

INTRODUCTION

1. Tonight we are beginning a new series called “The Doctrines of Grace” or “The Five Points of Calvinism.”
2. If you are new to this subject, let me first give you what the five points are and then some history behind them.
3. One of the best ways to remember the five points is by the acrostic *tulip* which stands for *total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and the perseverance of the saints*.
4. In 1610, one year after the death of James Arminius, five articles of faith based on his teachings were drawn up by his followers.
5. They were: free will, conditional election, universal atonement, resistible grace, and falling from grace.
6. These were presented to the state of Holland in the form of a "Remonstrance" or "protest."
7. The followers of James Arminius or commonly known as Armenians' insisted that the Belgic Confession of Faith and the Heidelberg Catechism which was the official expression of the doctrinal position of the churches of Holland be changed to conform to the doctrinal views contained in the Remonstrance or protest.

8. A national synod was called to meet in Dort in 1618 for the purpose of examining the views of Arminius in the light of Scripture.
9. The Great Synod was convened by the State General of Holland on November 13, 1618 with 84 members and 18 secular commissioners. Included were 27 delegates from Germany, the Palatinate, Switzerland and England.
10. There were 154 sessions held during the 7 months that the Synod met together to consider these matters, the last of which was on May 9, 1619.
11. The five articles of faith presented by the Armenians' were unanimously rejected.
12. As part of their rejection, they produced the five points of Calvinism.
13. Edwin H. Palmer, in his book *The Five Points of Calvinism*, says, "The title the five points of Calvinism can be misleading. For Calvinism does not have five points, and, neither is Calvin the author of the five points.

_____ First of all, Calvinism is not restricted to five points: it has thousands of points. The first word that Calvinism suggests to most people is predestination; and if they have a modicum of theological knowledge, the other four points follow. But this is wrong. Calvinism is much broader than five points. It is not even primarily concerned with the five points. In the

first catechism which Calvin drew up (1537), predestination is only briefly mentioned. In the Confession of Faith, drawn up in the same year, there is no mention of it at all. In another catechism and four confessions attributed to Calvin, the doctrine is mentioned only in passing. And in the first edition of his monumental work, *The Institutes*, it is given no important place even when he treats the matter of salvation. It was only in later editions, after attacks had been made on the grace of God, that he enlarged upon predestination.

Calvinism has an unlimited number of points: it is as broad as the Bible. Does the Bible teach about the Trinity? Then, Calvinism does. Does the Bible deal with the deity of Christ, the covenant of grace, justification by faith, sanctification, the second coming of Christ, the inerrancy of Scripture and the world-and-life view? Then, Calvinism does, too. For John Calvin's goal in his preaching, teaching, and writing was to expound all the Word of God—and the Word of God alone. *Scriptura tota: Scriptura sola*. Calvinism is an attempt to express all the Bible and only the Bible. To restrict it to five points is to misjudge and dishonor the man and movement that bears the name Calvin.

Not only can the word *five* be misleading in the name *the Five Points of Calvinism*, but also the word *Calvinism*. At first glance, many believe that Calvin is the author of the five points. Such a misconception ignores the fact that Calvinism simply expounded the Bible. Calvin did not invent a new teaching any more than Columbus invented

America or Newton the law of gravity. As Columbus and Newton merely discovered what had existed all along, so Calvin uncovered truths that had been in the Bible all the time. And Calvin was not the first nor the last to uncover these Biblical truths. Many others confessed them, too. From Augustine to Gottschalk to Spurgeon; from Lutherans to Baptists to Dominicans; from Dutch to Scottish to French; from individuals to associations to church confessions; from laymen to hymn-writers to theologians. The name Calvinism has often been used, not because Calvin was the first or sole teacher, but because after the long silence of the Middle Ages, he was the most eloquent and systematic expositor of these truths” (The Five Points of Calvinism, Foward).

14. As we think about this subject this tonight, let me caution you about labels.
15. I personally do not like to say I am a Calvinist only because of the baggage that comes with that label.
16. To use that label causes me to become everything that Calvin believed.
17. The same is true about Martin Luther or anyone else.
18. As for John Calvin and Martin Luther, both of these godly men believed in infant baptism.
19. I don't believe in that teaching, so for me to label myself, also causes me to take to myself other doctrines that these

men taught.

