

## Scriptures and Doctrine :: We Must Get Ourselves A New Heart and New Spirit

### We Must Get Ourselves A New Heart and New Spirit - posted by Oracio (), on: 2015/1/5 18:14

I'm sure that most, if not all of us are familiar with the wonderful truth that God grants a new heart and new spirit to those who repent and believe the gospel. This truth is clearly taught in scriptures such as Ezekiel 36:26 and Psalm 51:10. But I wonder how many of us are also familiar with Ezekiel 18:31 which teaches that God commands us to get ourselves a new heart and new spirit. Here is the whole passage in context:

"Again, when a wicked man turns away from the wickedness which he committed, and does what is lawful and right, he preserves himself alive. 28 Because he considers and turns away from all the transgressions which he committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 29 Yet the house of Israel says, 'The way of the Lord is not fair.' O house of Israel, is it not My ways which are fair, and your ways which are not fair? 30 "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways," says the Lord God. "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. 31 Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? 32 For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord God. "Therefore turn and live!"-Ezekiel 18:27-32

My point in bringing this up is to say that God COMMANDS us to repent. That is our part. We are not to be passive in the matter, as some would suggest. We are responsible and accountable in God's sight. Yes, we are dead in sin apart from Christ and weak in our flesh and need God to help us to repent and believe the gospel, and He does help us. But He does not require for us to know that He helps us to repent. He simply commands us to repent.

What He does require for us to understand in order to be saved is the gravity of our sins before Him. So He seeks to speak directly to our consciences to awaken us out of our complacency in sin. But again, once we are awakened to our plight as sinners before the holiness of God, the simple command is, "Repent, forsake your evil ways, be truly sorry for your sins against God!"

Matthew Henry's take on Ezekiel 18:30-32:

"Here are four necessary duties that we are called to, all amounting to the same: 1. We must repent; we must change our mind and change our ways; we must be sorry for what we have done amiss and ashamed of it, and go as far as we can towards the undoing of it again. 2. We must turn ourselves from all our transgressions, v. 30 and again v. 32. Turn yourselves, face about; turn from sin, nay, turn against it as the enemy you loathe, turn to God as the friend you love. 3. We must cast away from us all our transgressions; we must abandon and forsake them with a resolution never to return to them again, give sin a bill of divorce, break all the leagues we have made with it, throw it overboard, as the mariners did Jonah (for it has raised the storm), cast it out of the soul, and crucify it as a malefactor. 4. We must make us a new heart and a new spirit. This was the matter of a promise, ch. 11:19. Here it is the matter of a precept. We must do our endeavour, and then God will not be wanting to us to give us his grace...

II. Here are four good arguments used to enforce these calls to repentance: 1. It is the only way, and it is a sure way, to prevent the ruin which our sins have a direct tendency to: So iniquity shall not be your ruin, which implies that, if we do not repent, iniquity will be our ruin, here and for ever, but that, if we do, we are safe, we are snatched as brands out of the burning. 2. If we repent not, we certainly perish, and our blood will be upon our own heads. Why will you die, O house of Israel? What an absurd thing it is for you to choose death and damnation rather than life and salvation. Note, The reason why sinners die is because they will die; they will go down the way that leads to death, and not come up to the terms on which life is offered. Herein sinners, especially sinners of the house of Israel, are most unreasonable and act most unaccountably. 3. The God of heaven has no delight in our ruin, but desires our welfare (v. 32): I have no pleasure in the death of him that dies, which implies that he has pleasure in the recovery of those that repent; and this is both an engagement and an encouragement to us to repent. 4. We are made for ever if we repent: Turn yourselves, and live. He that says to us, Repent, thereby says to us, Live, yea, he says to us, Live; so that life and death are here set before us."

**Re: We Must Get Ourselves A New Heart and New Spirit - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2015/1/5 20:01**

Ezekiel 18 is one of the most profound passages of Scripture there is in coming to understand how men relate to God. Thank you Oracio!

It is where individual responsibility is reborn, where man is challenged by God mano a mano, each face in direct connection with its maker, no excuses, no family traditions, tribal customs, or hiding in a group.

And the power of those words, "Make for yourself a new heart!" I am sorry, but the waiting for blessing game is some of her religion, it is not God wrestling with the wayward hearts of men to come back, to turn from futile sinful ways.

In this passage I believe the notion of an inborn sinful nature is destroyed. "You shall no longer use this expression, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge!'" Children are not bound to follow their parents' sins, they do not bear the guilt incurred by those parents. Likewise, the children's sins are not born by the parents- each is responsible for his own behavior.

The passage weaves through this all carefully, and concludes with a challenge- whose ways are right, yours or God's?

I know there seems to be a conflict between "God will give you a new heart" and this one that commands you to get the new heart yourself.

Actually both are true, when a man turns to the Lord and the Spirit opens his eyes to his desperate condition, he is in a perfect position to receive a new heart. But first he goes through the furnace. He must first recognize the filthy rags he is wearing, and cry out for some new clothing.

Good call Oracio! A good passage in which to soak one's spirit on a regular basis.

**Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2015/1/5 22:57**

Sidewalk, I say amen to your post except for the following part, and I'm sure you know I'd disagree with it ;) :

Quote:  
-----In this passage I believe the notion of an inborn sinful nature is destroyed. "You shall no longer use this expression, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge!'" Children are not bound to follow their parents' sins, they do not bear the guilt incurred by those parents. Likewise, the children's sins are not born by the parents- each is responsible for his own behavior.  
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The reason I cannot fully agree with you there is because I cannot reconcile the rejection of original sin with Romans 5:12-21, for that passage seems to teach clearly that through Adam's sin all of mankind fell in sin and inherited guilt and death.

