

The Depravity of Humanity # 1

Ephesians 2: 1-3

Tonight I want to begin a series that deals with basic biblical doctrine. One of the greatest tragedies among the modern church is a lack of basic instruction. I am convinced that churches are filled with folks who have no idea what they believe or why, and much of what they do believe is not consistent with the Bible.

Now, this is not entirely their fault. Many church leaders have been saved for a number of years, and a good portion of those were raised in church. They have been exposed to biblical doctrine for most of their lives. Likely not intentionally, but inadvertently, many in places of leadership assume that others know what they know. The average church does not take the time or put forth the effort to properly teach the basic doctrines of the Bible. We see people saved and baptized, welcome them into the church, and then expect them to serve the Lord and have a reasonable knowledge of the doctrines of the faith. Sadly, many fall through the cracks because no one saw the need to instruct them in biblical doctrine.

This series will not deal with every issue that may arise, but it will cover the fundamental doctrines of the faith. As we begin this evening, I want to deal with an issue that is often overlooked in the modern church: the depravity of humanity. We live in an age where most never realize their need for Christ. They have been fed a doctrine that all people are basically good and a loving God would never condemn or judge them. People will never come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ until they see themselves lost and undone before Him.

I think it is safe to say that most of us realize that we were born in sin, separated from God, but we cannot assume that all know that important fact. We are condemned because of our sin and have no means of reconciliation within ourselves. The lost are in a hopeless condition apart from the grace of God. [Jer.13:23 – Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.](#) Humanity must realize they can do nothing to merit their salvation, and apart from a relationship with Christ, they remain in their sin. Let's take a moment to consider the [indictments](#) that are raised in the text concerning the lost as we think on: [The Depravity of Humanity](#).

I. Man is Dead (1) – [And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;](#) Notice:

A. The Miserable Existence – Paul reveals that prior to salvation in Christ, being quickened (made alive) in Him, we were [dead](#). I know that is strong language, but we cannot ignore it; it is right there in the text, easily understood. Now, I am not speaking of physical death, but spiritual death. All who are apart from God are dead in sin. They are a living corpse, walking about without

the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. A corpse can't enjoy the beauty of the day, the fragrance of a rose, the kiss of a loved one, or the simple pleasures of life.

- Just as those who are physically dead can't respond, those who are spiritually dead can't either. The lost man doesn't see the beauty of the Creator, hear the still, small voice, experience the loving touch of the Savior, or see His great love for all. The lost don't interact with the things of God: the church, the Bible, or other believers; they are dead. We were all in that state. [Rom.3: 23 – For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.](#) The world may not like it, and even chose to deny it, but the fact remains apart from Christ humanity is dead.

B. The Undeniable Evidence (1) – [And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.](#)

Prior to salvation we were all dead in trespasses and sins. You may be here lost and say, “Pastor, I'm not a bad person. I live a good moral life; I just haven't been saved.” Well, I've never heard of degrees of deadness; dead is dead!

- We are all guilty of trespasses and sins. [Trespasses](#) speak of “*falling by the wayside; a fault, error, or lapse; committing a mistake or wrongdoing.*” You may have been a good person, but I am certain we have all committed trespasses. We are also guilty of [sins](#). This literally means “*missing the true meaning and scope of God.*” How can one possibly understand the Lord and live according to His will apart from a relationship with Him? We cannot, and while living in sin we live contrary to what God desires.

- We may chose to ignore or deny it, but the fact remains we are dead in sin apart from Christ. The evidence is there and it cannot be denied. The consequence of our sin is separation, thus spiritual death. If you've never trusted Christ as Savior, you're dead in sin. Your only hope is to be resurrected a new creature in Christ Jesus.

I. Man is Dead (1)

II. Man is Disobedient (2) – [Wherein 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:](#) Man outside of salvation is at enmity with God. He has no desire for the things of God. His is a life filled with disobedience. Consider man's disobedience:

A. His Affection (2a) – [Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world.](#) Prior to salvation, man walks according to the course of this world. Apart from a relationship with God, he has no desire for the Lord or the things of God. He has one desire and that is to please the flesh.

