



Scriptures and Doctrine :: Cornelius, total depravity, works, a questions?...

Cornelius, total depravity, works, a questions?... - posted by anonymity, on: 2009/7/30 19:19

Act 10:1 At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort,
 Act 10:2 a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God.
 Act 10:3 About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, "Cornelius."
 Act 10:4 And he stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God.

You know I was thinking about this verse in light of the doctrine of total depravity. I have heard those who hold to that doctrine give different views on what it means. Some say that an unsaved man can do NO good whereas others say they can do some but are altogether tainted with it whereas I have thought that maybe they cannot do any good to God but only to man but I don't know maybe they can do good but not enough and are generally enslaved hmm. Anyways it says here that Cornelius feared God gave alms and they weren't hypocritical or not pleasing God in some way and he prayed. I mean did he just have the spirit "upon" him or what because surely he was not yet saved. Mostly it seems when people come to God they are saying of I am such a wretched sinner but it seems here that God came to him because of the good that he was doing? Or maybe those were acts of humility but they were also of love it would seem. What do you say?

p.s. this is not some C&A thing.

Re: Cornelius, total depravity, works, a questions?... - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2009/7/30 19:23

Hi Brother,

Total depravity simply means that natural man cannot do good apart from God "working in him" (Phil 2:13) to do His good pleasure. Also, check out Isaiah 26:12 ...

So, apparently the Lord was working in Cornelius to draw Cornelius to Himself, even though Cornelius wasn't to the point of understanding about Christ yet.

What do you think?

With care in Christ,
 Taylor

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2009/7/30 19:56

Hi anonymity,

What a blessing we have to have the scriptures available to us to compare and test the words and teachings of men.

May God protect you(edit protect us all) from the unrighteous influence of men.

Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2009/7/30 22:29

Quote:
 -----Hi anonymity, What a blessing we have to have the scriptures available to us to compare and test the words and teachings of men.
 May God protect you(edit protect us all) from the unrighteous influence of men.

Amen. Search the Scriptures and you'll find they are thoroughly consistent and illuminating. I hope the few Scriptures I gave you are helpful!

With care in Christ,
Taylor

Re: Cornelius, total depravity, works, a questions?..., on: 2009/7/31 6:47

Hi anonymity,

Quote:
-----but it seems here that God came to him because of the good that he was doing? Or maybe those were acts of humility but they were also of love it would seem.

Rather, God seeks a face-to-face relationship with man, and accepts the honest seeker Heb 11:6 who acknowledges Him?

I understand Rom 3:23 for all did sin, and are come short of the glory of God-- (YLT) but find the phrase 'total depravity' is not in any Bible version, so I find it hard to take.

deprave (dictionary.com)
verb (used with object), -praved, -prav⋅ing.
1. *to make morally bad or evil; vitiate; corrupt.*
2. *Obsolete. to defame.*

The NIV uses 'deprave' five times - Eze 16:47, Eze 23:11, Rom 1:28, Phil 2:15, 2 Tim 3:8. The NASB has only three, including 1 Tim 6:5 also.

I believe there is a worthwhile study of 'found grace' - which Cornelius did - going all the way back to Noah - Gen 6:8 and Enoch, Moses - Exo 33:17 and Elijah, and to meditate on God's relationship with characters such as Abraham, Joseph, David and others, who also used this humble expression within human relationships. How much more relevant it is to man's relationship with God.

Then, there are people like Samson's mother, John the Baptist's father, and Mary the mother of Jesus, who had not been doing anything extra to seek God within their Jewish birthright and culture (religion), to whom God sent angels, long before He honoured Cornelius' prayers. Nor was Cornelius the first Gentile in scripture to have an understanding of God (and with God), which provoked him to action or prayer.

Perhaps your confusion is based on man-made thinking/theology, which the scripture itself would clarify if you based your reasoning on its record?

Re: Cornelius, total depravity, works, a questions?... - posted by rookie (), on: 2009/7/31 7:20

Hear this promise found in Scripture...

