

# *The Doctrine of Man*

An Introduction to the Doctrine of Man  
and  
its relevance of Christian theology

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## Doctrine of Man

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## PREFACE

The church of Christ needs to hold on to the biblical doctrine of man. We need the doctrine because many have given it too little attention in recent years. Some Christians claim to study only God. Others study mostly the methods of Christian ministry. Still others borrow a view of man from the study of psychology. Yet none of these efforts will guarantee that Christians know the Bible's teaching concerning man. We need the biblical doctrine of man because many Christians avoid it.

We need to study this doctrine also because it enriches our understanding of God. God's work of creation reached its high point when He created mankind. God's plan for the world greatly involves man. So, understanding the human race helps us understand the way God deals with His creation.

The biblical doctrine of helps us understand mankind's greatest need. Scripture teaches us about the problem of human sin. Sin creates a great need for man, the need for God's forgiveness. So, studying the Bible's teaching concerning mankind helps us understand the problems everyone faces.

The Bible's teaching concerning man also explains Christ's saving work. The biblical understanding of mankind tells us that we need Christ. Christ came to bear man's sins. So the doctrine of man helps explain the gospel of Christ.

The author wrote this course with a firm conviction about the vitality of the subject.

This course on the Doctrine of Man covers several main topics. First, it utilizes four lessons to present the creation of man. These lessons do not explain the creation story of Genesis 1. Rather they explore the kind of creature God made when He made man. Next, three lessons present the problem of human sin. Since sin entered the human condition, it holds a major place in the Bible's teaching. We cannot understand mankind today without knowing about sin. Finally, the concluding lesson summarizes two views which diminish the seriousness of sin. We seek to alert students of these mistaken views.

This course also includes two unique features. First, most lessons conclude with a comment on the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that Christ took on our humanity. As each lesson explains a part of our humanity, it also explains how we should understand the humanity of Christ. Secondly, the author attempted to write this course with English grammar that would be understood by international students. MINTS seeks to train students around the world in theology. We hope that this attempt will advance the goal of MINTS.

We pray that this course will equip students to present the gospel of Christ biblically. Let every thought be made captive to Him (2 Corinthians 10:5)!

## COURSE INTRODUCTION

### JUSTIFICATION

An introduction to the biblical doctrine of man will help students understand more clearly the moral and spiritual problem mankind faces. It will also help us understand the humanity of Christ and the gospel of Christ. Such instruction will assist students in declaring the gospel both privately and publicly.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Students will learn the basic elements of the biblical doctrine of man.
2. Students will learn about the humanity of Christ.
3. Students will be encouraged to apply God's word to the human problem of sin.

### REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance** (15%)  
Students will attend class.
2. **Class Homework** (15%)  
Students will complete the home work of each lesson.
3. **Reading** (30%)  
Students will read 300 pages for BA or 500 pages for MA studies and write a review of the reading. Students must read from selected portions of Scripture and from assigned academic writings. A written report of one page per 100 pages read will be presented to the class.
  - a. Scripture Reading: 40 pages from the following: Genesis 1-11; 1 & 2 Kings, Romans 1-3. (Read to learn to learn how thoroughly sin has affected man.)
  - b. Academic Reading: Remaining pages from the following:
    - 1) J. Gresham Machen, *The Christian View of Man* (Carlisle, The Banner of Truth Trust, 1937). 233 pages. (Read to learn basic doctrines about God and man.)
    - 2) J. Gresham Machen, "Introduction," *What is Faith?* (Carlisle: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1937). 33 pages. (Read to learn how sin effects intellectual and academic thought.)
    - 3) John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book I. 18 July 2008 <http://www.ccel.org/download.html?url=/ccel/calvin/institutes.txt>. 200 pages. (Read to learn about our knowledge of God and man.)
4. **Project** (20%)  
The project provides the student an opportunity to use the knowledge received in this course in some form of ministry. Students may, as examples, decide: to teach members of the church, to witness to non-Christians concerning the humanity of Christ, or to show how the opinions





## LESSON ONE

### CREATED WITH IMPORTANCE

#### INTRODUCTION

This course will study important teachings from the Bible about the human race. Certainly we cannot explore everything in the Bible about mankind. So we want to examine the most important teachings from the Bible about man.

We may think that we need to know about God more than about man. Yet understanding the Bible's teachings about man is equally important. These teachings explain our relationship to God. They explain why Christ came to earth and what He did as the Savior of sinners. Biblical knowledge about man teaches us about God and how we must deal with Him.

