

# TOTAL DEPRAVITY

“For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”  
Genesis 2:17

## THE DEFINITION

**Every person is born spiritually dead. He is conceived with a nature at war against God and the things of God. Human affections and desires are so ruined that men hate God and rebel against His commandments. Though he has not lost his faculties of intelligence or reasoning, man’s ability to perceive and appreciate the things of God is so corrupted by sin that he only despises and resents them. He has no love or fear of God and is directed entirely by selfish ambitions toward sin, even when he does things appearing noble. He will not humble himself to seek God, for his desires are totally corrupt and biased against God. It is impossible for him to obey or please God, for he is spiritually dead, fully convinced that holy things of truth and wisdom are foolish. He resents any effort to tell him otherwise.**

### Introduction:

1. It has traditionally been called total depravity for ‘T’ of TULIP, the first of five points of Calvinism.
2. It has also been called total inability, radical corruption, pervasive depravity, righteous incapability.
3. This manmade name is for the doctrine man’s nature is spiritually corrupted in trespasses and sins.
4. We might prefer phrases for the doctrine like Man’s Spiritual Death from I Cor 2:14 and Eph 2:1-3.
5. This doctrine, either understood or rejected, affects how you view life and apply truth in many areas e.g. psychology, sociology, philanthropy, child behavior, training, and punishment, criminal rehabilitation, civil government, temptation and sin, means of salvation, God’s providence, etc.
6. It creates your worldview of man and how you react to human conduct, enemies, sin, and yourself.
7. It is very foundational and necessary for any true study of salvation from most any angle or direction.
8. Salvation is getting delivered from something, so you should start with what you are delivered from.
9. Distinguishing marks of our church include unconditional election to eternal life and monergistic regeneration before faith; both of these flow from and reflect the Bible doctrine of total depravity.
10. It is this doctrine that separates us from so many, for they make man merely wounded, sick, and sore.
11. If man’s depraved nature is understated, then salvation gimmicks and heresies will grow like weeds.
12. The right and true doctrine of eternal life depends on total depravity and is totally consistent with it.
13. If God does not intervene and regenerate a sinner against his will, over his mind, and change his heart, there is no threat fearful enough or offer enticing enough to get him to sincerely look Godward.
14. Fools say election is unfair. But without election’s *unfairness*, none would be saved, for all hate God.
15. Total depravity is the personal, vital, practical condition and character of man before being born again by the sovereign, monergistic power of God by His Spirit producing different character and conduct.
16. Do you know that you are born again? If you believe it, then are you showing evidence at all levels?
17. You will appreciate God’s sovereign grace toward you individually based on knowing this doctrine.
18. Our doctrine of unconditional eternal life that separates us from others is the result of total depravity.
19. To rightly appreciate salvation by God’s grace, we must understand the predicament of our depravity.
20. To rightly defend the doctrine of our salvation, we must understand the predicament of our depravity.
21. Each phase of salvation is a spectacular divine display (especially four), but consider this vital work.
22. It is not distant like eternal, legal, or final; it is a miraculous alteration of you since your conception.
23. This is no abstract concept or distant transaction; it is a creative, life-giving alteration of your person.
24. The more you realize your helplessness and rebellion, the more God gets the glory for your change.
25. There is a new you within you that should be put on daily while putting off the old depraved you!

### **The Warning (Eden)**

- A. God made Adam in His image (Ge 1:26-27), where we stress man's spirit soul and dominion.
- B. God made Adam very good (Gen 1:31). This was man at his very best state so far in history.
- C. God plainly warned Adam he would immediately die, if he ate the forbidden fruit (Gen 2:17).
  - 1. Death is the cessation of life and a very strong word about a drastic and complete change.
  - 2. Death includes the end of all ability, cooperation, energy, participation, strength, vitality.
  - 3. Death is not disease, debilitation, disadvantage, handicaps, sickness, sores, or wounds.
  - 4. Death is a final and conclusive result that cannot be altered by the object or any other.
- D. We begin reading the Bible and any real study of salvation by fully believing God's warning.
  - 1. We cannot get to the third chapter before reading God's clear warning of death to Adam.
  - 2. Once man's depravity is fully understood, the doctrine of salvation is easy to understand.
  - 3. God's warning of spiritual death is traced all the way to the first resurrection (Rev 20:6).
- E. Though unstated here, the key question to be answered by the history is, how did Adam die?

