

Total Depravity

Intro: The Lord's church never has been and never will be a denomination. The church is anti-denomination. Sadly many congregations have become and are becoming nothing more than denominations. They have lost their distinctiveness. We need to be able to recognize the signs of denominationalism and the teachings of denominations so we will not be carried off by those doctrines. One such doctrine is that of the Total Depravity of man, also called Hereditary Depravity or Total Hereditary Depravity or the doctrine of Original Sin or Adamic Sin.

I. JOHN CALVIN

A. Early Life.

1. He was born at Noyon in Picardy, July 10, 1509, to upper middle-class parents.
2. He went to the University of Paris to study theology.
3. Encouraged by his father, he turned his study to a study of law, and later the humanities (studying Greek, Hebrew and Latin classics).
4. However, his interest lay in theology.

B. *Institutes Of The Christian Religion.*

1. In 1536, he published the first edition of *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.
2. "Its effect upon the Christian world has been so remarkable as to entitle it to be looked upon as one of those books that have changed the face of society." (John M'Clintock and James Strong, *Cyclopædia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* [Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1968], 2:39.)
3. While Calvin died May 27, 1564 his influence and teachings have continued to the present.

C. Calvin's Theology.

1. Much of Calvin's work dealt with the sovereignty of God.
 - a. This deals with the doctrine of predestination.
 - b. Calvin's teachings are that God determines "what he would have to become of every individual of mankind."
 - c. In particular, Calvin's predestination concerned eternal salvation (He predetermined some to salvation, others to condemnation).
 - d. Some have gone beyond Calvin's personal teaching to say that God predestined everything within a person's life (i.e., the clothes they wear on a certain day, where they will go, what they will do, what they will eat.)
2. As important as the sovereignty of God was to Calvin, the doctrine of man is equally important.
 - a. "Our wisdom...consist almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves" (John Calvin *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1:1,1).
 - b. However, Calvin did not need to spend as much time concerning man's nature because it was generally accepted that man was totally depraved.

II. AUGUSTINE (354-430 AD)

A. Much of what Calvin believed was an enlargement upon the teachings of Augustine.

B. Augustine's thoughts.

1. Augustine's beliefs came into conflict with Pelagius (a British monk).

2. As a result, “Augustine employed all his energies to establish the position that man is unable of himself to will anything good, and that divine grace is necessary for every act leading to salvation. Following the death of Augustine his teachings on grace were modified into the doctrine of predestinarianism, which denied that God wills to save all mankind. A form of this doctrine became basic in Calvinism” (“Augustine, Saint,” *The American Peoples Encyclopedia*, 1953, 2:635).

C. Augustine’s early life.

1. He fell under the influence of the Manichæan sect.
 - a. They were a gnostic sect which held the dualistic view of two eternal principles from which all things proceed (the spiritual and physical or light and darkness).
 - b. In this view all matter (the material world) is evil. Thus, the body is inherently evil and sinful.
2. “In estimating Augustine as a theologian, we must remember that he commenced his life as a Manichæan; and many believe that traces of the Manichæan doctrines (of the evil nature of matter, etc.) can be traced in the later and severer forms of his belief.” (M’Clintock and Strong, 1:542).
3. I believe that these doctrines became the foundation of the doctrine of total depravity and original sin.

III. BASIC VIEWS.

A. M’Clintock and Strong outline four basic views concerning original sin (9:765-766.), three of them in support of the theory.

B. The whole human race was literally in Adam (as the oak is in the acorn).

1. Thus, everyone participated with Adam in his sin.
2. With this view God deals with humanity as a whole and not as individuals.

C. Adam is the representative of the race (as a king represents that nation and the entire nation is held responsible for the king’s action).

1. Adam was chosen as a type to stand for humanity, and by his trial the whole race was tried, and by his sinning the whole human race sinned and fell in his fall.
2. Adam, thus, acted as representative for the race with his sin imputed to the whole race.
3. With both of these views God treats the entire human race as a unit, not as individuals. The human race is because of Adam’s sin under condemnation irrespective of the sin or virtue of the individual, and needs to be pardoned and redeemed because of Adam’ sin.

D. Adam fell becoming a sinner.

1. Working on the principle that like produces like, all individuals inherit a nature like unto Adam’s—sinful and prone to sin.
2. This view distinguishes between sin and depravity (sin consist in voluntary action, depravity is simply that disordered state of the soul which renders it prone to commit sin).
3. Thus, man is not guilty of actual sin until he voluntarily commits sin by personal conduct.

