MURDER IN THE HEART

Our Churches Are Full Of Murderers'

If one believes the Bible which is the very words of Jesus Christ, We all are Guilty at One Time or Another.

“Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him” 1John 3:15.

By Pastor Del Wray

How blind man is to his own nature? Are we so obnoxious to think ourselves innocent? We may never have taken a gun and murdered another but in our minds and hearts, hatred exists and God associates that with the actual perpetrator of such a terrible crime. Our church pews are crowded with killers. Now don’t get so huffy that’s what the Bible says and Jesus spoke to men’s heart condition. If it were not there not one single person would ever have been slain. “Jesus knew what was in man.”

On June seventeenth, twenty-sixteen a twenty-one-year-old man entered Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston, South Carolina. He sat down with a small group of members who were there for a Bible study. After about an hour of listening to teaching and discussion on Mark 4:16–20, he pulled out a pistol and fatally shot nine people.

In the aftermath of the Charleston shooting, critics on television and people on social media labeled the tragedy “inexplicable” and “senseless.” While well-intentioned, these words are inaccurate. This young man’s deadly violence is indeed explicable. It does make a sort of twisted “sense.” We know why these nine people were murdered. We know why sex-traffickers thrive. We know why we cheat on our spouses. The reason for all that is wrong in the world is summed up in one word, “sin”.

The not-so-good news first: It may sound worn, but it is profoundly true: You can’t fully understand the good news if you don’t understand the bad. When God first created the world, He gave us only two descriptors applied to all that He made “good” and “very good.” But in His mysterious providence, He made the man and woman capable of rejecting His benevolence and disobeying His command. Our forefather Adam ate the forbidden fruit, and the world hasn’t been the same since. Sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and that death has spread to all men. Romans,

“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: ” Rom. 5:12.

The biblical teaching that Adam’s sin has been passed down to all people like a terminal spiritual disease is called “inherent depravity” Romans 3:10–23.

All-embracing but not thorough the depth of mankind’s sin nature is commonly misunderstood. Human beings are not as bad as they possibly could be. To be absolutely sinful means that a person’s every thought, word, and deed is malicious. But this isn’t our experience. People demonstrate benevolence all the time. They donate money and clothes to help the poor. They
become teachers to inspire young people to thoughtfulness and service. They take care of their sick parents.

Human depravity describes an extensive reality, rather than an intensive one. It means that sin extends to every aspect of our humanity. Each person’s mind, will and emotions have been corrupted by sin. No part of any human being has a defense against depravity. But this teaching does not mean that people do as much evil as they possibly could. Man’s degree of depravity does not speak of the intensity of sin in a person, only that every part of a person has been touched by it.

The guard from man’s inclination of bettering himself: The biggest enemy of our embracing this biblical truth is the contemporary belief in the inherent progress of humanity. The rapid advances in scientific knowledge during the Age of Enlightenment and the technological shifts during the Industrial Revolution deluded us into thinking that we behave better over time. The idea of sin seemed passé in the midst of tectonic changes from traditional to modern life. This reality gave rise to the idea of “self-betterment.”

Evolution teaches that, given enough time, information, and good will, people will become increasingly better on their own. Societies will become more humane, science will teach people all they need to know, and nations will become more civilized.

Human-centered evolvement undergirds the modern secular mind, and tragically it is sending people to hell. It causes people to turn away from God and seek salvation in science or the act of works in themselves. This philosophy has saturated our churches. In the philosophy of man’s own achievement, the serpent still whispers, “You will not surely die” Genesis 3:4. The biblical truth of our own depravity must be protected from man’s self-egotism, to help people seek Christ for salvation instead of themselves.

Man’s need for the good news of the gospel of the grace of God: The biblical doctrine of human depravity teaches the complete futility of all efforts at self-salvation. Human beings are not just sick in their trespasses and sins, but dead Ephesians 2:1. No matter how hard we try to do better in our own power, we will always act selfishly in the end. These problems do not arise from a lack of willpower, but from a lack of life. Only an external power stronger than sin and death can overcome the depravity that resides within us. The biggest implication of depravity is that humankind needs a Savior.

Jesus Christ was the only human being ever born who did not inherit Adam’s sin. Conceived by the Holy Spirit, he lived a sinless life and He is eternal life itself 1John 5:12. Yet because He so loved His chosen people, He willingly subjected Himself to death, even death on a cross Philippians 2:8. On the third day, He rose again, vanquishing sin and the last enemy, death. Now through faith in Christ, we too are more than conquerors Romans 8:37. Christ has freed us from the power of sin.

In Jesus, we are able to discipline our sinful nature and live holy lives to His glory. Christ’s sin-crushing power in us does not represent a mere foray into enemy territory but a complete takeover. Just as depravity once affected us in our totality, by faith in Christ, holiness now permeates our entire being. This change does not mean that we never sin. Even Christians suffer from the disease of sin and its effects, but the difference for believers is that sin no longer controls us.
The potential for evil still exists: Human depravity implies that the same seeds of murderous anger that led a young man to slay nine people in a Bible study reside in each of us as well. Just because we haven’t committed particular sins doesn’t mean we aren’t capable of doing them or worse. Human nature’s depravity should lead all of us to a humble alertness about our own potential for evil.

But God gives more grace. He has provided ways for us to continually dismiss the darkness with light. Sin flourishes when Christians are isolated, but it withers in the midst of community. God has given us the church to build one another up 1 Thessalonians 5:11. We are to exhort one another so we will not be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin Hebrews 3:13. God has also given us prayer, the preached Word, and the fellowship of those of like faith to keep the haunting presence of sinful depravity from ruling in our hearts.

Heinous acts have sin as their source, and we are all born in such entirety with a heart’s depravity. But thanks to God for the Grace He has shown us in Jesus Christ, who changes the depraved heart of man into a temple of God transforming him into one of the sons of God.

FEAR THE HEART! I BEG YOU!