Before we begin, we need to answer an important question: Why is the human race important? If human beings are the most important creatures on earth, we need to explain the reasons. Knowing the reasons will help us teach the Bible to other people.

Some people will say that we do not need to waste time on this. They say that everyone knows that people are important. So they think we do not need to study this subject. Yet, every religion—including every way of life—tries to explain the value of man in some way. These explanations affect what religions say about human life. So we must study the Bible to find out why God says that mankind is important.

Some people think human life is no more important than other life. They say we think we are important only because we are trying to protect ourselves. They study life on earth and say that human life is like animal life. They say animals are just as important as human beings are. They believe mankind gives itself too much importance.

Other people study astronomy. They measure how large the stars are and how far the stars are from the earth. They say that the stars show that we are very small. They believe we are too small to be very important. People have many reasons for thinking that the human race is no more important than other things.

But the Bible teaches that God created mankind with great significance. This lesson will present some reasons. We will study man's importance in three steps. First, we will see that Western culture has reduced our understanding of man's importance. Each student should understand this. Western culture continues to influence people around the world. It influences people in every country. So our summary of what Western culture says about man will help most people.

Second, we will look at some of the religions in the times of the Old Testament. We will also present the general beliefs of these religions about God. Their beliefs about God shaped their beliefs about mankind.

Finally, we will learn what Psalm 8 says about mankind's importance.

## A. MAN'S IMPORTANCE IN WESTERN CULTURE

### 1. When Mankind Seemed Important

It is difficult to say when modern Western culture began. But we can say that the Middle Ages began near the year AD 500 and ended near AD 1500. The church of Rome had the greatest influence in Europe during those years.

In those years the church told people what to believe about God and mankind. Since the church influenced people's opinions, many people believed that God created man.

People also believed that the sun was a ball of fire which went around the earth each day. So they thought that mankind lived in the center of the universe. Man thought that

the earth is his home. And on that earth his position is that of the sovereign, the subduer, the dominion-haver. He will therefore never outgrow the delineation the Bible gives of him. The earth is the center of man's universe and on that earth man is the director. He was created to be that way.<sup>1</sup>

This view thought man had great importance. People believed that man gave meaning to the whole creation.

### 2. Changes in Western Thought

But new discoveries gave people new knowledge. The Copernican revolution, named after the astronomer Copernicus (1473-1543), gave Western culture a new view of the universe. Astronomers such as Kepler, Galileo, and Newton proved that the earth is not the center of the universe. They taught that the skies contain many galaxies of stars; the stars cannot be counted. Astronomers also showed that there are planets and other bodies in space; many are much larger than the earth. Due to these discoveries man appeared to be only "fine dust" or as "the drop to the bucket."<sup>2</sup>

New theories also encouraged people to think less of mankind. Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656) had calculated from the Bible that the earth is about ten thousand years old. But people began to believe that the universe is much older. Some believed that the world never had a beginning. They said that the material world is eternal. These ideas did not come from the Bible. But they made people think that the human race is unimportant compared to an everlasting universe.

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<sup>1</sup> Leonard Verduin, *Somewhat less than God: The Biblical View of Man* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970) 10.

<sup>2</sup> Verduin 10.

New philosophies also made people think man has no importance. One of these philosophies is called Materialism. Materialism believes that everything is made of matter.<sup>3</sup> Matter includes anything physical which can be seen, felt, or measured. Material things include all plants, water, the air, and all animals. Materialism believes that nothing is spiritual. So Materialism says there is no spiritual God. Materialism also believes that a human being consists only of the chemicals in his body. It says that man has only a body but not a soul. It teaches that we were not made to know God or enjoy Him. It says that we must pursue only one purpose in life: to enjoy as many material things as possible.

These changes in Western culture actually confused people. On the one hand, they encouraged people to believe that man is less important. Their new beliefs about the world said that man is only an animal. On the other hand, people also believed that man is all-important. Many thought more about the creation than about the Creator. They believed that man's opinion has far greater importance than God's Word. As human opinions changed, God showed great patience towards the human race.

### 3. Summary

The church in Europe once convinced people that man is important. God created mankind to know God and serve Him. But the church's influence weakened. So people's opinions changed. They replaced their thoughts about God with their philosophy. They said science shows that we are too small to be important. They believed philosophies which said that we are merely physical things. When people replaced God, they also reduced man.

