

Doctrines of Grace: Total Depravity

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Date: 24 March 2024

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[0 : 00] Tonight, we're going to start with, here he comes. Raise your hand if you didn't get one of those. I know we're pretty short. Plenty extra. Yeah.

I would say the main reason is that we need to be humbled first to understand just how bad our condition is before you ever will be open to talking about election.

That's like my, I learned it that way. And I think a lot of times when people will try to share about election with me, it would be like, come on, I'm not that bad.

Like, come on. Like, I seem to think that sin wasn't as bad as it actually was. And so a few quotes for us. And these men likewise believed in what we're talking about.

But Augustine in the fourth century, the whole humility of man consists in the knowledge of himself. Yep. So the more you actually learn about you, the more humble you will become through God's eyes. Right.

[1 : 07] And Calvin said, man is never sufficiently touched and affected by an awareness of his lowly state until he has compared himself with God's majesty.

It is evident that man never attains a true self-knowledge until he has previously contemplated the face of God and come down after such contemplation to look into himself.

So we all think much of ourselves. Right. But when compared to God, we tend to shrink and be very, very small. That's what Calvin's saying. We need to humble ourselves.

If you want to look on your sheet, your handout here. Each week I'll begin with an example, a quotation. This was Spurgeon.

And so and so one of the things that I guess experientially confirmed this truth for me. So I will tell you from the beginning, but your convictions have to come from Scripture first and then your experience after that, because your experience doesn't trump what's what's true and what lasts forever.

[2 : 17] But what happened to me was I read these things in the scriptures and then I began to kind of think about how I saw them in my life. And one of those realities is I'm aware of what God's pursuit of me before I was a Christian.

I could see God tracking me. I could see him following me and pursuing me. Yeah, even though I was pursuing and doing my own thing, he was he was on my track.

He was going to and he was going to catch me. He was going to run me to ground when he was ready to. And that's something I'm like thankful for because he didn't have to do that. And that's what Spurgeon said.

So something I want you to think about is trace back the steps of your life and look at all the ways that God has shown you grace and all the ways that he has put people in your life.

He's put Bibles in your life. He's put a church in your life. Maybe parents that have taught you about Christ. This is what Spurgeon did. So let's read this together.

[3 : 16] He said one one weeknight when I was sitting in the house of God, I was not thinking about the preacher's sermon for I didn't believe it. That's a nice start, right?

The thought struck me. How did I come to be a Christian? I sought the Lord. But how did you come to seek the Lord? The truth flashed across my mind in a moment.

I should not have sought him unless there had been some previous influence in my mind to make me seek him. I prayed, thought I. But then I asked myself, how came I to pray?

I was induced to pray by reading the scriptures. How came I to read the scriptures? How did I read them? But led me to do so.

Then in a moment I saw God was at the bottom of it all. That he was the author of my faith. And so the whole doctrine of grace opened up to me.

[4 : 16] And from that doctrine I have not departed to this day. I desire to make this my constant confession that I ascribe my change wholly to God. So I hope that that's encouraging to you to begin to think about, well, how did this happen?

You keep looking back and you see that God was underneath every little bit of what was going on in your life at the time. So, let me see here.

When we talk about these things, we're looking at them, most of us, from a post-Christian perspective. Most of us are believers in here. But we have to look back and see what our condition was before we were in Christ.

And for a lot of us, we might have become a believer at a very early age. So that's awesome. Don't go any further. Right? Some of us will testify. Like, that's awesome. But if we look back, we don't really realize how bad our condition is until we see it in hindsight.

And let me give you an example. So I had that lung transplant. I knew I was pretty sick. I knew I was very sick, actually. But I didn't realize how close to death I actually was, though.

[5 : 30] And after the transplant, the surgeon said to me, well, no, actually, he didn't say it to me. He said it to my family. He's like, those are the worst set of lungs I've ever seen.

And I don't know how he was alive on those. I had no idea. Like, how he was still breathing on those. And so, you know, so thankful the Lord spared me.

But what I have the impression of, if you're like me, you tend to think sin is bad. Sin is not desirable. Sin is, you know, to be walked away from.

But it is really, really bad. Like, it is, like, so bad beyond our minds. And I think most of my early Christian life, I thought, yeah, sin's bad.

I'm a sinner. Yep. And I never really knew how much the Scripture actually had to say about it. Until the doctrines of grace or Calvinism or Augustinism, whatever you want to call it, whatever label you want to put on it.

[6 : 31] My personal favorite is what John Newton called it, the doctrine or the gospel of amazing grace. That's what we're just going to call this. It's pretty easy to remember, right? It's the doctrines of amazing grace.

And so I look back on my simple condition now and I see just how bad it actually was. And so if you don't realize how low you are, you're never going to be really willing to respond to anything from God.

Like, until you really realize how bad it is. So, but one of the go-to passages for sin in the Bible, which we have been through on Sundays, is Romans chapter 1.

And this idea that God gave us over to our sin. So let's just read this quickly. For although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him.

But they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. All right. Now, as we're going along tonight, think about, like, the anatomy. Have any of you kids had anatomy in your classes yet?

[7 : 38] A few of you have. Okay. Well, the human body, right? So think about, like, a spiritual anatomy. The mind, the heart, things like that. But you see right here, it kind of says this idea that our foolish hearts were darkened.

