

**DOCTRINE OF MAN - part 3**

**14. What are the results of the Fall?** (*Westminster Shorter Catechism Q.19, G I Williamson*)

- a. All mankind, by his fall, lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.
- b. ***Loss of communion with God***
  - i. Adam & Eve felt shame, guilt, fear of God and loss of openness because of sin and hid from God's presence among the trees of the garden (Gen 3:8). Because of sin and separation from God, God will not hear the prayers of sinners - “your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear (Isa 59:2).
  - ii. Expulsion from the garden (Gen 3:8-11, 22-24).
- c. ***The loss of God's image.*** The loss of godly knowledge, righteousness and holiness.
  - i. After the first sin, man lost the power to do anything good.
  - ii. “there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” (Rom 3:12).
- d. ***Physical and spiritual death***
  - i. Physical death.
    - “For the wages of sin *is* death” (Rom 6:23).
    - “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return” (Gen 3:19).
    - “all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.” (Gen 5:5)
    - “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” (Rom 5:12)
    - “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:” (Heb 9:27).
  - ii. Spiritual death - being separated from God.
    - “you *hath* he quickened [*made alive*], who were dead in trespasses and sins;” (Eph 2:1)
    - Spiritually dead sinners are unable to bring forth spiritual fruit by themselves.
    - *Illustration.* A father cut off some flowers from their roots, laid them in the grass, and told his son that he believed the flowers would continue to live and bloom. His son said, “Impossible!” The father responded, “You are right, son, this is the same truth with spiritually dead sinners. Those who are separated from God, their only source of spiritual life and growth, can never bring forth spiritual fruits apart from Him.”
- e. ***God's wrath & curse***
  - i. “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Rom 1:18-20).
  - ii. “we all had ... in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath ...” (Eph 2:3).
  - iii. “...the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together ...” (Rom 8:22).
- f. ***Slavery to Satan and Sin***
  - i. “snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.” (2 Tim 2:26).
  - ii. “the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not,” (2 Cor 4:4).
  - iii. “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” (Rom 6:16).
  - iv. “Jesus answered them, ... Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.” (Jn 8:34).
    - *Illustration:* Brian Borgman once taught “the bondage of the will” in a drug & alcohol rehabilitation unit. One of the inmates challenged him, “Preacher, do you mean to tell me I do not have free will?” “Yes, that is what I am saying the Bible teaches.” “I don't buy it!” he said irritably. So I asked him, “Are you in this unit for a drug or alcohol related offense?” “Yes”, he replied, sheepishly. “Well, have you tried to stop the abuse of drugs or alcohol?” A little humbled, he said quietly, “Yes, I've tried many times, but failed to quit.” “Exactly, if your will is free and you can do what you will, then you can quit. The reason you can't just say ‘No’, is that you are a slave to sin. Your will is a slave to your own sinful nature.” End of debate.

g. **All miseries in this life.**

i. Inward:

- *blindness of mind* "... understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;" (Eph 4:18).
- *a reprobate sense* i.e. a reprobate is a sinner who is not of the elect and is predestined to damnation. "as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;" (Rom 1:28).
- *strong delusions* "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie;" (2 Thes 2:11).
- *hardness of heart* "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;" (Rom 2:5).
- *accusing conscience* "Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;" (Rom 2:15).
- *vile affections* "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature;" (Rom 1:26).
- *continually evil sinful thoughts.* "The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God. They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ps 14:2-3). For "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Gen 8:21). "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually" (Gen 6:5).
- *misery.* Man's life is described as a shadow, a dream, a flower that withers. "man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." (Job 5:7) "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: ... surely the people *is* grass." (Isa 40:7) "But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isa 64:6).
- *life is meaningless and empty without Christ.*
  - The more people try to fill their life with empty things of the world, the more dissatisfied and more depressed they will become as the void in their heart can only be filled by Jesus.
  - "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all *is* vanity." (Eccl 1:2).
  - "The laughter of fools is like the crackling of thorns under a pot that will quickly be burnt into ashes" (Eccl 7:6).

ii. Outward

- *Curse of God upon nature* (Gen 3:17-19; Rom 8:19-22)
  - The ground was cursed, and it would yield thorns & thistles (Gen 3:17);
  - work will be exhausting - by the sweat of the brow (Gen 3:19);
  - *Illustration.* Tim complained, "I'm tired of gardening." "What's wrong?" his mother asked. "I keep trying to get the plants to grow. I do everything I can, but it's so hard to make them grow. The weeds grow by themselves. Even when I keep pulling them out, they keep growing back. Then you have the mealy bugs." His mother asked, "Do you know what is this a picture? Last Sunday our pastor preached on this subject." Tim responded, "Oh I know, our sinful hearts. The good things are so hard to grow. But the sinful things spring up without any help all the time." *Think about how our sin-filled hearts can be compared to weed-filled gardens?*
- *Sorrow & pain to the woman in child-bearing* (Gen 3:16)
- All other evils that befall us in our bodies, relations, work and death (Rom 6:23)

h. **Eternal punishment in the afterlife.**

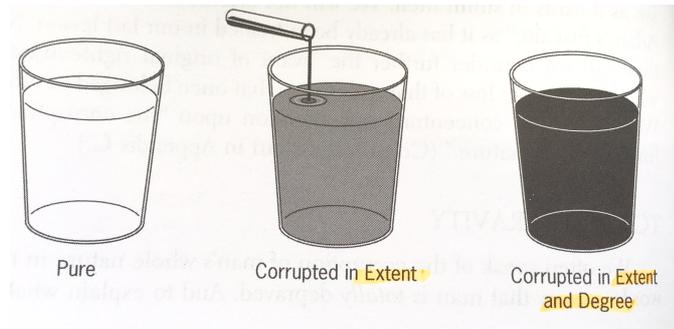
- i. Everlasting separation from the presence of God (2 Thes 1:9). "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" (Mt 25:41).

