

# MAN'S SATANIC ATTEMPTS TO DESTROY THE GRACE OF GOD

## Beware Of The Controversy Going On Over The Grace Of God!

Total Depravity means that sin has touched all of what a person is. In the unbeliever this means that his intellect is now corrupted by falsehood. His speech no longer brings glory to God. His motives are selfish instead of pure. His character is stained and corrupted. Furthermore, the doctrine of total depravity does not teach that the person is as bad as he can be, or that he always does the worst possible thing. Instead, it teaches that all parts and passions of the person have been touched by sin and are affected by sin. It means that our intellect is corrupted, our speech does not glorify God, and that our motives are not pure. This is because we are stained by sin and we are flawed by its effect upon us. We can recognize this fact by comparing ourselves to Jesus because He exemplifies what it means to not be touched by sin.

Jesus' intellect has no corruption. His speech always glorifies God. His motives are always pure. His character is without stain and completely flawless. How many of us would dare say that the unregenerate, like Jesus, are able to equally choose good and evil and make the right choices, not I. The truth is that we have all been touched by sin and Jesus Himself teaches us that our natures are corrupt and fallen.

Jesus said of the unregenerate...In Mark 7:21-23 Jesus said, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. "All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man." and....Matt. 15:19-20 He said, "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. "These are the things which defile the man."

And John 8:34, "Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin." and also...John 3:19, "And this is the judgment, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light; for their deeds were evil."

Why men's deeds are evil? Because Jesus said, "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit. "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit," Matt. 7:17-18.

Jesus speaks of the nature of a thing. The nature of the fallen is that he is sinful, completely touched by sin in all that he is. Likewise the Bible elsewhere says of the unregenerate...Jer. 17:9, "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately wicked; who can know it?" Rom. 3:10-12, "There is none righteous,

not even one; there is none who understands. There is none who seeks for God; All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, not even one."

Rom. 7:18, "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not." Rom. 7:23, "but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members." 1 Cor. 2:14, "But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually dead." Eph. 2:1, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins."

Eph. 2:3, "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."

Since God's Word declares that the unregenerate man has a deceitful heart, does not do good, does not seek for God, cannot understand spiritual things, has nothing good dwelling in him, is dead in his sins, and is by nature a child of wrath, we maintain that he is incapable of making a moral choice to decide to trust in Christ on his own. We maintain that his will is also affected by sin and, as the Word of God says in Romans 6:14-20, he is a slave of sin. This means that he is incapable of coming to God on his own because he cannot and will not choose contrary to his fallen and sinful nature. We see proof of this in the following Scriptures from Jesus.

John 6:44, "No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day." and again... John 6:65, Jesus said, "For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father."

If no one can come to God without the Father drawing and granting it to him, then the person is powerless to come to God of his own free will.

Please consider this again. If the free will argument is that the will of man is somehow neutral enough, somehow unaffected by sin enough, that it can make a choice between coming to God and not coming to God, then it would not be powerless and the statement "no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father," would not be true.

Since the unregenerate cannot come to God unless it has been granted to Him to do so John 6:65, then it is logically necessary that it is God who is performing the action and work of salvation in the individual. This means that God is the one who predestines, God is the one who elects and it also means that His election is not based upon looking into the future to see who would pick Him because, as we have seen, the Bible says the unregenerate heart is deceitful Jer. 17:9, that he does not seek for God Rom. 3:10-12, that he is a slave of sin John 8:34, and that he cannot understand spiritual things 1 Cor. 2:14. In other words, left to his own

abilities which are governed by his nature, He will never seek God. Why? Because the Bible says that no one seeks for God on his own. Rom. 3:10-12, "There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands. There is none who seeks for God; All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, There is not even one." Furthermore, in Rom. 7:18, Paul says, "For I know that nothing good dwells in me."

