

# Depravity - li

by Rolfe Barnard

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*The sermon emphasizes the total depravity of man and the need for a total salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 14:30

**Scripture:** Romans 5:12, Ephesians 2:1

**Topics:** "Depravity"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of understanding the actual condition of sinful man as a result of the fall in Adam. He emphasizes that the teaching of the Bible regarding man's condition is often perverted in two ways. Firstly, by giving more importance to the privacy of man than what the Bible teaches. Secondly, by confusing the degree of man's moral sadness with the extent of his fall in Adam. The preacher warns against the error of teaching that sinners, unless they are elect, cannot even hear the gospel, leading to the further error of not preaching to them.

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## Transcript

That we may have our part or a part in the recovery of that gospel that honors God and actually gets men saved, that gospel having been in a greater or lesser degree well now lost for generations and in your days and in mine. Last Lord's Day then we took up the first of the five basic teachings that we have to know about if we're going to be true to the souls of men, the actual condition of man as a result of his participation in what the Bible calls the fall, our being present in Adam and our sin in Adam. Now we must start here for if we go wrong here we'll be wrong the rest of the way.

If we do not come to the truth about men then our gospel will be a remedy that is perhaps not needed or is less than needed and our gospel will not meet the needs of ten foot men nor the requirements of a God who is holy. So last Lord's Day we suggested that the way to find out the condition of man is to lay the rule of the straight edge of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's elect man by whom he measures all mankind and in whom there is salvation and outside of being vital adjoined to him there is damnation. We are to lay that rule, the rule of the Lord Jesus Christ down beside the crooked deformities of sinful men and when we do that we see the depravity of men.

We see how far short they fall, all of them come short, maybe some more than others but all come short of the glory of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. The teaching then of the depravity of man, the actual condition of men, sets forth the extent of the fall of man and Adam, in other words how far did we fall when we fell. If

we use the term total depravity we get in some trouble as we'll see as we go along but in doing that we have reference not to the degree of man's depravity but to the extent of his depravity and we say that he is depraved, he's deformed, he's misshapen, he's crooked in all of his works that this fall extends to all of man's ability to save himself, to all of his works and to every faculty of the soul.

That's what we mean when we talk about the depraved condition of men and so to that extent we say that in the fall man became totally lost and needs a total salvation. Now we are divided today about what I'm talking about. The old-timers whom we call the followers of Arminius and they were people who tried to find out what the bible teaches and they're just as honest and earnest as any of us and we do not question their motive.

We believe they came up with the wrong answer but at any rate they taught and they still teach and this is the popular truth that this is the popular position today. The popular position today is that man lost something but that all the faculties of the soul of man are depraved except one. Now there are three faculties of the soul of man and their first is mind.

Man thinks, he's had some intelligence, man's will, man acts, he makes choices and man feels, he has affections, he has a heart, he has emotions. Now the old-timers whom we call Arminian said that man's mind was affected and depraved and that man's affections were depraved but not his will, not his will. There we get this popular what we call whosoever will gospel.

Now in one sense of the word that is so but in the deep meaning of that term it is seriously an error to preach a whosoever will gospel in a world of whosoever won't. Now if a man would he could believe in the Lord Jesus Christ but the trouble is he won't and that's the reason he's tremendously and terribly lost. Now if he isn't lost then he just needs some help and a partial recovery but either man is totally lost, in other words he's in the wilderness of sin and he can't get out and unless somebody comes and picks him up and rescues him and delivers him and redeems him and joins himself to the Lord that man will go on wandering around but he'll never get out of the pit that he dug himself.

Now the old-timers said that that's just not so, that a man's will is still pretty sound. Now all of us know that man has a will, that's part of being a man and not being a tin can or an automobile. Man has a will.

You say well brother Bond does he have a free will? He has a free will as a sinner of course but he's not free as God is free and he's not free as he would be if he weren't bound by the cords of his own sin and his freedom is under great limitation that he usually chooses what he wants to choose and his trouble is that his wanderer is in a mighty bad shape. Now the old-timers said that the depravity of man does not extend so far that we can say that a man is depraved in his will and that he needs this will operated on before he can savingly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. We teach and we believe we are right and we believe everybody else ought to tell sinners this truth that a man's will is under the power of S-I-N-F.