I know that you are very fond of Finney, whom denied the teaching of original sin. From what I remember of his writings he believed man inherited a "corrupted" or "twisted" nature through the fall of Adam. He believed and taught that man's nature was corrupted in the sense that it caused man to be largely tempted to sin; that man's nature caused him to be sort of "inclined" or "bent" toward sin (I use those two words hesitantly because I think Finney may not have preferred to use them). He rejected the term "sinful nature" because of the excuses he saw many non-believers make for their sins on account of that term and the teaching on original sin. But from what I remember of Finney's writings I got the impression that his teaching on an inherited "corrupted nature" was not that much different from the teaching of original sin when it came down to it.

Regarding Ezekiel 18, I believe it can be reconciled with Romans 5 through the understanding of inherited guilt from Adam. I'll try to explain how. When Adam sinned we all sinned along with Adam in God's sight, because God knew we would make the same choice as Adam (God dwells outside of time and knows all things). God allowed Adam to be the representative or federal head of the human race. So because God foresaw our agreement with Adam's sin, he pronounced the curse of death upon all of humanity through Adam's act of sin. It doesn't take much to see that we are born into a sin-cursed world. So while it is true that God does not punish people for the sins of their parents, Adam's sin was not just his sin but ours also in God's sight. After we are born we also commit "actual" sins for which we are also accountable.

It seems to me that Ezekiel 18 refers primarily to "actual" sins committed in this life.

Well, there you have it, my feeble attempt at explaining one of the deepest theological issues that we wrestle with as Christians.

But thanks for the encouragement Tom, no hard feelings on my end regarding our disagreement there.

**Re: Pursuing truth and wisdom within the bonds of love. - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2015/1/6 1:28**

Oracio I not only deeply respect your wisdom and eloquence, but I really love you too! I have long ago abandoned the compunction to get everyone to agree with me, so hard feelings will not enter this conversation! Still, it is fun to get into a spirited back and forth, because real men of God are always learning, and appreciate the men and women God sends along in life to challenge our good stuff that we might obtain better stuff!

You are right, I tend to disagree on the Adam connection. I have heard teaching suggesting that Adam actually became sin to save Eve as some type of the Jesus /Church salvation message, but I think that is a stretch. I don't think God's foreknowledge of what has become the sinful human race means that He was using Adam as a symbol of sin to come. As early as His conversation with Cain He was warning against letting sin have its way. God told Cain that he needed to master the sin crouching at the door wanting to have him. He could not have said that if He didn't have a reasonable expectation that Cain could resist sin.

As to the passage in Romans 5, I read that "therefore just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, thus death spread to all men, because all sinned."

The connection is always sin to death, and it does not say that guilt was passed down to men, just death. And that death was always the result of sin. There really is nowhere I have ever seen in scripture that sin is unavoidably natural, it is always willful disobedience. The pressures to sin vary of course- but I firmly believe that the strangely sweet characteristic of being accountable for sin enables me to agree with God that He is right, I am guilty, I am completely undeserving of His mercy because my sin is completely my own fault- and His Spirit whispers complete forgiveness by the blood of His Son. My Dad, his Dad, and Adam are out of the negotiation. It is just me, my sin, and the love of my Heavenly Father at the table. I bring a contrite heart, He brings the blood of His Son, the deal is sealed. And I come away knowing just how much this really cost!

Finney dealt with this from the standpoint that depravity was two separate spheres, moral and physical. Men are both moral and physical beings, and since Adam we all have physical depravity whether we sin or not.

Obviously some sin hastens and exacerbates physical depravity as the pictures of aging Rock Stars bears witness!

When we repent and are on our path to salvation, we have new life, eternal life- but will die from the curse of our physical depravity regardless. But the curse of our moral depravity is lifted when we are born again, we have passed from death to life and we have a witness in our spirits that we are alive unto God.

However, the physical depravity does not depart until the return of Christ, and that is a whole different topic. What is interesting is that Jesus was born into a physically depraved body, conformed to our dying bodies. Yet He was not morally depraved, sin was not a part of His day to day life.

But He did die, giving up His life in the "depraved" body He had been living in. The body died- the sinless man remained alive because sin had no claim on Him. "I lay it down, and I take it up again!"

All to my point that there is a separation between sin and death- a relationship to be sure, but a reason we can rejoice in our freedom from the curse of sin while still living in bodies cursed by Adam's sin in the beginning. Death did indeed spread to all men, but sin has always been a matter of choices. Guilt is a function of the conscience, "knowing together," that is a good gift from God to bring us to repentance- not a physical entity passed genetically from fathers to sons.

I express these opinions from the way I have come to interpret Scripture, from the trial and error of living in and out of sin, and from the guiding of Christ Jesus as I know Him. All of this varies from person to person so I know others will tend to see all this differently- not a problem for me and hopefully those who genuinely love God will not be offended. I share my opinions on SI because I believe I have gained some insights from God, and I love His body. Some of this might be a helpful blessing, some may be completely irritated.

If we are learning from each other and learning to love each other, we are doing well!