E. The fourth view is from Pelagius

1. Pelagianism denies any connection between Adam and his posterity.
2. God creates each soul as was Adam pure and innocent and undetermined towards either sin or holiness.
3. Each soul voluntarily chooses its own destiny by its choice of good or evil.

4. Pelagius and those who followed this view have been accused of progressing to a works salvation.
 - a. It excludes the need for a Savior and for man's redemption.
 - b. Man saves himself by his own goodness.

IV. EXPLAINING THE BELIEF.

A. God created Adam totally innocent and free from any sin.

1. When Adam sinned, he lost his innocent nature.
2. He became depraved and perverted.
3. This not only affected him but also this nature became ingrained into humanity.
4. Thus, every person born into the human race is born in a depraved sinful state.
5. "Augustine...taught that Adam had the choice of following God or sin. When he sinned, however, his soul became depraved and perverted. He not only was cast out of the garden, but he also could no longer have fellowship with God. This deprived him of any connection with god, and his nature was such that he could no longer choose the good. All of this depravity was transferred through heredity to his posterity. In this way every child shares the reality of original sin and is under the curse of the penalty imposed upon guilt. He makes birth itself the result of sinful concupiscence." (Mattox, *The Eternal Kingdom* [Delight, Arkansas: Gospel Light Publishing Company, 1961], p. 159.)

B. Man's Will.

1. "The human free will, though not destroyed, is rendered powerless to resist sin. We have 'not been deprived of will, but of a healthy will' (II.iii.5). As a consequence, both human reason and will are contaminated by sin. Unbelief is thus seen as an act of will as much as of reason; it is not simply a failure to discern the hand of God within the created order, but a deliberate decision *not* to discern it and *not* to obey God." (Alister E. McGrath, *A Life Of John Calvin*, [Cambridge, Massachusetts: Basil Blackwell, Inc., 1990], p. 156.).
2. However, some deny man's freedom of choice altogether. "He does not possess *free will* because he is bound to Satan who takes man captive at his will." (Duane Edward Spencer, *Tulip: The Five Points of Calvinism In Light Of The Scripture* [Grand Rapids, Mi.: Baker Book House, 1979], p. 67.).

C. Salvation.

1. Man is incapable of doing anything to save himself.
 - a. "Man is depraved in the sense that he is dead, blind, deaf, *unteachable* (emph. mine mh) in the things of God and ruled by Satan through his perverse heart and corrupt soul." (Spencer, p. 67).
 - b. "At the soteriological level, humans lack what is required in order to be saved; they do not *want* to be saved (on account of the debilitation of the mind and will through sin), and they are *incapable* of saving themselves (in that salvation presupposes obedience to God, now impossible on account of sin). True knowledge of God and salvation must both therefore come from outside the human situation. In such a manner, Calvin lays the foundations for his doctrine of the mediatorship of Jesus Christ." (McGrath, p. 157).
2. God thus must act on man's behalf. "All men are conceived in sin, and born the children of wrath, indisposed (*inepti*) to all saving good, propense to evil, dead in sin, and the slaves of sin; and without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, they neither are willing nor

able to return to God, to correct their depraved nature, or to dispose themselves to the correction of it.” (McClintock and Strong, 2:44).

V. PASSAGES CALLED UPON FOR PROOF.

A. Psa. 51:5 “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”

1. The NIV Perverts this passage.
 - a. “Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.”
 - b. This was a deliberate attempt to add this doctrine to the Bible.
2. The different possible understandings of what David says.
 - a. That it teaches that man is born in sin.
 - (1) However we understand this passage, it must harmonize with the rest of Scripture.
 - (2) This understanding contradicts other plain passages and is thus wrong.
 - b. David was born into a sinful world or environment.
 - (1) In this case David himself is not sinful, those in the world are sinners.
 - (2) I do not believe this is a correct understanding of this verse.
 - (a) Nathan has just convicted David of committing the sin of adultery and murder.
 - (b) David writes this Psalm as a psalm of repentance. He is setting forth that he is a sinner, not the world into which he was born.
 - c. His mother is the one who sinned.
 - (1) In this case, David’s mother committed sin, not David.
 - (2) Again, we would wonder what that has to do with what David did in his sin with Bathsheba.
 - d. Not entering into the congregation.
 - (1) Deu. 23:3 “An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever.”
 - (a) Ruth is the great-grandmother of David.
 - (b) Ruth was a Moabite; Ruth 1:4 “And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one *was* Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.”
 - (c) Some have drawn the conclusion that David has reference to this since he was within the ten generations prohibited from entering the congregation of the Lord.
 - (2) Deu. 23:2 “A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord.”
 - (a) David was the tenth generation from Judah’s adulterous relations with Tamar.
 - (b) Genesis 38:13-20
 - (3) I again wonder what either of these have to do with David’s sin against Bathsheba and why he would repent of such as these.
 - (4) While I do not believe that these are the correct understanding of this verse, they do not contradict the Bible’s teaching and thus, are correct possible interpretations.