#### B. MAN'S IMPORTANCE IN IDOL-WORSHIPPING RELIGIONS

All of Israel's neighbors in the Old Testament worshipped idols. The Egyptians, Philistines, Hittites, and Amorites worshipped their own gods with their idols. Each nation trusted that its gods would keep it safe. Everyone believed that every nation should have its own gods.

But the religions of the various nations were very similar. People believed that the gods somehow lived in their idols.<sup>4</sup> People thought they contacted their gods when they worshipped their idols. They worshipped their gods by giving sacrifices to the idols. All religions believed that the gods noticed the sacrifices and remembered who gave them.

But the idol-worshipper believed more. He believed that the gods got hungry; they could not feed themselves. He believed that the gods needed his sacrifices for food.

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<sup>3</sup> Anthony A. Hoekema, *Created in God's Image* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986) 3.

<sup>4</sup> Douglas Stewart, "Malachi," *The Minor Prophets*, ed. Thomas Edward McComiskey, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998) 1333.

The gods would help him if he fed them. An idol-worshipper in any nation around Israel believed that his sacrifices fed the gods.

People believed that the gods depended on man in other ways too. They believed that mankind was created to help the gods. People helped the gods by digging ditches for water to flow to the fields. They said the gods needed the food which man planted in the field. People served the gods by helping in these ways.

The Egyptian religion was a little different from this. Their idol was Pharaoh, their ruler. Egyptians thought Pharaoh connected them to their gods. So the Egyptians gave many gifts to Pharaoh and served him. This let Pharaoh care for and feed the gods. Since Pharaoh fed the gods, the gods gave the people sunshine, air, and river water.<sup>5</sup>

Everyone in those days believed that every nation should have its own gods. But idol-worshippers could not decide who had complete control. They were afraid of the gods because the gods could be angry with them. Yet idol-worshippers believed that men had power to feed the gods. This power of man gave him much control over the gods. Therefore, false religions of Old Testament Israel's neighbors taught both that man was weak and that man was important.

So far we have seen how Western culture has believed that man is very small. We have also seen how idol-worshippers believe that man is very great. But how important is mankind? Why do we have real value?

### C. MAN'S IMPORTANCE IN PSALM 8

Psalm 8 tells us how God shows us His glory. In the beginning it says, "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" God has somehow placed His glory in the earth. This does not mean that earth is God. Rather, it means that God created the world to show His glory.

The world which God made shows God's great power and wisdom. We understand how the things we make show our skill. Think of a rug or basket which someone made very well. It shows that the person who made it has very good skill. So you see the ability of a person when you look at what the person made. We also see God's great skill when we look at what He has made. His creatures show His glory.

Psalm 8 tells us how God shows His glory in the whole creation and in man.

#### 1. The Creation Declares God's Glory

Psalm 8 says, "You have set your glory above the heavens." "Heavens" refers to everything that is above us. It includes the clouds and the sky. Genesis 1:8 uses the same word. Some Bible translations of Genesis 1:8 call it the "firmament."

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<sup>5</sup> Noel Weeks, email to author, 16 November 2007.

Psalm 8:1 means that the skies praise the glory of God. We can think about many people singing praise to God in a church. Now imagine the sky singing its songs to God. The sky uses no words as we do when we sing. Yet, the sky seems to sing praise to God. The sky always declares the glory of God in every place.

Newborn babies also declare God's glory. They cannot use words to praise God. Yet the body of a new baby amazes us. The child's eyes, hands, and feet surprise us whenever we look at them. They are usually formed perfectly. Psalm 139:14 says that God "fearfully and wonderfully made us." So many things can go wrong when a baby is born. But usually a newborn baby has a perfect body. This is amazing. We praise God when we see this.

We can also see God's glory when we look at plants. We plant seeds which came from a flower. The seeds send small roots down into the soil and shoots into the air. A new plant grows to become like the parent plant. This also amazes us and shows us God's glory.

A Christian understands that we look everyday at the things God has made. Everything amazes us. Everything reminds us that God created it. And everything lets us see God's glory in some way.

## 2. Mankind Declares God's Glory

In verse three Psalm 8 begins to give attention to man. Verse 4 asks, "What is man that you are mindful of him?" This question asks about mankind, the most amazing creature which God made. God made animals and plants that are bigger than man. Some animals in the ocean are very large. Many whales are longer than 20 meters. Some trees stand 100 meters tall. Yet, God has created man to be more amazing than these very large creatures.