Proverbs 21 My son, if you receive my words,
And treasure my commands within you,
2 So that you incline your ear to wisdom,
And apply your heart to understanding;
3 Yes, if you cry out for discernment,
And lift up your voice for understanding,
4 If you seek her as silver,
And search for her as for hidden treasures;
5 Then you will understand the fear of the LORD,
And find the knowledge of God.
6 For the LORD gives wisdom;
From His mouth come knowledge and understanding;
7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
He is a shield to those who walk uprightly;
8 He guards the paths of justice,

And preserves the way of His saints.

9 Then you will understand righteousness and justice,
Equity and every good path.

10 When wisdom enters your heart,
And knowledge is pleasant to your soul,

11 Discretion will preserve you;
Understanding will keep you,

12 To deliver you from the way of evil,
From the man who speaks perverse things,

And how does God's grace enable man to please Him?

When man obeys...

Proverbs 123 Turn at my rebuke;
Surely I will pour out my spirit on you;
I will make my words known to you.

Cornelius is an example of such a man...

In Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2009/7/31 10:53

Not a reply to anyone in particular. Just adding to thread.

Quote:

.....the phrase 'total depravity' is not in any Bible version, so I find it hard to take.
.....

The word 'trinity' is not found in the Bible, yet the concept is. Man often uses words and phrases not used in the Bible to describe doctrines clearly taught and found throughout scripture.

Re: - posted by yoadam (), on: 2009/7/31 17:15

First. Total Depravity refers to the original sin we have all inherited in Adam. Psa. 51:5 , 1 Cor. 15:22 , Eph. 2:1 , Eph. 2:3

Second. Total depravity does not necessarily mean that every man is as evil as he could possibly become, but we are as fallen humans wholly inclined toward evil. We are totally evil, but God in his grace often restrains that evil for his purposes. Ie. The average "nice guy" who just can't bring himself to believe in God, or even someone who appears "good", like Ghandi, etc... James 1:17 -- just as He may also let loose his restraint and raise up a Pharaoh, a Nero Caesar, a Hitler, or an Obama for his purposes, etc... Rom. 9:17 , Rom. 9:18

Third. Total Depravity also may be called "Total Inability". Total Depravity means that no man is able to come to God on his own, apart from God who draws him. Rom. 3:11 , Rom. 3:12 , Isa. 64:6 , Isa. 64:7 , Isa. 64:8 , John 6:44 , John 15:16

The Westminster Confession on this issue is a great read!

Chapter VI Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and the Punishment thereof

I. Our first parents, being seduced by the subtilty and temptations of Satan, sinned, in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin, God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to His own glory.

Scripture proofs:

GEN 3:13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. 2CO 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

ROM 11:32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

II. By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion, with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body.

Scripture proofs:

GEN 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. 8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. ECC 7:29 Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions. ROM 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

GEN 2:17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. EPH 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.

TIT 1:15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. GEN 6:5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. JER 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? ROM 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood: 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways: 17 And the way of peace have they not known: 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

III. 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.

Scripture proofs:

GEN 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 2:10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. ACT 17:26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. ROM 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. 15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. 17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. 1CO 15:21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. 49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

PSA 51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. GEN 5:3 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth. JOB 14:4 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one. 15:14 What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman

an, that he should be righteous?

IV. From 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.

Scripture proofs:

ROM 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ROM 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. ROM 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. COL 1:21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.

GEN 6:5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 8:21 And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. ROM 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

JAM 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. EPH 2:2 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: 3 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; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. MAT 15:19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

V. This corruption of nature, during this life, does remain in those that are regenerated; and although it be, through Christ, pardoned, and mortified; yet both itself, and all the motions thereof, are truly and properly sin.

Scripture proofs:

1JO 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. ROM 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. 17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. JAM 3:2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. PRO 20:9 Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin? ECC 7:20 For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

ROM 7:5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. 8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. GAL 5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

VI. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, does in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal.

Scripture proofs:

1JO 3:4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

ROM 2:15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another. ROM 3:9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. 19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become

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guilty before God.

