

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Humanity and Sin, Session 19, Original Sin, Immediate Imputation, Effects of the Fall. Ability or Inability

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This is Dr. Robert A. Peterson in his teaching on the Doctrines of Humanity and Sin. This is session 19, Original Sin, Immediate Imputation, Effects of the Fall, Ability or Inability.

We continue our study of Original Sin.

We are up to Immediate Imputation and examining its strengths and then problems that it has tried to answer, objections to Immediate Imputation. The Bible presents Adam as both the natural and representative head of the human race.

As Lewis Johnson points out, that the unfolding of scripture demonstrates that the promises of dominion and the threats given to Adam were for the race. Quote, so just as the act of the last Adam is a representative act, becoming a judicial ground of the justification of believers, it follows that the act of the first Adam is a representative act, becoming a judicial ground of the condemnation of those united to him. 312 of the S. Lewis Johnson article on Original Sin.

Second, Immediate Imputation is implied in our estate. Born spiritually dead and evidently under a curse. Compare Ephesians 2:1 through 5. Paul writes, and you were dead in the trespasses and sins 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, 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 humankind.

Either human beings were tried in Adam and fell, or we were condemned without a trial. We're either under a curse for Adam's guilt, Psalm 51, 5, against you, you only have I sinned, Lord, and in sin my mother conceived me, or we were under a curse for no guilt at all. Immediate Imputation explains most satisfactorily what is ultimately a mystery.

Johnson 312. Immediate Imputation, most importantly, best fits with Paul's argument in Romans 5. This view alone emphasizes what seems to have been the governing principle of the apostles' argument. Adam and Christ are representatives of their respective races.

There's a definite parallel between the respective acts of the two Adams and the effects of those acts upon their people. Adam's sin brought condemnation and death to the human race. Christ's righteousness brings justification and life to his people.

I would go so far as to say that Christianity is a representative religion. Romans 5:12 to 21, teaches that this representation works in two ways. It explains the condemnation of the race in Adam, and it accounts for the justification of believers in Christ.

Fourth, Immediate Imputation enables us to see why only the first sin of Adam and not his subsequent sins, nor the sins of Eve, is imputed to human beings. Johnson page 313. Fifth, Immediate Imputation best explains the relation of Romans 5:13, 14 with verse 12.

The word for gar in Greek shows that verses 13, and 14 explain verse 12. Quote, if, however, verse 12 means all men are sinners, Pelagius, and others, or all have become corrupt, immediate imputation, or even that all actually sinned in Adam, realism. The verses do not substantiate the assertion in verse 12.

If, however, verse 12 asserts all have sinned in a representative, then everything else is clear. Close quote, Johnson 313. My comment is that the relation between verses 13 and 14 and 12 is clear.

All the details of the exegesis are not clear. Objections. Some have argued that the following verse contradicts immediate imputation.

Deuteronomy 24:16. Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers. Each is to die for his own sin. Deuteronomy 24:16. This verse deals with the civil government rather than the divine. We must separate the two.

If this verse is present to serve and evaluate God's ways of salvation, it could also be used to disprove that Christ died as a representative to take away our sins. And we certainly wouldn't want to do that. It's not talking about spiritual theology, spiritual matters in theology, but civil government.

Some have taken issue with immediate imputation on the basis of Ezekiel 18. Quoting Johnson again, but the passage has nothing to say about the reasons men are in sin, nor about original sin or the imputation of Adam's sin to men. It simply refers to the principles of divine government in the earth or divine justice.

The wicked shall die. The righteous, in the divine way, of course, shall live. That's a passage that says the father shall not be put to death for his son.

The son shall not be put to death for his father. Each one will stand before God on his own. Realists, third objection commonly appeals to Hebrews 7, 9, and 10 to defend realistic imputation and apply this verse to a realistic imputation of Adam's sin.

Hebrews 7:9, and 10, the Melchizedek passage. One might even say that Levi himself, who received tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him. Johnson argues that in view of the special typical nature of Hebrews 7:9, quote, the tithing of Levi in Abraham was no more real than Melchizedek was really the son of God.