### a. Created to Know God

We are amazing because we can know God. Human beings can pray to God. An animal or plant cannot pray to God. God also talked to Adam after God created him. God told Adam that he could eat the fruit of all the trees in the garden except one (Genesis 2:15-17). He spoke to Adam, and Adam understood. So Adam could be God's friend. This amazes us. God is so great. Yet we were created to talk with Him and know Him.

Psalm 8 continues. It says, "You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings." Some Bibles say that God made man to be a little lower than God. This teaches that we were made to rule the world, the animals, and the plants.

### b. Created to Rule the Earth

Next the Psalm shows us some of the many things that people rule. We rule over flocks and herds, over field animals, over birds and fish, and over everything else that is on the

earth. It says “You put everything under his feet” (:6). This means that God placed everything under man’s rule. God created mankind to be the ruler of everything in the world.

We can see many ways that mankind rules over the world. We rule over everything when we study everything. Adam named the living creatures (Genesis 2:19). We believe he studied the animals to learn something about each one. The name he gave showed what he had learned about each animal. God made us to want to learn about the animals.

People also rule other parts of the world. We try to learn the best time to plant seeds. Then we plant them in the right season. People cut down trees to harvest the wood. People find new ways to build their houses. God made us to want more knowledge about everything. We gain more knowledge as we study everything that God made.

We also rule everything by using what God made to improve our lives. People have learned about electricity and how to use it so light bulbs give light. People discovered how to make cell phones and televisions. People have learned new ways to build their homes and to travel from place to place. We make roads which go across fields and through mountains. Each time we use a new way to get work done, we show that we are ruling the things which God placed in the world.

Animals cannot do these things. A bird builds its nest the way birds did thousands of years ago. Birds can learn a little about making nests. But birds cannot study the world to see if there are better things to use. We can say the same things about other animals. And certainly a tree does not prepare a new place where it can grow. Animals and plants show God’s glory because they are wonderful creatures. But mankind is far more amazing. We can do what no other creature can do. We declare God’s glory in ways no other creature can.

Even the angels cannot do what man can. Angels are like man in some ways. They can talk to God and understand what God tells them. They praise God in heaven. In Isaiah 6:3 the angels sing, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.” Angels are spirits who serve God and God’s children. They enjoy God’s friendship. But angels do not build new kinds of houses, train animals, or plant crops. They can do amazing things. But they do not rule God’s creatures on earth.

Only human beings have many of the skills they use. God appointed us to rule. He also created us able to rule. And God made us able to worship Him in heaven while we rule the earth.

It is as Psalm 8 says, “O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!”

### 3. Summary: Psalm 8 and Worldly Views

So far this lesson has shown how people think that man is less important than he really is. Or they think he is more important than he really is. Psalm 8 gives us the right understanding of man.

We began this lesson by summarizing non-Christian thoughts about man's importance. We learned how Western culture began to think that man is small. People learned that the world is very large. They learned that we do not live in the center of the universe. They compared human beings to the things around us. So they compared us to things that are bigger than we are. They said that the things which are bigger and last longer are more important than we are.

This teaching makes man too small. Many great thinkers did not believe in God. So they did not understand that God appointed man to rule. But God created us with importance. He gave us skill to use electricity, oil, and sunlight to give us the energy we use. But many people do not believe that God has made us this way. We believe man is important because God made us to have importance.

We also learned about the religions which people followed in Old Testament times. They taught that people are very important, people feed the gods. Therefore, the great gods depend on man.

But this makes man too important. Idol-worshippers did not worship the true God. The true God does not depend on man. He has complete power over everything. He made mankind very important. But He did not make us as important as He is.

So we must learn the truth about man from the Bible. Psalm 8 shows that God created mankind. He appointed us to rule the world. He made us able to rule. But he also made us less than God. We believe this because God has told us these things in His Word.

#### D. MAN'S IMPORTANCE AND JESUS CHRIST

##### 1. The Present Rule of Christ

When Jesus Christ came, He showed man's importance. Let us remember that Christ came to save mankind. He did not die for the sins of dogs and trees. Dogs and trees do not sin. But he came to pay for the sins of men and women. We are able to sin, and we have sinned. Jesus came to return us to God, because we are important to God.

We can see that we are important when we look at the importance of our sin. Our sin makes us God's enemies. Adam's sin made him an enemy of God. So, Adam hid from God when God walked through the garden after the first sin (Genesis 3:9, 10). Adam's children are also born as God's enemies. Ephesians 2:3 says that men and women without Christ are "by nature objects of wrath." God's wrath is against our sins.

