



**Old Testament Reading – Genesis 3:1-24 – New Testament
Reading – Romans 7:7-25**

**This I Believe
That Man Is a Sinner
“The Need to Sin”
Ephesians 2:1-3**

Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor

The Bible says man’s rebellion against God and man’s inhumanity to man is because man is a sinner, not just in theory or in practice, but by nature.

- In Romans 5:12, the Apostle Paul said, ***“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”***

- Sadly, most of those who are saved by the grace of God do not fully understand the seriousness of sin.
- Even though their eyes of faith have been opened by the Spirit of God, and their hearts filled with the love of God, and their lives radically changed by the Son of God, because of the residual of his old sin nature, man still does not see himself as a sinner saved by grace alone, through faith alone, and in Christ alone.
- That truth may not become a reality to any of us until we stand before the Lord, having shed the body of this sinful flesh.

The Three Views on the Nature of Man:

- **The Doctrine of Total Depravity** – lost man is so spiritually dead and so darkened in his spirit and mind, that he is incapable of turning from his sin and embracing the gospel by his own will.
 - While lost man must cooperate with God’s work of grace, according to Ephesians 2:4-5, it is after the “quickening” of the Holy Spirit.
 - This view was embraced by the early church fathers and is stated in the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 – *“Only the grace of God can bring man into holy fellowship with God and enable him to fulfill the creative purpose of God.”*
 - Supporting verses include Isaiah 53:6, and Romans 7:14-18
- **The Doctrine of Pelagianism** – lost man is spiritually well at his birth and free to choose between good and evil.
 - Pelagius, a 5th-century Greek theologian, was so influenced by the Stoics that he denied the doctrine of original sin and said human nature is inherently good until each person chooses to sin.
 - While Pelagius’s philosophy was considered heretical and not taught in the theological schools, his concept of the sin nature of man morphed into “individualism” and later into “humanism.”

- Lost man's challenge is to find meaning and purpose in life through his personal pursuit of moral excellence.
- **The Doctrine of Semi-Pelagianism** – lost man does not need God's grace to be saved – lost man can save himself by accepting God's grace if he so desires.
 - This view is manifest in churches today through the theology of Arminianism, which makes salvation dependent on man's choice alone, thereby elevating man's responsibility above God's sovereignty.
 - Arminianism is a devastating doctrinal error that blinds the unbeliever's mind to the true message of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, and in Christ alone, and deceives them into believing they can be saved by their mental assent to the basic principles of the gospel and their good works.

In Ephesians 2:3, the Apostle Paul declared the root cause of sin by saying, ***"We are by nature, children of wrath,"*** which means man is not a sinner because he sins, but rather man sins because he is a sinner by nature and by choice.

1. The Creation of Man – Ephesians 2:1 – *"...and you hath He (God) quickened (made alive), who were dead in trespasses and sins."*

- Man is not the product of evolution. That unproven theory is refuted by the first verse in the Bible – ***"In beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."***
- The theory of evolution presumes there is no God and, therefore, no higher authority than man himself – i.e., "humanism."
- According to Genesis 1:26-27, man was the "crown" of God's creation, fashioned in the mind of God, created in the image of God, designed to have fellowship with God, and to serve as a reflection of the very glory of God.
- The Westminster Confession of Faith reads...

- ***“After God had made all other creatures, He created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endowed with knowledge, righteousness and true holiness, after His own image, having the law of God written in their hearts, and the power to fill it; and yet under the possibility of transgressing it, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject to change. Beside the law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; which while they kept, they were happy in their communion with God and had dominion over the creatures.”***

2. The Decision of Man – Ephesians 2:2 – “...In which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.”

- For reasons known only to God, evil was allowed to tempt Eve and Adam, and so began the cycle of sin that has infected every person who has been born or will ever be born.
- Before the earth was created, Satan existed as the most exalted angel ever created by God. His name was “Lucifer,” which means “star of the morning.” He was in charge of the praise of heaven.
- But rather than rule as God designed him, Satan wanted to rule and reign over himself – he wanted equality with God, and God had no choice but to cast him out of heaven and onto the earth.
- To justify his disobedience, Satan will do everything he can to oppose the work of God and to encourage others to follow his evil ways.
- Satan planted the seed of rebellion in Eve’s mind by questioning God’s Word: ***“Hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”***
 - Satan twisted the Scriptures to fit his evil desire. God had not forbidden them to eat from “any” of the trees in the garden – just one!

- Satan planted the seed of suspicion in Eve’s heart by questioning God’s motives: **“Ye shall not surely die! For God knows in the day ye eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened and you shall be as gods knowing good and evil.”**
- Satan accused God of withholding from her the knowledge of good and evil, that which would make her “equal with God.”
- When Adam and Eve fell for Satan’s lies, sin had its origin in the heart of man, and that flawed nature was handed down to all men so that all men are sinners by nature and by choice.
- Regardless of the word used in the scriptures to describe it, sin always involves a positive rebellion against God and a negative transgression against His standards of righteousness.
- God’s standard for man’s entry into heaven is perfection, and regardless of how man tries to get into heaven without measuring up to that standard, he will “miss the mark!”

3. The Condition of Man – Ephesians 2:3 – “We are by nature, children of wrath, just as the others.”

- From Genesis 3 through Genesis 6, the Bible describes every kind of dysfunctional behavior known to man.
- This is what the Apostle Paul meant in Ephesians 2:3 when he referred to all mankind as **“children of wrath, by nature.”**
- While we do not lose our sin nature when we receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, according to 1 John 3:9, when we are born again, we inherit a new nature – the Holy Spirit indwells us; giving us the power we need to overcome the draw of the flesh.
- Therefore, as the Apostle Paul said in Romans 6:11, we are to **“count ourselves dead to sin, but alive to God, through Christ Jesus.”**
- The least sin hinders our fellowship with God. But if we confess our sins to God and accept Jesus as our sin-bearer, God will forgive our sins, cleanse us of all our unrighteousness, and our intimacy with Him can be restored. Amen!