The relationships are typical, not actual, not real. It's plain to me that Melchizedek is not a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus, for example, because Hebrews 7 says, like the son of God, he remains a priest forever. The meaning was, in Hebrew fashion, no genealogy was given for Melchizedek.

He appeared to have no parents or no descendants. Systematic and pastoral implications of the doctrine of original sin. Worship is due to God for his dealings with human beings, for revealing his truth to us, for the principle of representation, for his gracious dealings with us in Christ, and for his wisdom and justice.

The doctrine of original sin guards the character of God and the goodness of his creative work. God did not make Adam and Eve as sinners. Our first parents fell, and Adam, as the head of the human race, was our representative.

A realistic assessment of fallen humankind. People are in need of a savior due to real objective guilt, Adam's and their own, and due to the pollution of sin. I said previously in these lectures that before Paul treats original sin in Romans 5:12 to 19, he treats actual sin in Romans 1:18 to 3:20.

Both are the basis of condemnation. Original sin and actual sin. Let us be careful to heed the purposes of the doctrine of original sin in scripture.

It does not remove culpability from the unsaved. Instead, it establishes it. Evangelism is thus imperative.

A fuller appreciation of studying original sin should yield a fuller appreciation of the saving righteousness of the second and last Adam, Jesus Christ. Let us not lose sight of the major purpose and context of Romans 5:12 to 21. Our salvation totally depends upon the efforts of another, even Jesus, on our behalf.

And although we don't rejoice in alien guilt, it seems to be a fact of history and of theology, but we certainly rejoice in alien righteousness. Our salvation totally depends on the efforts of another, even Jesus, on our behalf. Here's the greatest cause of our rejoicing.

Jesus Christ died and arose to save sinners, even us. Hallelujah. We move to another topic under the doctrine of sin, and that is the effects of the fall and ability or inability.

We just did that. We just did four things there, Ted. Three things.

Here we go. The effects of the fall and examination of the Pauline doctrine of the ability or inability of unsaved persons. Paul is the theologian of original sin.

It is worthwhile to investigate his writings to see what he says an unsaved person is able to do to rescue him or herself from his plight. I'd like to focus our attention on three important questions. One, how does Paul describe the will of an unsaved person? Is his will morally free or morally bound? Two, what can an unsaved person do to be saved? Specifically, is an unsaved person able to believe in Christ? Is either the Arminian or Calvinist view of prevenient grace correct? Is another view correct? Investigation of 1 Corinthians 2:14 and 16.

Investigation of 2 Corinthians 4:1 through 6. Then, there was an investigation into John 6, 44, and 65. Investigation of 1 Corinthians 2:14 through 16. I really should read that whole chapter.

1 Corinthians 2. And I, when I came to you brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling.

And my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Yet among the mature, we do impart wisdom, although it is not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.

None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him. These things God has revealed to us through the spirit, for the spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

Who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person in him? So, no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of this world, but the spirit from God, so that we might understand the things freely given to us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human

wisdom but taught by the spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

The natural person does not accept the things of the spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

The context. Paul says that when he came to Corinth, his preaching centered on the crucifixion of Christ. He did not rely upon human wisdom or homiletical ability alone when he preached the gospels of the Corinthians.

When Paul preached to them, he did not trust in human wisdom or speaking ability. His confidence was in the power of the Holy Spirit, verses 1 to 5. In another sense, the gospel's message is a message of wisdom. Mature believers recognize this.

The world does not. This is not worldly wisdom, whose source is the mind of man. Rather, this is God's wisdom in a mystery, verse 7. God planned to give the wisdom of the gospel to believers before creation.

The final goal of God's wisdom in the gospel is the glorification of the saints. In New Testament times, God revealed this wisdom, which was previously hidden in the Old Testament. He revealed it by his spirit through his apostles and prophets, Romans 16:25, and 26, 1 Peter 1:10 through 12.

