

Theological Equipping Class – Sin: Separation from God

Introduction

- Luke 7:47 – *“Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.”*
- “He that wishes to attain right views about Christian holiness, must begin by examining the vast and solemn subject of sin. He must dig down very low if he would build high. A mistake here is most mischievous. Wrong views about holiness are generally traceable to wrong views about human corruption...The plain truth is that a right knowledge of sin lies at the root of all saving Christianity. Without it such doctrines as justification, conversion, sanctification, are words and names which convey no meaning to the mind. The first thing, therefore, that God does when he makes anyone a new creature in Christ, is to send light into his heart, and show him that he is a guilty sinner.” - JC Ryle
- “Only as we begin to appreciate what we were before we became Christians (or what we would be naturally were we not Christians), do we begin to sense something of the immense grandeur of being new creatures in Christ.” – Sinclair Ferguson

Story of Sin

- We were made for fellowship with God.
 - “What profit would there be for those who were made if they did not know their own Maker.” – Athanasius
- We rebelled and rejected God.
 - “By aiming at more, a man is diminished, when he elects to be self-sufficient and defects from the one who is really sufficient for him. This then is the original evil: man regards himself as his own light, and turns away from that light which would make man himself a light if he would set his heart on it.” - Augustine, *City of God*
- Genesis 3:6-24 - *“So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. ⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” ¹⁰ And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” ¹¹ He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” ¹² The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” ¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” ... ²³ therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.”*
- Consequences of Sin:
- #1 – Broken Fellowship/Relationship with God
 - “This is perhaps the greatest tragedy of sin. God created us in a condition of glorious fellowship with him which reflected the love he has within himself. But not only does our sin make this

relationship impossible; we don't even want it. We worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator." – Donald Fairbairn

- #2 – New Sin Nature
- #3 – Spiritual Death
 - Ephesians 2:1-2 – *“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked”*
 - Colossians 2:13 – *“And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him”*
- #4 – Physical Death
 - Adam dies - Genesis 2:17; 3:19; 5:5 – *“but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die...for you are dust, and to dust you shall return...Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died.”*
 - Romans 5:12 – *“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned”*
 - Romans 6:23 – *“For the wages of sin is death”*
- #5 – Wrath: Eternal Death (if no Redemption)
 - Ephesians 2:1-3 – *“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins...and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.”*
- #6 – Broken relationship with other people (Genesis 3:7; 3:12-13, 16; 4:1-12)
- #7 – Broken relationship with the natural world (Genesis 3:14-19)
- #8 – Distorted Image of God
 - *“We are a glorious ruin.” - Francis Schaeffer*

Inherited Sin (Original Sin)

- All are born from Adam and therefore all are born sinners.
 - Romans 5:12, 19 – *“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned...¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.”*
 - Psalm 51:5 – *“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.”*
- Scripture describes all humanity as having a sin nature.
 - Genesis 6:5 – *“The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”*
 - Psalm 14:2-3 – *“The LORD looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. ³ They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.”*
 - Romans 3:23 – *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”*
 - Ps 143:2; Is 53:5-6; 64:1-6; Rom 1:18-32

The Nature of Sinners – Totally Depraved

- Westminster Confession of Faith - *“By this sin they [our first parents] fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body.”*

- Every part of us is corrupted by sin.
 - Our Actions (Genesis 6:5, Psalm 53)
 - Genesis 6:5 – *“The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”*
 - Our Wills (Isaiah 30:9, Ezekiel 3:7, Romans 6:17)
 - Isaiah 30:9 - *“For they are a rebellious people, lying children, children unwilling to hear the instruction of the LORD”*
 - Our Affections/Desires
 - Romans 1:22-23 – *“Claiming to be wise, they became fools,²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.”*
 - "I was still held firm in the bonds of woman's love...I did not persist in enjoyment of my God. Your beauty drew me to you, but soon I was dragged away from you by my own weight and in dismay I plunged again into the things of this world...as though I had sensed the fragrance of the fare but was not yet able to eat it...I began to search for a means of gaining the strength I needed to enjoy you, but I could not find this means until I embraced the mediator between God and men, Jesus Christ." – Augustine
 - *“How sweet all at once it was for me to be rid of those fruitless joys which I had once feared to lose! You drove them from me, you who are the true, the sovereign joy. You drove them from me and took their place, you who are sweeter than all pleasure...O Lord my God, my Light, my Wealth, and my Salvation.” - Augustine*
 - Our Attitudes (Proverbs 1:7, John 3:19, 2 Timothy 3:2-4)
 - John 3:19 – *“And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.”*
 - Our Minds (Romans 1:21, 8:7-8, 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 2:14, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Ephesians 4:17)
 - Romans 8:7-8 – *“For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”*
 - Our Hearts (Jeremiah 17:9, Ezekiel 36:26, Ephesians 4:18)
 - Jeremiah 17:9 – *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?”*
- We are wholly unable to save ourselves.
- *“If we think of depravity in terms of what we do instead of who we are, then it is not surprising that the “good news” becomes “good works”. If the problem is our works then we just need to reform our behavior, however, if the problem is fundamentally who we are—then we need a new nature. We don’t simply need reformation, we need regeneration. It is a difference between new habits and new life.” – Erik Raymond*

Sinning as Saints

- Salvation is a changing of our nature.
 - John 3:3 – *“Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*
 - 2 Corinthians 5:17 – *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”*

- Ephesians 4:22-24 – *“To put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”*
- The “now, not yet” state of the Christian.
 - Romans 6:6-11 – *“We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin...¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.”*
 - Galatians 5:16-24 *“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do...²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”*
 - Philippians 3:12 – *“Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.”*
 - 2 Corinthians 4:16 – *“Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.”*
 - 2 Corinthians 3:18 – *“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”*

Our Savior and Sin

- Isaiah 53:4-6 – *“Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”*
- 2 Corinthians 5:21 – *“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”*
- Luke 7:47 – *“Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.”*
- Romans 5:8 – *“but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
- Ephesians 2:1-8 - *“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—³ 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. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God”*