### **The Lie (Eden)**

- A. The serpent, called the devil and Satan, questioned God's words and altered them (Ge 3:1-4).
- B. He promised Eve they would not surely die for eating the fruit by inserting the one word *not*.
- C. She showed weakness of character by believing his lie and was thereby deceived (I Ti 2:14).
- D. This lie has been perpetuated by Satan and doctrinal dupes ever since about man's condition.
- E. Women are still moved by Arminian nonsense for free will and rejection of total depravity.
- F. Teaching that man is only wounded or sick, not truly dead, is the same lie Satan told Eve.
- G. The fountain of error regarding man's condition and the nature of his salvation is right here.
- H. Conditional regeneration denies man's death and/or invents a pre-regeneration work of grace.

### **The Result (Eden)**

- A. Adam and Eve ate the fruit for two different reasons, but they both died as God had warned.
- B. The first parents of all men died that very day according to God's promise, though not stated.
  - 1. There is no statement in the following context of Genesis 2 that Adam and Eve had died.
  - 2. This does not alter their real death at all, for God's promised warning was absolutely true.
  - 3. The lack of any mention in context simply tells us to examine how the two were changed.
- C. Adam began dying at least two other deaths, though the final consequences were still future.
  - 1. Adam's body did not die for 930 years, told by inspired history (Gen 5:5; Rom 5:12-14).
  - 2. Adam could not die the second death until Judgment Day, still future to us (Re 20:14-15).
- D. But Adam and Eve most definitely died that very day, for there were key, obvious changes.
  - 1. They immediately knew they were naked; guilt and shame replaced purity and sincerity.
  - 2. They designed their own escape from guilt and shame, with no thought of repentance.
  - 3. When they knew God was close and looking for them, they tried to get away from Him.
  - 4. When confronted by God, Adam used fear, devilish and selfish fear, to excuse fleeing.
  - 5. Adam then blamed God for giving him Eve and blamed Eve for offering him the fruit.
  - 6. Eve then blamed the devil for beguiling her to eat the fruit that God had forbidden her.
  - 7. Observe the (a) total lack of repentance, (b) human efforts to cover guilt and shame, (c) efforts to avoid dealing with God, (d) a devilish fear of God, and (e) the blame game.
  - 8. They showed no humility, resentment, or contrition toward themselves for their evil deed.
  - 9. They showed no affection, regret, remorse, or desire toward God for amends or mercy.

10. Of course, any offer of salvation would likely have been embraced, but with rebel hearts.
- E. Adam and Eve died in affection and desire toward God and His things, becoming enemies.
    - 1. Adam and Eve were now dead in their spiritual nature toward God and righteousness.
    - 2. There was no desire or effort toward repentance; no declaration of God's righteousness.
    - 3. They were foolish, fearful, irreverent, complaining, rebellious without fear or conviction.
    - 4. Any free will they had was gone, for now they were dead toward God and any obedience.
  - F. Scripture backs up this historical review by describing men dead in sins (Ep 2:1-3; Col 2:13).
    - 1. All men have the same nature – that of reprobates – that loves sin, the world, and Satan.
    - 2. From children of God in Eden, they first obeyed Satan, and then became willing slaves.
    - 3. All affections and ambitions are selfish toward fulfilling lusts rather than fearing God.
  - G. Solomon concluded 3000 years later that God made man upright, but he ruined it (Eccl 7:29).
  - H. Therefore, the promised warning of God was perfectly fulfilled with Adam dead in his sin.
    - 1. Let God be true, but every devil and man a liar, for we believe Adam died that very day.
    - 2. It is the devil's first lie repeated that man is alive and able to choose God by his free will.
    - 3. Man is spiritually dead toward God without appreciation or desire for Him or His things.
  - I. When you have sinned, run to God confessing your errors rather than hiding (I John 1:9).
    - 1. There is no Being with greater forgiveness and mercy for the truly contrite and penitent.
    - 2. Fear of God that keeps you from repenting and loving Him is the damned fear of devils.
    - 3. There is forgiveness with this holy Judge so that He may be properly feared by His saints.
  - J. Putting Band-Aids on consequences of sins misses the spiritual problem of total depravity.
    - 1. It is a heart issue, and the only workable solution is God fully changing a person's heart.
    - 2. There is no kindness, love, environment, or instruction that will change a person's heart.
    - 3. Without regeneration, the human seethes internally in sin and/or explodes outwardly in it.