**Re: We Must Get Ourselves A New Heart and New Spirit - posted by yuehan, on: 2015/1/6 2:30**

I posted something on the biblical definition of repentance in the "Repentance Must Be Perpetual" thread, which I believe is relevant to this discussion too:

[https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic\\_id=53946&forum=34](https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=53946&forum=34)

**Re: We Must Get Ourselves A New Heart and New Spirit, on: 2015/1/6 5:25**

The thing we miss when reading this and similar passages in Ezekiel, and other parts of scripture, is that God is speaking to those who are supposed to be His people, that is, people who already know Him and believe in Him, not people who need to first of all believe that there is a God.

It's easy to see why the mistake is made due to the words used which indicate that they are not yet saved and still need a new heart and spirit, but that is forcing doctrine into the text without considering that one might still have a stage to reach after one has come to Christ for forgiveness.

So God is saying to these His people, that they need to see their sins are not acceptable to Him and they must repent and especially of their complaints towards Him and lack of trust and they will 'get themselves' or receive because of their actions, the new heart and spirit, not as when they first came to the Lord and only faith was required. At that stage there was nothing we could do but accept His offer that He would enable us to BECOME the sons of God.

It is when we actually repent of our Christian behaviour and state that the promise is fulfilled and we become His sons.

**Re: , on: 2015/1/6 8:38**

Acts 15:8-9, "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."

When Paul preached the Gospel to the Gentiles and they heard what God had already accomplished for them in Christ they simply received the necessary faith and responded to this truth. As a result their heart was totally purified and cleansed.

The message of the gospel supplies the faith necessary for us to respond and to receive Christ, Himself as our life.

The true gospel is centered on what Christ has given and done to us and not on what we can do or give to Him.

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/1/6 11:31**

Tuc--

Scripture clearly places responsibility on hearers of the gospel to do certain things. This includes repentance, faith, baptism and continued, loyal obedience to Christ. But identifying what the Gospel requires of us is not the same thing as saying what the true Gospel actually is. This list of duties correctly identifies the proper response to the Gospel—not the Gospel itself.

The Gospel is a particular message of good tidings, heralded through Christ and the apostles (but only rarely by modern evangelists). It is called "the Gospel of the Kingdom" (e.g., Matt.4:23; 9:35; 24:14), because it is the proclamation of the presence of another Kingdom and another King—one Jesus (Luke 2:10-11; Isa.52:7; Acts 17:7; 20:25). This entire proclamation can be summarized by the original Christian confession: "Jesus is Lord ." This is what one must confess, in

order to be saved (Rom.10:9). It is because He is the King that we must repent (of our former neglect of His lordship), trust Him, and be baptized into His alternative, royal society. Obedience is the obvious response to Lordship:

"Why do you call me 'Lord,' 'Lord,' and you do not do what I say?" (Luke 6:46)

One is not saved by the perfection of his/her obedience, but by the determination to obey completely. This is what happens when one hears, believes, and does not rebel against the proclamation of Christ's Kingship. Baptism is the public submission to the Crown, and a pledge to loyally follow Him until death. Many reduce the Gospel to a decree of justification only. However, justification, in the context of the Kingdom of Christ, is simply the amnesty granted by the King to penitent rebels, as they return in submission to the Authority they formerly spurned.

One is not saved by 80% obedience nor by 100% obedience (which actually is possible over short periods, by the way). One is saved by having genuinely embraced the King and the life that logically follows from having such a King. None obeys completely, but we are commanded to do so, and true disciples have every intention of doing so. Failure to obey completely is a breach of the King's law, but it is not, in itself, damning. To inadvertently violate the speed limit is not to renounce your citizenship. Likewise, a child is not disowned by his parents because he forgets to do a particular assigned chore. There is grace in this Kingdom for those whose disobedience springs from weakness, ignorance or temporary insanity (James 3:2), and not from rebellion (Matt.26:41).

The Gospel is not a message of performance-oriented acceptance with God. We are saved by the grace of the Crown, and we obey because we love the King. If we do not love the King, whatever begrudged obedience we may render is a sham. It is not salvation.

**Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2015/1/6 12:03**

Quote:

-----If we are learning from each other and learning to love each other, we are doing well!  
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Amen Tom! I very much appreciated the tone of your last post. I'll briefly reply and resume our spirited back and forth :)

Quote:

-----As to the passage in Romans 5, I read that "therefore just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, thus death spread to all men, because all sinned."

The connection is always sin to death, and it does not say that guilt was passed down to men, just death. And that death was always the result of sin.  
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But we also have these other verses in that passage which imply a connection with Adam in terms of guilt:

"16 And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification."

"18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous."

So again, I don't see how we can get away from the plain reading of those verses.

And you admit that we inherit at least physical depravity and death from Adam. Yet God's Word declares that the wages of sin is death-Romans 6:23, and that the soul that sins shall die-Ezekiel 18:4. So if we die it must be because of our own sin, not just Adam's. And yet the Word also teaches that Adam's sin brought forth death upon all men. So I can understand how some could be quite confused in trying to reconcile the teaching in Romans 5 with Ezekiel 18. The only way I've been able to do that is with the explanation I gave in my last post.

So again, the bottom line for me here is that God's Word teaches that man's physical depravity is directly connected to, and is a result of his moral depravity. Without moral depravity there would be no physical depravity or death in this world

. So the fact that we are born with physical depravity and inherit the curse of death reveals that we inherit guilt through Adam's sin.

And yet we are still responsible and accountable for our sin against God and have no excuse for it. We have a conscience that tells us we are guilty of sin.