EPH 2:3 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; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

GAL 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

ROM 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EPH 4:18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.

ROM 8:20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. LAM 3:39 Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?

MAT 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. 2TH 1:9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2009/7/31 20:40

Hi again everyone,

Alive-to-God,

"...but find the phrase 'total depravity' is not in any Bible version, so I find it hard to take."

I appreciate that and think it was worth pointing out. I think we have reason to be carefull in what phrases and terms we accept into our thinking(John 6:63, 1Co 2:4 Col 2:4).

Men of all sorts can, and do, good(Gen 4:7, Ecclesiastes 7:29, Mark 12:28-34, John 15:13, Romans 2:14-15).

None of us can be pure within(Proverbs 20:9, Mat 5:8) or do that which is perfect(Mat 5:48, Rev 3:2), without God.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2009/7/31 21:36

This is the testimony we have concerning Cornelius...

.....
Acts 10:30 So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, "Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God.
.....

In the above Scripture, Cornelius is told that the Lord has heard his prayers...

In the following Scripture we have this precept....

.....
Prov. 15:8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD,
But the prayer of the upright is His delight.

Prov. 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked,
But He hears the prayer of the righteous.
.....

According to Scripture Cornelius was righteous because God only hears the prayers of the righteous.

How did Cornelius attain this righteous position before meeting Peter?

In Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by yoadam (), on: 2009/7/31 23:44

Quote:

rookie wrote:
This is the testimony we have concerning Cornelius...

.....
Acts 10:30 So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, "Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God."
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According to Scripture Cornelius was righteous because God only hears the prayers of the righteous.

How did Cornelius attain this righteous position before meeting Peter?

In Christ
Jeff

Hi Jeff.

I like the way Matthew Henry put it in his chapter introduction to Acts chapter 10. It's short & sweet:

"Doubtless Cornelius had true faith in God's word, as far as he understood it, though not as yet clear faith in Christ. This was the work of the Spirit of God, through the mediation of Jesus, even before Cornelius knew him, as

is the case with us all when we, who before were dead in sin, are made alive. Through Christ also his prayers and alms were accepted, which otherwise would have been rejected. Without dispute or delay Cornelius was obedient to the heavenly vision. In the affairs of our souls, let us not lose time."

<http://www.christnotes.org/commentary.php?com=mhc&b=44&c=10>

Quote:

TaylorOtwell wrote:

So, apparently the Lord was working in Cornelius to draw Cornelius to Himself, even though Cornelius wasn't to the point of understanding about Christ yet.

What do you think?

With care in Christ,
Taylor

EXACTLY. :-)

Quote:

Alive-to-God wrote:
Hi anonymity,

Quote:

-----but it seems here that God came to him because of the good that he was doing? Or maybe those were acts of humility but they were also of love it would seem.

Rather, God seeks a face-to-face relationship with man, and accepts the honest seeker Heb 11:6 who acknowledges Him?

The problem with this is that there are no "honest seekers." They don't exist. Only God-hating rebels who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Rom. 1:18, Rom. 1:30 (Please read my first post on page 1 of this discussion.) So in your salvation scheme, you have the entire world of fallen humanity going to hell and no salvation is possible for anybody. On top of all this depravity, we find that "faith" itself is the gift of God! Eph. 2:8 To say we are saved by choosing our Lord is true, but to say that we made the choice in and of our own will, (which is damnably evil), is to have salvation by works and to deny the scripture. Eph. 2:9 The truth of the matter is we who believe are effectually called by the grace God. Those whom God ordains to eternal life are the only ones who will choose to believe. Acts 13:48 *"48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."* Again, I say, **who chose who?** Did we choose Jesus and thereby gain eternal life? Or did He choose us and thereby we gained eternal life? John 15:16, *"16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."*

Watch the following Paul Washer video on youtube:

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?vwRGMp0md5CE>) "I don't understand Election"

And also check out the Westminster Confession of the Puritans once again. It explains these truths better than I can!