20. I have been a pastor for 19 years and during that time I have had only one goal—preach the Word!
21. So as I do that, I try to stray from labels and just teach what is the meaning of Scripture.
22. So when we're studying through a book in the Bible and we come across total depravity or election or any other theological teaching, I will teach what that passage says.
23. If I come to a passage that teaches about the limited atonement, irresistible grace or the perseverance of the saints, I will teach what that passage says about that doctrine.
24. Now let me further state about the five points of Calvinism that Calvin taught very little on this subject.
25. This should be called the five points of Augustine or Luther because they taught more on this than Calvin.
26. Having said all that, let's begin with the first point: *total depravity*.
27. First, let me give you a definition of *total depravity*.
28. *Total depravity* is defined in this way: "Sin controls every part of man. He is spiritually dead and blind, and unable to

obey, believe, or repent. He continually sins, for his nature is completely evil.”

29. Now the first question we need to ask is, “What does this mean?” It means that sin has affected every part of man. The heart, emotions, will, mind, and body are all affected by sin. We are completely sinful. We are not as sinful as we could be, but we are completely affected by sin.
30. The word “total” is used to indicate that the whole of man’s being has been affected by sin. The corruption extends to every part of man, his body and soul. It has affected all of man’s faculties—his mind, his will, etc.
31. The doctrine of *total depravity* is derived from Scriptures that reveal human character.
32. For example, Mark 7:21-23 shows us that man’s heart is evil. Jesus says, “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. 23 "All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.”
33. Jeremiah 17:9 says “The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?”
34. Romans 6:14-20 says that man is a slave of sin when it says, “For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under

law but under grace. 15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! 16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. 19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. 20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.”

35. Even Romans 3:11 says he does not seek for God: “There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God.”
36. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says he cannot understand spiritual things: “But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.”
37. Ephesians 2:14-15 says he is at enmity with God: “For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make

the two into one new man, thus establishing peace.”

38. And last, Ephesians 2:3 says he is by nature a child of wrath: “And were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”
39. Those who adhere to what these Scriptures teach ask this question, “In light of the Scriptures that declare man’s true nature as being utterly lost and incapable, how is it possible for anyone to choose or desire God?”
40. What’s the answer?
41. That’s what we’re going to explore in this study of the Doctrines of Grace.
42. Calvinism or Augustinism also maintains that because of our fallen nature we are born again not by our own will but God’s will.
43. John 1:12-13 says, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.
44. They also believe that God is the one who grants who will believe.
45. Philippians 1:29 says, “For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer

for His sake.”

46. Further they believe that faith is the work of God as Ephesians 2:8-9 says.
47. They also believe God appoints people to believe.
48. Acts 13:48 says, “When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.”
49. And they believe God predestines as Romans 8:29 says, “For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined.”
50. Let say another thing about *total depravity*—it is not the same as absolute depravity.
51. *Absolute depravity means that a person expresses his depravity to the nth degree at all times.*
52. Not only are all of his thoughts, words, and deeds sinful, but they are as vicious *as possible*” (Edwin H. Palmer, *The Five Points of Calvinism*, 9).
53. There are restraints in our lives to prevent this.
54. When Calvinism speaks of total depravity, the “inability intended by this terminology is *spiritual inability*; it means that the sinner is so spiritually bankrupt that *he can do nothing pertaining to his salvation.*

55. It is quite evident that many unsaved people, when judged by man's standards, do possess admirable qualities and do perform virtuous acts.
56. But in the spiritual realm, when judged by God's standards, the unsaved sinner is *incapable* of good.
57. The natural man is enslaved to sin; he is a child of Satan, rebellious toward God, blind to truth, corrupt, and unable to save himself or to prepare himself for salvation.
58. In short, the unregenerate man is *dead in sin*, and *his will is enslaved to his evil nature*" (David Steele, *The Five Points of Calvinism*, 19).
59. I think one of the most revealing passages on this subject is found in Ephesians 2:1-3.
60. In these three verses, Paul shows the Ephesians what they *were* before coming to Christ and reveals their total depravity or to use Paul's terminology, their being *dead in trespasses and sins*.
61. Listen to what it says.
62. Read Ephesians 2:1-3.
63. Paul has just completed his discussion in chapter 1 of the blessings believers have received as well as his prayer for them to realize what they have.

64. Here he continues his thoughts that began in verse 19 of the resurrection of the believer.
65. He not only prayed that their “understanding” be “enlightened” and that they “may know what is the hope of His calling...the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints”, but he also prayed that they would know “what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe” (NKJV).
66. This same power that “raised” Jesus “from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places” (vv.18-20, NKJV) is the same power that raises the believer from spiritual death to spiritual life.
67. John 5:21 says, “the Father raises the dead and gives life to them” (NKJV).
68. In other words, the dead do not raise themselves.
69. When we read Ephesians 1:20 that is what we’re seeing.
70. God “raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. ” (vv.20-23).