Claiming to be wise, there's the mind idea. Right before that, futile in our thinking. We became fools. We exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Therefore, God gave them up in the lust of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator who was blessed forever.

Now, that is like the essence of what sin is. It's taking your love and your worship, the failure to fulfill the great commandment to love God and giving it to idols, giving it to the things of creation rather than the creator.

And we all have done it. I could give you a list of mile long, the stuff that I have worshipped and put my value in that have let me down and destroyed me. So that's a great example.

[8 : 49] We worship and serve the creature rather than the creator who is blessed forever. For this reason, God gave them up to dishonorable passions. And jump forward to 28. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

OK, so this idea of giving them up, if you were here on Sunday, we were doing Romans 9. It's God saying, all right, deal with the consequences of your sin.

It's giving him over to all the terrible things that follow our rebellion. So it's an act of judgment for him to just go, OK, go do it. And that's what in essence what we're saying.

So so in the doctrines of grace or Calvinism, whatever it is, we use this phrase total depravity.

Right. We've heard that phrase. Anybody know what depravity means?

Biblically speaking, anybody? I don't care. Ty, we give a shot. No, what you're eating. It seems like a syndrome of corruption.

[9 : 56] Yeah. And you get a depravity of the worst it could possibly be. Yeah. So back on history, we talk about the worst we could possibly be. Mm hmm. Yeah. That's all we're talking about.

Literally. Look at that last verse, that debased word. That's the word we're going to look at. That's what depravity is. Other translations may actually say depravity.

Let's just look at MacArthur here to define it for us. He says, a godless mind is a depraved mind whose predetermined inevitable disposition is to do the things that are not proper.

The basic meaning of a dakamas, which is depraved, is that of notwithstanding the test. And the term was commonly used for metals that were rejected by refiners because of impurities.

See that to the connection. These impure metals were discarded and a dakamas. Therefore, came to include the ideas of worthlessness and uselessness.

[11 : 00] That's what we just read, right? In Romans, it became worthless, became useless. In relation to God, the rejected mind becomes a rejected mind and thereby becomes spiritually depraved, worthless and useless.

The mind that finds God worthless becomes worthless itself. It is debauched, deceived, deserving only of God's divine wrath. So, important to remember this.

Like, the reason, and this is hard, okay? So again, it's humbling for me. Before you were in Christ, you are worthless. That's what this just said.

And the reason why is because we were created, again, we're going back to the beginning, in God's image for a purpose. That purpose was, again, to walk with Him and to reflect His holy character in all that we do and to have that special relationship with God, to bring glory in Him in all our lives.

And so, sin has flipped that. It means that you have not fulfilled your purpose of being created.

Therefore, you are depraved, right? These metals have these impurities that are discarded.

[12 : 10] Also important to remember, don't let anybody tell you if you are in Christ that you are depraved. You're not. There's a change that happens, okay?

Now you're accounted as God's family. Now you're accounted as adopted, valuable, loved, cherished. Alright? So, and we have that. We're having that image restored in us, as it says in the New Testament now.

So, we're learning. We're following Christ and becoming more like Christ in the process. So, I think, before we go further, pause for like maybe two minutes.

Any questions? Hard words. They suck. But, how it is. I mean, you saw it right there, right? The Lord is talking about the mind.

Do you need to pray? Just a word to pray. But, he's referring specifically to verse 28 in this one. It talks about being a debased mind or a depraved mind.

[13 : 11] We're just taking the word depraved. Yeah. So, when you said that we're no longer depraved as a believer, you're not speaking specifically of the mind being something different, but rather something more fundamental.

Sure, yeah. I was just giving you a biblical example where depravity is found in the Bible. But, really, it's applied to our whole being as fallen people. But, yeah. But, the mind is corrupted for sure. So, yeah. But, as believers, what is our mind doing now? Being transformed by the renewal of our mind. So, it's changing. So, this also should invoke pity and brokenheartedness for those who are around us, right?

Because, if they knew Christ, they could have that image restored again, right? So, that's what leads us to share with other people. But, yeah.

We're going to get to... When we do the saving work of the Spirit, we'll talk more about why missions and evangelism are so important and why this is actually, like, fuel behind going, not a hindrance to it.

[14 : 23] So, yep. Let's walk through this first, because it's important to go through the Scripture first. Then I have just some other stuff for you on the PowerPoint.

But, for now, I want you to think about that anatomy idea. You know, as I do this... You know, let's do this first.

It's more important than going through that. But, alright, so man is not sick. Man is not injured. He is dead spiritually.

Alright? And there's a lot of Scriptures that say these things. I just picked a few. But, point number one, really, as a result of Adam's transgressions, men are born in sin and by nature are spiritually dead.

Therefore, if they are to become God's children and enter His kingdom, they must be born anew by the Spirit. So, think about that connection. You've heard the phrase being born again.

[15 : 26] You have to be born again because your condition is dead. Like, that's the point. It's connecting the two. Same thing as, like, there's a need for us to be regenerated by the Spirit. Let's just...

Let's just pick two of these. This is the idea of original sin, right? That Augustine kind of coined.

Let's look at Romans 5 there.

Just as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin. And so death spread to all men because all have sinned. And then Ephesians 2.

You were dead in your trespasses and sin, to which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air and the Spirit that has not worked in the sons of disobedience.