So Romans 5:10 says that “when we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son.” Our sin is so important that God decided to punish all sin.

## 2 The Future Rule of Christians

But Christ came to make us as God’s friends. Romans 5:10 says that Christ “reconciled” us to God. This means He came to remove what makes us God’s enemies. Then we are God’s friends.

Jesus showed that his disciples are God’s friends. He said,  
 Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.  
 You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. John 15:13-15

Christ also showed man’s importance when He came to do what Psalm 8 says man should do. Psalm 8 says that God placed everything under man’s feet (Psalm 8:6). But man cannot rule the world perfectly. He has become sinful. So Christ came. He died for sinners and rose again. Then God gave Him great honor again. God put everything under Christ’s feet (Hebrews 2:6-9). Today everything is “subject to him”—under His authority. Christ rules everything today much more than Adam did. Christ can do this because He is God. But He can also do this because He is man.

Christ’s rule gives comfort and happiness to every Christian. He rules everything when Christians suffer. He rules in every place where enemies capture Christians. Christ will never lose suffering Christians who follow Him. Jesus said, “No one can snatch them out of my hand” (John 10:28b).

We should say one thing more. Jesus will come back. He will raise from the dead everyone who trusted in Him. He will also make us kings. We will rule over everything as we were created to. 2 Timothy 2:12 says, “If we endure, we will also reign with him.” But our future rule will be greater than the rule Adam had. It will give God even more glory. Romans 5:17 also teaches that Christ saved us to rule again. It says,

If, by the trespass of the one man [Adam], death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.”

This means that eternal life will include our reigning because of Jesus Christ.

The book of Revelation also teaches that Christians will rule in glory. Jesus said to the church of Laodicea, “To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne” (Revelation 3:21). Revelation also says near the end of the book, “They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.”

This shows that Christ will restore to mankind the good rule which Adam lost when he sinned. The heavens and all that God made declare God's glory already. Christians will continue to show His glory when we reign with Christ.

## CONCLUSION

We began by asking whether men and women are important. We learned that Western culture believes that many things are bigger and last longer than people. Therefore, they do not think man is very important. We learned that idol-worshippers during Old Testament times believed that people fed the gods when they gave sacrifices to their idols. So they said that man is so important that the gods depend on man. But Psalm 8 teaches our importance compared to the true God. He created us to know Him and to rule the earth. Yet God is God, and we are not. Christ came to save men and women. This shows that God made us with importance which animals and plants do not have.

## QUESTIONS

1. What did you learn from this chapter that you did not know before?
2. What did the church during the Middle Ages teach about man?
3. Describe some of the new influences after the Middle Ages which gave people a different understanding of man's importance.
4. Why did idol worshippers believe that mankind is important?
5. Read Psalm 8 and list that things that give God glory.
6. How does mankind rule the earth?
7. In what ways does Psalm 8 teach a view of man which is different from what other views teach?
8. How does Christ's first coming show that man is important?
9. How will the Christian's future show that man is important?
10. How does the Christian's future restore to man what Adam lost?



## LESSON TWO

### BODY AND SOUL

#### INTRODUCTION

Modern personality theories try to explain the human personality by splitting it into separate parts. Often they say that these parts of a man's personality struggle against each other. For example, Sigmund Freud said that the human personality consists of the Id, Ego, and Superego. These parts represent the sometime-conflicting interests of pleasure, reality, and conscience.<sup>6</sup> Also, some Christians say a basic conflict in a person arises from the fact that a person consists of body and spirit. They believe that body and spirit continually oppose each other. So, many believe that an inner conflict always troubles people.

But we should not believe that God created mankind to experience continual conflict.

One of the most important aspects of the Christian view of man is that we must see him in his unity, as a whole person. Human beings have often been thought of as consisting of distinct and sometimes separable "parts," which are then abstracted from the whole. So, in Christian circles, man has been thought of as consisting either of "body" and "soul," or of "body," "soul," and "spirit." Both secular scientists and Christian theologians, however, are increasingly recognizing that such an understanding of human beings is wrong, and that man must be seen in his unity.<sup>7</sup>

We do not mean that mankind does not have separate aspects or features. A human being is physical, and a human being is spiritual. But we disagree with those views which try to separate the physical from the spiritual feature of man and claim that these two features continually oppose each other.

