

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

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[the bold texts, as they appear in the original are retained.]
courtesy: Mr. Gary S. Dykes

The doctrine or teaching of Total Depravity is taught in the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation. We as God's people will never be able to fully understand and appreciate the doctrines of **Unconditional Election and Particular Atonement** unless we are able to comprehend the clear teaching of the totally depraved and ruined condition of man through the fall of Adam. When we say man is totally depraved, we mean he is in a state of deadness as far as the spiritual things of God are concerned. This individual is described in the Scriptures as the natural man. (I Corinthians 2:14) The meaning is he (man) is only of the flesh. His life, reasoning, thinking, desires and **will are** limited to his nature, which is only carnal and fleshly. His **will** is certainly free, but cannot exceed the bounds of his nature. A wolf cannot **desire or will to** be a rabbit. A rabbit cannot **desire or will to** be a wolf. Both are fixed within their nature. The natural man (one dead in trespasses and sins) cannot desire **or will** the spiritual things of God because it is contrary to his nature. (Please carefully read and study I Corinthians 2:9 - 14.)

This is the case of fallen man prior to Regeneration or New Birth. If the natural man's **will or desires** are confined to his nature of flesh, carnality and sin, how can he **will or desire** the spiritual birth which is foreign to his nature? The answer is, "He cannot!" If he is to have a spiritual nature, it must be given to him by free, sovereign grace! God **must first** make us **alive, or quicken** us, or give us a spiritual nature **before** we can **desire or will spiritual things**.

This is exactly what God does! Ephesians 2:1 'And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.' Notice that Paul said it was entirely of God who gave the new birth or spiritual nature. Neither Paul nor the gospel is mentioned as an instrument that God uses in His work! Paul knew that before anyone could hear, respond to, and embrace the gospel as the saints at Ephesus had, they must already have been quickened to a spiritual nature, **because the gospel is a spiritual message to a spiritual people!** The natural man (unregenerated) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. The preacher and the Gospel do not or cannot give us life! It does bring life and immortality to light! (II Timothy 1:10). The Gospel reveals and makes known to the new born babe what God has already done for him.

When man teaches that we are in an **unregenerated state**, and must perform certain spiritual acts **before God** can save us, it is perfect evidence that he has never understood the Biblical teaching of Total Depravity of Man, and therefore cannot see the necessity of Free and Sovereign Grace. How can a dead man desire, will, or respond to anything? Belief, faith and, repentance are fruits of the Spirit of God that the **natural man cannot** receive while in a state of unregeneracy. (I Corinthians 2:14). **Life must precede** all actions, desires, or wills. It is incredibly foolish to believe differently.

It is my desire that all of God's people might realize and acknowledge this great Bible truth, and give God all the glory for the salvation of His people. When we understand these basic teachings of God's Word, there is no room for man to boast of those he believes will be in Heaven because of his preaching or witnessing to them. The purpose of the preacher and gospel is **to teach and instruct God's people...not to make them God's people!!**

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; **For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:** Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;" (Ephesians 4:11-14).