So... But... That's so important because dead means corpse. Dead means useless. You can't do anything. Like...

[16 : 21] I may have never been to a funeral before and seen the corpse there like I have. They can't do anything. I can't say, hey, jump up and fix yourself. Put yourself together. You know, my grandmother just went to be with the Lord a few...

Like last summer. And I couldn't say, come on, Mildred, just stand up. Get yourself together. You know? She would have slapped me silly if she had heard me say that. But...

The corpse can't do anything. That's the connection. You need to be born again by the Spirit. So... And a dead person has no ability to do anything for themselves.

Now, our spiritual senses are likewise darkened. Okay? So think about your senses. Sight. Feel. Touch. Those sort of things. As a result of the fall, men are blind and deaf to spiritual truth.

Minds are darkened by sin and hearts corrupted by evil. We just read that in Romans 1. We just read it. But to give you a few more, I mean, right out of the gate, right in Genesis, the Lord saw the wickedness of man was great on the earth and every intention, every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

[17 : 42] Right? That's the heart. Look at Jeremiah 17. We all know this one. The heart is deceitful above all else. Desperately sick. Who can understand it? Don't follow your heart.

Right? So that's the heart. Then Jesus talks about how all sorts of evil proceed from the heart of men. Look at 1 Corinthians there.

The natural person, or the person without God, the person that's without Jesus, the natural person does not accept, does not accept the things of the Spirit of God.

For they are followed to Him and He is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. Yeah. So, if you look at Ephesians, oh shoot, I have the wrong, wrong one on here.

It's the right chapter, wrong verse. I found it in my bed. I apologize. But it says, don't walk as the Gentiles do in the futility of their minds. See that? Like our minds are directed towards them.

[18 : 46] The darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance of the image and the hardness of their heart. So, just look at that kind of language that's there.

So yeah, there's a lot of other verses that kind of go with this. But, this is the scary one. This one scared the death. You know what? I mean, when I first read it, I was like, wow, I never thought about that.

But, before in Christ, we're in bondage to Satan and slaves to sin. Right? It's not made up language. Before sinners are born to God's kingdom through the regenerating power of the Spirit, they are children of the devil.

Satan. And under his control, they are slaves to sin. Alright? What? You, so, in the context of John 8, y'all know what's going on in John 8?

Anybody remember what's going on in John 8? Jesus is arguing with the crowd. He's arguing with the Jews who were there. And they're giving him a lot of stuff and they're rejecting him.

[19 : 58] They're rejecting his words. They're rejecting his truth. And I don't want you to think about it. Like, you could have one person share about Christ with your friends or your family.

Who would you want? Jesus, probably, right? He himself. So he's standing there, the Son of God, and he's talking to them. They're going, nope, nope. So this is what he says to them.

He says, you are of your father, the devil. And your wills do your father's desires. Wow. He was a murderer from the beginning and nothing to do with the truth because the truth, because there is no truth in him.

When he lies, he speaks of his own character for he is a liar and the father of lies. 2 Timothy, he's talking about sharing, you know, the good news with unbelievers in verse 26 and hopes that, right, they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil after being captured by him to do his will.

I mean, we all have like made these connections like they're everywhere and Jesus, I tell you the truth, truly, truly, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. And then Titus, we ourselves are once foolish to disobedient, slaves to various passions and pleasures.

[21 : 17] Right? So, that's not language that no one likes to hear. I'm, you know, and again, I'm looking at it in Christ now, like, oh my gosh, I had no idea it was that bad.

Like, I had no idea that I was that ensnared by sin. Alright? Important to know, when we use the phrase total depravity, it's different than using the phrase utter depravity.

Okay? There's a reason why we use that. Tolerance means that all our faculties have been corrupted by sin. But, through God's grace, we are able to do some things for good.

Right? We are able to do some things that somewhat look like the image of God, but those are distorted still. Utter depravity means that we are as evil as we could be all the time.

And that's not the case. Like, there's restraints on us. Right? You see utter depravity inch a little bit further with, you know, police going away and, like, the authority of the state going away and people just can do whatever they want to do.

[22 : 25] You're seeing that go a step further. There was restraints on them. So, utter depravity is different than total depravity. This one doesn't need a lot of explanation, but, like, how bad is it?

everybody. Because you may think, deep down, like, I know I'm bad. I know I'm really bad, but I don't think I'm that bad. Like, it puts us all under the same umbrella.

It does. Sin's reign is universal. All men are under sin's power, and consequently all are guilty, none are righteous, none are even one.

We read this morning, I think, TJ read Psalm 130, if you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? Right?

Like, are any of you ready to face God's judgment on your own, apart from Christ? Like, no, we could not stand. We would just perish before Him. And, so, we all know, I think that's a pretty commonly accepted one, that we're all under the same curse.

[23 : 28] But, there was a rabbi many years ago who wrote a book called, some of you are all enough to remember this, why do bad things happen to good people?

Remember that? Krishna? What's his name? Well, as humbly and as gently as I can say this to him, it would be because there are no good people.

That's what this says, right here, right? no one is righteous, not even one, no one understands, no one seeks God, all have turned aside, all have become worthless, as we just read, no one does good, not even one.

Alright, so that's the condition we all find ourselves in. And our mind is hostile to God. See that in Romans 8? The mind that's in the flesh, right, is hostile towards God and will not submit to God's law.

