

the reformers and their thinking along these lines:

1. Man's state in the world

a. Marked by Sin

There is a total corruption of the person witnessed both in the appetities and in the higher aspirations of the soul. Sin indwells and masters us. Original sin leads us to complete rejection before God. By nature we are guilty. The end of sin is condemnation and death and we are helpless before this judgment since no man is able to deliver oneself. Most of the reformers follow the traducianist view on the origin of the soul. To them original sin was our complicity in Adam which rendered the whole race guilty. There are some contrary expressions to this but it was the dominant view. This original sin could not be removed but by a gracious forgiveness.

b. Depravity

The logical consequence of sin, depravity refers to our stand before God. (We may be fairly honest in the sight of men.) The reformers did not think that depravity meant everything a man did in all areas of life was socially wicked. But as a grounds of salvation not act of good, etc., could be sufficient. Such acts as kindness, love, generosity, telling the truth, etc., took no special sanction for they were products of grace..common grace...grace rendered to every man in the spirit. But in the stand before God these were insufficient and there was nothing pleasing about man and even these common grace acts offered no efficacy as they might, from human resources, spring from inferior motivation. Depravity meant there was nothing a man could do to make himself pleasing to God. This aspect of the meaning of depravity is often misstated by anti-reformed theologians and should be carefully marked in our progress.

The Arminian reformers had difficulty going with this strong position. They knew man was lost but felt man could grip God with such force that he could direct himself to good that would eventually lead to God.

c. Destiny

The Protestant reformers (Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, et al) stood with Augustine on election and the force and aspects of Divine decrees. Luther's followers would move away from his strong emphasis in the next generation. Most anabaptist reformers did not agree with it and came closer to the ideas of Gregory I. In all of these positions, there is nothing "new" to the expression, simply a re-emphasis or iteration of a particular point.