The first-century worldly leaders did not understand the wisdom of God. They demonstrated this when they murdered Christ. God was not defeated, however, by the death of his son.

God has now revealed the wonderful things that he has prepared for his people, things that were made known not by any human being, figuring them out, but by revelation from God, 1 Corinthians 2:6 through 10. The Holy Spirit has access to the secrets of God. There's a parallel in the human sphere where only an individual knows his or her deepest thoughts.

In the same way, only God's spirit knows the thoughts of God. The apostles have not received the spirit of the world system, which is at enmity with God, from which they would learn the world's wisdom. They have received the spirit from God, from which they learn the wisdom of God and the things that God has graciously given them.

In turn, the apostles communicated this wisdom from God to their hearers. They preach the gospel not in words taught by human wisdom but in words taught by the

spirit. In so doing, they express spiritual truths in spiritual words, or you could translate spiritual truths to spiritual people, verses 10 through 13.

The ESV actually goes for that second alternative. Paul contrasts the unspiritual *psychikos* person with the spiritual one, *pneumatikos*, in verse 15. In context, these two words must mean lacking the spirit of God, hence unsaved, and having the spirit of God, and thus saved, respectively.

The unspiritual person does not accept a *nomos* present of *nekomai*, the things of the spirit of God. That is, it is simply customary. It is the way things are.

Unsaved people do not accept the things of the spirit of God because the unsaved person doesn't have the Holy Spirit. In fact, the wisdom from God is foolishness to him or her, because he or she evaluates from the perspective of the world's wisdom. The person without the spirit cannot understand the things that come from the spirit because those things are spiritually discerned.

Since they lack the spirit, unsaved people lack spiritual discernment. In contrast, the person with the spirit, spiritual man or woman, exercises discernment about all spiritual things precisely because he or she has the spirit. This person is not subject to the evaluation of unsaved persons in the spiritual sphere.

However, since he or she has access to, and is subject to, the revealed mind of God in Christ. Verses 14 and 15. The first important question is this.

What are the things of the spirit of God in verse 14? From the context, going backward from 14 to 2, they are the spiritual things expressed in spiritual words or to spiritual people, 13. They are what God has freely given, verse 12. They are the thoughts of God, 11.

They are the deep things of God, 10. They are what God has revealed by his spirit, 10. They are God's secret wisdom, 7. They are a message of wisdom, 6. They are Paul's message, verse 4. They are the message about Jesus Christ and him crucified, verse 2. As a matter of fact, all the way back to verse 1, they are the testimony about God.

In other words, the things of the spirit referred to in verse 14 are the revelation given by God to the apostles. That revelation centered on the saving work of Christ. That revelation included other topics as well.

For example, quote, what God has prepared for those who love him, verse 9. I've thus defined the things of the spirit of God in verse 14 as the revelation God gave to the apostles that they, in turn, preached. That is the gospel of Christ, understood in its broadest sense, as in Romans 1:17. The saving message and all its entailments, if you will, the counsel of God.

The Holy Spirit plays two important roles in 1:1-6. We must interpret verse 14 within the context of the spirit's twofold work. First, the spirit reveals the things of God to the apostles, verses 10-13.

As argued above, the things of the spirit of God are a reference to the apostolic preaching of the gospel that has its origin in the spirit's revelation. Second, there are two ministries of the spirit here. He reveals the things of God to the apostles.

Second, he enables people to understand the apostolic message. Verse 14 includes the second aspect of the spirit's work as well. The spirit works dynamically to enable sinners to apprehend the truth of God.

We might label the two aspects of the spirit's work revelation, transmission, and saving illumination, reception. Theological conclusions from 1 Corinthians 2:14. What does 1 Corinthians 2:14 teach us concerning the unsaved person's ability to take in the apostolic message? One, the unsaved person does not accept it. Two, it is foolishness to him or her.