Won't. Won't do it. Alright, so this leads to the next and last point which is controversial, right?

[24 : 38] Men, being blind in death to spiritual truth, are unable of themselves to repent, to believe the gospel, or to come to Christ.

They have no power within themselves to change their natures or prepare themselves for salvation. So, is it like, excuse me, some of you say, well, yeah, yeah, of course, I couldn't say myself, duh,

but I kind of met God halfway, right?

Like, I used my abilities and my goodness that was in me and all and my free will and I met God kind of halfway and then he did his part. well, no, what we're saying here is that you couldn't even prepare yourself for it.

Like, you were so low. Really motivational, right, people? Like, just enough. I feel like I'm getting hammered, you know, I feel like I'm getting roasted here. So, and this is important, no man can come to faith in Christ unless God grants him repentance resulting in faith.

Jeremiah, y'all know the song Jesus Painted All, the leper spots the heart of stone.

[25 : 51] What about the Bible? What about that? Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leper his spots? And also, you can do good who are accustomed to doing evil.

So, yeah, like, again, when you have no power, I have no power to change myself. I can't just reform myself and prepare myself for God. I'll give you another one.

You see that in 2 Corinthians there, that blinded the mind, Satan, the God of this age, has blinded the minds of unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel.

And then 2 Timothy, you've got the second part, God may perhaps, perhaps, grant them repentance, leading to a knowledge of the truth.

They may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil who have been captured by him to do his will. So, this idea that God has to grant it, it has to come from God himself.

[27 : 01] Those are just a handful. Like, people told me this stuff, I'm like, yeah, I don't believe it, whatever. they started saying, what about that one? What about that one? And I was like, ah, they're drowning me in scripture here.

So, I guess I'm just going to have to bow the knee and say, man, I am more, I was more wretched than I ever dreamed I was. Like, it was much worse. Like, the surgeon being like, I don't know how you were alive.

Like, that's crazy. Worst pair of lungs I've ever seen. Isn't it weird I want to actually see them? I mean, they got rid of them before I was conscious. But, we were not just bad, we were really, really bad.

So, any questions before we move on to the next section of this? About how bad we are? We were really bad. That's really only understandable in the context of how good God is.

Yep. Mm-hmm. Standing on our own, we can justify all kinds of good behavior. But, that's not what we're talking about.

[28 : 08] Nope. No, no, look, listen, you may be very good compared to some people you know.

Right? Like, that's a, you hear the gospel people, most people, but that's changing now, most people have some morality, they're like, some sense of right and wrong, and they'll say, well, I'm not that bad.

Nobody's perfect, right? I'm like, yeah, you have no idea how ironic that saying is. You're right, no one's perfect, and the standard is perfection. You're not there, and I'm not either.

So, it's, so yeah, only after you contemplate who God is do you actually see this first. Probably could have it a whole other week, just talking about how great God was, and then we showed up here, and we're like, oh man, we're done.

Colin, in his institutes, writes something like, like if you look down at the ground, and you can see things on the ground, like rocks, dirt, whatever, down near your feet, and very, very clear, right?

Like your vision's very clear. You can see it perfectly, unless you have this bad eyesight, like me. And, he compares that with looking at your earthly righteousness.

[29 : 24] Like, as long as I'm focused on earth, it's good. He's like, as soon as you gaze, like straight into the sun, your vision just blurts, right? He's like, that's what it's like to compare your righteousness to God's.

Like, you can't. And, your righteousness is skewed at that point. So, you know, but yeah, only after you have contemplated the face of God and come to look into yourself.

Anybody else? We're all family here. I know nobody came here to hear from me, but I'll say that I oftentimes don't feel a great draw to get into the Word or to pray, but what I've learned is that if I open up the Psalms or go to the last few chapters of Job, start contemplating God and His holiness and mightiness, it doesn't take me long to be very affected and really want to pray.

Yeah, turn the light to the roof. so I think that illustrates to a great point that even in my redeemed state, the reality is that the old man is still within me and those same things that are described in

Scripture about the lost and the depraved, praise God that I'm not relieved with them, but at the same time, those things are still so present in me knowing the holiness and greatness of God is the only way that I can see myself as I am and the Lord.

That's good, brother. Yeah, knowing what God's known in your life, I agree with you. That's awesome. So, I heard Aaron Menekoff at Mount Vernon.

[31 : 21] We were at that conference. What was really funny was, you know, I was preaching on election that Sunday and he taught on election at that pastor's conference. His main goal was that all doctrine is practical and all doctrine affects us.

It's not like there's doctrine and there's practical. Look at all in Mary together. And he said these discussions on what we're talking about are in-house conversations.

There's conversations you mainly talk to about with your family and they get it because they're your family. Right? That's kind of what the goal of this is. And Jay, why is that?

You brought up a really good point. Why? Why is it so hard to focus on God? You can focus on a lot of other things easily. Why? It's so hard to think about God. It's like we've had a stroke spiritually. I can't do it. We need help. It's like loving of pride. Because he's holy. He's so other from anything else in our daily lives.

[32 : 26] I think about it as long as maybe a little bit we see more of our sin and then more of his greatness in it. It can be a little overwhelming.

Yeah. Very overwhelming. Yeah. And that way to be careful not to get it away. Because we have to develop this sense of unworthiness where we're fearful to draw near to God through Christ.