### **The Inheritance**

- A. Adam generated children like himself – spiritually dead according to the warning (Gen 5:3).
- B. David wrote that men are conceived in sin and speak lies immediately (Ps 51:5; 58:3). Amen!
- C. All men are spiritually dead by natural conception, their first birth (Jn 3:6; Ep 2:1; Col 2:13).
- D. Men physically alive have souls dead toward God, seeking sin and obeying Satan (Titus 3:3).
- E. Each child you have was born with a totally depraved heart that only hates God and loves sin.
  - 1. Wise parents can discern this from an early age as rage and selfishness are fully shown.
  - 2. Without God's regenerating grace, for which you should beg, they can do most anything.
  - 3. We generally presume upon election and regeneration in training (Psalm 34:11; Is 38:19).
  - 4. You should not be surprised at folly and rebellion, but should seek their hearts (Pr 23:26).
  - 5. If they are born again, and you presume it so, you must firstly stress their walk with God.

### **The Nature**

- A. Total depravity is unrelated to original sin, the doctrine of representation, and Adam's federal headship, which is the legal/positional issue of our standing before God needing justification.
  - 1. Original sin and our guilt and condemnation for Adam's disobedience is in Rom 5:12-19.
  - 2. This is a legal matter of God holding men accountable for our first father's sin in Eden.
  - 3. The Second Adam obeyed to legally clear Adam's guilt, but it did not change our nature.
  - 4. We need another operation of grace to change our nature by giving us new spiritual life.
  - 5. Total depravity, man's wicked enmity against God is Rom 1:18-32; 3:9-18; 5:20-21; etc.

6. You are guilty for Adam's sin by covenant; depravity is how and why you sin yourself.
  7. Total depravity is the condition, character, disposition, qualities, traits of man's nature.
  8. Do not confuse God's word by mixing legal and vital considerations of man's existence.
  9. If you do not have the difference clearly in your mind, then do not proceed until grasped.
  10. Total depravity describes the traits of your human nature and its very sinful propensities.
- B. When we talk about the *nature* of a thing, we are talking about its essential qualities or traits.
1. **Nature.** The essential qualities or properties of a thing; the inherent and inseparable combination of properties essentially pertaining to anything and giving it its fundamental character. The inherent and innate disposition or character of a person (or animal). The general inherent character or disposition of mankind. [OED].
  2. The Bible uses *nature* this way and all men dead in sin (Eph 2:3; Rom 1:26; I Cor 11:14).
- C. There is not a physical or mental defect naturally considered, for both still function very well.
1. Though dead in trespasses and sins, all men and the wicked have bodies that work well.
  2. Dead in trespasses and sins, all men and the wicked can still believe anything they wish.
  3. They are capable of creative genius and analysis of phenomena (Gen 4:20-22; Ex 8:19).
  4. They can intellectually believe factual evidence about Jesus Christ or blaspheme Him.
  5. Do not forget what the Spirit said about those not born again (Jn 2:23-25; 6:14; 8:30-44).
  6. The indictment of man revealed in Romans 1:18-32 shows inherent knowledge of God.
- D. It is the heart of man that has been completely ruined that corrupts man's decision-making.
1. No matter the level of IQ, decisions of choice for or against God are dictated by the heart.
  2. Think affections, ambitions, commitment, desires, fear, humility, love, hate, interests, etc.
  3. Those who reject total depravity reason against it by pointing out mere human intellect.
  4. Dogs, pigs, elephants, and seals are trained, but this base intelligence is without a heart.
  5. The *cannot* aspect of depravity (inability) is largely due to the *will not* aspect (rebellion).
  6. The *cannot* aspect of depravity (inability) is lack of a spiritual man (I Co 2:14; Ro 8:7-8).
- E. The Bible teaches man rebels against knowledge he has in an intellectual or conscience way.
1. In Romans 1:18-32, the indictment of all men, especially Gentiles, includes considerable knowledge of God but rebellion and hatred against it e.g. *hold the truth, that which may be known of God is manifest in them, God hath shewed it unto them, clearly seen, being understood, so that they are without excuse, when they knew God, changed the glory of the uncorruptible God, changed the truth of God into a lie, did not like to retain God in their knowledge, haters of God, and knowing the judgment of God.*
  2. This matches David's inspired view that creation preaches God worldwide (Ps 19:1-6).
  3. For greater detail, see commentary on Romans 1 ... [www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/romans-one.pdf](http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/romans-one.pdf).
  4. God put a measure of truth in the consciences of men to further their guilt (Rom 2:12-16).
  5. The only excusing that occurs is from a natural or civil standpoint for a measure of sin.
  6. For greater detail, see commentary on Romans 2 ... [www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/romans-two.pdf](http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/romans-two.pdf).
- F. Total depravity does not alter decision-making capability or perceived freedom to choose.
1. The sinner is not restrained intellectually or externally from making the choice he wants.
  2. The sinner never chooses God, righteousness, truth, or wisdom due to his corrupt heart.
  3. Total depravity is not *want to* without ability to follow through but rather *no want to!*