Also, it doesn't take much to see that children are born with a corrupt nature and propensity toward sin. From the womb we are selfish by nature and have to learn to share, to tell the truth, etc. Finney called it physical depravity and others call it a sinful nature and/or total depravity. And I know there are some significant differences in understanding on certain points there.

**Re: Thrust and parry... But always in love... - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2015/1/6 23:02**

Oracio,

And everybody else of course, It seems to me from the careful reading of the Romans 5 verses, that a certain level of participation with Adam and with Christ is implied for both the guilt to be charged, and the deliverance to be apprehended. As we sin we join Adam in condemnation, as we repent and lay hold of Christ's atoning work we are redeemed into eternal life. But only those who participate are involved.

If we believe that sin is the knowing rebellion against the law of God, I do not see how guilt can be passed down to a man's offspring without their sinning first. Again, that strange quote from Jesus regarding the Pharisees, "Before I came, they did not have sin. But now they have hated both Me and My Father." Clearly Jesus acknowledged here that these men came into serious sin with their rejection of Himself, and it remains a question as to why he phrased it like that. Most of us would probably agree that in all likelihood these guys were the evil, whitewashed tombs of iniquity as He described them in another passage. A ponder...

As we have this discussion, I go back to the words of Paul in II Corinthians where he says "We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle that exalts itself against the knowledge of Christ." (10:5). Every belief system we hold, every doctrine we embrace should be useful to Jesus as we proclaim His salvation in our words and our deeds. So for me, cutting off every possible excuse for sin is at the top of the list. I have referenced this in other posts, but let me say again that my life changed when I took full responsibility for my sin and my sins, when I stood as the song says, "without one plea" before God guilty to all of God's wrath, deserving of zero mercy. I was ready to receive His pardon not by my works, but by His.

He gave His Son, and that suddenly made so much sense! Yes I was guilty, but there He was with the complete answer to the dilemma. Only a proud and selfish fool could look at that and say no!

Obviously, others have come to this incredible grace and sweet deliverance while still believing that their guilt has come down a genetic line from Adam. I just can't see that, even in the passages in Romans. I never see Jesus addressing sin as something natural in men, though I suppose when He says He knew what was in men might be used to support the inborn sinful nature position. But the passage does not elaborate that point. (Jn 2:24, 25)

It just seems that taking full responsibility for one's sin is an honest and strong position from which to see and comprehend the power of God's grace in salvation. I am disturbed in my spirit by the vast number of people who "receive Christ as a Savior" one day, and a month later are back in the world disillusioned and embittered. They need a better message, and a better preparation.

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/1/7 6:17**

Isn't it really a distinction without a difference? Even if man is not a victim of "original sin" at birth (I tend to believe this is not the case), all men sin at some point very early on.



**Re: - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2015/1/7 11:04**

The soul that sinneth will die.

Or the serpent's famous quote in the garden of Eden, brutally paraphrased, "Die? He told you that? Nah, you're not gonna die... sort of..."

The law of sin and death is that while they go together, sin precedes death. Adam and Eve died when they ate the forbidden fruit, but the physical manifestation of that came a bit later. Eve's death is not recorded, but Adam lived to be 930 years old.

The serpent lied. He still does.

**Re: , on: 2015/1/7 15:22**

Lets see what God said.

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."

Something had radically changed in them. Look at how they acted toward God.

This was a "death" to what what they had before they ate.

**Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2015/1/8 6:53**

If being birthed a human being and we can get a new heart, why do we need to be re-birthed?

There is only one that can give a new heart to believers, that is God Himself, when, where and how, it is His power that gives us new birth and new life in Christ Jesus.

Jesus Christ is the Incorruptable Seed that the Father gives rebirth to us and calls us sons of God. "Ye must be born again".

In Christ: Phillip

**Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2015/1/8 11:13**

The new heart and new spirit Ezekiel 18 speaks of is equivalent to the new birth as taught in the New Testament.

So you could also paraphrase Ezekiel as saying, "Be born again!"

We know that we cannot make ourselves born again in the least bit. Yet God commands us to be born again. It may seem like a paradox at the surface but it really isn't.

What God commands He enables.

I want to bring up the word command here in light of certain posts. Webster's defines it as follows:

"to give (someone) an order : to tell (someone) to do something in a forceful and often official way

: to have authority and control over (a group of people, such as soldiers)

: to deserve or be able to get or receive (something)"

I think it is very close to the word demand. Here's the definition of that word:

"a forceful statement in which you say that something must be done or given to you

"something claimed as due "

God does indeed COMMAND and DEMAND obedience because He has a right to do so as our Maker and Lord.

**What God commands He enables. , on: 2015/1/8 13:09**

What God commands He enables.

That is what I have been saying all along.

Grace enables us and and fulfills the command.

Grace supplies us with the ability that the Law or we could never do.

**Re: What God commands He enables. - posted by Oracio (), on: 2015/1/8 13:32**

Quote:

-----What God commands He enables.

That is what I have been saying all along.

Grace enables us and and fulfills the command.

Grace supplies us with the ability that the Law or we could never do.

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Yes, but we cannot deny the truth of God's commands or demands upon us.

Both are undeniable truths of God's Word. When we emphasize one of those truths to the exclusion of the other we err gravely in our presentation of the gospel message.

In emphasizing grace to the exclusion of man's accountability and responsibility we can end up either with heretical hyper Calvinism or heretical cheap grace.