Chapter X Of Effectual Calling

I. All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, He is pleased, in His appointed time, effectually to call, by His Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature to grace and salvation, by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and, by His almighty power, determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ: yet so, as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace.

Scripture Proofs:

ROM 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 11:7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. EPH 1:10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

2TH 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2CO 3:3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. 6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

ROM 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. EPH 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 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: 3 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; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved). 2TI 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

ACT 26:18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. 1CO 2:10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. EPH 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

EZE 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

EZE 11:19 And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh. PHI 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. DEU 30:6 And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. EZE 36:27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

EPH 1:19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power. JOH 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

SON 1:4 Draw me, we will run after thee. PSA 110:3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. JOH 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. ROM 6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? 17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2009/8/1 4:56

Hi Jeff and all,

Jeff,

"How did Cornelius attain this righteous position before meeting Peter?"

Your question brought to mind what Peter said to him before he was baptised with the Holy Spirit:

"Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

- Acts 10:34-35(KJV)

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2009/8/1 5:11

Alive-to-God,

"Rather, God seeks a face-to-face relationship with man, and accepts the honest seeker Heb 11:6 who acknowledges Him?"

This brings to mind Acts 17:27 and John 12:21.

It doesn't at all seem(to me) that those that came to Phillip seeking the Lord Jesus, did so because they hated him. I think that the Lord Jesus indicated that those that would persecute believers would do so because they do not know God, not because they do(John 15:21), and that it was those that had seen Him and all the works that He did, that hated Him(John 15:24).

Wish you well,

Chris

Re: - posted by yoadam (), on: 2009/8/1 5:36

Quote:

ChrisJD wrote:
Hi Jeff and all,

Jeff,

"How did Cornelius attain this righteous position before meeting Peter?"

Your question brought to mind what Peter said to him before he was baptised with the Holy Spirit:

"Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

- Acts 10:34-35(KJV)

Right on, but we must always remember this is all possible only because of the grace of God. Without His grace in our salvation we would all be despairingly doomed. It is all of grace. God does the work.

Ezekiel 36:26-27,

26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do the m.

Re: - posted by yoadam (), on: 2009/8/1 5:54

Quote:

ChrisJD wrote:
Alive-to-God,

"Rather, God seeks a face-to-face relationship with man, and accepts the honest seeker Heb 11:6 who acknowledges Him?"

This brings to mind Acts 17:27 and John 12:21.

It doesn't at all seem(to me) that those that came to Phillip seeking the Lord Jesus, did so because they hated him. I think that the Lord Jesus indicated that those that would persecute believers would do so because they do not know God, not because they do(John 15:21), and that it was those that had seen Him and all the works that He did, that hated Him(John 15:24).

Wish you well,

Chris

Chris, Acts 17:27 is an excellent verse. God is not far off-- is this not the good news!??? And all men are commanded to Deut. 4:29 "29 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul." Saint Augustine had it right, when he said in his Confessions, "Grant what Thou commandest and then command what Thou wilt." Commands do not imply ability. I love the way the puritan John Owen said it, "To suppose that whatever God requireth of us that we have power of ourselves to do, is to make the cross and grace of Jesus Christ of none effect."

Now what you see happening in John 12:21 looks to me like people are being drawn to the Father. ie. John 6:44 However, it is interesting that in the same chapter, Jesus also says in verse 37-41,

37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: 38 That the saying of Esaias t

he prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? 39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, 40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. 41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

These sayings of Jesus reminds me of the hard Biblical truth that not everybody is predestinated before the foundation of the world to salvation. Hence, God has a peculiar people whom He has chosen from among fallen humanity, these people are His elect.

Eph. 1:5-6,

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Eph. 1:11,

11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

Rom. 8:28-30,

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Rom. 9:11-13,

11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.

13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

Rom. 9:14-18,

14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

Rom. 9:19-23,

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

Rom. 11:5,

5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

Rom. 11:7-8,

7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded

8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.