But yeah, it's just self-evident. Why is it so hard for us to do what God calls us to do sometimes?

And why is it easy to do other things? I could focus on other things for hours and just lose myself in it.

But when it comes to God, what is it that makes us just turn off sometimes? And we need that extra help by the Spirit to really engage our minds and engage our hearts. It's just self-evident.

Again, we've had something go wrong spiritually, right? Even as believers, we have to fight it. Anything else? All right.

[33 : 28] Let's get into some other fun stuff. Oh, sorry. I guess I'd also choose to have believers there to still sin in us that first step because if we didn't still it wasn't still sin in us then we wouldn't have that issue.

we were in the process of becoming perfect. We're not there. This is sanctification. But thank goodness, though, unlike Rome, Rome puts sanctification before justification.

You know that? So only once you've reached a certain state of perfection or holiness then is right for God to justify you. So God helps those who help themselves.

that's just not what Romans 5 teaches at all. We were justified, right? Then sanctified. So to give you a few things here, over how has sin affected the will of man?

because we use the term free will like like crazy. You know, we hear it in culture, we hear it from non-Christians, we hear it from Christians. What does it mean?

[34 : 49] My youth pastor, well, actually, I was already out of high school, but he was a new youth pastor when I was a freshman of college, and I was going to school close to home.

So I helped out with the youth because I was kind of a young believer. I know a lot more than these schools. So I'll come here and try to help these younger people out. But he's the one who introduced me to all of this.

And I loved him and I couldn't stand him because he would just shoot down what I believe just by saying some things. But one time he was just sitting back on the desk with his kind of smug face, kind of his feet propped up, and he was just like, so what is free will, Clay?

And I was like, I don't know, I heard a movie. So, he's like, all right, go figure that out, then come back before we continue this.

So, I just had to wear it. But in short, the will is the faculty or the power of making choices.

[35 : 53] Okay? There's a difference between choosing something and willing something. All right? our will is what governs our choices. Right? It controls what choices we make.

Our wills do. So, let's go back over this a little bit. So, there's arguably more, but there's three major controversies.

So, you had to see the scripture first. All right? Now, we're going to look at some church history. Not enough just to have church history. But there was a major controversy around 1418, the early part

of the church where Augustine was the primary influence at that time.

He coined the term original sin. You've heard that? Like we're born in a fallen sinful state. Thinking about what David said and others. And he wrote a prayer in his confessions.

And it basically said, Lord, command what you will, but grant what you command. Meaning like, Lord, you've commanded us to do this, but give us your grace to do it.

[37 : 06] We need your grace to be faithful to you. We need your grace to keep your commandments. Right? And so, yeah, it makes sense to us. But there was a British monk named Pelagius.

This is like Romanized Britain time. And he had an issue with that. He was like, God wouldn't command us to do something if we couldn't do it. And it just started this huge controversy in the church.

And he was the one who talked about the idea of man's will being free. Alright? So look at the Augustinian view versus the Pelagian view.

Alright? The Augustinian view, we're going to go from left to right here. Adam's sin affected the entire human race. That's what we just read out of Romans 5, right?

Pelagius said sin affected only Adam. And he coined the phrase like tabula rosa, right? The clean slate. You're born a clean slate, untainted by sin.

[38 : 08] Adam messed up, but you don't have to mess up, right? That's kind of what he was basically saying. In short, Augustin taught man was born into a state of sin and spiritually dead, right?

That's what we just read Ephesians to. He said, no, man is born into a state of righteousness and spiritual life. Clean slate. Alright?

Now here's the deal. Third, man could not live or do any spiritual good apart from God's sovereign grace.

Then Pelagius said, man could live and do spiritual good apart from God's grace. None of us would probably go that far, right? But basically if this is true, the man doesn't need a savior.

He needs a teacher. He needs some moral assistance. He needs a life coach. He's got the ability within himself because he's not falling, he's not tainted. So he just needs a teacher to help him.

[39 : 08] Like, yeah, go that way, buddy. Do this. Live that way. And man has the ability. He could do it on his own without Christ's grace. But eventually the church kind of anathemized and kicked Pelagius out of the official accepted church at that time.

Probably for good. Augustine also taught this about the will of man. This is important because you're like, I make choices every day, so aren't I free? Like, I do this, I want to go home and do what I want to do and go to bed.

Well, some of you. And so, but this is what he defined it as. Free will is the faculty or power by which choices are made. Right? Now, he made a distinction between earthly choices and spiritual choices.

moral liberty, the ability to use that faculty of free will to embrace the things of God. Does that make sense?

Right? After the fall, moral liberty was lost, but free will remained. Meaning, like, yeah, I can still make choices, but those choices don't include the things of God.

[40 : 23] It's like we can't do things spiritually. But we can make decisions every day but we're kind of like the walking dead, really. We don't have that ability to make any spiritual good.

So he equated that with moral liberty. That was lost after the fall. Right? But not until regeneration occurs and man's, is man's moral liberty returned.

Alright? Now, so when we're born again, that's restored. Right? God saves us. He gives us a new heart. Puts His spirit within us. Writes His law in our hearts.

And so, so then, after regeneration, that moral liberty is restored where we can freely love God again. Alright? So we're not robots. We're not puppets.

We'll shoot that, we'll beat that to the ground. Okay? That's not what this is. I think I mentioned that very few people that I respect that are on the other side of this debate at all.