- ii. Grievous torments of soul and body in hell-fire for ever (Mark 9:43, 44; Lk 16:24)
  - “he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (Mt 3:12);
  - where “the word dieth not and the fire is not quenched” (Mk 9:48);
  - there will be torment in “fire and brimstone” (Rev 14:10);
  - in the “outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Mt 8:12).
- iii. Facing death is terrifying for non-believers. A very wealthy Paris gentleman went to visit his slowly-dying friend and promised to hire the best nurse in the city to care for him. He then found a highly-respected nurse to hire her to care for his dying friend. The nurse asked, “Is your friend a Christian?” The man was surprised by her question. “Why, yes, he is, but if you don’t mind me asking, why do you ask me that?” “Sir”, she said, “I took care of the atheist, Voltaire, on his deathbed, and for all the money in the world, I would not be willing to see another unbeliever die!” Voltaire was the pen name of a famous author and philosopher who lived from 1694 - 1778. A strong and public promoter of atheism, he experienced powerful judgments of God upon his deathbed and died a terrible death.

**15. What is the nature of Adam’s sin?** (*Westminster Shorter Catechism Q.18, G I Williamson*)

- a. The nature of Adam’s sin consists in the guilt of Adam’s first sin, the lack of righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature (total depravity), which is commonly called the Original Sin, and all actual sins that proceed from it.
  - For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous (Rom 5:19).
  - There is none righteous, no, not one: (Rom 3:10).
  - And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually (Gen 6:5).
- b. ***Our sinfulness consists in***
  - i. Original sin passed down to us from our first parents, Adam & Eve, comprises:
    - Guilt of Adam’s first sin; lack of original righteousness;
    - Corruption of man’s nature inclined to do evil. All men are conceived born in sin “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” (Ps 51:5). “Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.” (Rom 7:17-18).
  - ii. Actual sins from our evil hearts. “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:” (Mt 15:19). “But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, ... bringeth forth death.” (James 1:14-15).
- c. ***Total Depravity.*** The corruption of man’s whole nature. Sin has, like some terrible disease, infected every part of man’s nature, and everything that man does:
  - i. Man’s depravity is inward, deep down within man’s nature. God can see it, even if men do not. “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, ...” (Mt 15:19).
  - ii. The wickedness is great. Men may say that they are not very wicked, but God says their wickedness is very great (Gen 6:5). “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jer 17:9).
  - iii. This wickedness is continual. “evil continually” (Gen 6:5).
  - iv. This wickedness is universal. There is not one who is not evil by nature. All men have sinned and failed to attain to God’s standard. “There is none righteous” (Rom 3:10).
  - v. What does the “total” in total depravity mean? A thing may be totally corrupt in
    - *extent* – i.e. corruption, rottenness or depravity is found in every part;
    - *degree* – i.e. depravity is absolute; as bad as bad can be.

Illustration:



- Pure (left): a glass of pure water symbolizes Adam’s original purity.
  - Corrupt in Extent (middle): We add a drop of deadly poison into the water, which mixed with the water and spreads out through the whole glass. The glass of water is now ruined because the poison has corrupted every part of the water. So it is with man’s fallen nature.
  - Corrupt in Extent & Degree (right): A glass with nothing but poison. This is like the wickedness of Satan, for in him there is not a trace of good left.
  - As long as non-believers are in the world, evil is not yet so complete in them as it is in Satan. We say then, they are totally depraved in extent (their whole nature is corrupted by sin), but not in degree (evil has not gone as far as it can).
- vi. What does this all mean? A.H. Strong in his *Systematic Theology* explains,
- It does not mean the entire absence of conscience, (“And they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience” Jn 8:9); nor of all moral qualities, nor that men are prone to every kind of sin.
  - It does mean that man is unable to love God as He commanded. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you (Jn 5:42). In fact, the natural man is against God (Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God). Man’s nature is constantly prone to sin and rebellion. “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. ... But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members (Rom 7:18, 23).
- d. Why aren’t men worse? If not for the mercy of God, in slowing down the workings of sin:
- i. Conscience. God has given to sinful men a conscience, which does not make men good but does help to restrain the workings of sin to some extent. “Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another” (Rom 2:15).
  - ii. Civil government. God has set rulers in place to deter crime and evil. “For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power?” (Rom 13:3).
  - iii. Fear of death. What holds men back from crime is the fear of death (Heb 2:15).
  - iv. Influence of family, education & society also help to restrain sin in the hearts of men.
- e. What sinful men cannot do?
- i. Man cannot do anything that God considers good or holy without first being regenerated by the Holy Spirit. For “the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth” (Gen 8:21). “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies” (Ps 58:3). The inward desire of the heart is evil continually (Gen 6:5); there is none that doeth good, no, not one (Rom 3:12).
  - ii. If a man is not always able to do what he is free to do, he has no free will. Unregenerate man is not able to do good as His own evil nature inclines him to do evil. “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? *then* may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil” (Jer 13:23).
  - iii. Summary: An unregenerate man left to his own sinful nature will always incline to evil. The whole Bible, and the world today, show us the total depravity of man. How often have we departed from and rebelled against God? We thank God that there is hope because God given us a Saviour, Jesus, (which means, *Yahweh Saves*). This Christmas, let us thank God because Jesus, the Hope of this world, has come.