

# Total Depravity, Big Objection, Good Deeds

January 21, 2018

**OT**

**Mt 23:5-7**

Mt 23:5-7, 5 Everything they do is for show. On their arms they wear extra wide prayer boxes with Scripture verses inside, and they wear robes with extra long tassels. 6 And they love to sit at the head table at banquets and in the seats of honor in the synagogues. 7 They love to receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces, and to be called 'Rabbi.'

**NT**

**Eph 2:1-5**

Eph 2:1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience-- 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ-- by grace you have been saved--

## Context? (introduction)

*So far in Ephesians:*

- Two Sundays ago: our life before we were brought into the Church
- Last Sunday: in-text doctrine: total depravity, (4 sermons, Eph 2:1, 5)

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins. ... 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses,

- What is total depravity? Morally corrupted in all parts of our being, so dead in relationship with God.
- Big objection: free will. We have free will; a faculty of our souls. It functions according to our nature, which is totally depraved.

- Big objection: good deeds.
- Why is total depravity a big deal?
- Gospel focus:
  - Need (ours): to escape all lies about our own abilities
  - Remedy (Jesus): to see the truth about how hopeless we truly are
  - Joy & Glory!: to abandon self-reliance and rest in Christ-reliance
- Caution: 3 dangers
  - Denigrating God's word:

Jh 6:60-63 Many of his disciples said, "This is very hard to understand. How can anyone accept it?" Jesus was aware that his disciples were complaining, so he said to them, "Does this offend you? Then what will you think if you see the Son of Man ascend to heaven again? The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing. And the very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

- Dismissing God's warning:

Jer 6:13-15 From the least to the greatest, their lives are ruled by greed. From prophets to priests, they are all frauds. They offer superficial treatments for my people's mortal wound. They give assurances of peace when there is no peace. Are they ashamed of their disgusting actions? Not at all-- they don't even know how to blush! Therefore, they will lie among the slaughtered.

- Defaming God's worth:

Rom 2:22-24 You say it is wrong to commit adultery, but do you commit adultery? You condemn idolatry, but do you use items stolen from pagan temples? You are so proud of knowing the law, but you dishonor God by breaking it. No wonder the Scriptures say, "The Gentiles blaspheme the name of God because of you.

**Focus? (attention)**

*Gospel focus: does God's declaration (of your total depravity) hurt you?*

## **Text? (explanation)**

**The Big Topic:** two big objections to total depravity.

Eph 2:1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ... 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses.

*Second big objection: can't people do good deeds?  
(four considerations: relative, ultimate, intention, and glory)*

- *Relative (good to others)*

2Ki 10:30-31, 30 Nonetheless the LORD said to Jehu, "You have done well in following my instructions to destroy the family of Ahab. Therefore, your descendants will be kings of Israel down to the fourth generation." 31 But Jehu did not obey the Law of the LORD, the God of Israel, with all his heart. He refused to turn from the sins that Jeroboam had led Israel to commit.

1Ki 21:27-29, 27 But when Ahab heard this message, he tore his clothing, dressed in burlap, and fasted. He even slept in burlap and went about in deep mourning. 28 Then another message from the LORD came to Elijah: 29 "Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has done this, I will not do what I promised during his lifetime. It will happen to his sons; I will destroy his dynasty."

Lk 11:13, So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.

*We can do good deeds, but only relatively, good in each other's eyes.*

- *Not ultimate (bad to God)*

Heb 11:4, 6, 4 It was by faith that Abel brought a more acceptable offering to God than Cain did. Abel's offering gave evidence that he was a righteous man, and God showed his approval of his gifts. Although Abel is long dead, he still speaks to us by his example of faith. ... 6 And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come

to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.

1Co 13:3, If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.

Isa 58:2, Yet they act so pious! They come to the Temple every day and seem delighted to learn all about me. They act like a righteous nation that would never abandon the laws of its God. They ask me to take action on their behalf, pretending they want to be near me.

Mt 15:9, Their worship is a farce, for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God.

*We can do good deeds, but ultimate, not good in God's eyes.*

- *Wrong intention (motive), goal*

Col 3:17, 23, 17 And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father. ... 23 Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

Gn 8:21b, the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth.

Mt 6:2, 5, 16, 2 When you give to someone in need, don't do as the hypocrites do-- blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. ... 5 When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. ... 16 And when you fast, don't make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. (Mt 6:2-16 NLT)

Joh 5:44, No wonder you can't believe! For you gladly honor each other, but you don't care about the honor that comes from the one who alone is God.

*We can do good deeds, but have wrong intention-goal.*

- *Self-glory, therefore corrupt, even when commanded*

Pro 21:27, The sacrifice of an evil person is detestable, especially when it is offered with wrong motives.

Hag 2:14, Then Haggai responded, "That is how it is with this people and this nation, says the LORD. Everything they do and everything they offer is defiled by their sin."

Amo 5:21-23, 21 I hate all your show and pretense-- the hypocrisy of your religious festivals and solemn assemblies. 22 I will not accept your burnt offerings and grain offerings. I won't even notice all your choice peace offerings. 23 Away with your noisy hymns of praise! I will not listen to the music of your harps.

Mk 7:6, Jesus replied, "You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote, 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.'

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*We can do good deeds, but have wrong purpose: our own glory.*

## **Review (for Joy & Glory!)**

*Gospel focus: is God's declaration (of your total depravity) offend you?*

- Need (ours): to escape all lies about our own abilities
- Remedy (Jesus): to see the truth about how hopeless we truly are
- Joy & Glory!: to abandon self-reliance and rest in Christ-reliance

*Second big objection: can't people do good deeds?*

*(four considerations: relative, ultimate, intention, and glory)*

*We can do good deeds, but only relatively, good in each other's eyes.*

*We can do good deeds, but ultimate, not good in God's eyes.*

*We can do good deeds, but have wrong intention-goal.*

*We can do good deeds, but have wrong purpose: our own glory.*

*So what hope is there?*

Eph 2:4-5 **4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,** 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ-- by grace you have been saved--