- It is not within the sinful nature of man to obey God. He walks according to the course of this world. Man is encouraged by the world (society, world view) to live for self. Most live a life of self-gratification. If you are saved you have been delivered from that course of life, but I am sure that we all can identify with those desires. Prior to salvation I had no desire for a relationship with the Lord; I had no interest in church or living life in a manner that honored Christ. When one comes to know Christ, his desire will change. [Rom.12:2 – 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.](#)

B. His Allegiance (2b) – [Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air.](#) The lost commit their loyalty to the prince of the power of the air, the devil. I know many do not like to consider that thought, but it is true nonetheless. Our lives will be lived for the Lord or for the devil. You will either live in a way that pleases the Lord or in a way that submits to the influence of Satan. Our allegiance will be to one or the other; man cannot serve two masters. [Mat.6:24 – No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.](#) The context of this thought deals with the love of money, but the principle is the same. Unless you have a personal relationship with Christ, you will not seek to serve Him, but rather the desires of the flesh and the devil.

C. His Association (2c) – [Wherein 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:](#) Those who live apart from Christ live according to the spirit that works within the children of disobedience; he identifies with them and seeks their fellowship. That isn't hard to receive. People typically associate with those of like passions. They want to be around folks who engage in the same activities and share the same philosophies. The lost man has no desire to spend time with Christians. He wants to be with those who indulge in the flesh.

- This may not be popular opinion today, but I have concerns about those who claim to be a Christian and never darken the church door. They may claim association with Christ, but if there is no desire to attend church and fellowship with believers, that raises concern about a genuine relationship with Christ. Our association will reveal the true desires of the heart. The lost have no desire for the church or the things of God.

I. Man is Dead (1)

II. Man is Disobedient (2)

III. Man is Depraved (3a) – Among 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; Paul reveals the depraved nature of the lost. Consider:

A. His Nature – Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh.

The lost man is dominated by his desires. All his conversation is consistent with those fleshly desires. This involves much more than one would think. It is not limited to the words that we speak and the conversations we have. It has the idea of “*our conduct, conversation, and our dwelling; literally all our being.*” In essence the lost man’s entire being is consumed with pleasing the flesh.

- Each of us were born with a fallen nature; one that desires to control body and mind. That nature has one purpose, fulfill the desires of the flesh. Isn't that evident in the lives of millions around the world? Their main concern is to satisfy the flesh. A dog behaves like a dog because it has the nature of a dog. It can't behave any other way; it's a dog. Sinners behave like sinners because of their nature. [Ps.58:3 – The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.](#) Man isn't a sinner because he sins, he sins because he is a sinner!

B. His Necessity – Among 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; Man in his sin has one objective in life, one priority, and that is to satisfy the lusts of the flesh. He is not concerned with the needs or desires of others. He is not concerned with tomorrow or the life to come. He is selfish and only seeks to satisfy the hunger and cravings of the flesh. He will stop at nothing to satisfy his desires.

- You may disagree with that, but the evidence proves this truth without fail. Take a moment to consider all of the relationships, homes, and lives that are ruined because of the insatiable appetite of the flesh. I know the dangers involved. I have experienced the ruin that sin will bring. I was raised in a broken home due to a commitment to the flesh and a determination to satisfy it. Jesus can change the desires of the heart, but apart from Him most will continue in their quest to bring satisfaction to the flesh.

I. Man is Dead (1)

II. Man is Disobedient (2)

III. Man is Depraved (3a)

IV. Man is Doomed (3b) – [and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others](#). Paul referred to the lost as children of disobedience in [V.2](#) and now we see them as the children of doom. Those who haven't accepted Christ are the children of wrath. As God looks upon them, He sees a life of sin, disobedience, and rebellion. There is no middle ground; you're either saved or lost. [John 3:36 – He that believeth on the Son hath ever-lasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.](#)

- If you haven't been saved, born again through the blood of Jesus, you are lost and under the wrath of God. The only thing preventing you from an eternity in hell is the grace and mercy of Almighty God. You aren't guaranteed another breath; don't be condemned to hell. God doesn't hate you; He hates sin. That sin must be atoned, and it can be. Christ paid the sin debt on the cross. You can enjoy that cleansing today!

I will admit that this type of message is little heard in our day. They are not enjoyable to hear and they are not enjoyable to preach, but I can assure you, they are needful. No one will ever come to a saving faith in Christ until they first realize their lost condition and need for a Savior. The world needs to understand the severity of being lost and undone before God.

The lost man is in a wretched condition, doomed to eternal separation and torment in hell. It doesn't have to be that way. Notice [V.4, But God](#). He has made a way for all to come to repentance and be born again. The sinful state of man is terrible, but it doesn't have to be eternal. Salvation can be found in Jesus, thus giving life to those who are dead in sin. If you have never been saved, I urge you to come to Christ and receive salvation.