- e. Using hyperbolic language to state sin characterized his life.
 - (1) By use of dramatic language David embellishes that he has been a sinner **Relatively Speaking** since birth.
 - (2) This parallels what David writes in Psalms 58:3: “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.”
 - (a) Men do not actually speak lies from birth. Actually, babies do not speak at all.
 - (b) By use of the dramatic, speaking lies characterized their life.
 - (3) David is simply acknowledging that he is a sinful person.
 - (4) This is necessary in gaining repentance from sins, which is the intent of this psalm of David.
- B. Gen. 6:5 “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” Gen. 8:21 “And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done”**
1. These are usually combined with passages that teach that man is a sinner.
 - a. Rom. 3:23 “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”; Gal. 3:22 “But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”
 - b. To teach that man is a sinner is far different than teaching that man is born in a state of sin.
 2. Only by reading something into these verses can one come to the conclusion that a person is born a sinner
 3. Genesis 8:21 says that man’s heart is evil not from before his birth, as per total depravity, but from his youth; proving the innocence of man at birth.
 4. To state that man is a sinner is true and scriptural, but man commits sin, not born into sin.
- C. John 3:6 “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”**
1. Lenski states, “There is a contrast between σάρξ (flesh—mh) with πνεῦμα (spirit—mh), and this determines that the former does not refer merely to the human body or to nature or to this with its connotation of weakness and mortality, but to ‘the flesh’ in its full opposition to ‘the spirit’: our sinful human nature.” (Lenski, p. 239)
 2. It is with this as a basis that the New International Translation perverts the word σάρξ in Romans 8 by saying sinful nature eight times, also five times in Galatians 5:13-24, along with many other passages of Scripture. They have intentionally inserted the doctrine of Total Hereditary Depravity into their “translation” of God’s Word.
 3. Context.
 - a. Jesus was teaching Nicodemus the need to be born again to enter the kingdom of God.
 - b. Nicodemus asks Jesus if He meant a second physical birth, and how that would be possible?
 - c. Jesus is only drawing a contrast between a physical birth and a spiritual birth.
 - (1) A physical birth cannot place one into a spiritual kingdom.
 - (2) To enter the spiritual kingdom one must go through a spiritual birth, of water and spirit.

4. Jesus nature.
 - a. Lenski says concerning this principle that is being established: “and one without a single exception.” (Lenski, p. 239).
 - b. Jesus, the Word, was made flesh.
 - (1) John 1:14 “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”
 - (2) Heb. 2:14 “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;”
 - (3) 1 Tim. 3:16 “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”
 - c. Thus, if there are no exceptions to this principle, then Jesus was born sinful!
 5. Lenski in discussing the Word becoming flesh correctly adds: “for the word flesh itself, as describing our nature, does not include sin.” (Lenski, p. 73).
- D. Eph. 2:1-3** “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; ²Wherein 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: ³Among 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. They would have us to believe those who are dead in sin (verse 1) are such by reason of being “by nature children of wrath” (verse 3). They teach this to mean that they were born children of wrath, thus born in sin.
 2. Verse one gives the state the people were in, but does not tell us how they got to be in that condition.
 - a. Verse two and three instructs us as to how they got into the condition of being dead in sin.
 - b. They are dead in sin because they walked in a certain way (according to the ways of Satan, the lust of the flesh and mind, and not after God).
 3. With this in mind we come to *nature*.
 - a. *Nature* comes from the Greek word φύσει (*phusei*).
 - b. This word means, “a mode of feeling and acting which by long habit has become nature.” (Joseph Henry Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1974], p. 660.)
 - c. Thus, sin had become their nature, because of their continued living in sin.
- E. Rom. 5:12-21** “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: ¹³(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. ¹⁴Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. ¹⁵But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. ¹⁶And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. ¹⁷For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) ¹⁸Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. ¹⁹For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. ²⁰Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin

abounded, grace did much more abound: ²¹That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord”

1. This is an admittedly difficult passage and one even Christians do not agree concerning.
2. One of the teachings is that what we lost in Adam is regained in Christ.
 - a. The benefits of Christ far exceed whatever was lost in Adam.
 - b. Thus, even if man became depraved in Adam they would no longer be depraved because of Christ (note *all* of verse 18 applied both to the offence and the gift of righteousness).
3. The sentence of death is passed upon all men.
 - a. This is because all men have sinned (vs. 12).
 - b. All men die spiritually, not because of Adam’s sin but because of their own sin.

