

statements with basic Evangelical ideas discussed earlier, and you can see why this concept is questioned.

The convicted alien crucifies the "old man" in repentance, as a preparation for baptism, where the guilt of the past is forgiven (Rom. 6:1-6; cf. "Killing the Old Man" in an earlier article). God calls on men to repent, implying they can do so. The Spirit's work in all of this is to "convict the world . . . of sin, righteousness, judgment" which He does through the revealed and deliv-

ered truth (Jn. 16:8). The "law of sin" in man (Rom. 7:18f), his desire for satisfaction of fleshly desires, and it exists side by side with the "law of mind" or determination on man's part to serve God instead. We are urged to "walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit" (mind, will; 8:4-8); which must, in turn, be filled with truth (cf. Eph. 5:18 with Col. 3:16). Much of our weakness in discussing these matters is in failing to appreciate the real meaning of the law "written on the heart" - a work of the Spirit but ministered by preaching, not

by some mystical operation (2 Cor. 3:3; Eph. 4:20-24).

God's Spirit works hard, but His tool is the word of God (Eph. 6:17). That word is powerful, in physical creation, and in spiritual creation. Powerful enough to shake a governor and a king; to convert pagans, and change lives. When it is used in faith, the Spirit works - as God would have it offering life through Christ to all who will accept and obey Him. ~

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Depravity and the Indwelling of the HOLY SPIRIT

by
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Does man need a personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit; (1) to overcome his inherited sinful nature; (2) in order to (a) understand the Scripture, (b) be converted, and (c) to live a sanctified life? I am especially thankful that this special issue is planned, for our generation is not well schooled in logical consequences of Total Hereditary Depravity. Also, sometimes our own brethren have accepted specific concepts that logically derive from

depravity, and when they try to defend their careless statements they are drawn deeper into the fatal web. In order that you may know we are not "shooting in the dark" we will cite recognized sources for these doctrinal concepts.

Charles Hodge's Systematic Theology, is a three volume set of books, making all the usual arguments. He advocates "the Augustinian doctrine of original sin," and offers his proofs (?) as

well as his answer to arguments made against it (Vol. 2, pp. 231-309). His first affirmative argument is based on the universality of sin. Since all men sin, he reasons they are inherently depraved (some brethren even say man "must" sin). He argues (2) from the entire sinfulness of men - seen by the dreadful fruits of sin and what he calls the "universal rejection of Christ," and man's inability to extricate himself. And (3) he argues from the early manifestation of sin in our lives. These things, says

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Hodge, make depravity a part of the "nature" of man. "Nature" can refer simply to the usual pattern of conduct ("according to the course of this world," Eph. 2:2-3), and none of these arguments prove we inherited a sinful bent from Adam. But we are concerned with the relation of depravity to Spirit indwelling.

Philip Schaff, a recognized Reformed scholar, ties depravity to the indwelling Spirit as he tells us of Augustine (354-430), the theological father of the doctrine under consideration. Augustine treated grace as an "enabling power," and considered that power the results of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Schaff explains, "(Christ) does not merely influence believers from without, but lives and works in them through the Holy Ghost, as the principle of their spiritual life" (History of the Christian Church, Vol. 3, p. 814).

Does man need the Holy Spirit to overcome a depraved nature? Schaff says, "Augustine reaches his peculiar doctrine of redeeming grace (via H.S., rft) in two ways. First, he reasons upwards from below, by the law of contrasts; that is, from his view

of the utter incompetency of the unregenerated man to do good. . . . In the second place he reasons downward from above; that is, from his conception of the all-working, all-penetrating presence of God in natural life, and more in the spiritual. . . . With him grace is, first of all, a creative power of God in Christ transforming men from within. It produces first the negative effect of forgiveness of sins, removing the hindrance to communion with God; than the positive communication of a new principle of life. . . . He stands on essentially Evangelical grounds. . . . Faith itself is an effective of grace; indeed, its first and fundamental effect, which provides for all others, and manifests itself in love." He is reasoning man cannot, God must, and making "redeeming grace" something in addition to the message of the cross.

