

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

THE PIONEER BAPTIST

INDEPENDENT • MISSIONARY • ESTABLISHED 1786

“Preaching the same truth since before Kentucky was a state”

VOLUME 37, NO. 3

DECEMBER, 2005

24th ANNUAL MISSION BIBLE CONFERENCE - October 24-26, 2005

It was great to once again see our brothers and sisters in the Lord! Our church enjoyed these three days of fellowship and feasting on God's Word (as well as the food the ladies prepared)! We were blessed to have you all; and we especially thank those who traveled great distances to join us. It's always good to renew our friendships in the Lord! For those who were not here, check out the back page of this paper to order the messages that were preached.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

By: C. D. Cole

Depravity is a word that describes the state or disposition of man considered as a moral being. A moral being is one who is accountable to God for his thoughts, speech, and conduct. Depravity means the moral corruption of human nature; it refers to the state of sinfulness natural to the unregenerate.

Man's condition is not determined by what he feels or says about it, nor by what the people (whether friends or enemies) think or say about it, but by what the word of God says about it. The Bible gives us the only true photograph of man's moral condition in the sight of God. What we are in God's sight should be our chief concern. But alas! The majority are more concerned about a reputation in the sight of man. Good opinions of others are very apt to deceive. And a good opinion of self is even more dangerous. Sincerity is not sufficient to deliver one's soul. Proverbs 16:25, "*There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*" It has been the age-long tendency for man to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. He has ever been prone to believe the devil's lie, Genesis 3:5, "...ye shall be as gods..." rather than God's truth, Genesis 2:17, "...thou shalt surely die." Depravity is the word used to describe man's state of being by nature. The adjective total tells of the extent of this depravity of nature. It reaches to every part of man. Depravity denotes the absence of anything good in man. We shall divide our message into three parts: first, the doctrine explained; second, the doctrine proved; third, the consequences of the doctrine. And in conclusion, we will show the value of the doctrine.

THE DOCTRINE EXPLAINED

Care must be exercised here. Some reject the doctrine of depravity, because it has not been properly presented to them.

It is no part of this doctrine of total depravity--that lost men may not believe some things which are entirely true. The demons believe some truth. James 2:19, "*Thou believest that there is one God; thou dost well; the devils also believe, and tremble.*"

It is no part of this doctrine--that lost men may not do some things which in themselves are right. Lost men have an affection for their children and will defend and protect them. Lost men may have a spirit of devotion to their country. Devotion to place and affection for offspring are instincts. They are present in both man and beast. But they are not evidences of righteousness and holiness. Lost men may pay their debts, but this is no evidence of love for God. A lost man may even hate his sins, but only because they are

injurious to his own interests. Depravity has to do with man in his attitude toward God. Nothing the unregenerate does is for the glory of God, nor prompted by love to God.

Illustration: A ship's crew is in mutiny against their officers, they put them in chains and take the command of the ship. They agree to set the officers ashore on some uninhabited island, to sail to some distant port, dispose of the cargo, and divide the amount. After parting with their officers, they find it necessary, for the sake of self-preservation, to establish some kind of law and order. To these laws they adhere, and shew much respect for each other. They agree to an impartial distribution of their plunder. But while they are on their journey, one of the company relents and becomes very unhappy. The others inquire the reason. He tells them that they are all engaged in a wicked cause. They plead their justice, honor and generosity to each other. He denies that there is any virtue in it, while they are in rebellion against the law of justice.

This depravity is total, that is, it extends to every part of man's being. Not a question of degree but extent. In the above parable, while there was no virtue in the ship's crew showing respect to one another, yet they would have been worse by killing each other. Total depravity does not mean that man is as mean as he may become, or that he is as mean as Satan. Here is a corpse; life has just left it. It is totally dead, every part of it is dead; hands, feet, eyes, ears, no life anywhere about the body. But it will be in a worse condition in a week from now. Depravity is spiritual death; every faculty of the human soul is dead in sin.

The cause of depravity. It is inherent. It is not the result of environment or education. The child of the minister is as truly depraved as the child of the bandit. Ephesians 2:3, "...by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

THE DOCTRINE PROVED

If the Scriptures are allowed to speak, the doctrine of depravity is easily proved. It is proved:

By the Scriptures which expressly teach it. The understanding is darkened. Romans 3:11, "*There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.*" Ephesians 4:18, "*Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.*" The affections are alienated from God. I John 4:10, "*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*" John 3:19, "*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the*

world, and men, loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

By the Scriptures which declare the utter impossibility of the natural man to do anything pleasing to God. Romans 8:7-8, "*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*" Hebrews 11:6, John 6:44, "*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him...*"

By the Scriptures which teach the necessity of the new birth. John 3:1-8, "*There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*"

By the Scriptures which teach that conviction, repentance, and faith are from God. John 16:8, "*And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.*" II Timothy 2:25, "*...if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.*" Ephesians 1:19, "*And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.*"

CONSEQUENCES OF THE DOCTRINE

Consequences of the fact of depravity. Depravity is a foundation doctrine of the once delivered faith. To be wrong here is to be wrong on all the doctrine of grace. Many oppose the doctrine of election because they are not sound here. If depravity is true, then man is in a terrible condition. So terrible that it cannot be exaggerated. A preacher once committed a terrible sin against my soul. Do you ask how? By flattering me instead of telling me how bad I was. The turning of man's heart must be altogether of God and

free grace. And this is exactly according to scripture. Psalm 65:4, "Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of the holy temple." Jeremiah 31:3, "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." II Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

THE VALUE OF THE DOCTRINE

It tends to humility. It is a great blow to the pride of life. It increases appreciation of the grace of God.