VI. THE INNOCENCE OF MAN AT BIRTH.

A. God makes man upright.

1. Ecc. 7:29 “Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.”
 - a. Solomon is discussing man in general “they,” thus, indicating God made all men upright.
 - b. Man then commits sins, going astray.
2. Psa. 106:37-38 “Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, ³⁸And shed innocent blood, *even* the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood”
 - a. The Psalmist is rehearsing Israel’s history and transgression against God.
 - b. The parents sinned in their idolatry, sacrificing their children.
 - c. The children were innocent, not depraved and sinful.
3. Eze. 28:15 “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee”
 - a. Ezekiel is writing a lament for the King of Tyre.
 - b. He was perfect, without sin or iniquity, when he was created.
 - c. He continued in that state of perfection until he reached the age of accountability and chose to commit sin.
4. Mat. 18:3 “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven”
 - a. The word translated “little children” is the Greek term *ta paidia* (τὰ παιδία) which means, “a young child, a little boy, a little girl” but then for this exact phrase, “infants; children; little ones.” (Thayer, p. 473).
 - b. If babies are totally depraved then Jesus is teaching that one must become totally depraved and sinful to enter the kingdom of heaven.
5. Mat. 19:13-15 “Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put *his* hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. ¹⁵And he laid *his* hands on them, and departed thence.”
 - a. The kingdom of heaven also consist of such infants.
 - b. Thus, according to the doctrine of total depravity, men must remain totally depraved and sinful to remain in God’s kingdom.

B. Origin of man's spirit.

1. God is the Father of man's spirit.
 - a. Ecc. 12:7 "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - b. Heb. 12:9 "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"
 - (1) He makes a distinction between man's flesh and his spirit.
 - (2) There is a father of the flesh: through natural means of procreation.
 - (3) There is also a Father of the spirit who is God.
 - (4) Zec. 12:1 "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him."
2. God's gifts are good, not depraved and sinful; Jam. 1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning"
3. Since God is the author of that which is good (not evil and sinful) and man's spirit comes from God, it follows that man's spirit is good—not depraved.

C. The nature of sin.

1. Sin is transgression of God's law.
 - a. 1 John 3:4 "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law"
 - b. This can be categorized into two classes of sin.
 - (1) Sin of omission.
 - (a) God has authorized certain actions.
 - (b) When man fails to do those things he has committed sin.
 - (c) Jam. 4:17 "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin"
 - (2) Sin of commission.
 - (a) God has forbidden certain actions.
 - (b) When man does those things that God has forbidden, man sins.
2. Infants have not committed either sins of omission or sins of commission.
3. The Calvinist must invent another category of sin (inherited sin), which is in within the pages of God's Word.
4. The consequences of sin do affect others.
 - a. Examples of this truth.
 - (1) A person gets drunk then gets behind the wheel of a car; often the result is the death of innocent parties, broken homes, etc.
 - (2) A prospective mother who smokes, drinks, takes drugs, etc., will often cause the baby to be born deformed or mentally retarded.
 - (3) They are not guilty of sin, yet they are suffering the consequences of someone else's sin.
 - b. Eze. 18:20 "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."
 - c. Some consider this the discussion in Rom. 5:12-21.
 - (1) Adam sinned.

- (2) Sin brought physical death into the world; all die (physically) because of Adam's sin.
- (3) All men suffer the consequences of Adam's sin, and thus die.
- (4) This is a far cry from saying that all men inherit the guilt of Adam's sin.

D. Each person is responsible for his own sin.

1. God would not allow the Israelites to put one person to death for what another did.
 - a. Deu. 24:16 "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin"
 - b. When Amaziah became king in Judah.
 - (1) Amaziah put to death the ones who murdered his father Joash. Yet, he did not put their children to death.
 - (2) 2 Kin. 14:6 "But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin"
 - c. God follows the same course of action spiritually; Exo. 32:33 "And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book"
2. God will judge us by what we do, not what someone else did.
 - a. Rom. 14:12 "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God"
 - b. 2 Cor. 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad"
 - c. Rev. 20:12 "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works"
3. The doctrine of total depravity teaches that we stand condemned by God because of what Adam (or our ancestors) did, not what we have done.

