

# 1. Total Hereditary Depravity

## T.U.L.I.P.; Calvin's doctrinal system as it relates to the spiritual condition of man.

- Total Hereditary Depravity
- U nconditional Election
- L imited Atonement
- I rresistible Grace
- P erseverance of the Saints

## I. DEFINITION OF TOTAL HEREDITARY DEPRAVITY.

### A. WHAT DO THESE WORDS MEAN?

**Total** – “Complete in degree; absolute, thorough.” (**Webster**)

**Hereditary** – “of or passed down by heredity; designating or of a characteristic transmitted from generation to generation.” (**Webster**)

**Depravity** – “corruption” (**Webster**) – “Inability” (Calvin attaches this idea to it)

“**Total depravity**; in theology, the doctrine that man's nature is innately bad and perverse because of original sin.” (**Webster**)

### B. CALVINIST EXPLANATIONS.

1. “**Original sin**, therefore, appears to be a hereditary depravity and corruption of our nature, diffused through all the parts of the soul, rendering us obnoxious to the Divine wrath, and producing in us those works which the Scripture calls, ‘works of the flesh’” (**John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion**, Book 2 chapter 1)
2. “By this sin (eating the forbidden fruit) they (our first parents) fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation. For this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.” (**Presbyterian Confession of Faith**, Chapter 6)

## II. CALVIN'S PROOF TEXTS:

### A. **Gen. 6:5.**

1. Man or baby under consideration here?
2. Does a baby think evil? Not just evil but evil continually?
3. Parents have seen many precious moments from their child.
4. We are told that proof of THD of a Baby is they get angry the moment he is born.
5. If that's proof then God is TD who has moments of anger. (**Ex. 32:10; Ps. 7:11**)
6. One Calvinist said that his child waking him up in the middle of the night was evil and proof of TD!

### B. **Job 14:4. ONCE AGAIN, CONSIDER THE CONTEXT:**

1. **vs. 1.** Job has a very bleak look on life at this moment. So much the so that he wishes he was never born (**Job. 3:1-3; 9-13**).
2. So with that in mind he embarks upon a mission to find out why he has suffered so much. He is in a state of pain most of us cannot empathize with. He is filled with sores and boils (**Job. 2:7-9**).
3. It is natural to think about the state of man and the sorrow in life; and speak in a depressed tone.
4. Looking at mankind from a strictly physical/earthly standpoint: man lives and dies in a matter of moments, who would God look at as one worthy of standing with him (**v. 3**), how can one find something clean in that which is unclean.
5. Job never denied that there was sin in the world or that he ever sinned, but that he did not do anything worthy of the pain he was suffering.
6. But if we toss out the context and ascribe a literal meaning to this passage, would not the reverse be true too?

**“Who can bring an unclean thing out of a clean thing?”**

We were made after God; no cleaner a one ever existed. So how did an unclean thing come from a clean thing?

### C. **Job 15:14-16. “BORN OF A WOMAN”**

1. Was Jesus not born of a woman? (**Gal. 4:4**). Was Christ born depraved?
2. **Lk. 3:38** says, he was a son of Adam. . .did he inherited sin too?
3. **vs. 15** – God puts no trust in his saints – **1 Tim. 1:11** “glorious gospel. . .that was committed to my trust”
4. And the heavens are not pure, are they really not pure?
5. **vs. 16.** “How much less a infant. . .” is that what it says??? NO!
6. What is going on here?

The Bible does not contradict. Remember the context of Job. Job is in pain, wishing to die, knowing that he has not done anything deserving of such punishment. Job had 3 friends come to visit to help him sort through his thoughts on his affliction. Much of his friends words were not profitable to Job as they erred in what they said.

These words were spoken by Eliphaz (**15:1**) and in **16:1-3** he says that they are vain words, empty words.

### D. **Psalms 51:5. POETRY RELAYING DAVID'S FEELINGS ABOUT HIS SIN.**

1. **vs. 4** – Didn't David sin against Uriah? He was killed!
2. What about **Psalm 22:9-10**? Was David was a believer before he was born