[41 : 22] But one, I think most of us would have a measure of respect for BCS Lewis. Right? He won't be the very few. But we would call him more of a writer and literary guy versus a Bible teacher and theologian.

But he made a good argument. He said, for love, I'm paraphrasing, for love to be love, it has to be offered by both parties. Right? You can't force somebody to love you.

You can't impose your love on them and say, love me. It has to be freely offered by both parties. Therefore, he saw, like God's election or God was forcing his love on somebody who didn't want it. I would say, I agree with you, C.S. Lewis. Like, for love to be loved, it has to be freely offered by both parties. Are we all on board with that?

You know what the problem is? Anybody? Are you thinking about a fallen man? He doesn't have the ability. He won't. He won't love God. Like, cannot and will not love God unless God does something first.

[42 : 30] Unless God gives him a new heart. And so that's what he basically is saying in the idea is he gives him back moral liberty after he's born again. That's restore so we can freely love God, freely obey God, freely walk with him.

Hey, girls, this is the chart I tried to draw you in the back of that napkin. Didn't work out real well. So, yeah? there he is.

Yeah, I mean, you can just shoot it out all night. Yeah, it's all over the place. We love because he first loved us. Exactly. I want to take credit for this.

I think it was out of one of R.C. Spurl's books a long time ago. But look at this. Pre-fall, Adam and Eve, we were able to sin and able to not sin.

They sinned. So then it goes to the fallen depraved condition. Able to sin, unable to not sin. That's like all we can do. Regenerate.

[43 : 38] This is where we are right now. We're able to sin and we're able to not sin. We can do both. We can choose to please God and obey His commandments with a loving heart.

And we can choose to go back to our vomit. As the scripture says. To which He promptly kicks us back out of love. But glorified, which we're all going towards.

Able to not sin. Unable to sin. Yay! Can't wait until we get to that point. Whoa. Put the plagianism down.

Step away. I don't know who put that in there. All right. So this, so in the Reformation, Luther wrote a book called Bondage of the Will.

Anybody heard of that book? I worked my way through about maybe halfway of it and I let a prim bar and I never finished reading it. So, Rome was getting their clock cleaned by the reformers.

[44 : 52] Needless to say, they were losing a lot of support. And so they got their top deologian, their number one guy, Desiderius Erasmus. And they said, hey, we want you to take an aim at Luther.

like, go after his teaching and like, you know, he did some valuable things. He actually wrote a Greek New Testament that he actually pointed out to the Pope, hey, the Latin Volgae actually has some errors in it.

It's not consistent with the Greek and the Pope's like, yeah, thanks, thank you, good, go sit down, in short, kind of dismissed it. But yeah, he pointed out that the Volgae had many errors in it. Some people say, the Bible had errors in it.

Yeah, it did. Well, a certain translation of it did. Not the original language that we have. But, what's really funny is that Luther loved Erasmus' Greek New Testament.

He used it all the time. Then he used his own work against him in this debate, which is really funny. If you know anything about Luther, he was not like a nice, quiet, polite guy.

[46 : 01] He was more like the guy you might see in a tavern with a beer and a turkey leg. That's kind of more of his personality. bull in a china closet. Not real refined. That would be more like Calvin's personality.

So what Erasmus did was that he took what Pelagius taught, but he just took it a step further. Right? Alright, man's not born clean.

He's born sinful, but he hasn't lost all his ability yet. He still has some ability left in order to cooperate with the grace of God. Is that right? Follow that? He just took it a step further.

So man is sick. That's basically what you could equate it to. Man is sick and he needs a physician. That physician shows up and says, hey, take my medicine, take my remedy, and you can use your free will at that point to say, okay, I'm on board, like Satan.

Get this done. So that's where most people, probably in the evangelical church probably fall right? Most of us, that's why I grew up kind of thinking, I'm really sick and Jesus is going to give me my

medicine, I'm going to get better.

[47 : 09] So that's the controversy. It's called the, in history, it's called the monergism, synergism. So monergism meaning God alone, and synergism meaning like two parts working together to achieve something, right?

So meaning God and man working together to achieve salvation, right? So look at point number one, Luther, man's fall into sin brought spiritual death to man, and he taught the same thing that Augustine taught.

Luther was in fact an Augustinian monk before he went to teach theology at Pittenberg. And then Erasmus said man's fall into sin disabled man's spiritual ability, okay?

So it impaired him. It didn't wipe him out. So basically sick as opposed to dead. sin. Number two, man's will is in bondage to sin and must be set free by sovereign grace.

So it's in bondage to sin, meaning it only can sin, which is what we just read a bunch of scriptures about. He said, no, it's free. Man's will is free to embrace sin or the things of God.

[48 : 18] It can go either way. then thirdly, salvation is completely the work of God alone. And salvation is achieved by God's work and man's exercising of free will.

So it's synergistic. So, Luther really did win the day. He quoted so many scriptures in bondage to the will. Think about what he's saying.

He's saying your will is in bondage and needs to be set free by God. But I couldn't resist. Like, if y'all know him, he's very sarcastic. He actually addressed Erasmus at the end of the book, just for fun.

He's talking to Erasmus. He goes, it is sad to have to remind a theologian like you of these things. As if you were a pupil instead of one who ought to be teaching others, I owe you a small thanks, for you have made me far more sure of my position by letting me see the case for which free choice put forward with all the energy so distinguished and so powerful a mind, but with no other effect than that to make things worse than before.

