

From Your Pastor

A Study of the Shorter Catechism

Question 18: Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate wherein man fell?

Answer: The sinfulness of that estate wherein man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called Original Sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it (Rom. 5:12-21; Eph. 2:1-3).

An Explanation: All men are under two kinds of sins: Original and Actual (“...Want of original righteousness, and the corruption...with all actual transgressions...”; see Psalm 51). The Bible teaches that all men are conceived and born into sin and iniquity. Ecclesiastes 7:20 says: “*Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.*” God chose Adam as a public person to be the representative head of the human race; Adam was the best and wisest choice, chosen by God. His offence and sin led to our corruption because God imputed the guilt of the sin to all mankind (“...Adam’s first sin...”). The Bible describes it thus: “...Many died through the one man’s trespass” (5:15); “...The judgment following one trespass brought condemnation...” (Rom. 5:16); “...Because of one man’s trespass, death reigned...” (Rom. 5:17). Adam’s sin brought an estate characterized by sin, trespass against God’s Word, judgment, condemnation and death.

Sin and condemnation is manifested in our enmity toward God and our aversion and powerlessness from doing good and righteous things. The Apostle Paul describes this: “*For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out*” (Rom. 7:18). We are prone to do evil, enslaved to sin: “*For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin*” (Rom. 7:14); “...Among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind” (Eph. 2:3). This condition is summarized in Romans 3:10ff: “...As it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one...”

Every aspect of man has been tainted by sin (“...Corruption of his whole nature...”) (Gen. 6:5, mind and imaginations; Rom. 3:13-15, 6:12ff, body as an instrument of sin); there is a great need of a regeneration and renovation of the whole man, body, soul and spirit (see 1 Thess. 5:23). As sinners, let us be humble before the Lord, and realize that only by His grace in Christ can we be set free from sin. Only in Christ, can we be forgiven and fully restored to God, renovated back into God’s image (Eph. 2:14-18, 4:17-25). Let us confess our sins and not fool ourselves thinking to hide our sin and corruption from God or others! (Psa. 139:23-24; 1 Jo. 1:7-2:2). We must be born again! There is no hope for mankind apart from Christ! (John 3:3, 16-18, 36)

A Prayer: Lord and Father, we are undone, miserable, fallen, and unable to help ourselves from our sinful predicament. We are conceived in sin, born into iniquity; we are far from you by nature, and do not good, only do evil continually. We cannot even desire the good apart from your initiating and saving grace to us in Christ!

Thank you for your grace in Christ! Thank you for making us alive while dead in sin, and beginning the restoration of our whole selves into the image of Christ! Glory to your name! Thank you that we love the good now. We delight in your commandments! (Psa. 119:15-16).

In Christ’s love,
Pastor Biggs

“I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.”

-ESV Revelation 3:18