

Psalm 14 — “The Problem With All Mankind”

Do not contend with God who is stronger than you are, who is able when he will (and he will one day be found both able and willing enough) to turn the wicked into hell...

In short, sin is the dare of God’s justice, mercy, the jeer of his patience, the slight of his power, the contempt of his love, as one writer prettily expresses this ugly thing.

(Ralph Venning, *The Sinfulness of Sin*)

Background to Psalm 14 — a psalm of David. Psalm 14 is identical with Psalm 53 (cf. Romans 3:10-20)

The Darkness of Depravity

- Total depravity/total inability (or moral/total inability): This doctrine teaches us that fallen man is unable to love, obey, or please God because sin has so thoroughly defiled him (in every part of his being).
- Total depravity means “radical corruption”. The core of our being is radically and unchangeably infected by sin. This permeates our hearts, our minds, our wills, our desires, and our actions. *Everyone is born spiritually dead even though he may physically live.
- Radical corruption, thus, means that “sin has pervaded every part of our physical, mental, emotional (and of course spiritual) makeup so that there is *nothing* about us that remains untouched by sin (James Boice).

>> **Ps 14 in a word: Man is thoroughly corrupt & has actively turned away from GOD.**

THESIS — **From this text**, God will show us the *Problem With All Mankind*. We’ll gather our thoughts around 2 important doctrines: (1) your RUIN by sin; (2) your REDEMPTION in Christ

I. YOUR RUIN BY SIN (1-6)

All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God (Gen. 3:8, 24), are under his wrath and curse (Eph. 2:3; Gal. 3:10), and so made liable to all the miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever (Rom. 6:23; Matt. 25:41). (Spurgeon’s *Catechism*, Question #17)

❖ **Note the unspeakable ruin of sin** — vv.1-6

1. Where sin begins = the heart
2. What sin believes = “there is no god”
3. What sin produces = corruption
4. How far sin extends = no one who does good ... all (Rom 3.10-20)
5. Why sin is dangerous = it revolts against God
6. What sin hates = God and God’s people

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7. What sin makes of people = **Fool** (v.1a)

The fool — one who is morally perverse; not mentally deficient; it's moral, not intellectual. (Lawson)

Lord, dost thou love a worm like me?
That love how wonderful and free,
To one so vile and base;
A wretch forlorn, undone, unclean,
An heir of wrath, a slave of sin,
Yet subject of thy grace! (Benjamin Beddome)

A guilty, weak, and helpless worm, Into Thy hands I fall;
Be Thou my strength and righteousness, My Savior, and my all.
Lord, I am vile, conceived in sin, And born unholy and unclean;
Sprung from the man whose guilty fall Corrupts the race, and taints us all. (Isaac Watts)

II. YOUR REDEMPTION IN CHRIST (7)

❖ **David gives hope in v.7 - "Oh..."** (emphatic prayer/wish)

A. God **initiates**

B. God **accomplishes**

C. God **restores**

D. God **gladdens**

From John Bunyan

Sin is the living worm, the lasting fire,
Hell would soon lose its heat, if sin expired;
Better sinless, in hell, than to be where
Heaven is, and to be found a sinner there.
One sinless with the demons might do well,
But sin would make a very heav'n a hell.
Look to yourself, and keep it out of doors;
It will come in, and may go out no more.

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No match has sin but God in all the world,
 Men, angels, it has from their places hurled;
 Holds them in chains, as captives in despite,
 Of all that here below is known as might.
 Release, help, freedom from it none can give,
 But only He by whom we breathe and live.
 Watch then, and keep this giant out of doors;
 If he comes in, he may go out no more.

Fools mock at sin and they will not believe
 It carries such great danger up its sleeve;
 How can it be, they say, that such a thing,
 That seems so sweet could carry such a sting
 They do not know that it's the very spell
 Of sin, to make men laugh themselves to hell.
 Look to yourself, and deal with sin no more;
 Lest He that saves, against you shut the door.

- Bunyan continued: Nothing can hurt you except sin; nothing can grieve me except sin; nothing can defeat you except sin. Therefore, be on your guard!

So we pray with the Puritan in the *Valley of Vision*:

Thou art good beyond all thought, But I am vile, wretched, miserable, blind;
 My lips are ready to confess, but my heart is slow to feel, and my ways reluctant to amend.
 I bring my soul to thee;
 Break it, wound it, bend it, mould it. Unmask to me sin's deformity, that I may hate it, abhor it, flee from it.
 Give me grace to bewail my insensate folly.
 Grant me to know that the way of transgressors is hard, that evil paths are wretched paths, that to depart from thee is to lose all good.
 All these sins I mourn, lament, and for them cry pardon. And Grant that through the tears of repentance I may see more clearly the brightness and glories of the saving cross!

Sin is not weakness, it is a disease; it is red-handed rebellion against God and the magnitude of that rebellion is expressed by Calvary's cross. (Oswald Chambers)

Sin is an attack on God's character, a denial of God's truth, and affront to His very being. (Michael Lawrence)

What is sin? Sin is a species of rebellion against God. It is self-pleasing: it is the utter ignoring of God's claims: being completely indifferent whether my conduct pleases or displeases Him. (AW Pink)

PSALM 14: *The Psalter**Tune: I Sing the Mighty Power of God*

The fool has said within his heart,
 “There surely is no God.”
 They are corrupt, their deeds are vile;
 there’s no one who does good.
 The Lord looks down from heav’n upon
 all women and all men,
 To see if any understand
 or seek for God within.

They are in dread, for God is with
 the righteous among men.
 The wicked shame afflicted ones;
 the Lord’s their refuge then.
 Oh, that salvation for Israel
 would come forth from Zion!
 Great joy for Jacob when the Lord
 restores His captive ones.

They all have turned aside and to
 corruption they have gone.
 There is not one who does what’s good;
 no, not a single one.
 Will evildoers never learn—
 those who with one accord
 devour my people like their bread,
 and don’t call on the Lord?

The reasons for singing psalms result from one great truth—namely, the uniqueness of the Psalms as part of Holy Scripture, God’s authoritative, eternal, living, and powerful Word. It pleased the Spirit to include a collection of hymns in the canon of Scripture. The unique divine origin of this collection implies that there can be no other songs like these as the gift of God to His church, and obedience to His will requires that God’s people use them as God Himself intends and commands—as the sacrifice of praise that we offer to Him. (Joel Beeke on Singing Psalms in Christian worship)

HIS MERCY IS MORE

What love could remember no wrongs we have done;
 Omniscient, all-knowing, He counts not their sum.
 Thrown into a sea without bottom or shore;
 Our sins, they are many, His mercy is more.

What riches of kindness He lavished on us;
 His blood was the payment, His life was the cost.
 We stood ‘neath a debt we could never afford;
 Our sins, they are many, His mercy is more.

Praise the Lord!**His mercy is more.****Stronger than darkness; new every morn;****Our sins, they are many, His mercy is more.**

What patience would wait as we constantly roam;
 What Father, so tender, is calling us home.
 He welcomes, the weakest, the vilest, the poor;
 Our sins, they are many, His mercy is more.