3. **Acts. 2:8** – “born in a tongue” – where that language prevailed.
  4. “in sin my mother conceived me”? How does this mean that we are born sinners?
    - a. “In drunkenness my husband beat me.” Would you attribute the drunkenness to the wife or the husband?
    - b. Do we attribute the sin to the baby or the mother?
  5. Was David’s killing Uriah and taking Bathsheeba **inherited** sin or **committed** sin?
- E. Psalms 58:3.**
1. the context. **vs. 1-2.** They work wickedness. Infants do not know how to work.
  2. **vs. 6.** – “Shall break their teeth!” How many infants born with teeth?
  3. **vs. 10** – righteous rejoice at infant damnation? Are we talking about infants here?
  4. Was this a prayer from David for the destruction of infants? No, but the unrighteous congregation and judges mentioned in **vs. 1.**
  5. **vs. 3** – It says, “estranged from” not IN the womb – “go astray” not born astray!
- F. Jer. 13:23. DOES IT SAY ONE IS BORN A SINNER? WHERE?**
1. Accustomed means taught (we are taught our customs) not born.
  2. Read context. God is angry at his people and how they have left him. Thus he will be giving them over to the heathen nations. (**vs. 10, 11, 17**).
  3. This was going to happen. **Vs. 25** it was their lot. Thus just as an Ethiopian cannot change his skin or a leopard their spots they will go into captivity.
- G. Jer. 17:9.**
1. does it say we are born sinners? What is the context?
  2. **vs.5** – The one who trusts in himself.
    - a. “I just know it is ok with God (without a Bible passage) because I can feel it in my heart.” You see how they are trusting in their own flesh?
    - b. Your feelings can lead you astray if not rooted in the Word of the Lord.
  3. But Jeremiah’s hope and prayer and trust was in the Lord. (**vs. 14, 17**).
  4. The heart is our responsibility (**Prov. 4:23**).
- H. Rom 3:10-18.**
1. Once again where in this text does it say we are born sinners?  
That Adam’s sin was given to all mankind and will always be given.
  2. We have all sinned; it is stated in (**vs.23**)!
    - a. But are we born that way or did we choose that way by our own free will?
    - b. A careful look at the terms used shows that Paul is talking about accountable adults, not infants.
 

“tongues practice deceit”, “mouth full of cursing”,  
“feet swift to shed blood”, “destruction are in their ways”
    - c. Not infants corrupt at birth but folks who are corrupt by their sin.
  3. Paul was illustrating that the Jews are no better than the Gentiles for they have sinned too (**vs. 9, 29**).
- I. Rom 5:12-19. FINALLY A PASSAGE THAT TALKS ABOUT ADAM.**
1. **vs. 12** – Spiritual death spread to all, but why? Because **ALL** sinned?”
    - a. Now this is important to understand the rest of the text (**vs.15, 18**).
    - b. If the text means that all have spiritually died because of Adam’s sin, then it means that all are spiritually alive because of Christ’s sacrifice!
    - c. If Christ dying for all doesn’t equate that all are saved, then Adam’s sinned does not make all sinners.
  2. So what does it mean? Remember **vs. 12**  
– Spiritual death did spread to all, but **because we sinned**, not Adam.
  3. So if Spiritual death, which originated with Adam, has come, then Spiritual life has come, which originated with Christ. And all that choose to can partake of such spiritual life.
- J. Eph 2:1-3. WHERE DOES THE TEXT SAY THAT WE INHERIT ADAM’S SIN?**
1. **vs.1** even says dead through “trespasses and sins” not original sin.
  2. **vs. 2** says they **walked in them** not were born in them!
  3. **vs. 3** – *fusus*, “a mode of feeling and acting which by long habit has become nature” (**Eph 2:3**).(Thayer).
  4. What about the Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves” (**Rom 2:14**).
- K. John 6:44.**
1. Only those called by God can come to Christ.
  2. How does God call (**vs. 45; 2 Thess. 2:14**). **Thru the Gospel.**
  3. Who is called through the Gospel? (**Mark 16:15-16**).
- L. 1 Cor. 2:14.**
1. Argued that it is only through some special dispensation of the Spirit that one can understand God’s will properly.
  2. Who is the natural man? Look at the context (**3:1-3**).
  3. He speaks of one with a spiritual perspective, not one who has the Holy Spirit.
- M. Mark 4:11.**

1. To some it is not given to know the mysteries of God, hence, the parables.
2. Consider the parallel in **Matt. 13:11**. Why was it not given to him? (**vs. 15**).

### III. **HEREDITARY DEPRAVITY ANSWERED.**

A. **HIS TEACHING ON CHILDREN (Matt. 18:1-5; 19:13-14)**. Are they depraved?

B. **WHAT DID DAVID HOPE FOR, TO JOIN HIS SON IN HELL? (2 Sam. 12:15-23)**.

C. **HOW DID GOD CREATE US? (Ecc. 7:29)**.

D. **DOES MAN, BORN OF ADAM, HAVE THE ABILITY TO OBEY GOD?**

"Man, by his fall into sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation ...is not able by his own strength, to convert himself or to prepare himself thereunto." (**Presb. Conf. of Faith, Chapter 9, sec. 3**)

E. **WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES?**

1. **Matt. 23:37**. **YE** would not!
2. **John 7:17**. If any man **WILLETH** ...
3. **Rev. 22:17**. "He that will ..."
4. **2 Cor. 5:10**. Judged for what **WHO** has done?

F. **THE CLINCHER – Ez. 18:1-4, 19-20.**

## Joshua 24:15