

(Man will announce that he will be justified by God and after baptism a new power will be given him, enabling him to keep the law. He will choose to do right.)

--The Gospel and religious grace are external and not really necessary.

(A Person is not left out or neglected if he does not have them or know them. Perfection is a developed, not conferred, skill and one must make his faculties move in that direction.

Now the teachings of Pelagius are better understood if we can put them into the ideology of that day. With regard to man's mortal needs, the strong view was that of Augustine. This school conceived of man as being helpless and unable to save himself or even to prepare himself for salvation. One could be saved only by a mandated grace that we could best call irresistible. This grace worked mysteriously on the heart and the man on whose heart it worked would respond even though he may not have been conscious of the inner-working before his response. The Gospel was the vehicle by which this grace could be known but if there was no heart-work, the Gospel would do nothing.

A view less severe, to some extent, was offered by the Chrysostom circle. In this circle the loss of man was recognized and it was clearly seen that man could not save himself. Nonetheless he was exhorted to strive to honor the moral law of God..it was in his best interest to do so anyway, and as he does, grace is proffered that he might believe and be saved. One might say..he "runs across grace" as he pursues patterns of truth.

The ideas of Pelagius, obviously, run counter to both of these. Man's will is the culprit in the Pelagian system, not man's nature. If he will but bring his will into line he can be saved from the ill effects it may otherwise bring him. No external revelatory truth is necessary although some may serve as an aid for the exercised inner man. These paragraphs represent an over-simplification, of course, but that is par in these classes with TVT and the essential ideas are correctly stated, I believe. And you will see that while the problems have been around a long time they are still not worked out to everyone's joy.