- G. Total depravity is not utter depravity, in that men are not as wicked as their actions could be.
  1. Total depravity is not a percentage of impairment of the human heart – it is truly total.
  2. But God restrains much of man’s choices and actions by His own government (Ps 76:10).
  3. Surely you have wondered why there are not many more outrageous acts of wicked men.
  4. This restraining control by God does not make them less guilty, but rather more guilty!
- H. The Bible’s descriptive word is *death*, which leaves man totally unable and unwilling to act.
  1. Since man does act, even religiously, even philanthropically, in what sense is he dead?
  2. He is dead toward God, truth, and righteousness by rebellious enmity in his affections.
  3. He has no appreciation, ambition, or desire for God or godliness or anything of God’s.
  4. He is not moved by any appeal, presentation, rewards, or threats of spiritual things.
  5. He is alive in a different direction – toward self, sin, Satan, and the world (Eph 2:1-3).
  6. Without divine intervention to overrule or replace his nature, man cannot help himself.

### **The Extent**

- A. The *human will* is opposed to God regardless of knowledge (Jn 5:39-40; Ro 1:18-32; 8:7-8).
- B. The *human mind* is alienated and an enemy of God by sin (Col 1:21; Rom 1:30-31; 8:7-8).
- C. The *understanding* is darkened from seeing the gospel (I Cor 2:14; II Cor 4:3-4; Eph 4:18).
- D. How *early* is man depraved? He is conceived in sin and lies immediately (Psalm 51:5; 58:3).
- E. He sins *from his youth*, which God saw when surveying men before the Flood (Gen 8:21).
- F. *Noble deeds*, as they appear externally to other men, are sin to God (Prov 21:4; Rom 14:23).
- G. *Religious activities* of natural men are an abomination to God (Proverbs 15:8; 21:27; 28:9).
- H. Man *hates light* he should love and *loves sin* he should hate (Jn 3:19-20; I Jn 2:15-17; Ja 4:4).
- I. Though man has a *conscience* with some revelation, he sins against it to show his depravity.
  1. God put some truth in man’s conscience to further his guilt (Rom 2:12-16; John 8:1-11).
  2. The only excusing that occurs is from a natural or civil standpoint for a measure of sin.
  3. The conscience is activated and improved by regeneration and revelation (Prov 20:27).
  4. For greater detail, see commentary on Romans 2 ... [www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/romans-two.pdf](http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/romans-two.pdf).
- J. There is no freewill left in a dead man, or what was lost and what died in Adam in Eden?
  1. God made Adam very good and upright (Gen 1:31; Ec 7:29). Only then was his will free.
  2. His spiritual death the day he ate the fruit corrupted his desires, thus enslaving his will.
- K. Romans 3:10-18 shows extent to include all men without exception and all aspects of living.
  1. The first three verses of this passage, 10-12, include all men without even one exception.
  2. The next five verses of this passage, 13-17, cover all aspects of conduct and lifestyle.
  3. The last verse of the passage, 18, rejects the basic foundation and motive to please God.
- L. Jeremiah 17:9 condemns man’s heart as deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.
- M. No one knows the Father or the Son without divine revelation to do so (Matt 11:27; Jn 6:44).
- N. Solomon observed in his book of philosophy there was not one just man on earth (Eccl 7:20).

### **The Inability**

- A. The Bible’s descriptive word is *death*, which leaves man totally unable and unwilling to act.
  1. Since man does act, even religiously, even philanthropically, in what sense is he dead?
  2. He is dead toward God, truth, and righteousness by rebellious enmity in his affections.
  3. He has no appreciation, ambition, or desire for God or godliness or anything of God’s.
  4. He is not moved by any appeal, presentation, rewards, or threats of spiritual things.

