

REVISITING CHRIST'S MESSAGE TO TODAY'S EVANGELICALS
Part III: Christ's Appraisal Of Evangelicals As Two, Offensive, Judging Factions

B. Christ's Evaluation Of Evangelicals Detailed

2. Christ's Exposure Of The Factions' Errant Beliefs Behind Their Errant Judgments

a. The Errant Views Of Depravity And Their Harmful Effects

(Revelation 3:14, 17b[a])

I. Introduction

- A. Having **critiqued** the errant **judgments** of today's two evangelical Calvinist and Arminian factions, Christ detailed **how** they **arrived** at this troubling state by the **influence** of their **respective errant BELIEFS!**
- B. In Revelation 3:14, 17b[a], Christ exposed the factions' **errant beliefs** on **depravity** and **their harmful effects:**

II. The Errant Views Of Depravity And Their Harmful Effects, Revelation 3:14, 17b[a].

- A. In Rev. 3:17b in the Greek text, Jesus said that each faction was "**the** wretched **and** pitiful **and** poor **and** blind **and** naked **one**" (five adjectives linked by four conjunctions), implying that the **five adjectives** are **all inter-related with each other**, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 845; A. T. Robertson, A Gram. of the Grk. N. T., p. 777.
- B. Notably, **Calvinist** theologian Loraine Boettner (The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination, 1932, p. 59) wrote that **Calvinism's five points of belief** are "not isolated and independent doctrines, but are . . . inter-related . . ."
- C. In viewing these five adjectives **in order**, we see **Christ critiqued** the **five points** of **Calvinism in order AND** their **opposing Arminian beliefs**, with **insight** on the **harmful effects** that each errant view has on **believers:**
1. Calvinism's **first** point is "Total Inability," that **unsaved** man's **will** is so **bound** to a **fully depraved nature** that he **cannot author faith** in **Christ**, and **God** must **give him** the **faith** to **trust** in **Christ**, *Ibid.*, p. 61-82.
 2. Arminianism holds that man's **will and nature** are **both partly depraved**, that **unsaved** man has **free will** and **cooperates** in salvation by **giving faith** to God (Bettenson, Docs. of the Christ. Chch., 2nd ed., p. 377f).
 3. However, Jesus critiqued **both** views of human depravity along with their harmful effects on believers:
 - a. The Laodiceans were **first "wretched"** (Revelation 3:17b[a] NIV), what translates the word **talaiporos** in the Greek N. T., and it appears outside of this verse elsewhere in the New Testament **only** at Romans 7:24 (Moulton & Geden, Conc. to the Grk. Test., 4th ed., p. 932; U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 845, 547).
 - b. **Christ** thus **critiqued** the **Calvinist** view of **depravity:** (a) **talaiporos** in the **context** of **Romans 7:15-24** describes one who **sins against his will!** (b) Calvinists claim that **only carnal Christians sin against their will, that the unsaved will only to sin** (John Murray, The Epis. to the Rom., 1975, 256-259)! (c) However, Romans 2:1-3:8 presents **unsaved moralists** and **unsaved Hebrews** as **both [errantly] boasting** that they do **NOT sin**, what reveals that they **can WANT** to do what is **RIGHT!** (d) Consequently, the **will** is **SEPARATE FROM** the **sin nature NOT ONLY in BELIEVERS, BUT ALSO in UNBELIEVERS**, so **Calvinists err** in holding that God must give the unsaved elect a gift of faith for them to trust in Christ!
 - c. **Christ** also **critiqued** the **Arminian** view of **depravity:** (a) Though the will is separate from the sin nature, Romans 7:15-24 **also** shows that one is **unable to avoid sin in his deeds due to his sin nature!** (b) Man is **NOT able to cooperate with God to help produce his salvation**, for his **sin nature** is **TOTALLY depraved!**
 - d. **Christ's use** of **talaiporos** in Romans 7:15-24 with Galatians 5:16 **also** reveals **how** these beliefs have **led** to **spiritually defeated lives:** (a) **Calvinists** have **relied** on **God's predestination** to make His **alleged gift** of **faith allegedly given** to them at **salvation strong** that they might gain **victory over their sin nature SO THAT they have NOT initiated reliance on the Holy Spirit for such victory like Galatians 5:16 teaches!** (b) **Arminians** have **relied** on the **supposed power** of what is really a **POWERLESS FAITH** to give them **victory over their sin nature instead of relying on the HOLY SPIRIT as Galatians 5:16 teaches!**

Lesson: (1) **Calvinists have errantly held that the will is so bound to a totally depraved sin nature that unsaved man cannot trust in Christ but must be given a gift of faith by God to believe. So, relying on God's predestination to use His alleged gift of faith to give them victory over the sin nature, saved Calvinists have failed to initiate faith in God that they might have that victory.** (2) **Arminians have errantly held that the will and nature are both partly depraved, that the unsaved can then contribute faith to God to help save themselves. So, believing that their faith has power, Arminians have relied on a powerless faith versus the Holy Spirit for victory over the sin nature.**

Application: **May we avoid both Calvinist and Arminian views on human depravity and hold that the will is a non-depraved entity that is separate from the totally depraved sin nature, that we might then initiate a reliance on the Holy Spirit by faith to live in victory over our totally depraved sin natures (Romans 8:3-4; Galatians 5:16)!**