



# Systematic Theology

A study of the major doctrines of Scripture

TOPIC 5 – THE DOCTRINE OF SIN  
LESSON 92 – ADAM'S SIN AND YOU

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# Original Sin

- ▶ How does the first man's sin affect all born after him?
- ▶ Original sin refers to the first sin committed by Adam, but original sin also encompasses the sinful state and condition of all people because of their relationship to Adam, which is the reason people are depraved and tainted with sin from conception.
- ▶ Psalm 51:5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.
- ▶ Ephesians 2:3 We....were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.
- ▶ Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— 18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

# Original Sin

- ▶ Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned
- ▶ 1. Sin entered the world through one man.
- ▶ 2. Sin brought death.
- ▶ 3. Death spread to all people.
- ▶ 4. The reason death spread to all people is because all people sinned.
- ▶ Augustine translated “because all sinned” as “in whom all sinned,” referring to us being in Adam when he sinned. This is based on the idea that Levi gave tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham. Hebrews 7:9 Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, 10 for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

# All Sinned

- ▶ So did we actually commit sin with Adam, in him? Or does this just mean that all people commit sin, eventually?
- ▶ Romans 5:18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.
- ▶ "One trespass led to condemnation for all" and that "by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners."
- ▶ Sinned is aorist tense, meaning this is a specific historical event in the past.
- ▶ All members of the human race, naturally descended from Adam, were represented by Adam before God in the time of the testing in the Garden of Eden. As our representative, Adam sinned, and God then counted us guilty along with him. Adam's sin was imputed to us.

# Born Guilty

- ▶ When we first confront the idea that we have been born counted guilty because of Adam's sin, our tendency is to protest because it seems unfair. We did not actually decide to sin, did we? Then how are we guilty?
- ▶ 1. Everyone who protests that this is unfair has already voluntarily committed many actual sins for which God also counts us guilty.
- ▶ 2. If any one of us were in Adam's place, we also would have sinned as he did, and our subsequent rebellion against God demonstrates that.
- ▶ 3. If we believe it is unfair for us to be represented by Adam, then it would also be unfair for us to be represented by Christ and to have His righteousness imputed to us.
- ▶ God regards the human race as one whole unity represented by Adam as its head.
- ▶ God also thinks of the new race of Christians as a whole unity represented by Christ as head of His people, the church.

# Born Corrupt

- ▶ We not only have legal guilt before God, but we have a sinful nature because of Adam's sin.
- ▶ Our nature, from conception (Psa. 51:5), has a sinful disposition.
- ▶ Psalm 58:3 The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.
- ▶ As children, we did not have to be taught to do wrong. We have to be taught what to do right!
- ▶ This inherited tendency to sin does not mean that we are all born as bad as we could be. We are restrained by family, government, society, and by God.
- ▶ In our natures, we totally lack spiritual good before God (Rom. 7:18).
- ▶ In our actions, we are totally unable to do spiritual good before God (Rom. 8:8 – those who are in the flesh cannot please God...).

# Actual Sin

- ▶ 1. All people are sinful before God. We have “all gone astray” and are “all corrupt,” “there is none that does good, no not one” (Psa. 14:3). “There is no man who does not sin” (1 Kings 8:46). “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).
- ▶ 2. Does our ability limit our responsibility?
- ▶ An early teacher, Pelagius (AD 383-410), taught that God holds man responsible only for those things that man is able to do. Since God commands us to do good and warns us about doing evil, then Pelagius taught that we can restrain ourselves from sin and we can, on our own, do actual good. Pelagius rejected the doctrine of original sin. (for more on Pelagius and Augustine’s response to him, see RC Sproul here on “The Pelagian Captivity of the Church” - [https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/willing\\_to\\_believe/the-pelagian-captivity-of-the-church/](https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/willing_to_believe/the-pelagian-captivity-of-the-church/) )
- ▶ Scripture teaches that we are responsible before God, being born “dead through the trespasses and sins” in which we once walked (Eph. 2:1), and thus unable to do any spiritual good.

# Actual Sin

- ▶ 3. Are Infants guilty before they commit actual sin? Since we see from Scripture that we are guilty before we are even born, is there an age of accountability before which young children are not held responsible for sin? No, the Bible nowhere teaches an age of accountability. Passages about final judgment do speak of our being judged for actual, personal sins we've committed, but this does not change the truth that we are all conceived with a fallen nature and born with a propensity to sin. This sinful nature manifests itself very early in life.
- ▶ What about infants who die? We understand that the Scriptures tell us we are guilty because of Adam's imputed sin and guilt, and can only be saved by the imputed righteousness of Christ, completely on the basis of Christ's redemptive work and regeneration by the work of the Holy Spirit which is not limited by human ability, will, or age (John 1:13; Rom. 9:16). The bottom line is that NONE of us could be saved if Christ did not supernaturally grant us new life by the Spirit, and He gives that new life to whomever He wills. We also have clear testimony of multiple infants and even the unborn who were regenerated by the Spirit. (David's son by Bathsheba, John the Baptist).

# Old Self and New Self

- ▶ Paul instructs us in Ephesians 4:20 But you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.
- ▶ And in Colossians 3:9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, 11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.
- ▶ If we are born again, the old man (self) has been put off, and a new man (self) has been put on. We are a new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17).

# Old Self and New Self

- ▶ The old self encompasses everything a person is in Adam before union with Christ by faith.
- ▶ The new self is the regenerate self, united with Christ, who replaces the old self.
- ▶ However, up until the complete redemption of the body in glorification we will still struggle with the flesh and sinful desires. By walking (living) in the power of the Spirit, we do “not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16).
- ▶ One is therefore either in Adam, or in Christ. No other option exists.
- ▶ Being in Adam means guilt, death, and judgment.
- ▶ Being in Christ means life, justification, and righteousness.
- ▶ The solution to our sin is to be found, not in the first Adam, but the last Adam – 1 Cor. 15:45 The first man Adam became a living being. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.
  
- ▶ Next Week: Lesson 93 - Total Depravity