5. He is alive in a different direction – toward self, sin, Satan, and the world (Eph 2:1-3).
6. Without divine intervention to overrule or replace his nature, man cannot help himself.
- B. Rehabilitation will not improve man's desire or ability, for it only helps the living (Is 26:10).
  1. Man does not need rehabilitation or modification or self-help preaching, he needs life.
  2. He does not need medication, but resurrection; he needs no doctor; he needs a Creator.
- C. Methods will not attract his interest, no matter how incredible or supernatural (Luke 16:31).
  1. If methods get results, then the results are entirely suspect, except for any confused elect.
  2. Starving natives will go to Jesus to get your Oatmeal, but they still hate God and truth.
- D. No man can come, for no man will (Jn 5:40; 6:44,65). This is God's drawing, not ministerial.
  1. Arminians blab about it being so easy ... "all you have to do is come" ... but no man can!
  2. Man cannot and will not seek God by infatuation with man's praise (Jn 5:44; 12:37-43).
- E. The gospel is the revelation of condemnation to the dead – a sweet savour (II Cor 2:14-17).
- F. Unless God gave you faith to believe, you never would believe (Jn 8:45; Phil 1:29; Jas 2:5).
- G. A lie in their right hand that they cannot let go is true of all men (Is 44:19-20; Rom 1:18-32).

## **The Proof**

- A. The Bible's descriptive word is *death*, which leaves man totally unable and unwilling to act.
  1. God plainly called it *death* to Adam, then He repeated it (Gen 2:17; Eph 2:1-6; Col 2:13).
  2. There is no better view than a corpse and its total inability to do anything at all about life.
  3. A corpse has no more ability or desire for life than do sinners have to God and godliness.
  4. There is no offer, gift, reward, or threat that can entice or persuade a corpse to activity.
  5. There is no medicine, therapy, nutrition, or exercise program that can improve it at all.
  6. To undo this *death* requires God to resurrect, quicken, and create (Eph 1:19-20; 2:1,5,10).
  7. *Death* requires God to generate or birth again (John 3:3,7; Jas 1:18; I Pet 1:23; Tit 3:5).
  8. To preach the gospel to one in this *dead* condition only proves deadness (II Cor 2:14-17).
  9. Regeneration or resurrection by Christ's voice proves spiritual death (Jn 5:25; Rev 20:6).
- B. God inspected man's condition thoroughly and could not find a single exception to the rule.
  1. The law of emphasis in hermeneutics means things repeated should be given emphasis.
  2. God searched man and declared him corrupt three times (Ps 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Ro 3:10-12).
  3. Both testaments have the inspired, condemning description of man's depravity from God.
  4. Here is His indictment after His discovery process of infinite knowledge of all facts: *man is a fool, corrupt, done abominable works, there is not a good man, not one understands, not one seeks God, they are all gone aside, they are all filthy, there is no exception.*
- C. God gave a more extensive indictment of man by combining more such places (Ro 3:12-18).
  1. Having already quoted Psalm 14:1-3 and Psalm 53:1-3, Paul used five other quotations!
  2. Man's mouth, like his whole being, is *dead to good speech, but alive to lying* (Psalm 5:9).
  3. Man's mouth, like his father the old serpent, *has the poison of asps in it* (Psalm 140:3).
  4. Man, cursed as he is for his sin in Eden, has a *mouth full of cursing and more* (Ps 10:7).
  5. Man, guilty of death and ruin in Eden, *wants to kill, destroy, ruin, steal peace* (Is 59:7).
  6. Man, choosing lusts over fear of God in Eden, *has none of it remaining at all* (Ps 36:1).
  7. See the Spirit's indictment by combining these quotes to condemn mankind (Ro 3:9,19).
  8. Talk all you want about confessing with the mouth for salvation, but who will ever do it?
  9. Talk all you want about repenting of sin to gain eternal life, and they will kill you for it!