Three, she cannot understand it. This passage does not account for the inability of the unsaved to respond to the gospel by appealing to their condition of spiritual death, as does Ephesians 2. Nor does it ascribe the rejection of the gospel to Satan's working, as 2 Corinthians 4 does. Amazingly, it merely labels the unsaved unspiritual and, in so doing, says that they do not, indeed, cannot believe because they do not have the spirit of God.

Apart from the spirit, one is locked up to the wisdom of this evil world. From the standpoint of the world's wisdom, it is really ignorance. Paul is probably being sarcastic.

From the standpoint of the world's so-called wisdom, the gospel is foolishness. Are you kidding me? A message about a crucified Jewish man? It is only the spirit who gave the gospel that can cause sinners to apprehend it savingly. I will attempt to tentatively, since as Robert Dunsweiler accurately taught me, we must study the whole Bible to learn the teaching of the Bible on a subject, tentatively address the three questions that I posed at the beginning of this study, keeping in mind our passage may not answer some of them.

The issue of the freedom bondage of the will is not specifically addressed by our text. Some type of bondage of the will is implied for the unsaved person does not accept and cannot understand spiritual things. They are foolishness to her.

Inasmuch as he is limited to worldly wisdom on his own, his will does not receive, and his mind cannot understand or be bound by sin. Our passage seems to answer

the second question by saying that an unsaved person cannot do anything to be saved. She cannot understand the gospel.

It is part of the normal state of affairs, the normal presence of the world that the unspiritual do not accept spiritual things. The passage would seem to attribute the ability to believe in the work of the spirit. Our question does not directly address the question about the nature of prevenient grace; the grace that comes before we believe the best we can do is test the Armenian and Calvinist models.

This passage does not teach a universal work of the spirit that enables all persons to be saved. The passage rather distinguishes between the spiritually saved and unspiritual person on the basis of the possession or lack of possession of the spirit. The spirit-saving work is not universal here.

It is the spirit that makes the difference between those who understand spiritual truth and those who do not. The passage does not attribute possession or lack of the same spirit to faith or unbelief. It attributes faith apprehension of spiritual truth and unbelief rejection of the same to the presence or absence of the spirit.

Thus, on the basis of this passage, I would incline toward the Calvinist view of prevenient grace. The second text, second Corinthians four, one through six. I will treat John six.

As a matter of fact, I will treat John six in the order up there. John 6:44, and 65. This is Jesus' bread of life discourse.

And in 6:44 we read. No one can come to me, Jesus said, unless the father who sent me draws him and I will raise him up on the last day. 65.

Jesus said, this is why I told you no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father. Jesus shocks his hearers by teaching they must eat his flesh and drink his blood to gain eternal life. John 6:48 to 58.

He said that he would return to the father, 6:62, and that no one could come to me unless the father enabled him. John 6:65. Jesus' shocking words in John 6:65.

Reflect his earlier assertion in John 6:44. No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him. In order to understand these two verses, we will outline the father's and son's works on behalf of God's people.

According to John 6:35 to 45 and 54 and 65. The father gives people to the son. This is one of John's pictures of election.

We see it in John 6:37. All the Father gives me will come to me. Whoever comes to me, I will never cast out.

The father gives people to the son, which means the father chooses people for salvation. The father draws them to the son. 6:44.

No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him. John's drawing, which is the work of the Father, is akin to Paul's idea of effectual calling or summoning people inwardly, supernaturally, and efficaciously through the outward gospel call. These people come to the son, 35, 37, 44, 45, 65.

I'm the bread of life. Whoever comes to me shall not hunger. Whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

Where coming is parallel to believing, and that's what coming means. They come to the son. The parallelism in John 6:35 shows coming to Jesus means believing in Jesus.

The son keeps the people given to him by the father. John 6:37 and 39. All the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me, I will never cast out.

39, this is the will of him who sent me that I should lose nothing of all he has given me but raise it up on the last day. This means that once saved by Jesus, they are not lost. Finally, fifth, Jesus will raise them from the dead on the last day.