2TI 1:9

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

1TH 5:9

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jude 1:4,

4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Puritans had it right. Please read the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Chapter III Of God's Eternal Decree

I. God from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.

Scripture Proofs:

EPH 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. ROM 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! HEB 6:17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath. ROM 9:15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

JAM 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. 1JO 1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

ACT 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. MAT 17:12 But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. ACT 4:27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. JOH 19:11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. PRO 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.

II. Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions; yet has He not decreed anything because He foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.

Scripture Proofs:

ACT 15:18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. 1SA 23:11 Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the Lord said, He will come down. 12 Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver thee up. MAT 11:21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

ROM 9:11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according

to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

III. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life; and others foreordained to everlasting death.

Scripture Proofs:

1TI 5:21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. MAT 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

ROM 9:22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. EPH 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. PRO 16:4 The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

IV. These angels and men, thus predestinated, and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

Scripture Proofs:

2TI 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. JOH 13:18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

V. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, has chosen, in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving Him thereunto; and all to the praise of His glorious grace.

Scripture Proofs:

EPH 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. ROM 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 2TI 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. 1TH 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

VI. As God has appointed the elect unto glory, so has He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power, through faith, unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.

Scripture Proofs:

ROM 9:11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. EPH 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.

EPH. 1:6,12.

1PE 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. EPH 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. 2TH 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

1TH 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. TIT 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

ROM 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. EPH 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. 2TH 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

1PE 1:5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

JOH 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. ROM 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. JOH 6:64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. 65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. 10:26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 8:47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. 1JO 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

VII. The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extends or withholds mercy, as He pleases, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice.

Scripture Proofs:

MAT 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. 26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. ROM 9:17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? 22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. 2TI 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. 20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. JUD 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. 1PE 2:8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

VIII. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men, attending the will of God revealed in His Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God; and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the Gospel.

Scripture Proofs:

ROM 9:20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! DEU 29:29 The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those

e things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

2PE 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

EPH 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. ROM 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

ROM 11:5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. 20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. 2PE 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall. ROM 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. LUK 10:20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2009/8/1 8:26

Matthew Henry wrote:

Quote:
-----"Doubtless Cornelius had true faith in God's word,

This is true for Peter testifies that Cornelius had already heard the word of God...

36 The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all— 37 that word you know,...

Look again to verse 37... "that word you know,"...

Cornelius was already clean, was already enabled by God to do works of righteousness. For we know that Scripture says...

Romans 8:

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

So based on the testimony of Scripture...Cornelius was already enabled by the Holy Spirit to know how to do the works of righteousness.

All that is needed is that one hear and do the word of God. God speaks to all that turn and obey His word. God promises that He will pour out His Spirit on those who do so...

Proverbs 1:

23 *Turn at my rebuke; Surely I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you.*

In Christ
Jeff

Re: Cornelius, total depravity, works, a questions?..., on: 2009/8/1 9:14

Hi tjiservant, ChrisJD and all,

Thanks for your replies. I do understand that theology is a human attempt to codify truth from scripture, but imho, it falls short in several directions, and can actually lead one to *miss* truth from God's revelation of Himself through His written word.

To Jeff,

Quote:

-----According to Scripture Cornelius was righteous because God only hears the prayers of the righteous.

I would respectfully suggest, that the testimony of the men who fetched Peter, gives more of an explanation of God's attribution of righteousness to Cornelius. He appears to have been a 'doer' of the word, as far as he understood righteousness and justice. He was not unique amongst Gentiles, either. (Luke 7:4, 5, 6, 7, 8.)

22 And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.

Psa 111:10, Prov 9:10, John 10:16.

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2009/8/1 9:33

Hi everyone,

Alive-to-God, thank you also.

"I do understand that theology is a human attempt to codify truth from scripture, but imho, it falls short in several directions, and can actually lead one to miss truth from God's revelation of Himself through His written word."

I feel much the same way. One of the passages I thought of in meditating on this topic is from Psalm 12 where David asks for God's help because he says, *for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.*

I noticed today that this is the same place where it says

"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."

- Psalm 12:6(KJV)

Thanks again!