71. Then chapter two says, “And you....”
72. Chapter breaks many times interrupt a passage as is the case here.
73. Verse 1 is still part of the content of Paul’s prayer. Only now in verse 1 does he turn his attention to the resurrection of the believer.
74. He says that the same power which raised Jesus from the dead raised you from spiritual death.
75. Now Paul shows us *what we were before our spiritual resurrection* in verses 1-3.
76. He says we were *dead* in sin.

I. What We Were Before Our Spiritual Resurrection (vv.1-3)

A. Dead in Sin (v.1)

In Genesis 2:16-17 Adam and Eve were told they could eat “of every tree in the garden” but “of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (NKJV).

In Genesis 3 we see them disobeying God’s command by eating of the forbidden fruit and God passes judgment and banishes them from the garden (v.24).

The moment they disobeyed God and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they died.

They didn’t die physically until chapter 5 but on that day they died spiritually.

Their separation from the garden in verse 24 is a picture of their separation from God.

Romans 5:12 says, “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.”

Death is the fruit of sin. James 1:15 says “Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is

accomplished, it brings forth death.”

It, according to Romans 6:23, is its “wages.”

So “man’s basic trouble is not being out of harmony with his heritage or his environment but being out of harmony with his Creator.

His principal problem is not that he cannot make meaningful relationships with other human beings but that he has no right relationship to God, from whom he is alienated by sin (Eph.4:18).

His condition has nothing to do with the way he lives; it has to do with the fact that he is dead even while he is alive. He is spiritually dead while being physically alive” (John MacArthur, Ephesians, pp.52-53).

1. Scripture graphically paints this picture of every person (except Christ)
 - a) When one of His followers said to Jesus, “Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father” (Mat.8:21). Jesus responded by saying, “Follow Me, and allow the **dead** to bury their own **dead**” (v.22).

In other words, let’s the spiritually dead bury the physically dead but you come and follow me.

- b) In the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32 Jesus reveals in verses 22-24 and 32 that the son was dead while living.

When the son came back to his father's house after squandering all that his father gave him, the father said ""But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; 23 and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24 for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate.

In verse 32 he told his other son, who was angry that his father showed his brother all this attention, that ""we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours *was dead* and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.'""

Both of these verses illustrate how the human race is spiritually dead while physically living.

- c) When Paul counseled Timothy about widows in the church, he said of those who were profligate, ""But she who gives herself

to wanton pleasure is *dead* even while she lives” (1 Tim.5:6).

“Men apart from God are spiritual zombies, the walking dead who do not know they are dead. They go through the motions of life, but they do not possess it” (John MacArthur, Ephesians, p.53).

2. The definition of spiritual death

“Dead” Gr.nekros, it’s “an inability to respond.” You were a “lifeless, useless [spiritual] corpse” (UBS, LN). Spiritual death is that which separates the soul from God. Physical death is the visible symbol of the reality of spiritual death. It show us what spiritual death is like.

John Walvoord says, “Death signifies absence of communication with the living. One who is dead spiritually has no communication with God; he is separated from God. The phrase "in your transgressions and sins" shows the sphere of the death, suggesting that sin has killed people (Rom. 5:12; 7:10; Col. 2:13) and they remain in that spiritually dead state” (The Bible Knowledge Commentary).

- a) Paul defines what he means by them being *dead* in Ephesians 4:18 when he says they

were “excluded from the life of God.”

b) He said to the Romans in 8:6-8:

“For the mind set on the flesh is *death*, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, 7 because the mind set on the flesh is *hostile* toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, 8 and *those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*”

Phil Johnson says, “We are born objects suited only for the wrath of God. There’s nothing we can do for ourselves to remedy the situation because we are spiritually dead, spiritually lifeless; we’re spiritually inert, and worse, we’re like spiritual cadavers: decaying, disgusting, obnoxious to everything good and holy. That’s the imagery Paul means to convey here” (Message - “My Resurrection from the Dead”).

3. The sphere of spiritual death

“in trespasses and sins” (v.1)

“We were not dead because we had committed sin but because we were *in sin*. In this context *trespasses and sins* do not refer simply to acts but first of all to the sphere of existence of the person

apart from God.

He does not become a liar when he tells a lie; he tells a lie because he already is a liar. He does not become a thief when he steals; he steals because he is already a thief” (John MacArthur, Ephesians).

“Committing sinful acts does not make us sinners; we commit sinful acts because we *are* sinners” (MacArthur).

Jesus confirmed this when He said in Matthew 15:18-19, “But the things ***that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man.*** 19 ‘For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.’”