- D. Man in his natural state without the Spirit is *at enmity against God, will not obey God's law, is powerless to alter his condition, and has no ability to please God* (Rom 8:7-8).
1. The only way to get this man saved by conditions is to require conditions offending God!
  2. This is total depravity. You do not need seminary; you need to read the simple scriptures.
  3. There is not a single sinner on earth that even likes God or wants to obey or please Him.
  4. There is not a single sinner on earth just waiting to hear the offer of Jesus for salvation.
  5. There has never been a sinner on earth whose heart would melt hearing about Calvary.
  6. If Calvary's scene would not provoke hatred, that Saviour's holy demands surely would.
- E. The things of God, no matter how well presented, *are foolish to the depraved minds of man*.
1. The things of the Spirit of God in this place are the things of the gospel preached by Paul.
  2. A natural man cannot discern or know them, and he will not receive them (I Cor 2:14).
  3. This is not an exceptional text; Paul already declared this fact twice (I Cor 1:18,21,23).
  4. The best preaching can do is prove the present existence of life or death (II Cor 2:14-17).
  5. The gospel is hid to the wicked; there is nothing a preacher can do about it (II Cor 4:3-6).
  6. Jesus said unregenerate Jews could not hear Him with understanding (John 8:43,45,47).
- F. A natural man born only of flesh cannot see or hear the gospel of Christ (John 3:3; 8:43,47).
1. Hearing ears and seeing eyes are God's creation, naturally and spiritually (Prov 20:12).
  2. The gospel is hid to men by Satan until God commands the light to shine (II Cor 4:3-6).
  3. No man can come or will come to Jesus Christ without God's work first (Jn 5:40; 6:44).
- G. Why does the Bible describe and require a work of grace from God before faith is possible?
1. Men that receive Jesus Christ and believe on Him were born again of God first (Jn 1:13).
  2. Men that believe the gospel and see Christ in it had it revealed to them (Matt 11:25-27).
  3. God must draw and open hearts to attend and believe the gospel (Jn 6:44,65; Acts 16:14).
  4. God must grant repentance for men to rationally acknowledge the truth (II Tim 2:25-26).
  5. The ability or desire to please God is something He must work in us first (Phil 2:12-13).
  6. Faith, love, righteousness prove regeneration by following it (I Jn 2:29; 3:7,14; 4:7; 5:1).
- H. If there is no good thing in man's flesh, how much good can man in the flesh do (Rom 7:18)?
- I. If man's flesh lusts against the Spirit, how many in the flesh will obey the Spirit (Gal 5:17)?
- J. If the devil takes sinners captive at his will, how many are free to choose (II Tim 2:25-26)?
- K. If it takes faith to please God, how many please God (Hebrews 11:6; James 2:5; II Thes 3:2)?
- L. If God is not in all his thoughts, how many men think of loving and serving God (Ps 10:4)?
- M. If natural men are as bad as Paul wrote, how many will melt hearing the gospel (Ep 4:17-19)?
- N. Paul and Titus in *time past* had been depraved just like others (Titus 3:3 cp Eph 2:13; 5:8).
- O. What could you do to cooperate, if Christ died for the ungodly *without strength* (Rom 5:6)?
- P. Job and Eliphaz had little respect for natural man's condition or state (Job 14:4; 15:14-16).
- Q. Prove it yourself! Without God's grace, you are depraved, which His honest children know.
1. The terribleness of your old man ... there is not a good thing in it (Rom 7:18) ... it has no power to do good ... it hates and despises God, goodness, and good men (II Tim 3:3).
  2. Have you ever told yourself you feel dead spiritually? No power, will, desire, or joy?
- R. We know total depravity is true by looking within and being fully honest in our assessment.
1. Why do you have such trouble to read scripture, to pray, and to delight in Christ alone?
  2. Why can you stay awake for hours for spectator sports and/or movies, but not preaching?

3. Why can you be convicted to do what is right and lose all memory of it in mere minutes?
  4. How long can you pray and stay alert and focused in comparison to talking to a friend?
  5. Why do you have cravings and explosions for lusts, bitterness, excess, anger, hatred, etc.?
- S. For more with other proofs ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/salvation/unconditional-salvation/sermon.php>.