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2009/8/1 23:23

Hi again everyone,

Jeff and Alive-to-God, a few more things came to mind as I thought about what you wrote more tonight and I wanted to share them with you.

First, Alive-to-God,

"He appears to have been a 'doer' of the word, as far as he understood righteousness and justice."

What came to mind was what the Lord Jesus said in John 7:17 and what Peter said in Acts 5:32.

"He was not unique amongst Gentiles, either. (Luke 7:4, 5, 6, 7, 8.)"

What also came to mind was Mat 12:41-42 and Luke 10:30-36.

Jeff,

"All that is needed is that one hear and do the word of God."

I thought also of Naaman(2Kings 5:10-14), and what Paul wrote in Romans 10:13-14.

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2009/8/1 23:58

Hi again all,

I apologise for the multiple posts here.

I was wondering if I could share a brief story with you all?

I was walking around downtown earlier this evening and was passing through a crowded shopping area. At one point along the street there are some benches where sometimes people that are homeless sit. Tonight as I passed by I noticed one man sitting on a bench in front of me and there was a man lying on the ground in front of another.

I looked down as I passed by and saw that he was mostly face down, lying on the ground. I continued to look at him as I went by and was checking the time on my phone and didn't really think too much of it. Besides, I was down there to walk and pray.

And then I suddenly caught myself and asked 'what are you doing!?''

Its not too uncommon to see people lying on benches or even on the ground and maybe I've become numb to seeing that

and I suppose too that I saw how everyone else was just walking by and even felt a bit self-conscious of stopping to check on him, thinking that he was probably just passed out from drugs or alcohol.

So anyway, as I kept thinking and began to feel like the priest and the levite from Luke 10, and as I walked along I noticed an older woman on the phone and I suspected that she might be calling someone about the man as she was looking that way. Finally after walking on some more I turned back and went up to the woman on the phone. I asked her if she was calling about the man and she was and I offered to go back and check on him.

After asking him some questions and not understanding anything he said, he managed to ask me clear enough to call an ambulance.

The woman said they were on the way.

Among all the people there, she did a good thing, the right thing.

As I walked on I could hear the Ambulance coming in the distance. They were on their way to do a good thing, that was their duty to do.

As for me, I thought that I need to examine the tenderness of my heart to the needs of those around me.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2009/8/2 10:23

Brother Chris wrote:

Quote:
-----I looked down as I passed by and saw that he was mostly face down, lying on the ground. I continued to look at him as I went by and was checking the time on my phone and didn't really think too much of it. Besides, I was down there to walk and pray.

And then I suddenly caught myself and asked 'what are you doing!?'

We as believers often look at Scripture as a means to know what we should and should not do, never realizing that the promise is so much more abundant. This abundance is defined by the promise that we who are adopted into the kingdom of God, will be conformed into the image of His Son.

Your testimony above reminded me of another believer found in Scripture...

Acts 3:

1 Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. 2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; 3 who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. 4 And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." 5 So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. 6 Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

Chris, often the Spirit will draw our attention to someone or some situation in which He calls us to do something. As we learn to hear and then do, we gain understanding that Paul and Solomon often speak of.

Quote:
-----So anyway, as I kept thinking and began to feel like the priest and the levite from Luke 10, and as I walked along I noticed an older woman on the phone and I suspected that she might be calling someone about the man as she was looking that way.

This testimony demonstrates the critical importance of knowing God's word. Like Cornelius, because you knew the word of God, you were sensitive to the path that He wished for you to follow...

Psa. 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path.

The word of God enables us to see the abundance that is found in the Light of Life. The word of God will empower us to know Jesus and His desires for us. We will learn to love humanity in a way that the natural man cannot. A man can read the Scriptures daily yet not know the Lord. A man who obeys the Spirit of God and turns to walk with our Lord will realize this promise...

Proverbs 1:
23 Turn at my rebuke;
Surely I will pour out my spirit on you;
I will make my words known to you.

All Scripture will enable us to know the heart of Jesus..

God Bless
Jeff

Re: - posted by anonymity, on: 2009/8/2 18:18

Yeah so..

