

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord May Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

No. 33

November 2014

Personal Depravity and Salvation

Introduction

Since Adam sinned in Eden it has been a characteristic of humanity to be proud of what they have, what they know, or the position they may have. When it is the matter of salvation then human pride begins to glare in its fulness for several things come to the fore:

- a) The tendency to think of themselves as average and there are others a lot worse than they are!
- b) The acceptance of what men of the cloth say without comparing it with the scriptures.
- c) The pride of belonging to an influential church.
- d) The erroneous assumption that, as an individual, they could offer something to God for their acceptability.
- e) The outright rejection that God would ever shut them out of heaven for “look at the good they have done”.

These all show how far man is from God, how totally depraved every human is.

I am aware that this doctrine is theoretical and applied mainly to the unsaved, but it is a teaching which every saint should know, for when God saved them, He did not take away the old nature, and indeed the closer one lives with the Lord the more they are conscious of the debasement of the human heart.

The doctrine of depravity has nothing to do with how man evaluates himself spiritually, but God’s true and perfect evaluation. Man imagines that there is a little bit of good in everyone, and if his “higher self” is appealed to, such a one will become a model citizen.

The Depravity of Humanity As Revealed In The Scriptures

Accepting that the scriptures are the “Word of God” (Heb. 4:12) and “the scripture of truth” (Dan. 10:21), then there must be acceptance of God’s evaluation of us. He is the God of truth (Deut. 32:4), but Satan is a deceiver (Rev. 20:3, 8) and a liar (Jn. 8:44) who keeps man blinded (2 Cor. 4:4) to the truth about themselves. Only God will tell us our true spiritual condition. Therefore, we must be willing to let God speak to our hearts through His word. Having said that, due to pride in our hearts it is possible we apply the truths to others, or shrug it off as not relating to ourselves.

1) What is meant by “depravity”?

- a) Depravity is that inward corruption which permeates every aspect of each individual so that it is impossible to have a true understanding of their own condition before God. Each individual is born with a deviant nature which is self seeking and in time responds to sin as a nail to a magnet. The entire personality is disfigured so that intellectually, emotionally, physically, physiologically, and spiritually nothing is seen in truth and without distortion.

2) Concerning man universally God states:

- a) "There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10-12)
- b) Every human, except the Lord, was born with sin within them. Being the children of Adam and Eve we were born with a sinful nature so that we can say with David: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psa. 51:5).
- c) Paul, by the Holy Spirit, wrote: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners" (Rom. 5:19). In other words, not only were we born as individuals who naturally would respond to sin, but our hereditary relationship to Adam and Eve put us in the place of condemnation (Rom. 5:16, 18).

3) The condition universal depravity puts us in:

- a) Total corruption in every way
 - i) "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known" (Rom. 3:13-17)
 - ii) Without the fear of God: "There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. 3:18)
 - iii) Being in a spiritual condition which makes it impossible to please God: "They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:8).
 - iv) We all are "ungodly" (Rom. 5:6); "sinners" (Rom. 5:8); "enemies in your mind" (Col. 1:21); "alienated from the life of God" (Eph. 4:18).
- b) It has:
 - i) Effected his heart, ears and eyes: "For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." (Acts 28:27)
 - ii) Diverted his pathway: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way" (Isa. 53:6).
 - iii) Warped his mind: "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Rom. 8:7)
- c) We are condemned and already under the judgment of God:
 - i) We "were by nature the children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3)

Depravity has to do with man's spiritual state and God will use easily understood expressions to prove such.

- a) Man is "under sin" - "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin" (Rom. 3:9). That is, every child born is a child of Adam, and when Adam sinned he passed the "germ" of sin to his every offspring. Man sins willfully and in ignorance, but it is still sin, an act of insubordination. This is exceedingly serious for the Holy Spirit in Hebrews informs us that: "If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" (Heb. 10:26). That is, if an individual deliberately rejects the sacrifice of the Lord on their behalf, there is no other sacrifice for their sins.
 - i) Man is "under the sentence of condemnation" - There are many who say that they cannot know if they are going to heaven or not, that they will only know when at the judgment God will review their good and bad works, then it will be determined where they will go. God emphatically tells us "NO! "the axe is laid unto the root of the trees (Matt. 3:10). They are condemned already.
 - ii) Man is under "the curse" [Applied particularly to the Jews (Gal. 3:10), but applicable to all those who are trying to get to heaven by keeping the law. They are in reality putting themselves under the curse of God.]
 - iii) Thank God we can read: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13). No works of man can make the individual fit for heaven. Fitness is found only in Christ who bore the curse, the penalty for sins, for my sins.

[How Can An Individual Be Made Right With God?](#)

For an individual to be in fellowship with God certain factors come into play.

1) **There must be knowledge:**

- a) That I am incapable of making myself fit for God's presence:
 - i) It is irrelevant what religious endeavor an individual seeks to fulfill, or zealously seeks to keep the law, God gives His commentary:
 1. "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6)
 2. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5)
- b) That I am already under the condemnation of God:
 - i) "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (Jn. 3:18)
- c) That I personally am going to perish for all eternity:
 - i) "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:15)
- d) That there is only one way of salvation and that is by the work of Christ at Calvary:
 - i) "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12)
- e) That salvation is the acceptance of the gift of salvation received by believing God:
 - i) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8)
 - ii) "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23)

2) **There must be:**

- a) The deliberate conscious acceptance of Christ as Lord and Saviour, that is, without any dependence on works of my own but depending on the finished work of Christ. Putting it another way, it is the transferring of my faith on my works and religiosity, and accepting God's gift as one would receive any gift. When that is done, there at that instant all condemnation is removed, and salvation is assured by God.

[The Decision](#)

- a) Will I accept God's evaluation of myself?
- b) Will I accept Jesus Christ exclusively as my Lord and Saviour?
- c) Will I do it now?

... Rowan Jennings