

Calvin Quote

“The Scripture is the school of the Holy Ghost, in which, as nothing necessary and useful to be known is omitted, so nothing is taught which it is not beneficial to know. Whatever, therefore, is declared in the Scripture concerning predestination we must be cautious not to withhold from the faithful, lest we appear either to defraud them of the favor of God, or to reprove and censure the Holy Spirit for publishing what it would be useful by any means to suppress. Let us, I say, permit the Christian man to open his heart and his ears to all the discourses addressed to him by God, only with this moderation, that as soon as the Lord closes His sacred mouth, he shall also desist from further inquiry. This will be the best barrier of sobriety, if, in learning, we not only follow the leadings of God, but as soon as He ceases to teach, we give up our desire of learning.”

The Five Points

Arminianism

Free Will

(Human Ability)

Conditional Election

Universal Redemption

(General Atonement)

**Holy Spirit's Regen-
erating work limited
by Human Will**

Falling from Grace

Calvinism

Total Depravity

(Radical Corruption)

Unconditional Election

Limited Atonement

(Particular Redemption)

Irresistible Grace

Perseverance of the Saints

(Preservation of the Saints)

Unsaved Man's Condition

“I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father but by Me.” John 14:6

We note that man is lost, blind, and dead.

By nature man is:

Dead Romans 5:12

Bound II Timothy 2:25f.

Blind/Deaf Mark 4:11f.

Uninstructable I Corinthians 2:14

Naturally Sinful

At conception Psalm 51:5

In practice Genesis 6:5

Total Depravity—a closer look

What it is NOT

A. Not absolute depravity—man is not as sinful as he possibly could be, not as vicious or mean-spirited as possible

This is to say that any man

--could commit worse sins

--could commit more sins

B. Not complete absence of relative good (human good)

And if you do good to them who do good to you, what thanks do you have? For sinners also do the same. Luke 6:33

“But what are good works?” ANSWER: “Only those which are done from true faith, according to the law of God, and to His glory.”

Heidelberg Catechism

Summary: Man does not commit all the sins possible.

Man does not sin as badly as possible.

Man can perform relative (human) good.

Total Depravity—a closer look

What it IS

A. Positively: only and always sinning

Gen. 6:5—man's wickedness

1. was great
2. penetrated to his heart
3. penetrated to the thoughts of his heart
4. penetrated every imagination of
5. was continual
6. was pure evil

Jeremiah 17:9 ---deceitful, desperately wicked

Psalms 51:5 ---shapen in iniquity

Romans 14:23 ---whatever is not of faith is sin

Ephesians 2:1-3 ---dead in trespasses and sins

Romans 5:12, 19 ---Adam's posterity affected

Romans 3:9-20 ---all under sin, none righteous

Total Depravity—a closer look

B. Negatively: total inability

1. Man cannot do the good (no capacity for this)

Matthew 7:17-18 good tree, bad tree

Romans 8:7-8 Mind of the unsaved

---hostile to (enemy of) God

---not subject to God's law; ie, he is
unable to obey God

---cannot please God

2. Man cannot understand the good

Ephesians 4:18 understanding is darkened

John 8:43 did not understand Jesus because unable to hear

See also Matthew 13:14, I Corinthians 1:18-21; 2:14

3. Man cannot desire the good

Ephesians 2:1-3 dead in trespasses and sins

John 6:44 Father must draw men to the Son

John 6:65 Father must grant faith and repentance

Three Views of Natural (unsaved) Man

1. Pelagianism (Pelagius)

- Adam's sin affected only himself.
- Only Adam's physical characteristics were passed down
- Newborns are as holy in nature as Adam before the Fall
- All sin consists in voluntary wrongdoing (not thoughts).
- All men are always able to recover themselves from sin by the power of their own wills.
- Man is always able to reject wrong and choose right.

CRITIQUE

This view denies the need for:

- unconditional election
- irresistible grace
- God, in sanctification,

and nearly denies need of any atonement. It does not account for universal sin, nor is it true to human experience. Clearly, Pelagianism is

contradictory to Scripture!

Three Views of Natural (unsaved) Man

2. Arminianism (Arminius)

- Imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity is real.
- Man is unable to turn to God by means of his own strength, wisdom, or works (total depravity).

Then, how can a man be made right with God?

****God gives to every man sufficient grace to overcome this natural inability. This is called "common grace," or "common sufficient grace."*

'The operation of this grace is carefully limited', however; it is never sufficient to secure that any particular person will certainly exercise faith and be saved. It is sufficient only to enable the will to choose right and wrong, good and evil, life and death.

CRITIQUE

This is practical Pelagianism (see critiques thereof).

Three Views of Natural (unsaved) Man

3. Calvinism (Calvinus)

“We believe that all the posterity of Adam is in bondage to original sin, which is a hereditary evil. what God had given to Adam was not for him alone, but for all his posterity; and thus in his person we have been deprived of all good things, and have fallen with him into a state of sin and misery.”

--a present inability of will on the part of man, owing to his birth in sin

--man is responsible for his own sinfulness

--born in moral likeness to fallen Adam

--born a rebel against God

--born in the realm and under the dominion of the devil

--born an enemy of God, a violator of His law

Thus, man justly merits the punishments of Hell.

RESPONSE to the doctrine of TOTAL DEPRAVITY

Toward the Triune God:

Supreme thankfulness for God's single-handedly having delivered us from sin, Satan and hell when we were totally incapable of doing anything to rescue ourselves.

Toward the unsaved:

Compassion

Patience

No surprise re: their lifestyles

Forgiveness

Prayer for

----God's kindness toward them

--opportunities to witness the Gospel