I think I was just thinking.

I know that prayers of humility and repentance can be accepted by God.

But, alms are also accepted by God.

It's odd I mean I always thought that all their righteous works were as filthy rags.

It also seems that other Centurions were honored.

Or Paul said I was given mercy because I did these things in ignorance.

I mean we often think of some gang banger just going for evil on purpose and then God melting his heart in love and bringing him to repentance or something.

But, here it was not as if Paul was just being evil on purpose but he said he received mercy because he did it in ignorance.

So can those who do evil on purpose receive mercy as well. Could Paul have received mercy had he on purpose killed Christians. hmm. Well maybe I would guess so. I mean the goodness of God leads men to repentance and we are to do good works to our enemies to put hot coals on their heads and love our enemies and even turn our enemies to our friends.

In Paul's case maybe not though maybe he would have been as Judas who just went too far (if hypothetically he killed knowingly). I don't know maybe it has to be judged on a case by case basis and only God knows.

Was Paul still to blame? I don't know maybe. I would guess so since the other Pharisees were often rebuked. But, maybe he was different than the other Pharisees maybe especially being seen in that he ultimately became a Christian.

So Cornelius' prayer and alms were honored hmm. Well maybe I can say that for certain people their righteous acts are as filthy rags because they are done with wrong motive (I will have to look at the context again). Maybe Cornelius' works were different because they were done in humility and sincerity. Maybe he didn't do them to try to earn his way to God but to love God. Maybe he didn't do his works in false beliefs but in incomplete ones namely not yet being told of the Gospel. I think it was Apollus who was taken aside by Aquila and Priscilla and told the fullness of the Gospel whereas before He only knew the baptism of John?

The last thing I think I will bring up in this post. Is something Billy Graham said. There is a video floating around of when he was speaking to Robert Schuller Pastor of the Crystal Cathedral. He is deemed as a heretic in it. In that he says that many who have not heard the Gospel around the world and are in false religions like Hinduism or Islam but are truly sincerely seeking God but just have not yet had the truth are in fact saved. So he says that to those who are ignorant but sincere no matter what religion they are in are saved.

Now can I agree with with this. Well this would be really hard to receive. I mean does not Jesus promise to reveal Himself to those who truly seek him. Or can they not receive dreams and visions or other Divine interventions. Or if they were seeking the truth would they then not know that Islam and others were false. I mean did not those biblically who were ignorant at least believe the true God of Israel and other things and probably also reject many false religious thing amongst the Pharisees and whatnot as Jesus did. I do bring this up though as it comes up in the context of the topic. hmm...

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2009/8/2 22:16

Hi anonymity,

Since I had participated in this discussion I wanted to respond to something that you mentioned if I could?

"I do bring this up though as it comes up in the context of the topic."

I believe that whatever ways and reasons God has dealt with people in time and in their lives and in bringing grace to them and us, are His own(Deut 29:29) and that we are called(and are called upon to tell others) to put no confidence in ourselves or anything that we have done for hope in this life and in the next, but in Christ and Christ alone.

And this is the life and message and hope that we have to give to others.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2009/8/3 7:21

Quote:

-----Or Paul said I was given mercy because I did these things in ignorance.

Paul's testimony was...

4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the Law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Paul's source of ignorance is found in his dependence on the law of Moses. We know that the law of Moses only condemns the acts done in the flesh. So Paul did not know the law of the Spirit until Jesus met him on the road to Damascus. Jesus said to him...

Acts 9:5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?"

Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads."

In this exchange we find that Jesus testifies that Paul has been refusing to respond to the work of the Holy Spirit thus far in his life. One must remember again, that Paul being a Pharisee of Pharisees knew the word of God by heart... every last jot and tittle. We know that Paul also knew this verse...

Eccl. 12:11 The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd.

To paraphrase...The words of God, spoken by men chosen by God, find their source of inspiration in "one Shepherd."

And we know that Shepherd is Jesus.

In the book of Job we find a description of how God works to redeem man.