I close now by giving attention to one objection to this doctrine. Some may argue that to have such a mean and contemptible opinion of self as belief in the doctrine will produce, will lead to the loss of self respect, and be conducive to a cringing and cowardly spirit. But the facts are otherwise. Job abhorred himself before God, but held his own with his human opponents. Luke 5:8, "When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." But on Pentecost he charged the people with the murder of the Son of God. Acts 2:23, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Paul said, Romans 7:18, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing..." But who would accuse Paul of cowardice before men? The most fearless preachers of modern times were the Puritans, and without exception they believed in total depravity. The fact is that the fear of God makes a man fearless before men. It is degrading to worship men, but it is ennobling to worship God.

APPRECIATION OF THE MERCIES OF GOD

By: C. D. Cole

Romans 12:1-2, "I Beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Romans, chapter 12, begins the practical and hortatory portion of Romans. If the doctrinal part is distasteful, the practical part will be repulsive. People who do not like the doctrines of the Bible will not like the commands of the Bible. He who despises the mercies of God will rebel at the commands of God. Practical Christianity must rest upon doctrinal Christianity. You cannot divorce doctrine from life. As G. C. Morgan puts it, "You cannot grow the tulips of the kingdom of God unless you get the bulbs from heaven." The strength for a Christian life is found in God and His word and not in man and his opinions. A man's conduct is the fruit of what he believes. If he believes falsely, he will live badly. The flower of a Christian life has its roots deep in the soil of experienced grace.

In Romans Paul gives the greatest of all expositions of the grace and mercy of God; gives expression to his feeling of adoring wonder at the ways of God; and exhorts to becoming conduct on the part of those who have been able to follow him in his discussion of the mercies of God to poor, lost, and dying sinners.

PAUL'S GREAT APPEAL

He beseeches. He does not command like Moses. The Christian minister cannot give orders nor compel; he can only get things done by beseeching and appealing. His weapons are arguments drawn from the word of God. His sword is the word of God which is the sword of the Spirit. It has been said that if a people like their preacher they will do anything he wants them to do. This is so, but the true minister of Christ wants people to do things because they love to do.

Paul beseeches by the mercies of God. He appeals to a sense of their appreciation of the mercies of God. This is the greatest argument for a godly life. The highest and purest of all human motives is to act out of appreciation for the mercies of God. Paul has discoursed on the mercies of God from election to glorification; he has shown that all that has been done for sinners is through the grace and mercy of God, and now he says in effect, "I beg you to show your appreciation of the mercies of God by which you have been saved."

Gratitude is a rare virtue. What seems to be gratitude is often the very heart of selfishness. Some one has said: "The gratitude of most men is but a secret desire of receiving greater benefits."

"The gratitude of place - expectant is a lively sense of future favors." Sir Robert Walpole.

*"I've heard of hearts unkind,
Kind deeds with coldness still returning;
Alas! The gratitude of men*

Hath oftener left me mourning." (Wardsworth)

"Revenge is profitable, gratitude is expensive." (Edward Gibbon, 1737-1794).

Paul knew this and if he could get the Roman Christian to have a sense of gratitude for the mercies of God, then they would present their bodies as sacrificial service to God. The saint who does not give God much of his time and money and service is lacking in appreciation of the mercies that saved him.

There is lack of appreciation everywhere. Husbands do not appreciate their wives and vice versa. I am reminded of a woman who said that she would burst into tears of joy if her husband were to ever pat her on the back and say, "Good ole' Fido; faithful old dog." Yes, many a man shows more appreciation of his dog than he does of his wife; kinder to his dog than to his wife.

It is often that a church is lacking in true appreciation for the work of its pastor. Preachers are to be loved for their work's sake. A lazy preacher is not to be appreciated. It has been said that every person has a field of usefulness, but the trouble is that so many of us are too lazy to jump the fence.

Paul beseeches them to present their bodies to God. The word present is a temple term and alludes to bringing thither something to God as an offering. Our bodies are to be yielded as members of righteousness unto God. Consecration must be to God, not to a cause, nor a work. A person may be consecrated to a good work and be absorbed in it and forget God. We must consecrate ourselves to God and do what we do in His service out of appreciation of His mercies. The Ephesian saints were busy but they had left their first love.

Paul beseeches the Christians to be different from the world. "Be not conformed to this world."

The result of this transformation will be to prove or demonstrate what is that good and perfect will of God.