Clips from Psalms

Psalms 118:1-4
Thanksgiving for God’s Saving Goodness

"1 Oh give thanks unto Jehovah for he is good; for his lovingkindness endures for ever.  2 Let Israel now say, that his lovingkindness endures for ever.  3 Let the house of Aaron and all that fear Jehovah say, That his loving-kindness endures for ever."

Are We Born Sinners?

John Calvin is known for developing the doctrine of "Calvinism." Calvinism is defined by the acronym TULIP. The "T" stands for total hereditary depravity. Some believe that this is what David was teaching at Psalms 51:5 when he said, "5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." David was not teaching that all men are born in sin. David is saying, contextually, that we are all born into a world where sin rules the minds of the majority. The "wicked" are not born into this world as sinners but rather begin early on in life to pursuing the paths of sin and lies.

Another passage of interest is found at Psalms 58:3. The psalmist writes, "3 The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies." Bible students cannot afford to rip passages of scripture out of their context or from the overall message of God's word. When faced with a difficult passage we must consider the context of that passage as well as other teaching on the same subject throughout the Word of God. If it is the case that men are born into this world with the capacity to learn and make choices then the matter is solved. Remember the words of Joshua when he said,
"15 Choose this day whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell: but as for me and my house we will serve Jehovah" (Joshua 24:15). The Christian has a choice to do that which is good or evil (see Romans 6:16). If the choice of doing good or evil was settled at birth then why does the Lord and his apostles repeatedly warn and advise us all to choose to do good?

The point of Psalms 58:3 is that God knows, before any man or woman is born, that there will be people that choose good and people that choose evil (see Romans 9:11 in its context). No man is a born sinner. Babies have no sin. Can a baby curse, get drunk, participate in sexual immorality, lie, cheat, steal, or gossip about another? The answer is obvious. Choose to be good and you will never be disappointed.

Whenever we desire to know the true meaning of any given scripture we must take into consideration the meaning of words, the context they are written in and the teaching of the entire Bible on the given subject. If we ripped Bible verses out of their context and general doctrine of God on the subject in other parts of the Bible we will be guilty of misrepresenting God’s words and their meanings. Consider the dangers of such a reckless approach to studying God’s word as you read verses such as Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 2:8; 2 Peter 1:10 and 1 John 3:9.

John C Robertson

Psalms 119

Aleph

1 Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD.

2 Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart.

3 They do nothing wrong; they walk in his ways.

4 You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed.

5 Oh, that my ways were steadfast in obeying your decrees!

6 Then I would not be put to shame when I consider all your commands.

7 I will praise you with an upright heart as I learn your righteous laws.

8 I will obey your decrees; do not utterly forsake me.

Beth

9 How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.

10 I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.

11 I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

12 Praise be to you, O LORD; teach me your decrees.

13 With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth.

14 I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.

15 I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways.

16 I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.