On the other hand in emphasizing man's supposed ability to change himself and obey God without His grace you end up with heretical Pelagianism (the belief that obedience to God's law is possible without God's grace).

**Re: Born again, on: 2015/1/8 14:31**

You said

"We know that we cannot make ourselves born again in the least bit."

I agree 100% with this.

So here is the real question to ponder.

When were we born again and why?

How did this happen, and what was our part in it - if any?

Lets get some remarks about this.



**Re: - posted by makrothumia (), on: 2015/1/8 15:39**

For a "when" consideration - "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise"

We are included in Christ when we hear and believe.

**Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2015/1/8 15:47**

Paul the Apostle said, "I was alive without the law once, but when the law came, sin revived and I died." Romans 7

He also said, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." Romans 5

"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Cor.

It appears to me that sin is universal and original due to Adam's sin. Paul says that death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. The word man in this context means human being. This death includes sickness, death in process, and spiritual death and the resulting judgment. Yet Paul says that there was a time that he was alive without the law, and that there was a time before the law when sin was in the world, but the spiritual consequences were not being imputed though the physical consequences were apparent.

I think that a man becomes spiritually accountable for his sinful condition when he is aware that he is violating the law of God. At what age this occurs is arguable, and I think only God and the man can make that determination. I knew I was a sinner at age 8 and came to the Lord in repentance and was born again. But the behavior of a child at a very early age ought to be evidence that all is not well spiritually with that child...that is, that that child has been born unregenerate or in sin.

So there is, I think, a distinction between physical and spiritual effects of sin to some degree. But I don't see how we can say anything other than that a man is born into depravity, rather than that a man becomes depraved due to his own actions. Due to the sin of one man, all are made sinners....but due to the obedience of one man all who will can be made righteous.

On another note, I think the "God's Part/ Our Part" discussion might be a bit of talking past one another. I cannot have faith or ability to repent unless God grants me that ability, while at the same time I must make the decision that I am going to repent and turn to God. I provide the impetus, He provides the ability.

**Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2015/1/8 19:05**

sounds rights travis ....to me

The way I see it is Paul was also teaching we were in Adam when he sinned and as the Bible says, because all sinned, rather than saying all will sin or saying or are sinning. Paul said death spread to all men because all sinned. So death physical death is seen as evidence that we sinned past tense, the fact that a baby can die shows that he in fact has sinned past tense, for a baby to be able to receive a physical death in the womb shows it can't be a judgment of death penalty by his own sin, but one before him, and the Bible clearly states that it was Adam's sin by which this death spread to all.

We also know that it says in Adam all died but in Christ all will be made alive, some to everlasting life and some to everlasting damnation. Whether it was because we were in Adam's loins and have a close connection, a union to him and all other men, or whether God knew we would all do the same as Adam because of the special creative union we have with Adam and one another, or both, we know it says what it says, and that is speaking not directly of spiritual life or death but physical resurrection life, hence in Christ all will be made alive we know for sure all will not be made spiritual alive, but all will be resurrected.

but total depravity is slightly another angle but if we equate spiritual death with physical death. Then we have as much power to come to Christ for spiritual life as Lazarus had to undo his grave cloths and meet Jesus at the stone door,

and that's what death means to me ,dead period ,,because the light that was in me was darkness ,how great was that darkness

**Re: - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2015/1/8 20:28**

The Ezekiel 18 passage is important here, because Paul must have been intimately aware of it when he drafted the book of Romans. The teaching there is clear that a man and his father are not connected in their sin and not connected in righteousness. Each is accountable for his own response to the enlightening law of God.

By saying that he was once alive before the law came to kill him, Paul discounts any pre-existing sin within himself. Also, when he says that by one man (Adam) all die and by one man (Jesus) all men live, it is only logical that there must be participation. The commitment to serve Christ with repentance and a genuine confession is the participation with Christ, and it is the willful disobedience on the other end that participates with Adam.

God didn't create us to sin, He created us for friendship. His dilemma was just that we had to be free to love Him or reject Him in order for the love choice to be real. He does not want or need puppets.

We do not need a sinful nature. We are fully capable of concocting plenty of our own sin just with the lusts we learn to feed at a very early age!

Think about God forgiving you for the sinful nature with which He created you. Would this not be an insult to law, justice, and reason? Sin would be two completely different entities, one based on moral choices, and one based on physical being. Jesus never taught anything like that!

**Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2015/1/8 22:05**

i think the opposite is true of paul he was saying just that, that he had a sinful nature that why he called it the natural man and said that he cant receive the things of the spirit,,the natural born human is not able to receive the things of the spirit, I feel it is a spit in the face of the holiness of Christ who had no sin him his nature ,due to the fact that his maternal father was not from the lineage of adam but from god he was the new creation the new adam in which the new lineage was refreshed ,we become part of that when we partake of the devine nature ,natural man and the carnal man has not that new nature ,neither does the unborn in that lineage .Adam had it but lost it for all after him ,that is why the new birth is expedient

If death spread to the unborn in the womb it can be only for the same reason the bible states it, and that is because all sinned passed tence .

The bible gives us no other reason for the death penalty to be upon everyone's babies and the unborn alike .

