

Lesson 23

Where Depravity and Godliness Collide

Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more - Rom 5:20

“Grace is not a reward to the righteous but a gift to the guilty!” Steve Lawson

Last lesson we considered Job’s probing and all-encompassing question of how can a sinful man be in the right with a holy God (Job 9:2). We began to look biblically at natural man’s total depravity as declared in passages such as Ps 36:1-4; Isa 64:6-7; Jer 13:23 & 17:9-10. We also learned the critical importance of learning these truths as they help move us from training ourselves to godliness in a sphere of drudgery to a privilege of delight. We will continue in this lesson driving the roots of delight in God’s love deeper as we learn even further the depths of despair from which God has graciously plucked the redeemed!

How different would your life be if you came back from the dead?

1. Start by reading Ephesians 2:1-3 and explain how this passage dramatically describes the depravity and desperate state of man. What does it mean that “man is dead in the trespasses and sins” (Eph 2:1 see also Col 2:13)?

Consider 1 Cor 2:14, Rom 3:10-18, 2 Cor 4:4, and Col 1:21, and explain how those verses help you better understand what Paul means.

Furthermore, read the words of Jesus in Jn 5:21-29 and John in 1 Jn 3:14 and explain how that helps you better understand what is meant by being “dead” in your sins. Is unregenerate (unsaved) man “dead” because he sins or does he sin because he is dead? See Mt 12:33-37 and Mt 15:16-20 also Ps 51:5, 58:3, Gen 6:5, 8:21, and Jerm 17:9 to help answer this question correctly.

So is man’s ultimate problem internal or external? Is it man’s roots or fruits that condemn him? Why is this question so critical?

2. How does Eph 2:2-3 vividly display the “fruit” of being “dominated by sin” and can you list out three explicit results from this passage Eph 2:1-3 of being dead that are manifested in life (no pun intended)?

What or who does a dead man follow?

Read these verses and explain how they correlate to this passage (Eph 2:1-3) and the pitiful state of the natural man (Prov 28:26; 1 Jn 2:15-17; 2 Cor 4:4; 1 Jn 3:10; Jn 8:44; Mt 13:38; 2 Tim 2:24-26; Titus 3:3).

Are there any other verses you could add that demonstrate man’s desperate state?

Would you agree with this quote “*A Superficial diagnosis of the depravity of man will only lead to insufficient remedies for his cure.*” (Professor George Zemek)? If you agree, explain why with biblical support.

From what we have covered so far, how would you biblically define man’s “depravity”?

What does all this have to do with training yourself to godliness (1 Tim 4:7), and is there any correlation to Col 1:13-14, 2 Pet 3:18, and Titus 2:11-12? Explain the most encouraging connection in all of this!

Memory Verse: Ps 119:9