So he basically is saying, thank you for challenging me on this, because you really, you know, when your belief is challenged, you either retreat on that belief or you dig in deeper.

[49 : 37] He's like, yeah, I'm sure, because like, this may look stupid pretty much, and Luther's teaching on the bonds of the will carried the day, really.

Yep. So the next, any questions? One last controversy here. I'll hold off. All right, so the next one, the one a lot of people know about, was the Calvinist Arminian controversy, 1618.

What's the connection between Calvin and the year 1618? Anybody? Oh, come on. Think timeline. When did Calvin live?

1618? He did. He was dead a long time ago. So, so why is it called that?

Shoot, he died in the 1500s. I don't remember the exact date. Like, mid to late 1500s. So, so, but the people that he taught, the people he had influence on, were the people who responded to Arminius.

[50 : 51] Does that make sense? So, that's why it's called that. So, Calvin didn't like sit down one day and like, you know what, I'm going to write up my theology in five points. So, he didn't actually work that way. This was a response to, what Arminius thought.

So, Arminius wrote these points to basically state this surferiology, what he believed the scripture said, and he put it forward, and they took those scriptures at the Senate of Dort, D-O-R-T, if I don't know the funny name, and they examined them, like the Dutch church examined these scriptures, the Dutch Reformed church at that time.

Oh, they examined his writings, excuse me, then they responded by saying, no, not okay, and here's where they kind of landed. So, let's just go from right to left this time, but basically Arminius was taking up the same position that Erasmus, man is sick, but his will is still somewhat free, and has some ability to choose God, as where they said no, like man's will is completely enslaved to sin, completely and totally depraved.

Alright, conditional election. So, no one wants to fight the idea that God chose, right? We see that all in the Bible. So, people want to say, then, what was the condition in which God chose or didn't choose?

And, we did the whole sermon on that a while back, two sermons on it, but, what he would say is that God used his foresight.

[52 : 35] They looked down in time and said, hey, you know what? That Ty Burnett, he's a silly boy, and he's going to do some bad things, but you know what? One day, he's going to place faith

in me, so therefore, I'm going to choose him.

So, that was the condition. Like, faith was the condition by which God chose, right? That's what they're going to say. Like, he, they'll want to try to use the word foreknowledge.

That word has nothing to do, like, you know, this ability to, it's not foresight, it actually has to do with, like, relational knowledge, like, God knew who those people were, who he was going to elect and choose.

So, that was the condition, that condition was faith, but what we'll look at in a few weeks is that faith itself is a gift from God. and, actually, what we taught on is actually election is unconditional.

We read that right in Romans 9, like, that his purpose, his election might stand. Universal atonement, Jesus died on the cross for every single individual ever to walk the earth, period.

[53 : 43] He died for you, he died for Mother Teresa, he died for Hitler, he died for Stalin, he died for your best friend, he died for them all. We would say no.

He died for the elect, he died for his people, he died for the ones that the Father shows, right? So, it's a limited atonement.

I think, notice I said tulip, T-U-L-I-P, you know, limited atonements can be a bad phrase, but we'll just say this, like, Christ's atonement was limited in one way or another.

If you believe that it was meant to save everybody, then it's limited in its power, because it's not going to save everybody, and we know that. Scripture says that, and we see it all around us. So it's limited in its power, if it's not going to save everybody, or it's limited in its extension.

That's what I believe. That's what I think Scripture teaches, meaning that it saved exactly who it was meant to save, Christ bought us with His blood. That blood is precious, not just like wasted and thrown around on everybody, right?

[54 : 57] He gets what He died for. He gets His people. He gets the reward of His suffering. Yep. I had a big problem with that one back in the day.

I was like, no. two. And there are a few Scriptures that may seem to say contrary, but like using the simple hermeneutic of let me use the 50 to understand the two or three, not the other way around, and that kind of worked for me.

I understood it at that point. Then we get into the work of the Spirit. Arminius taught that when the Holy Spirit calls, you hear the Gospel, right?

You hear the Holy Spirit pulling on you, that man has the free will to reject it or receive it on his own. Like to reject it or deceive it on his own.

As where the Calvinists, I'd say, I guess taught, no, God's grace is irresistible. He makes it irresistible to the elect. And He makes it irresistible to those that the Father gave Him.

[56 : 02] And He overcomes all resistance. real quick. How many of you know the Scripture in Acts, you stiff-necked people always rejecting the grace of God?

Well, that verse. That's a quote from the Old Testament, I think. Yeah. So there it is, right? We can reject God's grace right there in that verse. Well, it might be said of me at one point, I rejected the grace of God too, right?

And you too. But there was a moment where God said, enough. And He overcame that resistance in your will. And He regenerated your heart.

And He was hunting you down day and night. And that's what you see in the Scripture, right? You don't see God being like, come on guys, please follow me, somebody. You see Him hunting down people.

He's like, that guy, that guy. Paul, Saul of Tarsus, you're mine. You don't have a choice in the matter. Right? That's what you see. You don't see God being a lonely old man, calling people, to himself, just hoping somebody will take up the Gospel.

[57 : 09] Alright? So then, Arminius consistently, okay, and if I think philosophically, logically, he thought, oh, okay, if man's free will is that God comes and he initiates, the man responds with his free will.

