

## The Five Points of Calvinism #1

# Total Depravity

Jonah 2:9

### Introduction to This Series:

1. Today we begin a series on the doctrines of grace
  - a. These are some of the most difficult doctrines of the Bible
  - b. These are the most hated of all doctrines
  - c. Unashamedly I say that I am a Calvinist
2. Calvinism declares the truth that “Salvation is of the Lord”
3. The doctrines of sovereign grace were once accepted by nearly all Baptists, but they have been abandoned as obsolete, unfair, unbiblical
  - a. People don't mind a God who was sovereign in creation
  - b. People want a God who is sovereign in the govt of His universe
  - c. But people get angry when we preach a God who is sovereign in salvation
4. It is common today to hear preachers say, “Make the first step and God will meet you half-way.”
5. “God votes for you, the devil votes against you, now you cast the deciding vote.”
6. Some believe that God is trying to save people, but He can't

### Introduction to Total Depravity:

1. We must start here with Total Depravity
2. Be right on this doctrine and you have good start on other doctrines.
3. He who is wrong here is bound to be wrong on many other doctrines
4. The clear teaching of Scripture is man, at the fall, became totally incapable and powerless to either desire God, to serve God, to know God or to seek God unless God enables him.
5. There is nothing more repugnant to the pride and self-righteousness of man than total depravity
  - a. To confront men with their total ruin in the fall causes heated opposition
  - b. People do not like it when their total corruption is exposed – corruption in heart, mind, and body
  - c. Some might admit that they have some spiritual infirmity and they might even confess that they need some assistance to elevate themselves spiritually but no one wants to admit that he is spiritually dead
6. Total depravity means that no one is naturally “really good at heart”

## I. What Total Depravity Is

- Let us now note what we do mean by total depravity.
- Depraved comes from Latin by way of the French - De = thoroughly and pravus = crooked

### A. *The Lost are Depraved by Birth – Rom 5:12*

**12** Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

1. Adam sinned in the garden of Eden and became a sinner
2. The whole human race was in Adam's loins
3. By birth we partake of the corrupt, fallen nature of Adam
4. Death passed on man for all have sinned in Adam
5. **Ps 51:5** Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.
6. **Ps 58:3** The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

### B. *The Lost are Depraved in Their Will*

**Lu 22:67** Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:

1. Man likes to boast of his free will, but his will is corrupt
2. Those who say that man's will was not effected by the fall
  - a) Many believe that man has a free-will
  - b) No, we have a fallen, corrupt, depraved will
3. You have a free will when it comes to choosing cereal, shirt
4. You cannot will yourself a million dollars
5. Niagara Falls is free but it is only free to go down for that is its nature

6. Man's free will cannot cure him of a toothache or mend a broken arm but he vainly can cure his own soul
7. The sinner's will is dominated by Satan - he is fulfilling the desires of the flesh and is by nature a child of wrath

### **C. The Lost are Depraved in Their Hearts**

**Jer 17:9** The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

**Mt 15:19** For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

1. "Heart" in Scripture refers to man's inner being including the mind, emotions, intellect and will
2. Our hearts are so wicked they deceive us into thinking that we are ok

### **D. The Lost are Depraved in Their Minds – Rom 8:7-8**

**Ro 8:7** Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. **8** So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

1. The mind is corrupt and is not subject to the law of God
2. The heart is desperately wicked

## **II. What Total Depravity is Not**

- It is important that we state what we do not mean by total depravity.

### **A. By Total Depravity I Do Not Mean Absolute Depravity**

1. This is often misconstrued by those who disagree with us.
2. The lost are often not as bad as they could be – they are not as evil as possible
  - a) *When the lost lie, they often tell little lies and the lies could be a lot worse*
  - b) *There is no good in the lying, but they are not as bad as they could be*
  - c) *As vicious as Hitler was, even he spared some French villages because of the pleas of a priest*
  - d) *Kitty Genovese was left to die on a New York sidewalk in the sight of 28 people. It was terrible that no one wanted to get involved. They could have been worse, they could have helped to kill her.*
3. Understand - It is not strictly what the sinner does, but what he is.
4. The Pharisees did not omit tithing mint, anise, and cummin (Matt. 23:23), and of all that they possessed (Luke 18:12), though they omitted the weightier matters of the law as judgment, mercy and faith.