## **The Delusion**

- A. Satan's first lie continues to be told by preachers, if they compromise death at all (Gen 3:4).
- B. They say God will not save you against your will ... but if He does not, none will be saved!
- C. They blab about man's free will and his power and his freedom and his ability to choose.
- D. They invent prevenient grace to provide sufficient ability and strength to activate free will.
- E. Arminians imagine something like this: *Though morally hurt by sin in Eden, man has a free will to choose to obey or disobey God. Sin has not destroyed his ability or desire to cooperate with God. The Spirit can woo him to action without violating his will. He must obey by his choice before God will regenerate him.*
- F. Some Calvinists do not go far enough, for grace short of regeneration is not good enough.
- G. Some argue by good people known for charity and philanthropy that are not yet born again.
  1. How can they be totally depraved and corrupt, since they are so nice, kind, and good?
  2. First, we believe God's word regardless of anything you may see, hear, feel, or think.
  3. Second, you do not have a clue for the motive or reason or cause for any of their actions.
  4. God's word condemns any natural and neutral acts without faith (Prov 21:4; Rom 14:23).
  5. God's word condemns any religious acts without righteousness (Prov 15:8; 21:27; 28:9).
- H. Enemies of total depravity use O.T. verses that have nothing to do with the unregenerate state of man and his ability but rather the offer of temporal benefits for God's regenerate children.
  1. Moses set life and death, blessing and cursing, before Israel for this world (Deut 30:19).
  2. Joshua's challenge was to the church of God to be faithful serving Him (Joshua 24:15).
  3. Elihu reminded Job that whatever he chose or refused, God would repay (Job 34:33).
  4. The consequences of choosing or rejecting wisdom do not alter total depravity (Pr 1:29).
  5. The eunuchs that choose the things that please God are clearly born again (Isaiah 56:4).
- I. How is man responsible? How can man be responsible for rejecting God, if he cannot help it?
  1. God said he has no excuse, for he has ability to respond to truth he knows (Rom 1:18-32).
  2. Depravity is more *will not* (depraved heart) than *cannot* (no intellectual ability to choose).
  3. In fact, you do not have the right to ask such questions of your Potter (Romans 9:19-21).
- J. Before a sinner is born again, what part of him should must accept Christ or invite Jesus in?
  1. The common scheme is a man can be born again by saying the sinner's prayer sincerely.
  2. Can a man in the flesh use his mind to please God for good (John 1:13; 3:6; Rom 8:7-8)?
- K. With sufficient ignorant thinking about sin, salvation, and infants, many think baptism saves!
  1. Baptismal regeneration of infants by application of a little H2O is preposterous heresy.
  2. Consider the devil's lie – why worry about total depravity, when baptism washes it away!
  3. This damnable delusion has resulted in so many related heresies that it is hard to measure.

## **The Disaster**

- A. Based on the delusion that man is not really dead or depraved, heresy brings forth inventions.
- B. Salvation *methods* – free-willers will do anything to get a decision out of depraved sinners.
  1. Food or medical missions entice starving children and their mommies to believe on Jesus.
  2. Rock concerts with sufficient volume and emotional appeals by stars will move youth.

3. Jail ministries giving inmates their first visitors and attention in years can bring decisions.
4. If Lazarus coming back from the dead would not help, why would these ridiculous ideas?
- C. Salvation *results* – they count up decisions by emotional or other manipulation without fruit.
- D. Salvation *confusion* – many more people are told they are saved than fruit and reality prove.
- E. Salvation *controversy* – in order to make it ever simpler, they create a Lordship controversy.
- F. Salvation *degradation* – exalting man’s will they degrade God’s glorious grace and power.
- G. Some propose and suggest that following your feelings as a guide for your life is good. Nuts!
- H. Some propose and suggest that following your thoughts as a guide for life is good. Nuts!
- I. Who would want to follow their heart after the Bible’s indictment (Je 17:9; Pr 28:26; 10:20)?

## **The Solution**

- A. Without any desire or ability to obey or please God for salvation, it must be unconditional!
  1. Therefore, the false doctrine on this point is very great, as men have invented many ideas.
  2. There is far more evidence ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/salvation/unconditional-salvation/sermon.php>.
- B. God did not find any that understood and desired Him (Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Rom 3:9-18).
  1. He planned salvation without conditions, for no man could do any (Jn 1:13; Rom 8:7-8).
  2. God initiates eternal life according to His own will against ours (John 3:8; Rom 9:15-16).
- C. Our nature is totally incompatible with God’s, averse to all good, loving sin, unfit for heaven.
  1. It must be changed to save us from willful bondage to Satan and sin to faith and holiness.
  2. We must be changed, and it is not a change of our body, like in the day of resurrection.
  3. We must be changed to love God, the things of God, people of God, and place of God.
  4. We call this the vital phase of salvation, because it changes the vital aspects of our nature.
  5. For the sake of this study, we pass over the other phases of salvation also by God’s grace.
- D. From Adam’s death in sin, a *quickenings* or *resurrection* is required by God’s mighty power.
  1. It is much more than conviction, as some foolishly say – it must *make us alive* spiritually.
  2. It takes the same mighty power that God used to raise Jesus from the *dead* (Eph 1:19-20).
  3. Do not miss the link between Eph 1:19-20 and Eph 2:1-5, comparing two quickenings!
  4. It takes mighty power like that God used to declare sunshine into existence (II Cor 4:1-7).
  5. If this sounds too high and lofty, God chose *created* to exalt it even higher (Eph 2:10).
  6. This glorious quickening is called and compared to a resurrection (John 5:25; Rev 20:6).
- E. This glorious work and phase of salvation is also called being born again and regeneration.
  1. No wonder Jesus taught so plainly and powerfully – Ye must be born again (John 3:7).
  2. Being born again is flatly outside human generation, your will, or others’ will (Jn 1:13).
  3. Being regenerated is flatly without works of righteousness, whatever they are (Tit 3:5).
  4. For much, much more about being born again ... [www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/born-again-truth.pdf](http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/born-again-truth.pdf).
- F. God works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure, or we never would (Phil 2:13).
- G. No matter how dark hearts and minds, He commands spiritual light to shine (II Cor 4:3-7).
- H. Some Calvinists do not go far enough, for grace short of regeneration is not good enough.

