

If we are always sinful how can morality matter?

Bad or good the doctrine of total depravity is in the Bible. We will see later which one of these it is. The doctrine does not say we are all mad evil animals but that all we do has to have some sin in it. In other words we won't do good unless we find something bad in it or we do good but throw a sinful intention into it - such as "I respect good more than you God". So nice people sin all the time in all they do just as the not-nice do. Total depravity means that sin touches our whole being - in other words we want it to be always involved in what we do.

The Bible plainly teaches the total depravity doctrine that unsaved people are capable only of sin when it says that salvation is a gift from God.

Jeremiah said that the heart is full of deceit and is wicked beyond belief (Jeremiah 17:9). According to him you can be surprised at how wicked you are if you take a good look at yourself.

The apostle John declared that if he or anybody else says that there is no sin in themselves they are wrong at 1 John 1:8. Some say he is contradicting the notion that some people have that they have never sinned and is not thinking of people who claim to be freed from sin now and to be Catholic style saints. But he included himself and he certainly believed that repentance put you right with God but not completely right. The note on page 270 of the New American Bible says that the verse teaches that nobody can be completely free from sin.

If we are bad and totally depraved or if we cannot do good unless we have something evil in it how can we love or connect to anybody else? The Christian answer is that Jesus gives grace, forgiveness and the power to improve goodness, to the person though having won this grace by dying for them. Jesus offers reparation for us sinners by offering his life in our place to show love in place of the love we didn't show. He personally lives in the person so any good in them is his so we can trust them for he is the one who is shaping them into something better. It is a terrible answer but the only one. It compels people to accept somebody like Jesus. So people are seen as good not for themselves but for him. It condemns anything that is not about or focused on something like Jesus. It says without that there is no morality. For some, that is all they mean by saying without God or religion – meaning Christianity – there is no morality just a semblance.