And God is not going to take that faculty away. Free will is so valuable to God, right? Then he consistently taught that that same free will can lead you to damnation.

You can walk away from the grace of God. You can lose your salvation. That's pretty scary. But he's consistent. He's being consistent. Like, yep, you can choose it, and you can unchoose it.

You can come to grace, and you can fall away from grace. So today, you know, Methodists, Wesleyans, they consistently believe that.

That's true. It's consistent. But what we have today is a new theology that nobody would agree with in the past. It's like, yeah, you initiate it, but then God finishes it for you, right?

[58 : 13] He's not going to let you go no matter what you do. That's not what is consistent. Both Wesley, Arminius, and Calvin would disagree with that. So God's not going to take that away from you if that's what's so valuable.

But, if it started with God, it's going to finish with God. See that? Hey, that sounds like a Bible verse. Yep. Yep, author and finisher of faith, right?

And, and another one. Yep. He started it, he finishes it. And man, I'm so glad for that one. Because I think I'd be unsaved every day. And that's what some traditions teach. That's what Rome teaches. That's what, in short, Methodists teach. And again, that's what Rome taught.

I'm not trying to go along with that. But like, no, no, no. God keeps you. Like, He saved you. He shows you before the foundation of the world. His son died and shed his blood to cover your sin and give you his righteousness.

[59 : 19] And the Holy Spirit applies that work to you at the moment, right, that you're born again. And then by God's Spirit, He keeps you until the end, until you breathe your last.

Like, you may struggle, you may, your faith may go like this a little bit, you know. Hopefully it's kind of going more like this, but we were persevered until the end and we are saved.

All right? All my Irish friends sent me this about a few years ago. the five-point baconists, you don't like Calvinism.

Bad people, already elected, completely atoned for, overwhelmingly called, never falling away.

Yeah. And Spurgeon said, I have my own private opinion that there is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism.

It has a nickname to call it Calvinism. Calvinism is the gospel and nothing else. So, Nathan was at Turret McConnell.

[60 : 34] I'm not going to know that. He worked at Turret McConnell for a while. They are not Calvinists there at all. He had a lot of stuff all the time. He said, okay, that's okay. Make fun of me. And I heard two professors laughing, kind of, ha, ha, ha.

Isn't this so stupid that so many people think that Spurgeon was a Calvinist? And he wanted to be like, no, he did. He had a book call. Yes. Calvinism is the gospel.

It was the name of the book that he wrote. So, yeah, just really funny. But, this is what we can talk about for a minute. But how has the depth and severity of our sin magnify the work of Christ in the gospel?

What do you think? That's critical. This is why this is applicable. This isn't just theory. Anybody?

Does the question make sense? I have a problem writing questions. People don't understand. I have to reword it. I think the parable.

[61 : 46] People will forget it. Sin was greater. Yeah. Yep. I think like the original intent in the garden.

Ty's reference of this morning back in chapter 2, the design was that the glory of the Lord would be over the earth as the waters cover the sea.

And like, I just think of how if that is God's greatest pursuit in this world, and we've broken it, we've rejected that plan, then like any credit to restore and to make things fulfill their purpose, and to credit man with any of it, when the only thing we have credit for is the disruption and the rejection of the Lord is a beautiful man.

I think it's mind-boggling to think that the restoration of God's purpose could be credited to ourselves.

I think it just gives a lot of hope that if God's purpose is to glorify Himself, He will do it through saving sinners, and not because of us, but despite us.

[63 : 14] Yes, despite us. Yep. For me, kind of going back to what Jeff said, I hear about the tendencies that we have to not want to be in the Word or not seek the Word, I think for me a lot of times that comes from the place in seeing my sin for what it is, and seeing it for how depraved that it really is, how much it screams in the face of God.

The contrary to me, if I'm not seeing that and walking in that truth, then I don't put the value on what Christ is on, and continue just seeking for it, worshiping that.

for us to understand this, we have all rebelled against God, and we've done so directly and indirectly.

You know what I mean? of that. Like some people say, you know what God, I know you're there and I don't care. I want to give you the birds, I'm going to do what I want to do. I'm going to live my life and be the captain of my own destiny.

And you quote the poem, right? So some people do that, but I don't say most people live in rebelling to God in an indirect way, meaning that they don't think about Him.

[64 : 50] They treat Him as if He's not there, which is to say that God is small, that He's insignificant, that He's not important, and He doesn't have the right to rule over your life. And so no matter what we do, we then rebel towards God.

But when I asked that question about how is understanding our sin, the greatness of our sin, magnify the work of Christ, I think about what John Newton said.

He said, and in his old age, my memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things. I'm a great sinner in Christ, and that Christ is a great Savior. So the greater our sin, the greater the Savior. That's kind of the point of this. So if Pelagius was right, Christ wasn't that great of a Savior. If Erasmus was right, Christ wasn't that great of a Savior either.

He was like, yeah, a little bit, not really. But if we are really fallen, like we just read in the Scripture, then man, he is like an incredible Savior then. Like, we have to have one because our condition is that bad.

[65 : 53] We have to have somebody that great to save us. This is what was written on his tombstone. John Newton, once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was by the rich mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith that he had long labored to destroy.

Yeah, I feel that, you know, very much so. But we'll have some close by Newton in the future here.