - God may be considered harsh and unfair if He does not at least try to save everyone
 - A loving God would never send anyone to hell
 - God is immoral and unjust if He sends anyone to hell, except those who truly deserve it
 - = the bad guys like Hitler and Dahmer
 - God is big enough to fit within all religions
 - God should be there for me when I need Him
 - I am not as bad as most people in this world

Humanities' incorrect view of themselves carries into theology as well

- Humanity is naturally good and is capable of saving themselves without any assistance from God
- Humanity has the ability to reach out to God
 - And as a result, if a person chooses to reach out, God will respond and save them
- God first reaches out to all humanity and neutralizes the effects of original sin
 - Which then enables any person to reach out to God for salvation
 - This is known in Arminian circles as "Prevenient Grace"
- Calvinism
 - God regenerates and saves all those He has elected
 - This is known as the "*effectual call*"
- In the first three systems man is able to contribute and participate in some fashion to his salvation
 - This is commonly referred to as *Synergism* – God and man both cooperating together for salvation to occur
 - God does His part and people do their part
 - Either by God leaving a person to their own ability to save themselves
 - By waiting for you to first reach out to Him
 - Or by drawing a person and then waiting for them to respond in faith
 - God has casted His vote for YES

- Satan has casted his vote for NO
 - The final decision is yours to make
 - The Bible teaches that humanity is completely dead, unable, and unwilling to choose Christ
 - We receive and rest upon Christ ALONE for salvation
 - This is commonly called *Monergism* – God doing ALL the work of salvation
 - Humanity comes to faith *as a result* of Christ first uniting that person to Himself
 - Not because we came to our senses and then chose Him

Questions about Synergism and the biblical view of human nature :

- **If God does His part and humanity has to do his part as well:**
 - **Is God capable of saving anybody if the person does not cooperate?**
 - No – He needs our permission and cooperation
 - God can only save those who respond back to Him
 - God can only save the person who chooses to do so
- **Who has the final say in salvation according to Synergism, God or man?**
 - We do
 - Humanity has the final say in who is going to be saved and who isn't
 - God is limited in His ability to save people
- **Does God get all the glory in salvation under Synergism?**
 - No, only the part He contributes
 - 1% - 50 % - 99.999%
- **Is salvation unconditional (based upon nothing but God's grace alone?)**
 - No, it is based upon something a person does = foreseen faith

The Great Parallel

- The great injustice **is not** from humanities point of view
 - that we are born condemned sinners in Adam
- The great injustice **is** that our sins have been imputed to Christ
 - And His righteousness has been imputed to us
- The Lord does not simply leave his elect to die in their sinful state
 - But while we were yet sinners and enemies of God Christ died for us

Romans 5:17-19 –

- *¹⁷ For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.*
- *¹⁸ Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.*
- *¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous*