

Radical Depravity

Steve Lawson

1. spiritual ignorance

John 1:9-11

⁹The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own,^[a] and his own people^[b] did not receive him.

2. spiritual blindness

John 3:3

³Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again^[a] he cannot see the kingdom of God."

3. spiritual hatred

John 3:19-20

¹⁹And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. ²⁰For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.

4. spiritual defiance

John 3:36

³⁶Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

5. spiritual death

John 5:25

²⁵"Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

6. spiritual inability

John 6:44

⁴⁴No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

7. spiritual slavery

John 8:34

³⁴Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave^[a] to sin.

8. spiritual bondage to Satan

John 8:44

⁴⁴You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

9. spiritual deafness

John 8:43,47

⁴³Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word.

⁴⁷Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."

(1689 LBC, 9.1) God has endued the will of man with that natural liberty and power of acting upon choice, that it is neither forced, nor by any necessity of nature determined to do good or evil.¹

¹(Matt 17:12)² But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands.”

(1689 LBC, 9.2) Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to will and to do that which was good and well-pleasing to God,² but yet was unstable, so that he might fall from it.³

(1689 LBC, 9.3) Man, by his fall into a state of sin, has wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation;⁴ so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin,⁵ is not able by his own strength to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.⁶

⁶(Titus 3:3-5)³ For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. ⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Spirit,

¹(Deut. 30:19)¹⁹ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live,

¹(James 1:14)¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

⁷(Eccles 7:29)²⁹ See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.

³(Genesis 3:6)⁵ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

⁴(Romans 5:6)⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

⁴(Romans 8:7)⁷ For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.

⁵(Eph 2:1)² And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

³(Eph 2:5)⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

⁹(John 6:44)⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

(1689 LBC, 2.4) When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, He frees him from his natural bondage under sin,⁷ and by His grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good;⁸ yet so as that by reason of his remaining corruptions, he does not perfectly, nor only will, that which is good, but does also will that which is evil.⁹

⁷(Col. 1:13)¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, (Jn 8:36)³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

⁸(Phil 2:13)¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

⁹(Romans 7:15-23)¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³ but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

(1689 LBC, 2.5) This will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone in the state of glory.¹⁰

¹⁰(Eph 4:13)¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

1689 London Baptist Confession

Chapter 9

“Of Free Will”