6:39, 6:40, 6:44. Here, Jesus predicts the resurrection of the righteous. Here is the flow of thought.

The father gives people to the son. The father draws them to the son. They come to the son.

They believe in him. The son keeps them, and the son will raise them from the dead on the last day. These works of salvation form the theological framework for John 6:44, and 65 and lead us to affirm two important truths.

First, there's harmony between the Father and the Son in salvation. The father gives people to the son and draws them to him. The son saves, keeps, and will raise the same people.

Second, there's continuity in the identity of God's people. These are the same people whom the Father gives to and draws to the Son, and the same people who believe in the Son are preserved by him and will be raised by him. Studying John 6:44, 65, within the framework of the saving deeds of the father and the son, yields much fruit.

Jesus replies to the Jewish leader's unbelieving complaints. Stop grumbling among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day, John 6:43, 44.

Jesus' words are arresting. He tells his hearers that their unbelief indicates they are not God's people. When he says no one can come to me, remember six, 35, where coming to Jesus parallels believing in him.

He means no one can believe in me unless the father who sent me draws him. Sinners cannot believe in the son unless they're drawn to him by the father. Jesus is not speaking of inability hypothetically as in a Wesleyan Arminian scheme but is confronting actual grumbling, unbelieving hearers with the fact that they are not the people of God.

He tells them not merely that they do not believe but that they cannot believe. Arminian interpreters have appealed to the parallel use of the same word draw in John 12:32, and have concluded that God draws everyone to Jesus. 12, 32 of John, when I am lifted up from the earth, Jesus says, I will draw all people to myself.

Good. Yes. There, there, Jesus says, but when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself.

He means when he's crucified, see the following verse, and he will bring all men to himself in salvation. All men here does not mean every individual, however, but Gentiles as well as Greeks, as Jews, excuse me, Gentiles as well as Jews. We say this because of the context in which after some Greeks asked to see Jesus, John 12, 20 to 22, he apparently ignores them and talks about his approaching cross 12:23 to 28, but he doesn't really ignore the Greeks.

He includes them in all men whom he will draw by his death. Jesus does speak of all without distinction, all kinds of people, Greeks, as well as Jews, and not all without exception. That is every individual.

In addition, a careful reading of John 6:44 precludes the idea that the father draws all people to his son. Jesus says, quote, no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

Look close quote; because of the continuity in the identity of the people of God, as we noted earlier, if we understand John 6 44 to say that every person is drawn, then we must conclude that every person will be raised up by Jesus for salvation on the last day. But this is universalism. The view everyone will finally be saved is a view rejected by evangelical Calvinists and Arminians alike.

Consequently, the father does not draw all persons to Christ in John 6:44. That verse teaches that unsaved persons are unable to trust Jesus as a savior unless the Father draws them to Jesus. The father does this for those whom he has given to his son, those whom he has chosen, and the son will raise them for final salvation.

The conclusions we reach for John 6:44 are confirmed by John 6:65. There, Jesus says to a grumbling crowd, quote, for this reason, I've told you that no one can come to me unless it has been given to him by the Father. Once more, Jesus affirms that unsaved persons are unable to believe in him unless the Father has enabled them to do so.

In the verses immediately preceding John 6:44 and 6:45, unsaved people grumble about Jesus. Jesus addresses them and thereby ascribes inability to actual unsaved people. This contradicts the Arminian idea of a hypothetical inability.

Our last passage is 2 Corinthians 4:1 through 6. The context, 2 Corinthians 3:7 to 18. Paul had been speaking in 2 Corinthians 3:7 to 18 of the glory of the new covenant. The glory of the Mosaic covenant fades away completely in comparison to that of the new covenant.

The new dispensation brought by Jesus Christ is altogether glorious. Consequently, the ministry of the new covenant is glorious as well. Paul is a minister of the new covenant of the glorious Lord Jesus.

An exegesis of 2 Corinthians 4:1 through 6. Therefore, diatata points back to the preceding discussion of the glory of the new covenant ministry. The following participial clause does the same. Since we have this glorious new covenant ministry, it is only because of the saving mercy of God that the apostles had their ministries.