Bringing up the idea to questions gods reasons an Justus like forgiving us for our sinful nature ,doesn't change anything ,we all need to be sinless like Christ , through the blood of the new covenant and Christ we all need to be changed into his image of absolute perfection ,,baby's and the unborn will need the divine holiness of the second adam ,the fallen image of the man of dust will not be excepted ,, no one will excepted on the basis of them being sinless enough in themselves to enter into the the holiest of holy,only through Christ righteousness and the sprinkling of the blood will we be excepted

.. The bible even calls the children of the unbelievers in the new covenant as unclean ,,if children could possibly be sinless the bible would not call them unclean

**Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2015/1/8 22:36**

I think the fact that we are all born in to a fallen world show the the result of adams guilt and and the judgment and punishment that was to fall upon adam falls upon us all ,and so we all suffer the punishment to some degree that was due to adams sin ,even tho we haven't sinned after the likeness of his transgression

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2015/1/9 12:39

Quote:  
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Amen brothagary, I agree with all your posts in this thread. Indeed, the fact that all babies are born with physical depravity and the curse of death clearly shows that there is a connection between us and Adam's sin. The objection comes up, "God cannot punish babies or people for Adam's sin." I ask then, why are they punished with physical depravity and death? Why are some born with various types of serious deformities or illnesses and some die from illnesses as babies? Again, the answer according to God's Word is that there is a connection with Adam's sin.

I know that accepting that we are born as sinners with guilt inherited through Adam(as Romans 5:18-19 plainly declares) can be a very humbling thing for us to do. When it comes to certain hard truths revealed in God's Word we inevitably come to a place where we either humbly receive those truths as a child or reject them due to not fully understanding the reasonability of them. It is during these times that we must heed the admonition of Proverbs 3:5 not to lean on our understanding. Let's face it, there are some things of which we may never fully understand the reasonability this side of heaven.

It is in that area where I believe Finney erred on certain points. I believe he allowed his experience as a lawyer and his intellectual brilliance to hinder him from humbly accepting certain hard, yet plain truths of Scripture. He went to certain extremes in trying to find a precise, logical explanation for every single point of theology. And many have follow suit, and some have crossed into outright Pelagian heresy after starting with Finney's teachings.

I agree with the concept of endeavoring to destroy all excuses or objections for rejecting the gospel, but not at the expense of clear or plain truths of God's Word.

Re: , on: 2015/1/9 13:00

Oracio, I really enjoyed your scriptural defense for 'if we repent, God will give us a New Heart/Spirit'.

Great expository teaching. Keep up the good work in the word. I feel blessed to have read your teaching/discussing on this topic.

Re: , on: 2015/1/9 13:15

Ezek: 36:25-27 "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 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 a heart of flesh. 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."

Here is an exact Charles Finney quote from The Promise of The Spirit published by Bethany House 1980. Lecture 11. THE PROMISES--No. 1, page 135.

"We never keep the commandments, only as we take hold of the promises. By this I mean that grace alone enables us from the heart, to obey the commandments of God. It is, therefore, only when we lay hold of the promise, by faith, and receive its fulfillment in ourselves, that we really, in heart, obey the commandments of God. For example we never love the Lord our God, according to the first great commandment, only as we lay hold on, and receive the fulfillment of some such promise as this: "I will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

The grace of the gospel offers you, with every command, the strength to obey, and work in you the very thing commanded. Every command implies a corresponding promise, that is, if we are required to do anything by Christ, the very requirement is an implied promise or offer of all the aid we need to make it possible for us to perform it. Indeed, the command in itself is an implied GIFT of all needed help. The command itself implies the ability to obey it. Every command of God implies this in the strongest manner. It should be remembered that God is perfect in both love and wisdom: therefore He cannot be so unjust as to demand something from us that is impossible for us to perform. THE GRACE OF GOD TURNS THE REQUIREMENTS INTO A PROMISE FROM GOD.

The grace of God now shows you that there is an entirely new position for you to take. You must take a possible position of simple childlike trust in what God has already accomplished, day by day, to every command His voice speaks to you through the Spirit. You must take a possible position of simple childlike dependence on and experience of His all-sufficient grace, day by day, for every command He gives.

**Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2015/1/9 13:49**

LoveMeekHope, thanks for the encouragement!

tuc, I say a hearty amen to that piece from Finney!

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/1/9 17:17**

But having a sinful nature is not the same thing as being born guilty with "original sin." When Adam and Eve blew it (even though they had no sinful nature---gasp!!!) sin entered the world and thereafter people were born with a "bent" toward sinning. That's why every little kid starts sinning around 3 years old.

**Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2015/1/9 17:46**

Quote:  
-----But having a sinful nature is not the same thing as being born guilty with "original sin." When Adam and Eve blew it (even though they had no sinful nature---gasp!!!) sin entered the world and thereafter people were born with a "bent" toward sinning. That's why every little kid starts sinning around 3 years old.  
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But is not being born with a sinful nature or bent toward sinning or depraved nature a judgment from God? Is not death a judgment from God? If so, how can there be a judgment like that if there is no guilt involved? A judgment or punishment like that has to involve guilt if you take the words in Ezekiel 18 literally.

Also, how is it known that kids start sinning at around 3 years old? Even as early as 6 months old there can be a tendency in babies to get angry if you try to get them to share their toys with other babies (I know they can't be held fully accountable for things like that at that age because they're just babies). And don't get me wrong, I know they are very adorable and I don't want to take away from the image of God that is still there. But I believe Scripture teaches that sin and a sinful nature are realities even at conception. We are judged and punished with a depraved nature and death as a result of Adam's sin.

