

Theme: Can you live up to all of this perfectly? No. I have a natural tendency in thought, word, and deed to not love God and my neighbor as He has commanded.

## I. Intro – Ross Perot’s View of Man

- A. Ross Perot at USNA; Tocqueville; American’s good
- B. I disagree; firestorm ensues
- C. Are people actually good? Do we keep God’s law?
- D. Catechism Q10 - see the theme statement

## II. All Are Essentially Sinful - Not Good

- A. All are sinful in their very nature  
As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one; <sup>11</sup> there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. <sup>12</sup> All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.” Romans 3:10–12
  - 1. All are under sin
  - 2. Note the universal language
    - a. No or “No one” - 6 times; all turned away
    - b. Ends with the exclamation “Not even one”
  - 3. No one is good, righteous, understanding, or seeking God
  - 4. This is the natural state of humanity - **tendency**  
Can you live up to all of this perfectly? No. I have a **natural tendency** in thought, word, and deed to not love God and my neighbor as He has commanded
- B. Clear Biblical teaching - EVERYONE is sinful, not good

- 1. Paul is quoting from Psalms; all over OT
- 2. Jesus Himself declared the same thing  
“Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good — except God alone. Mark 10:18
- 3. This Biblical teaching is not harsh or negative - it is realistic and true!  
"Certain new theologians dispute original sin, which is the only part of Christian theology which can really be proved." (GK Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*)

## III. The Extent and Depth of Sin

- A. We are sinful in our thoughts - heart and mind  
“There is no one who understands, no one who seeks God... <sup>18</sup> There is no fear of God before their eyes.” Romans 3:11, 18
  - 1. We don’t understand (mind) or seek (heart)
  - 2. Our internal attitude is we have no fear of God
  - 3. This fear is not being afraid of God, but a right disposition of love and obedience towards God as our Creator and Lord - this is absent from our basic disposition
- B. We are sinful in our words (speech)  
“Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit.” “The poison of vipers is on their lips.” <sup>14</sup> “Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.” Romans 3:13–14
  - 1. All parts affected (throat, tongue, lips, mouth)
  - 2. Sin in speech arises from deep within
  - 3. Throat an open grave spewing forth death, unclean

4. Tongue practices deceit - native language
5. Poison of vipers – words filled with poison
6. **Whole** mouth, **full** of cursing and bitterness
7. Contrary to what we may say, words matter

8. Sinful speech arises from a sinful heart  
 Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? <sup>18</sup> But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.'  
 Matthew 15:17–18

C. We are sinful in our actions

“Their feet are swift to shed blood; <sup>16</sup> ruin and misery mark their ways, <sup>17</sup> and the way of peace they do not know.” Romans 3:15–17

1. Paul has moved from words to actions, organs of speech to the organ of walking (lifestyle)
2. Swift to shed blood – murder – Genesis 4
3. Path marked by ruin and misery - the path we walk
4. Do not even know the path of peace
5. Our sad history of murder, mayhem, and war - right up to the 20th Century World Wars, and our decades of terrorism
6. Our current situation - As of 2017, 65.6 million individuals have been forcibly displaced worldwide because of persecution, conflict, violence, or human rights violations, per the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).
7. Evil actions from an evil heart

But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.'  
<sup>19</sup>For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. Matthew 15:18–19

D. Conclusion: Sinful to the core, we violate God's law

Can you live up to all of this perfectly? No. I have a natural tendency in thought, word, and deed to not love God and my neighbor as He has commanded

1. We don't just do sinful actions - we have a sinful nature (tendency)
2. We don't just have a few actions that are sinful - we sin in thought, word, and deed
3. We don't sin but still have a natural bent to love God and others - we sin because we don't love God and others as we were created to do.
4. Because we do not love God and others as we should, we think, speak, and act in a sinful manner.

## IV. God's Cure for Our Sin

A. Christ's blood has washed away our sins

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace Ephesians 1:7

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 1 John 1:7

1. Jesus' blood has redeemed us, paying the penalty for our sins so that we might be free!
2. His blood purifies us from all of our unrighteousness, washing away our sins.

3. Through the blood of Christ, we are free from any stain or penalty of sin.

B. Christ's righteousness is given to us to make us positively holy

But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. <sup>22</sup> This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. Rom 3:21–22

1. The righteousness comes from God and is received by faith

2. This righteousness is the righteousness of Christ, and it is given to everyone who believes in Christ.

3. Paul makes the same point other places

What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. Philippians 3:8–9

a. We consider everything else - including all our works - to be rubbish and throw it aside

b. We do not have our own righteousness but the righteousness of God that is given to us.

c. We receive this righteousness by faith, not works or law.

4. Through the righteousness of Christ, we stand before God holy, full of positive righteousness and obedience, as if we had always obeyed God's law with every thought, word, and deed.

C. We are regenerated by the Spirit so that the power of our sin nature is broken

He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, Titus 3:5

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. <sup>26</sup> I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Ezekiel 36:25–27

1. We are not only cleansed of our sin and saved from its pollution and penalty, but we are also born again!

2. We who were dead to God and slaves to sin are now made new so that we are alive to God and no longer slaves to sin.

3. The Spirit comes into us, breaking sins dominating power over us, and drawing us to obedience to God and His law.

4. Because of regeneration, we have not only been justified, we are being sanctified - growing in freedom from the power of sin and in actual holiness of life.

## V. Applying the Word

A. Do I see my dilemma?

1. Our problem is not just a few external actions - we are sinful to the core!

2. Left to our own, we would utterly turn from God and give ourselves over to sin

3. If God did not intervene, sin would destroy us and everything we touch
4. Do I recognize and confess not just my sins (external actions) but my sin (internal nature)?
5. Do I see the depth of my need for salvation and deliverance?
6. Do I recognize my utter inability to save myself?
7. Polluted water can not cleanse anything - so we can not cleanse ourselves as our nature is polluted with sin!

B. Do I see the great provision given to me in Christ?

1. What we could never do, Christ has done for us!
2. We could not keep the Law, but He has!
3. We sinned in thought, word, and deed, but He was perfect in thought, word, and deed!
4. He died to bear the covenant curse, wash away our sin, and give us full status as children of God!
5. The Spirit has regenerated us so that we are new creations in Christ!
6. He has not only removed the penalty of sin, He is also freeing us from its power! (And one day He will free us from its very presence!)
7. All of this is given to us in Christ - our Great King!

C. The Table of Provision

1. Here we remember that we are broken deep down inside, and this is why we have violated God's will and law - but Christ kept it for us!

2. Here we remember that Christ died to take our sins away!
3. Here the Holy Spirit works to break sins sway in our lives!
4. Come and receive today!

### Can I Keep God's Law?

Romans 3:10-24  
November 3, 2019  
Communion  
Hebrews 13:20-21

Teaching keywords: Catechism; God's Law; law and gospel; sin; regeneration; salvation and deliverance

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, <sup>21</sup> equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Hebrews 13:20–21

As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; <sup>11</sup> there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. <sup>12</sup> All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." <sup>13</sup> "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." <sup>14</sup> "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." <sup>15</sup> "Their feet are swift to shed blood; <sup>16</sup> ruin and misery mark their ways, <sup>17</sup> and the way of peace they do not know." <sup>18</sup> "There is no fear of God before their eyes." <sup>19</sup> Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world

held accountable to God. <sup>20</sup> Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. <sup>21</sup> But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. <sup>22</sup> This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. Romans 3:10–24