Just as we received mercy, Paul then says, we do not lose heart. Since Paul has received from God a part in the glorious ministry of Jesus Christ, he does not despair. The glorious Christ and the privilege of serving him are great encouragement to the apostles.

4:2 of 2 Corinthians. The apostles are not discouraged about serving the Lord. On the contrary, they have nothing to be ashamed of, nothing to hide.

They have, culminative aorists, renounced shameful hidden things and shameful qualitative genitiveness. Their enemies falsely accused them of ungodliness. The ministry of the new covenant is full of glory.

The glory shines on everything they do. There is thus no place for hidden sins. All is open to God and human beings.

Quote, and we do not walk in craftiness, which means they do not act with trickery. Again, contrary to their opponents' accusations. Quote: neither do we falsify the word of God.

Close, quote, by saying one thing and doing another that contradicts the ministry of foolishness. But quote, on the contrary, by means of open proclamation of the truth, objective genitive, we commend ourselves to every person's conscience in the sight of God. The ministers of the new covenant look with unveiled faces at Christ's glory.

They have nothing to hide from God or man. They proclaim the truth of the gospel openly. Four, three, Paul's opponents will reply, if your message is so glorious and clear, why do all not see it the way you do, Paul? Paul, your message is not clear.

You're a false apostle, and your message is merely your own. Paul says, but even if our gospel is hidden, quote, it is hidden to those who are perishing. Close quote.

Paul will not fault the glorious Christ or his illuminating gospel. No, darkness resides in the hearers who reject the message of light. In fact, one can gauge his spiritual condition by his response to the gospel.

Those to whom the good news is hidden reveal that they are unsaved and headed for destruction. The perishing ones are further described by means of a relative clause in whom the God of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers, or you could translate their unbelieving minds. Paul teaches that those who reject the gospel are in big trouble.

They're not; they not only show themselves as lost by their negative response to the good news but also in the clutches of a sinister force more powerful than they are. The devil has blinded their thinking. There's been a satanic effect upon their minds.

Paul implies that the gospel is so glorious that it takes Satan himself to blind unbelieving minds from the gospel's light. Satan's blinding work is so that, as a result clause, they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. The evil one has a very specific intent.

He wants to keep the unsaved from believing in Christ. He works in the thinking processes of the unsaved so they will not be savingly illuminated by the gospel. Notice the light-related words, blinded, see, light, glory, and image.

Paul is emphatic that there's no lack of clarity or glory to the gospel. The good news is a message of the glory of Christ, the very image of God as we saw previously in our study of humankind. The Lord Jesus reveals the invisible God to all who have eyes to see.

The means given here, those who are perishing do not see, is that Satan has blinded their spiritual eyes. Four, five. In verses three and four, Paul has taken time to explain why some do not believe this clear, luminous gospel.

Now he returns to his main thought from verse two. For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. Close quote.

We have nothing to do with the hidden sins of the unsaved, nor do we act in secrecy. We do not adulterate the word of God through ungodliness. On the contrary, we proclaim the truth with openness before God and human beings.

Then, he further explains. Four, our message does not concern ourselves. We preach the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is the content of the message of the New Covenant ministry. He is the one, he is the whole reason why the gospel is so glorious and clear. Paul's reference to Christ's lordship may be his way of saying that he was commissioned to preach the gospel message of another, even Jesus Christ.

The slaves of Christ and of their hearers because of Christ. They've come to believe the message. They acknowledge Jesus as Lord.

They're his servants who now serve others so that they, too, might come to know the glorious Lord. Four, six. The reason why Paul preaches the gospel of Christ is that the creator God savingly illumined them.

“The God who said the light shall shine out of darkness is he who shined in our hearts with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” The great creator of light and of everything else is responsible for giving spiritual light to Paul.