As far the age of accountability question, I'd rather not get into that one because that's a tough one for me to be dogmatic about at this time. I'd probably have to do more prayerful study on it.

**Re: perspective shift - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2015/1/9 21:01**

In your mind as you think on these things, is God rooting out sinners to punish them, or is He working on His plan to save them?

If He is working to save them, it is because there are laws in place that force Him to make a plan. He cannot just lay the law aside because He loves someone- that is not how salvation works.

For the current American president so many laws are in the way he just ignores and goes around them. He spends money that he just prints up, he releases enemy combatants without their repentance, he wants school and medical care to be free- he is popular and loved among the dependent classes, giving away the store! But it is not producing social stability and a sense of justice. I have never seen so much confusion, class and race hatred, and general anger in the public square as I have since he began to implement wealth redistribution, another name for lawlessness.

God is nothing like this. He is the author of the laws of justice, He is the wise instructor in how sowing and reaping works, He is the One Who calls out to men, "Come, let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet you will be white as a snow!" When He says "reason" He presumes that all are on the same page in the discussion. His ways are high, but they are not unreasonable!

No man who is condemned to Hell will wonder what he did to incur God's judgement, further- he will see that not only did

his own sinful choices bring the condemnation, but as he bows his knee to Jesus Christ there will be a flood of revelation that God had worked tirelessly to spare him this fate. He will know that God does not send him to hell, his own rebellion does. He will not whimper out some excuse that he was born with a sinful nature, will he?

**Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2015/1/9 21:07**

tod I don't think those two things are exactly the same thing ,im not sure if anyone one would propound that way ,

But adams oridgnal sin caused the judgment of god to fall upon him and his seed and rest of the world ,and since that ti me ,we are born with the effects that original sin caused by bringing gods curse ,and part of that is a sin full nature ,man y people would call the flesh, but having said that it is not that same as total depravity ,which is the degree in which this sinfull nature or flesh has its control of humans and beasts

I agree oracio

**Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2015/1/10 8:58**

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 f lesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Rom 5:15-20

(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 grac e 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 i s 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 gif t 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 right eous.

(20) Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

The contrast between the first Adam whose disobedience brought the condemnation of sin and God's judgment upon all men and the second Adam, Christ, who brought to all men the gift of righteousness is a fantastic revelation to receive fro m the word of God. Because of the one original offense of the one original man, God's judgement came upon all men to condemnation. We were, as Eph. 2:3 says, the children of wrath by nature of being carnal man, not by our own individu al offense. But by the obedience of one, Christ, we can receive a new nature. We can be made righteous.

Because of Adam's transgression, we all, as the human race, came under the curse of sin and were born, as David said , in sin and iniquity. Because of this, there is not a single person who does not have to be regenerated in spirit (reborn). The only exception to this need for regeneration are those to which the condemnation of the law has not taken effect. W e typically think of these people as children who are not yet of age to understand that they are sinners, but we could also include, I think, those adults who are mentally incapable of this recognition as well.

Paul says in the first part of Romans that when men make laws regarding right and wrong, even when they do not base t hese laws upon God's precepts, they show by their very behavior that they understand that there is a God to whom they are accountable. Otherwise they would not recognize that some actions are right and others are wrong. Paul says that t hese people will stand before God without excuse.

As to the visiting of the father's iniquities upon the children, I would like to make a couple of observations. There are two scriptures that seem to be very contradictory. In Exodus 34, we find God described as one who does visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to even the fourth generation. Yet in Deuteronomy and 1 and 2 Kings we find that it was a gainst the law to punish the children for their father's sin. We must understand, I think, that the verses the speak of God not punishing the children for the sins of the father is a commentary on the law. It does not give us commentary on the s in of Adam bringing death spiritually and physically to all men. Rather it speaks of the punishment that was meted out u nder the law for transgressions of the law. Under the law, if a man committed murder, his son was not put to death beca use the father committed murder. This was about physical punishments meted out under the law.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/1/10 9:12

Original Sin and Depravity  
Lecture by Steve Gregg

#### I. Original sin: What is it?

A. Term not found in scripture—Primarily based upon Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:12 & 1 Cor.15:21-22

—Death spread to all men because all men sinned. Does this mean that all have sinned in their personal lives (which is apparently the meaning of the words in 3:23) or that all sinned in Adam's primal sin? In support of the latter it might be argued that human beings are mortal before they commit any sin, so that the mortality of the race is the result of the original racial sin. The construction, with the underlying thought, is paralleled in 2 Corinthians 5:14: "one has died for all; therefore all have died"—It is not simply because Adam is the ancestor of mankind that all are said to have sinned in his sin (otherwise it might be argued that because Abraham believed God all his descendants were necessarily involved in his belief); it is because Adam is mankind. (F.F. Bruce, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Introduction and Commentary, pp.122f)

—Death is visited on all men today, not just because all men have sinned like Adam, but because all men sinned in Adam—the reason why died is not because they deliberately transgressed—like Adam and died for their transgression, but because they and the whole of humanity (Christ only excepted) were included in Adam, the head of the human race. (John R.W. Stott, Men Made New: An Exposition of Romans 5-8, p.25)

B. Definition of term not agreed upon among theologians. Does it mean:

1. Inherited sinful nature
2. Inherited guilt of Adam's sin
3. Neither

C. Views of the Early Church

—Many Fathers found it difficult to accept any concept of what we would call inherited guilt. To most of them disobedience was a personal act, repeated in each individual but not directly inherited from Adam in a way that would make us responsible for his disobedience. (Gerald Bray, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Romans, p.130)