Job 33:

13 Why do you contend with Him?
For He does not give an accounting of any of His words.
14 For God may speak in one way, or in another,
Yet man does not perceive it.
15 In a dream, in a vision of the night,
When deep sleep falls upon men,
While slumbering on their beds,
16 Then He opens the ears of men,
And seals their instruction.
17 In order to turn man from his deed,
And conceal pride from man,
18 He keeps back his soul from the Pit,
And his life from perishing by the sword.
19 "Man is also chastened with pain on his bed,
And with strong pain in many of his bones,
20 So that his life abhors bread,
And his soul succulent food.
21 His flesh wastes away from sight,
And his bones stick out which once were not seen.
22 Yes, his soul draws near the Pit,
And his life to the executioners.
23 "If there is a messenger for him,
A mediator, one among a thousand,
To show man His uprightness,
24 Then He is gracious to him, and says,
"Deliver him from going down to the Pit;
I have found a ransom";
25 His flesh shall be young like a child's,
He shall return to the days of his youth.
26 He shall pray to God, and He will delight in him,
He shall see His face with joy,
For He restores to man His righteousness.
27 Then he looks at men and says,
"I have sinned, and perverted what was right,
And it did not profit me."
28 He will redeem his soul from going down to the Pit,
And his life shall see the light.
29 "Behold, God works all these things,
Twice, in fact, three times with a man,
30 To bring back his soul from the Pit,

That he may be enlightened with the light of life.

The light of life is salvation. And that salvation is found in hearing and obeying the words of the Shepherd. No religion can deliver one from the pit.

In Christ
Jeff

Re: Cornelius, total depravity, works, a questions?..., on: 2009/8/3 11:55

Hi anonymity,

I enjoyed your musings.

You asked

Quote:
-----Was Paul still to blame?

It seems you were thinking that somehow, blame was not attributed to Cornelius (and the other centurion), but you are unsure why that might be, as we all know that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. I believe context is important, and you do need to look for other places in scripture where similar things are mentioned.

Jeff alluded to the law of Moses, and I would point out in agreement with that, what Paul said in Romans 10:3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, **and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.** 4 For Christ the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

You also mentioned the goodness of God leading to repentance. This is true, of course, but again... look at the context.

Rom 1: 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, ... 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, 30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: 32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. Rom 2:1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. 2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. 3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? 4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? 5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds: 7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: 8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; 10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: 11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

So... there is repentance for people who know the truth and deny it, who later chose to turn from their sinfulness, as much as those who don't know it and sin in ignorance. Perhaps this is why Paul calls it 'the goodness of God' to such sinners. But, this was true also in the Old Testament: Eze 3:18, 19, 20, 21, and, Eze 18:1 - 24. (Please read the whole section, as this is a key passage delineating a change in the way man is to regard his sinfulness, and, God's judgement upon it. By the time Jesus lived and died, the grace of God is offered to every man as an individual, to believe Him for salvation.

n.)

We see this in Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; **but now commandeth all men every where to repent**: 31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by man whom he hath ordained; he hath given assurance unto all, in that he hath raised him from the dead. 32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this. 33 So Paul departed from among them. 34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed.

As Paul's 'hearing' the word of God on the road to Damascus furnished him with the necessary faith to choose salvation, Rom 10:17, so those in Athens who heard, were divided into those who chose to put the faith into action, and those who consciously chose unbelief. It is for this choosing of unbelief that God condemns men.

John 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. 21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2009/8/4 10:59

Quote:

----- Maybe he didn't do his works in false beliefs but in incomplete ones namely not yet being told of the Gospel.

The OT saints had the gospel preached to them according to Scripture...

Rom 10:16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "LORD, who has believed our report?"

Rom 10:17 So then faith by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Also...

Hbr 4:1 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.

Hbr 4:2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.

Those who live by faith through the work of God's grace in their lives will come to know Salvation. Jesus is able to save those who lived before His incarnation as well as those who lived after His resurrection. You will find Christ's work in the OT. The doctrine of the Trinity is the same always...

In Christ
Jeff