Of course, we know that Paul is not speaking about the Spirit indwelling him, for the Spirit is good. Rather Paul is speaking about his sinful nature. Therefore, if it is true that the unregenerate can choose God out of His own free will, which I do not believe, then we find something good in that person, something that has made a good and wise choice. Furthermore, it would mean that God finds some sort of favor or merit in that person by which He then saves him since God is basing His decision to save because of a quality and action in the individual. But, this would be contradictory to what the Word of God has declared that nothing good dwells in the unregenerate and that God is impartial in His elective choice. Furthermore, given the sinful nature of the unregenerate, it is not in the will of the unsaved to be born again. It is not of the will of man but of God since it is God who causes us to be born again. Proof of this is found in the two following verses...

John 1:12-13, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the power to become children of God, even to them who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." And

1 Pet. 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

Therefore, we can see that because of the sinful nature of the unregenerate, because of the bondage of sin within him, because his heart is full of evil, because He does not seek for God, God must intervene and save individuals lest none be found redeemed. In other words, God, in His sovereignty, regenerates the unregenerate giving them the ability to then desire God and granting that they believe as Phil. 1:29 so clearly states. The rest He lets go their natural way, to damnation.

But then, some will object in various ways. First, some will say that God does not intervene in the hearts of individuals so as to affect their choices. But the fact is that the Scriptures declare that God does exactly that.

Exodus 4:21, "And the Lord said to Moses, 'When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go.'"

Yes, Pharaoh also hardened his own heart Exodus 8:32, "But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go.", but this verse clearly teaches us that God also hardened Pharaoh's heart. Deut. 2:30,

"But Sihon king of Heshbon was not willing for us to pass through his land; for the Lord your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, in order to deliver him into your hand, as he is today." 1 Sam. 10:9, "Then it happened when he turned his back to leave Samuel, God changed his heart; and all those signs came about on that day."

Prov. 21:1, "The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord. He turns it wherever He wishes." Rom. 9:18, "So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires." Likewise, God also softens the hearts of people as is declared in the following scriptures. Deut. 29:4, "Yet to this day the Lord has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear."

Jer. 24:7, "And I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the Lord; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart."

Still, some will say that God simply works a kind of prevenient grace in a person that cooperates with the person enabling him to choose God of his own free will. This prevenient grace is said to be a grace given by God to an unbeliever that woos the person and gently persuades the person, to come to Christ. It is a "quickenning, aiding and directing of the energies of the free will of man" towards acceptance of Christ as a Wesleyan pastor once said. But, of course, the final decision is up to the individual. How untrue!

But, where is this in Scripture? Where does it say that God helps a person believe by working grace into him? If you say John 6:44 "No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him", then you admit that human nature is incapable of coming to God on its own, thereby validating the truth of total depravity and the inability of man to choose God apart from God's regenerative work. If you look to John 12:32 'If I be lifted up from the earth I will draw all men unto me;', then "all" here cannot mean every individual since there is no other way to be saved but by the gospel of Jesus and not all have heard that gospel of Christ.

Still, some will ask how can God hold someone responsible for that which he cannot help but do? First of all, total depravity does not mean that men cannot make choices. It says that their choices will only be consistent with the nature of fallen man which, we have seen from God's word, is fallen, a slave of sin, full of evil, is incapable of understanding spiritual things, and does not seek for God. Second, if the claim that it is not right for a person to be held responsible for doing only that which is consistent with his nature would mean that the devil himself is exempt from judgment since he also is only following the dictates of his fallen nature.

There is so much more to say, but the simple truth is that God is in control of salvation. It is He who predestines. It is He who saves. It is He who guides the heart. It is He who grants that we believe Phil. 1:29 and causes us to be born again 1 Pet. 1:3 because the truth is that as fallen people, we will not be born again of our own wills, but of God's will John 1:13. To God be the glory for saving

any of us and He did save us in spite of our bondage to sin, in spite of us never seeking for God, doing no good, and not understanding spiritual things. He saved us because of Jesus, for His glory, and by complete grace, not grace based upon the decisions of man but Instead, grace based on the decision of God.

People it is all the work of God from first to last, from salvation through sanctification and glorification, It is grace, grace alone! I say all, Jesus did it all! Don't let men and their works of the flesh deceive you! For it is the last days, "...for whatsoever is not of faith is sin" Rom. 14:23. Luke said, "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8.

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