—Those who oppose the idea of the transmission of sin try to attack it as follows: —If Adam's sin harmed even those who were not sinners, then Christ's righteousness must help even those who are not believers. For Paul says that people are saved through Christ in the same way or to an even greater degree than they had previously perished through Adam. —Secondly, they say: —If baptism washes away that ancient sin, those who are born of two baptized parents should not have that sin, for they could not have passed on to their children what they did not possess themselves. Besides, if the soul does not exist by transmission, but only the flesh, then only the flesh carries the transmission of sin and it alone deserves punishment. —Declaring it to be unjust that a soul which is born today, not from the lump of Adam, bears so ancient a sin belonging to another, these people say that on no account should it be accepted that God, who forgives a man his own sins, imputes to him the sins of someone else. (Pelagius, Commentary on Romans)

—show a manifest affinity with the later teachings of Pelagius rather than with those of Augustine. In a measure, it may be said, they prepared the way for Pelagianism—Adam could sin and did sin, and thus came under the power of Satan, death, and sinful corruption. This physical corruption was propagated in the human race, but is not itself sin and did not involve mankind in guilt. There is no original sin in the strict sense of the word. They do not deny the solidarity of the human race, but admit its physical connection with Adam. This connection, however, relates only to the corporeal and sensual nature, which is propagated from father to son, and not to the higher and rational side of human nature, which is in every case a direct creation of God. It exerts no immediate effect on the will, but affects this only mediately through the intellect. Sin always originates in the free choice of man, and is the result of weakness and ignorance. Consequently infants cannot be regarded as guilty, for they have inherited only a physical corruption.

It should be noted, however, that there were some departures from this general view. Origen admitting that a certain hereditary pollution attached to every one at birth, found the explanation for it in a pre-natal or pre-temporal fall of the soul,



and came very close to a doctrine of original sin. And Gregory of Nyssa came even nearer to teaching this doctrine. But even the great Athanasius and Chrysostom scrupulously avoided it. (Louis Berkhof, The History of Christian Doctrine s, p.128)

D. Total depravity? (Genesis 6:5/ Jeremiah 13:23; 17:9/John 8:44 / Romans 7:18 )

## II. Ramifications:

### A. Infant guilt and damnation

“Everyone, even little children, have broken God’s covenant, not indeed in virtue of any personal action but in virtue of mankind’s common origin in that single ancestor in whom all have sinned.” (Augustine, The City of God 16:27)

B. All men born haters of God’Romans 1:30

C. Men incapacitated even from believing and repenting’“Dead in sin” (Col.2:12) see also John 6:44; 10:26; Rom.3:10-12; 8:7-8

D. Did Jesus inherit the sinful nature? If not, how was He tempted like we are?

“If the souls of all men are derived from that one which was breathed into the first man – either the soul of Christ was not derived from that one, since he had no sin of any kind or, if his soul was derived from that first one, he purified it in taking it for himself, so that he might be born of the virgin and might come to us without any trace of sin, either committed or transmitted.” (Augustine, Letter 164)

## III. Examination of relevant Scripture:

### A. “Sinful nature”

1. There is evidence in scripture and experience of sin in our nature  
 “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child” (Prov.22:15)  
 “Slaves of sin” (John 8:34; Rom.6:16-23)  
 “Sin in my members” (Rom.7:14-25)  
 “By nature children of wrath” (Eph.2:2-3)  
 The state of the pagans (Eph.4:17-19)

2. There is very little in scripture that speaks of inheriting this nature at birth  
 Seth born “in the likeness and image of Adam” (Genesis 5:1-3)  
 “the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth” (Genesis 8:21)  
 “in sin my mother conceived me” (Psalm 51:5)  
 “The wicked are estranged from the womb” speaking lies” (Psalm 58:3)

### B. Adam’s guilt and ours

1. There is evidence in scripture that God does not blame children for their fathers’ sins  
 Deut.24:16/ Jer.31:29-30/ Ezekiel 18:20/ 1 Kings 14:12-13

2. There is such a thing as suffering consequences of a father’s sins, without the guilt  
 Exodus 20:4-5/ Egypt’s firstborn/ Canaanite infants/ 2 Samuel 12:14

3. There is no scripture that specifically affirms inherited guilt (Psalm 51:5? Rom.5:12?)

## IV. How did Adam bring death upon all people?

A. Man created a mortal , potentially immortal, species (1 Timothy 6:16/ Rom.2:6-7/ Gen.3:22)

B. Access to the tree of life was interrupted due to Adam's sin, consigning the race to mortality

Question: Is individual death the penalty for personal sin, or is it the natural consequence of being born without access to the tree of life?

C. Birthright of a relationship with God interrupted

D. Human self-centered (animal-like) instincts cannot be overcome without God

1. "Dead" or "Sick"? (Mark 2:17/ Ps.41:4/Isa. 1:5-6; 6:10; 57:17-19/ Jer.3:22/1 Pet. 2:24-25)

2. Flesh is said to be "weak" (Matt.26:41/ Rom.8:3-8)

3. "Sin" means "Missing the mark" or "falling short of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23)

4. Total depravity (where it exists) is not a birth condition but an acquired condition—an advanced stage of the disease (Rom.1:21-22, 24, 26, 28; Prov.29:1; Jer.13:23; Matt.13:15; Eph.4:17-19)