## **The Evidence**

- A. If I am so depraved and deceitful, then God must make a drastic resurrection and renovation!
- B. If I am so depraved and deceitful, how can I know God saved me in spite of my depravity?
- C. Since man is so depraved and deceitful, any godly desire or action toward Him proves life!
- D. Election is proved after regeneration, so evidence is the same (II Peter 1:5-11; I Thess 1:2-4).

- E. If you hear and believe the gospel, it proves you are already born again (John 5:24; 8:43,47; I John 5:1; 4:15), and it proves you have a new spiritual man (I Cor 1:18,24; 2:14-15).
- F. If you love the brethren in deed and truth, then you are already born again (I John 4:7; 3:14).
- G. Natural men do not unselfishly love, so if you unselfishly love, you are born again (Tit 3:3).
- H. If you do righteousness as defined by God (I Jn 2:29; 3:7), it proves you outside Rom 3:10!
- I. If you will and do things that please God, He made that change (Phil 2:12-13; Rom 8:7-8).
- J. A changed life as defined by true religion can only occur in a person's life after regeneration.
- K. You need a changed life for real evidence of your depravity being overthrown (II Cor 5:17).
- L. You must choose your new man and his traits over your old man (Eph 4:20-32; Col 3:5-15).
- M. Baptism is the wonderful event when we bury our depraved old man figuratively (Ro 6:5-7).
- N. You choose the Spirit and His things over the depraved flesh and his things (Gal 5:16-26).
- O. For much more about the evidence of eternal life ... [www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/assurance-of-eternal-life.pdf](http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/assurance-of-eternal-life.pdf).

### **Conclusion:**

1. This doctrine reveals man as a rebellious beast before God for His greater glory, for the grace designing regeneration and the resurrection power executing it are worthy of praise and thanksgiving!
2. You should know that this is where you must start to present the true doctrine of salvation to anyone, for without this foundation they will inevitably try to work man's will or works into his salvation.
3. Family planning should include consideration of this doctrine, especially in this depraved generation, for young parents hardly have a clue what it takes to keep the world from children and vice versa.
4. Though regenerated, do you know how bad your old nature and your children's old natures remain?
5. There is great reason confirmed by your own nature and experience to be strict regarding godliness, in putting off the old man and putting on the new, as Paul described his condition in Romans 7:7-25.
6. If you make provision for the flesh, which you should not, you guarantee your own ruin (Rom 13:14).
7. Do you know that you are born again? If you believe you are, are you showing evidence at all levels?

### **For Further Study:**

1. Unconditional Salvation ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/salvation/unconditional-salvation/sermon.php>.
2. Five Phases of Salvation ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/salvation/five-phases-of-salvation/sermon.php>.
3. Calvinism and Arminianism ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/salvation/calvinism-arminianism/sermon.php>.
4. God's Will or Man's Will ... [www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/gods-will-or-free-will.pdf](http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/gods-will-or-free-will.pdf).
5. The Truth about Being Born Again ... [www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/born-again-truth.pdf](http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/born-again-truth.pdf).
6. When Was Cornelius Saved? ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/salvation/when-was-cornelius-saved/sermon.php>.
7. The Age of Accountability ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/heresy/age-of-accountability/sermon.php>.
8. Questions for Arminians ... [www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/questions-for-arminians.pdf](http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/questions-for-arminians.pdf).
9. Assurance of Eternal Life ... [www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/assurance-of-eternal-life.pdf](http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/assurance-of-eternal-life.pdf).
10. Charles Spurgeon, *Human Inability* ... <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/0182.htm>.
11. Jonathan Edwards, *Freedom of the Will* ... <http://www.reformedreader.org/rbb/edwards/fowindex.htm>.
12. Martin Luther, *Bondage of the Will* ... <http://www.reformedreader.org/bow.htm>.
13. John Piper, *Total Depravity* ... <http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/piper/depravity.html>.
14. Travis Carden, *List of Bible Verses about Total Depravity* ... <http://www.traviscarden.com/total-depravity-verse-list>.