Before God destroyed man and all living creatures from the earth with a worldwide flood, Moses said in Genesis 6:5 says, “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that ***every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.***”

Jeremiah came to the same conclusion when he said in Jer.17:9 that the “***The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?***”

Paul gives the sphere of our past spiritual deadness in two words: *trespasses and sins*

- a) “Trespasses” Gr.paraptoma, means, “to slip, fall, stumble, deviate or go the wrong direction” (MacArthur). It is “a deviation from uprightness and truth” (W.E. Vine)

Friberg adds, it is “a deviation from living according to what has been revealed as the right way to live.”

William MacDonald says they are “are sins which are committed in open violation of a known law” (Believer’s Bible Commentary).

- b) “Sins” Gr.hamartia (used 173 times in the NT). It means “missing the mark, falling short of any goal, standard or purpose.” It’s “any form of wrongdoing, whether consciously committed or not” (MacDonald).

In the spiritual realm it refers to missing or falling short of God’s standard of holiness.

Romans 3:23 says, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

This does not give two truths but two views

of the same truth. “Sin is falling short of God’s glory, and falling short of God’s glory is sin” (MacArthur).

Paul does not use the two terms here to point up different kinds of wrongdoing but simply to emphasize the breadth of the sinfulness that results from spiritual deadness” (John MacArthur, Ephesians).

B. Living According to the World and Satan (v.2)

1. Our conduct

We “walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.”

“Walked” Gr.peripateo, from pateo, “to walk,” and peri, “around or about.” It means, “to walk about...to make one’s way, conduct one’s self or order one’s behavior” (Wuest)

2. Our control

- a) We walked according to the “course” (aion), “age, world order” (UBS), “world system” (LN)

- b) “World” is the Greek word kosmos, which does not refer here to the physical world but to the “evil system of which Satan is its head” (see 2 Cor.4:4)

The course of this world follows the leadership and design of Satan, the prince of the power of the air and it is characterized by:

- (1) Futility of mind (Eph.4:17)
- (2) Hatred (Jn.7:7; 15:19)
- (3) Immorality (1 Cor.5:10)
- (4) Evil (Gal.1:4)

No wonder James said in 4:4: “You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

William MacDonald says, “The world has a mold into which it pours its devotees. It is a mold of deceit, immorality, ungodliness, selfishness, violence, and rebellion. In a word, it is a mold of depravity. That is what the Ephesians had been like. Not only so, their behavior was diabolical. They followed the example of the devil” (Believer’s Bible

Commentary).

- c) The “prince” (archon) refers “to the first in an order of persons or things” (Wuest), “a ruler” (Vine). Satan is the archon, the prince and ruler over this world system.
- d) “Power” Gr.exousia, means “authority.” Here it refers to “demons.” It occurs in 6:12
- e) As with the *world*, the *air* (aer) represents “the sphere where demons move” (MacArthur). It’s “the lower, denser atmosphere” (Wuest).

In this context *world* and *air* would be almost synonymous, both of them representing a realm, a sphere, of influence. Paul has in mind here the fact that Satan rules the *power* (demons) who occupy the air (the heavenly sphere around the earth).

“Men are not free and independent; they are totally dominated by the hosts of hell” (MacArthur).

- f) “the spirit” is used here as an expression or as a reference to the nature of the prince. He “now works” (energeo) or is “at work” or “operative” “in the sons of disobedience.”

“All unsaved people are sons of disobedience in the sense that they are characterized by disobedience to God. They are energized by Satan and are therefore disposed to defy, dishonor, and disobey the Lord” (MacDonald).

C. Living According to the Flesh (v.3)

“Flesh” is mentioned 2 times in this verse referring to the totally depraved nature.

1. We “formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh”
 - a) “formerly lived” is anastrophe which means “to live.” We “lived” in the lusts of our flesh.
 - b) “lusts” Gr.epithumia, “a passionate longing, a craving, good or bad depending on the context” (Wuest). Therefore it could refer “to strong inclinations and desires of every sort, not simply to sexual lust” (MacArthur).

[1 Tim.3:1 and James 1:14 illustrate the two uses of the term]

- c) “flesh” Gr.sarx, “refers to the totally depraved nature” (Wuest) [See Rom.7:5]

“By the flesh, however, is not to be understood merely our sensuous nature, but our whole nature considered as corrupt” (Charles Hodge, Commentary on Ephesians).

