

[Follow up] Should we refer to ourselves as totally depraved and evil?

The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; Who can know it? Jer 17:9. Because the believer has two natures, there is a war within him (Ro 7:15). There is no such war inside a non-believer; for he has not yet been granted repentance to life (Ac 11:18). Make-believers and unbelievers have not been forgiven for their sins (Ac 5:31). The wrath of God abides on them (Jn 3:36).

Regarding Jeremiah 17:9 J. R. Lundbom wrote:

...Jer 17:9. A partial reading in 4QJera supports MT. Hebrew 'āqōb has the meaning "uneven" in Isa 40:4: "the uneven ground shall become level." ...Duhm saw the prophet as sharing a personal insight into his own heart and suggested that v 9 continues in v 14 where the prophet prays for healing. There is no direct connection between v 9 and v 14; at the same time, Jeremiah could well be confessing "dark possibilities which he had come to discern within himself" (Peake). Since "heart" here has the definite article, which Holladay says is unique in the OT, Jeremiah most likely is generalizing about the heart of every person, including his own...

... The question, "Who can know it?" is rhetorical, with "know" (yd') having the sense here of "understand." No one, says Jeremiah, can understand the human heart, which sets up the response of Yahweh.

...10. I, Yahweh, am the one who probes the heart, the one who tests the inner being. The personal pronoun, 'ānî ("I"), is for emphasis, i.e., "I, and only I" (cf. Deut 32:39). The verb ḥqr means "to probe, look into (something)." On the "heart" and "inner being" (lit. "kidneys"), see 11:20 where Jeremiah concedes that Yahweh in his righteous judgment tries both (cf. Ps 7:10 [Eng 7:9]). Here the question as to who can understand the human heart is effectively answered, albeit circumspectly. Yahweh alone is able to look into the human heart, plumb its depths, test it, and come up with an equitable judgment regarding it. On Yahweh probing, knowing, testing, and assessing the human heart, see Deut 8:2; 1 Sam 16:7; Pss 17:3; 26:2; Prov 17:3; and 21:2; and in the NT, Acts 1:24; 15:8; and 1 John 3:20....

...When Yahweh dispenses righteous judgment, each one receives what each one deserves. Compare Isa 3:10; Mic 7:13; Ps 62:13 [Eng 62:12]; and Job 34:11.¹

Because the heart can deceive one into believing he is saved when he is not (1 Co 3:18; Jas 1:22), he should examine himself as to whether he is in the faith (2 Co 13:5).

For those who are saved what work God begins he will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ (Php 1:6).

God chastens his children. In fact, chastening is evidence of one's sonship (Pr 3:11, 12). Believers have the scars to prove it (Lk 22:31).

The Lord does not pray for the world. He prays for his own (Jn 17:9).

¹ Lundbom, J. R. (2008). Jeremiah 1–20: a new translation with introduction and commentary (Vol. 21A, pp. 787–788). New Haven; London: Yale University Press.

When one abides in the Son (Jn 15:4, 5c–6), he can produce good fruit (vv. 7–8a, Ps. 92:14, Mt 13:23, Col 1:6, 10). Those who produce good fruit will be rewarded (Jer 31:16, Php 1:11); whereas those who produce wicked fruit will be punished (Mt 7:16).

J. Vernon McGee wrote:

Now Paul makes clear what the works of the flesh are:

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God [Gal. 5:19–21].

This is an ugly brood of sensual sins, religious sins, social sins, and personal sins....“They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” “Which do” indicates continuous action. Our Lord gave the illustration of the Prodigal Son who got down in the pig pen but didn’t stay there. The only ones that stay in a pig pen are pigs. If a son gets there, he will be very unhappy until he gets out. If you can continue to live in sin, you are in a dangerous position. It means you are not a child of God.

Now, having listed the works of the flesh, Paul will list the fruit of the Spirit. Notice the contrast: works of the flesh and fruit of the Spirit. The works of the flesh are what you do. The Ten Commandments were given to control the flesh. But now the Christian life is to produce the fruit of the Spirit.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law [Gal. 5:22–23].

The Lord Jesus Christ talked about the fruit of the Spirit in John 15. He said that without Him we could do nothing. And fruit is what He wants in our lives...²

After one has passed from death to life (1 Jn 3:14), he can do a good thing (Ac 13:2).

Though the Christian may stumble after justification (2 Co 5:21) during his regeneration/sanctification (He 2:11); he will repent (1 Jn 1:9)—get back up and press on (Php 3:14).

The believer presents his body as a living, holy sacrifice (Rom. 12:1) perfect and without blemish (Eph 5:27) in Christ Jesus (Col 1:28). He has no righteousness of his own—his righteousness has been imputed (Php 3:9).

The bride is being made Christlike (Is 61:10) now and in the future (1 Jn 3:2).

² McGee, J. V. (1991). Thru the Bible commentary: The Epistles (Galatians) (electronic ed., Vol. 46, pp. 100–102). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.