E. Inherited Nature.

1. Those who hold to the doctrine of total depravity believe this is an inherited nature.
2. However, some individuals are righteous before God.
 - a. Job 1:1 "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil"
 - b. Luke 1:5-6 "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. ⁶And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless"
 - c. Those who are Christians today are righteous before God.
3. If man's nature is inherited, then these people's children would inherit a righteous nature and not a depraved nature.

F. There is no plan for saving infants.

1. God desire is for all to be saved.
 - a. 1 Tim 2:4 "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth"
 - b. 2 Pet. 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."
2. Infants do not have the capability to do those things necessary for salvation.
 - a. Faith is necessary for salvation.
 - (1) Heb. 11:6 "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

- (2) This faith comes upon hearing; Rom. 10:17 “So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
 - (3) Faith is the proper reasoning based upon the evidence given (concerning God the Father, Jesus, and the Gospel plan God established).
 - b. Upon that faith, they must repent of the sins they have committed.
 - (1) Luke 13:3 “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”
 - (2) Acts 17:30 “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:”
 - c. Then they must confess that Jesus is the Son of God; Rom. 10:10 “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”
 - d. Upon these things they are then to be baptized in water for the forgiveness of their sins.
 - (1) Mark 16:16 “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
 - (2) Acts 2:38 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
3. If infants are born sinful, and they do not have the capability to be saved, they would be lost with no opportunity of salvation. This is against the nature of God.

VII. RESULTS OF BELIEVING IN TOTAL DEPRAVITY.

A. The practice of infant baptism.

1. Original sin, as St. Paul has told us, is universal. Every child is, therefore, defiled at its birth with the taint of Adam’s disobedience. Now, the Scripture says that nothing defiled can enter the kingdom of heaven. Hence Baptism, which washes away original sin, is as essential for the infant as for the full grown man, in order to attain the kingdom of heaven. (James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith Of Our Fathers* [Baltimore, Md., John Murphy Company, 1904], p. 260.)
2. If this doctrine was true, it would have been true during the first century.
 - a. We do not see any example during that time for the baptizing of babies.
 - b. There is no command for this practice.
 - c. The requirements of baptism cannot be done by babies.
3. Thus, we know that this practice is wrong.
4. Closely connected with the practice of infant baptism is affirming, dedicating, and consecrating babies. (This practice has made its way into some congregations today).

B. False concepts of the work of the Holy Spirit.

1. Since man is totally incapable of doing anything good, God must do something to save man.
 - a. God sends the Holy Spirit into depraved man, changing man’s nature.
 - b. The Holy Spirit enables man to understand God’s Word, be convicted of sin, and then enables man to obey God.
 - c. The Holy Spirit also sanctifies (enables them to live righteous) the one whom He saves.
2. These errors have also made inroads into the teaching of members of the Lord’s church.

C. Makes God a respecter of persons.

1. God is the one who must decide whom He saves and whom He will not save (by sending the Holy Spirit into their hearts).
 - a. Rom. 2:11 “For there is no respect of persons with God.”
 - b. Acts 10:34-35 “Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: ³⁵But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”
2. This leads to thinking that I have no personal responsibility.
 - a. If I do something wrong, it is not my fault.
 - (1) I could not help myself since I am totally depraved.
 - (2) “The devil made me do it.”
 - b. I can blame God since He did not send the Holy Spirit into my life convicting me of sin, converting me, and sanctifying me.
 - c. I can also blame the Holy Spirit for not doing the proper job on me.

D. Denies the power of God’s Word.

1. The Spirit must enable man to understand God’s Word.
 - a. John 8:32 “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
 - b. Eph. 5:17 “Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*.”
2. God’s Word does not draw men to Christ, the Spirit must do that; John 6:44-45 “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. ⁴⁵It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”
3. The Spirit is the one to save and change man; the Word alone is incapable of doing this.
 - a. Rom. 1:16-17 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
 - b. 1 Cor. 15:1-4 “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; ²By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. ³For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; ⁴And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:”
 - c. Jam. 1:21-22 “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. ²²But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”

E. Impedes the evangelistic nature of the church.

1. If the Gospel is impotent to draw men to Christ, convict, and convert the sinner, why spend the money, time, and effort in taking the Gospel to the world?
2. God is the one who is responsible for sending the Spirit into someone to save him. Man has no part in the conversion process.
 - a. Mat. 28:19-20 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”
 - b. Mark. 16:15-16 “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
3. Is this the reason we are not as evangelistic as we should be?

Conclusion: We must not take this doctrine lightly. It is very dangerous. If we accept this doctrine, then the rest of Calvinism logically follows. We must be firm in our stand against this perversion of the nature of man and God's Word.