Now in the second place the old-timers we call our minions taught and they still do that the abilities of man are depraved except one. They say his abilities are depraved except he still has the power or the ability to believe but we teach that a man's affect if a man's affections are depraved therefore his mind is depraved too and thus he has not the ability to come to Christ in true faith except as the Lord draws him. We base that on many passages of scripture and we believe it is terribly important that in preaching to lost men we shut them up to the awful condition they're in.

I say over this radio and I stand by it and I want you to hear me and I dare you to disprove it that the gospel we've been preaching is not the whole truth because we've left with men the impression that they're not from lost. The popular teaching today is now God's done his part and now he waits for you to do yours. That damnable teaching men who believe that can never get saved unless God just ignores it and saves them without them hearing the truth and that isn't the way God does.

No we preach that God not only has done his part but he's doing his part now. We preach the saving activity of God in the gospel now. We preach that the spirit works to draw men to Christ now.

We preach that all of it flows from the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and we're able to tell the wickedest sinner out of hell, I don't care how lost in the forest and wilderness he is, if he'll stop where he is and cease his own efforts and quit believing in his own abilities and stop there in the quagmire of this sin and look up there's life in a look. Praise God. There's salvation when a man looks away from himself and looks to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Salvation's in him. We are elect in him. We are chosen in him.

Praise God. You can just get to Christ if you look to Christ, if you lean heavily on Christ, if you look away from everything else and look to him. Thank God there is life in a look.

Now my friends, I wanted for the rest of the time over this broadcast and then I think it'll take me through next Lord's Day to take up what I suggested last Lord's Day are the two ways in which the teaching of the Bible was referenced to the actual condition of sinful men. This is important with the way they are perverted. They are, have been, and they are being today perverted in two ways.

Therefore this truth is perverted by making the utter depravity of man mean more than the Bible teaches. And this truth is perverted by confusing the two terms, the degree of man's moral badness and the extent of his fall in Adam. Now next Lord's Day I think I'll take the whole of the broadcast on that second point.

And as time remains this morning, I want you to give me careful attention as I'm speaking to help as I bring before us this truth, this statement. The truth about man can easily be perverted if we make his depravity look in the direction that the Bible does not teach. Now what I'm talking about this morning is simply this, that if we make man's inability to believe the gospel, if we make that mean a physical inability or a mechanical inability, if we simply say a sinful man cannot physically hear the gospel, we are teaching what the Bible does not teach.

And now I'm at a sore spot for many young people and older people. They come to see a little of the truth of God's elect in grace and bang, they go off where the Bible does not go and they begin to preach that sinners, unless they are elect sinners, cannot even hear the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And that leads them to the further damning error that sinners, unless they are elect, therefore we need not preach to them.

And that is another terrible error. Now we are living, of course, today in a time when we got to label everything and put a name on everything. And the name that's been put on this perversion that I'm talking about now is the name hyper-Calvinist.

When I was first called a hyper-Calvinist in this country, I wondered what they were talking about. I think it means they were shooting at something that is an error. And I take up that term this morning and try to analyze it.

And I'm going to show you in the course of these broadcasts how all five of the basic teachings of the word of God that buttress the gospel can be carried too far and thus truth become error. Now let's see how the teaching of the word of God about the inability of sinners to believe the gospel can be carried too far and thus be made into a damnable error. The hyper-Calvinist, the fellow whom they say carries truth too far, he is guilty if there are such people and there is a terrible danger that this may be true.

This type of preaching carries the doctrine of the teaching of what we call total depravity. When we carry that into a physical or a mechanical inability to hear the gospel, we go beyond the teaching of the word of God. For it is definitely true that sinful men do have the physical ability to hear the gospel.

Now for instance, some preachers, kind enough to be listening to me right now, public preachers, and this morning I trust in your services maybe you'll preach the gospel and I hope there'll be unsaved people there and they'll listen. Some of them will give you very kind and courteous attention and they'll hear every word you say. They hear the gospel, but they do not hear it as good news.

If they did, they'd break up your sermon and they'd clap their hands with joy and they'd shout all over the church building as for the first time the gospel was good news to them. Now there's nothing on earth about the physical makeup of men to keep them from receiving the knowledge of God in the gospel as glad tidings of good news, but the fact remains that they do not do so. What's the matter with them? Are they physically unable? No sir, they are morally and spiritually unable.

They simply cannot receive the knowledge of God as gospel.

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