### **B. By Total Depravity I Do Not Mean a Complete Absence of Relative Good**

1. The lost can do a certain amount of good (in the sight of man)
2. However, the unsaved cannot and will not do these works for the glory of God, but for selfish reasons.
3. "He bringeth forth fruit unto himself" (Hos. 10:1).
4. Many lost men work hard to support their families
  - a) *They are faithful to their wives*
  - b) *They obey the laws of the land*
5. The lost soldier in combat who exhibits courage and love by throwing his body on a grenade in order to save his comrades
6. The non-Christian who risks his life by dashing in front of an oncoming truck to save a child
7. Total depravity does not mean that there cannot be some good as man counts goodness
8. There is no goodness that God will accept

## **III. The Results of Total Depravity**

- Since man is totally depraved he is totally deprived of all ability to please God. This is seen in that the sinner is:

### **A. The Lost are Spiritually Dead**

**Eph 2:1** And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; **2** Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: **3** Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

1. The question really is – how far did man fall in the garden of Eden?
  - a) *Did Adam become just sick, handicapped or injured when he fell into sin*

- b) *Or did Adam die spiritually the moment he ate of the fruit?*
2. A dead person cannot do anything in the realm in which he is dead, and the sinner is spiritually dead to God.
  3. Thus he cannot repent of his sin, believe the Gospel, come to Jesus Christ, nor live for Him.
  4. The lost cannot no more choose Christ or understand spiritual truth than a rotting corpse can play tennis or debate philosophy
  5. The preacher can use all human persuasion possible, but the preacher cannot give life where death reigns

#### **B. The Lost are Totally Disabled**

**Joh 6:44** No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

1. The effect of total depravity is total inability
2. The lost cannot do anything which fundamentally meets the demands of God's law
3. The lost cannot change their fundamental preference for sin and self to love for God
4. The lost man is unable to do any spiritual good
5. He cannot save himself, and will not turn to Christ for salvation until he is born again by the Spirit of God.
  - a) *He is free to turn to Christ, but not able.*
  - b) *I am free to make a million dollars, but so far it seems that I am not able.*
  - c) *Turning to Christ is a spiritual act, and the sinner is spiritually dead.*
  - d) *He cannot will himself to be saved and he cannot convert himself*

#### **C. The Lost Cannot Comprehend Spiritual Truth – 1Cor 2:14**

**1Co 2:14** But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

1. He is defiled in heart and mind.
2. In the days of Noah "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5).
3. Have sinners improved since then?
4. No one ever understands the gospel or any other spiritual truth until the eyes of his understanding are opened by the Spirit of God and he is instructed by that Great Teacher
5. The lost man can study the Bible and learn what it teaches regarding history and God's way of salvation
  - a) *He may teach a college religion course*
  - b) *The Bible to him is mythological nonsense*

#### **D. The Lost Cannot Repent**

**Jer 13:23** Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.

1. No one can change is depraved heart by himself
2. Turning over a new leaf is not enough

#### **E. The Lost Cannot Seek God – Ps 14:2; Rom 3:11**

**Ps 14:2** The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. 3 They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

**Rom 3:11** There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

1. The lost don't seek God, because the lost can't seek God
2. The lost are not banging on the doors trying to get in here this morning
3. The lost often turn to different philosophies and world religions in order to escape the true God
4. The only ones who seek God are ones who have been made alive by God

#### **F. The Lost Are Under the Power of Satan – 2Cor 4:3**

**2Co 4:3** But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

1. The lost are loyal to the god of darkness and they love darkness rather than light

**G. *There Is No Hope for Anyone Apart from The Sovereign Grace of God***

1. Dead in sin, the lost sinner has not the will or the power to come to Christ for deliverance
2. He cannot turn from evil and do good for that would be against his nature
3. If any sinner is to be saved, then it must be by God's sovereign grace

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