From the fact that all men sin it does not follow that none are competent to do anything good. It only proves man's need for mercy, and Paul's arguments are all aimed in that direction (Rom. 3:26; Gal. 3:24). Man can not be free of guilt by doing other good, but he can do other good, including trusting in Christ

for mercy. The Scriptures treat man as a sinner, yes; but they also treat man as capable of responding to the faith producing word (Jn. 20:31). When Christ says, "Come unto me" we believe man can accept and obey that invitation (Matt. 11:28). When alien sinners are called upon to repent, we believe they are capable of repenting (Acts 17:30). Every conditional promise (Mk. 16:16; Acts 8:37) is further evidence that man's sin is not sufficient reason to conclude he is incapable of responding to God's call.

Anyone who can see that a Just God can be Merciful, should be able to see that a Sovereign God can treat man as a free agent, make him conditional promises, and offer him a way of mercy that awaits man's response or acceptance. It is actually a limiting of God's "all-working, all-penetrating" presence, to conclude He can not extend mercy on conditions - He can not be merciful and Just at the same time. God's promise to punish the sinner is not contradicted by His mercy. He is "longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). But the Calvinist con-

cept of sovereignty limits God, forcing upon Him the election of individuals, thus denying His own claim to be "no respecter of persons" (1 Pet. 1:17; and many like passages).

Is the indwelling Spirit necessary for understanding the Spirit inspired word? Charles Hodge (Ibid. Vol. 1, pp. 187-8) says, "The Scriptures are to be interpreted under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. . . . The ground of this rule is twofold: First, the Spirit is promised as a guide and teacher. He was to come to lead the people of God into the knowledge of truth." And secondly, the Scriptures teach, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The "natural man" in his view is one who has not been given the indwelling Spirit of God. Of course the passages in John 14, 15, 16 are clearly made to the apostles, not to the public in general. "I have yet many things to say . . . but ye can not bear them now" (16:12) shows that, When compared with Luke 24:48f there can be no doubt in the mind of a fair scholar.

And the context of 1 Corinthians 2 contrasts the man who depends on human wisdom with one who accepts God's word because of its source. Both of these men are descendants of Adam, yet they are two kinds of listeners: the believer and the man who tests the message with human wisdom, and calls it foolishness. Paul says he came not with human wisdom, but with demonstrations, that faith might be "in the power of God" (2:1-5). The "we" who have received, are the inspired speakers - "which things we speak" (2:12-13). Then v. 14: "but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness. . . ." kept in context, refers to one who refuses information, perhaps even seeks to speak, on the basis of human wisdom rather than by revelation. This passage does not say the words of inspiration can be understood only by those who also have the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Inspired speakers intended their word to be understood (Eph. 3:3-4; 2 Pet. 1: 13-15; 3:1-2). If inspiration failed in the first instance, how can we expect it to succeed in the second? Of

course, the Calvinist denies that God wanted all to understand - only the elect individuals. This limits the atonement, the "all the world" for preaching, and again, makes God a respecter of persons. According to Scriptures, the ones who will not understand are those who close their eyes to truth, being blinded by their capitulation to Satan (Acts 28:26-27; 2 Cor. 4:34).

Must man have the indwelling Spirit to live a sanctified life? In K.C. Moser's book, The Way of Salvation, he says: "Man is even now unfit for Christianity until he is 'born from above,' until the crucifixion of the 'law of sin'" (p. 2 1). Then on page 133, "The fundamental weakness of man is the 'law of sin' within him." Page 134: "Under Christ this 'law of sin' called elsewhere by the same apostle the 'old man,' is overcome by a principle of life given by the Spirit. It then becomes the work of the indwelling Spirit to keep this 'old man' under subjection so that the child of God can successfully serve Him" (Emphasis mine, rft). If Moser believes the Spirit can work through the word to convert an alien, can the Spirit not work through the word to "keep" him? Compare Moser's