The gospel is luminous, but the devil blinds the minds of the unsaved. One stronger than Satan, the creator himself, illumines the minds of God's people with the gospel. I believe Paul is implying that God's work of saving illumination of the gospel is a work of recreation.

In any case, it is as much a work of the creator as creation was. Thus, in response to enemy attacks, Paul firmly holds his conviction that the gospel is full of light. People do believe in the gospel because they are perishing and are blinded by the false God of this present evil world.

The creator God savingly illuminates the heart of Paul and the rest of the people of God. Theological conclusions from 2 Corinthians 4:1-6. One reason that unsaved people do not believe the gospel is that Satan has blinded their thinking.

Concerning our first question, Paul does not specifically mention the will of the unsaved in our passage. He does mention their thoughts or minds. The unsaved person's thoughts or mind has been blinded by Satan, so he or she will not believe the gospel.

That blinding is effective, as the comparison of verses 3 and 4 will show. Those to whom the gospel is hidden are those who are perishing, in whose case Satan has blinded their thoughts. The language is given in the metaphor of light and darkness rather than bondage and freedom.

Nevertheless, the message is plain. A more powerful being than sinners has blinded their unbelieving thoughts. They are thus bound or blinded until a greater one comes to free them.

It appears that our passage answers the second question we initially asked by teaching. An unsaved person can do nothing to be saved. He or she is blinded by the devil and is in need of divine illumination.

He or she cannot illumine himself or herself, for she is blinded. He cannot even believe the gospel, for it is hidden to him. The reason given here for his unbelief is that Satan has blinded him.

2 Corinthians 4:1-6 does not mention divine grace. It speaks rather in terms of illumination. Saving illumination is the work of God the Creator.

It is only when God shines in hearts with the light of the gospel that Paul or anyone else is saved. There is no general illumination of humankind taught in this passage. There is an efficacious and particular enlightenment that is the work of God that leads indeed to salvation.

This concludes our brief discussion of ability or inability. Obviously, I conclude from 1 Corinthians 2:14-16, John 6, and 2 Corinthians 4:1-6 that the scripture seems to teach the inability of unsaved people to be saved. Thus, we are totally reliant upon the Holy Spirit and the grace of God to save sinners.

This diagram will help us pull things together as we conclude our lectures. Diagrams of the effects of the fall. I acknowledge the help of Anthony Hoekema in his book created in God's Image.

Original sin, Adam's sin imputed to the human race, brings forth legal and moral repercussions. The legal repercussion is guilt or condemnation. The moral one is pollution or corruption.

We are actually damaged, ruined by sin. And that pollution issues forth in both depravity and inability. Total depravity does not mean human beings are as bad as they could be; otherwise, there'd be no life on earth possible.

It means every part of human beings is affected by sin. As I said a couple of times in this course of lectures, Paul especially singles out the mind for the noetic effects of sin. As we just saw, the scripture also teaches, or at least it inclines in that direction, the inability of unsaved persons to save themselves apart from the sovereign and efficacious grace of God accompanying the gospel.

It's another way of saying, apart from the Holy Spirit working in regeneration to give those who are spiritually dead life, which is the subject of Ephesians 2, 1 through 10, a passage we did not even address in this context. Let us pray together. Gracious Father, we thank you for the teaching of your word concerning human beings that we're your special creations, we are made in your image for relationship with you and one another and your world, that you have made us unitary beings, and that we will be body and soul united for all eternity on the new earth by your grace.

We thank you for the teaching of your word concerning sin and the awful description of sin you give us in your word, that we might be humbled before you and see our tremendous need of your word, of your spirit, of your son, of your grace. We acknowledge our actual sins and thank you for teaching us that the ultimate origin of sin is original sin and not your good creation. We also acknowledge our inability to save ourselves, and we rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us, gave himself for us, and rose again on the third day, promising eternal life to all who believe in him. Amen.

This is Dr. Robert A. Peterson in his teaching on the Doctrines of Humanity and Sin. This is session 19, Original Sin, Immediate Imputation, Effects of the Fall, Ability or Inability.