“The 'lusts of the flesh' are those irregular desires which have their origin in the flesh” (Hodge). [See Gal.5:19-21]

2. We were “indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind”
 - a) “indulging” Gr.poieo, “to do, perform” (Wuest). It implies “carrying out or accomplishing” (Vincent). The NASB translates it “indulging”

Kenneth Wuest says, “It speaks of the habitual performing of acts that satisfy the desires of the evil nature and of the evil thoughts, thus a fulfilling of those desires. We went the limit in sin. The evil nature had full sway” (Word Studies in the Greek NT).

- b) “desires” here is not epithumia but thelema which “emphasizes strong willfulness, wanting and seeking something with great diligence” (MacArthur). This is “desires that come from the emotions” (Wuest).

We were “swayed by the emotions rather than the reason” (Wuest).

- c) “mind” Gr.dianoia, “used in 1:18 translated “heart.” It refers to the “understanding” (Wuest)

F.B. Myers wrote, “It is as ruinous to indulge the desires of the mind as those of the flesh. By the marvelous gift of imagination we may indulge unholy fancies, and throw the reins on the neck of the steeds of passion— always stopping short of the act.”

- 3. We “were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest”
 - a) By “nature” Gr.phusis, “natural condition” (UBS). This is what is “inherent, not acquired” (JFB)
 - (1) Ps.51:5 says, “Behold, I was ***brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.***”
 - (2) Ps.58:3 says, “The wicked are ***estranged from the womb; These who speak lies go astray from birth.***”

- (3) Isa.48:8 says, “You have not heard, you have not known. Even from long ago your ear has not been open, Because I knew that you would deal very treacherously; ***And you have been called a rebel from birth.***”
- (4) Gen.8:21 says, “The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for ***the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth***; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done.”
- (4) Job 14:4 says, “Who can make the clean out of the unclean? No one!”
- (6) Job 15:14-16 says, “What is man, that he should be pure, Or he who is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? 15 "Behold, He puts no trust in His holy ones, And the heavens are not pure in His sight; 16 How much less one who is ***detestable and corrupt, Man, who drinks iniquity like water!***”
- (7) Job 25:4 says, “How then can a man be

just with God? Or *how can he be clean who is born of woman?*”

- b) “children” “emphasizes the connection by birth” (Vincent)

“Tekna, the word for ‘children,’ suggests a close relationship to one's parents (in contrast with huioi, ‘sons,’ which speaks of distinctive characteristics).

Unbelievers have a close relationship, not with God, but with His wrath! Disobedience and unbelief lead to the wrath of God (Rom. 1:18-2:29; John 3:36)” (Walvoord).

So the “inherent” condition was we were “children of wrath, just as the others.” We were no different than the rest. We were “dead” in our sins and the objects of God’s wrath.

CONCLUSION

1. The same power that raise Christ from the dead, raised us from spiritual death—the death that Paul talks about here that characterized our lives prior to salvation.
2. Everyone is born in sin, dead, children of wrath, alienated from God, living according to the leadership and design of

Satan and according to their own lusts.

3. It is only through Christ can one be made alive as Paul says in verses 4-10.
4. I know there are people who say they can choose Christ at any time or that they can change their ways and be born again.
5. I have only one question: “How can a sinful, dead corpse choose life? Can he change his sinful nature?”
6. I have never seen a physically dead corpse rise up on his own. How then can one who is spiritually dead? Can he in his own power make himself alive?
7. What’s the answer? No. He has no power. He’s dead! He is “like a spiritual cadaver; decaying, disgusting, obnoxious to everything good and holy” (Phil Johnson).
8. Jeremiah 13:23 asks, “Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil.”
9. You can no more change your sinful nature than an Ethiopian change his skin or a leopard its spots?
10. Why? Because you are “accustomed to do evil.”
11. Your bent is toward evil. That’s why Isaiah said when it

comes to measuring your righteousness, it comes up as “filthy rags” (Isa.64:6).

12. There is only one Person who can change your condition.
13. It’s found back in Ephesians 2, verse 4, “God.”
14. Salvation is God spiritually resurrecting us from the state of spiritual deadness, bestowing on us the gift of faith through His grace, and making us to sit in heavenly places with Christ throughout all ages as His trophies of grace.
15. Therefore salvation is His work in us thereby making us “His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”
16. Now before we conclude our study on this topic tonight, let me give you some verses you can jot down and study for yourself: Genesis 6:5; Psalm 51:5; 58:3; Prov.30:12; Isa.64:6; Jer.17:9; John 3:19; Rom.3:10-12; 5:12; 1 Cor.2:14.
17. If you’re struggling with what I shared with you tonight, let me encourage you to look further into these verses.
18. With all that said, let’s pray.