This lesson aims to show from Scripture the unity of our human nature. We also hope to demonstrate from Scripture that mankind has two features, one physical and another spiritual. God made us to be physical-spiritual unities. Sometimes theologians teach this by calling man is a "Psychosomatic [soul-body] Unity."<sup>8</sup>

We will look also at an understanding of man which is called trichotomy. This view teaches that man possesses three distinct parts: body, soul, and spirit. We will learn the differences which trichotomists say exist between soul and spirit. We will ask whether trichotomy is biblical, mistaken, or even dangerous.

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<sup>6</sup> Calvin S. Hall and Gardner Lindzey, *Theories of Personality*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1970) 32-5.

<sup>7</sup> Hoekema 203.

<sup>8</sup> Hoekema 217.

Finally we will explore how the biblical view of man can help us understand the human nature of Christ when He became man.

We begin by looking at the Bible's teaching concerning man's body and soul.

#### A. MAN'S SOUL-BODY UNITY

##### 1. Created Very Good

The Bible clearly teaches that God created everything. When God created everything, including the human race, He gave everything its beginning. Before God created the heavens and the earth, only God existed. "By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible" (Hebrews 11:3).

God created everything, including the human race, to be good. When the creation was finished, God "saw all that He had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). So every part of man was also very good. Therefore, as we learn about man's body and soul, we believe that both man's body and soul were created good.

God also made Adam and Eve different from other creatures. He gave them a job to do in the world. No other creatures—not even the angels—have the job which God gave mankind. We must fulfill our task because God gave it to us. We will learn more about this task when we learn about the image of God in Lesson Three. But we should say something now about this task. The job which God gave the human race included ruling the earth and loving God. Other creatures in the world, such as trees and dogs, cannot love God. The angels, who were created to love God, do not belong to the world. They do not rule the world as people do. Only mankind belongs to the world and can love God. The way God made us should convince us that God made us "very good."

##### 2. Man's Physical Characteristic

The Bible teaches that God created our bodies. Genesis 2:7 says, "The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground." This teaches that men and women have bodies. The "dust" God used to make us refers to the matter which God placed in the earth. God made our bodies from materials that we can find in the earth. Every chemical which God put in our bodies can be found somewhere else in the world. Our bodies have no elements which belong only to our bodies. Man is unique, yet man's body is made of ordinary substances.

The Bible reminds us that our bodies were made from materials of the ground when it describes human death. When God first cursed mankind with death, He said, "you [will] return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return" (Genesis 3:19). When God takes a person's life away, the body returns to the dust which God used when He made it.

Other parts of Scripture also emphasize this truth. Part of Psalm 90 describes death. It says in a prayer, “You turn men back to dust, saying ‘Return to dust, O sons of men’” (Psalm 90:3). Psalm 104 describes death this way: “When you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust” (Psalm 104:29). Psalm 146 says, “When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing” (Psalm 146:4). Elihu told Job how people die. He said, “If it were his [God’s] intention and he withdrew his spirit and breath, all mankind would perish together and man would return to the dust” (Job 34:15). Ecclesiastes also teaches that human death takes place when “the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7). These are some of the places where the Bible teaches us about death. When we die, our bodies again become the materials that we can find in the ground.

### 3. Man’s Spiritual Characteristic

Genesis 2:7 says, “The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” This shows us that a human being has more than a body. We also have a spiritual feature which our bodies need to live.

Other parts of the Bible also teach that we have this second feature. The book of James says, “As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead” (James 3:26). Ecclesiastes describes human death this way: “The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7). We can recognize a person’s body when he dies. Yet we can also see that the spiritual aspect of the person is gone.

The Bible tells us that this second basic feature of the human personality does not come to an end when a person dies. We call this feature the person’s soul or spirit. The Apostle Paul referred to his spirit when he wrote,

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith. Philippians 1:21-25.

Paul wrote that, at his death, he “will be with Christ.” His body will be in the ground, yet his spirit will be with Jesus. Paul will continue to live after his body is dead.

Jesus mentioned the spirit of man several times. In one place He said, “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28). This means that people who try to destroy our bodies cannot destroy our spirits. So He shows us that the body and spirit differ in some ways. Jesus also said to his disciples, “The spirit is willing, but the body is weak” (Matthew 26:41). He said this to His disciples in the Garden of

Gethsemane. They wanted to stay awake while Jesus suffered, but they were too weak. Jesus indirectly mentioned the two features of the human nature.

Although ‘flesh’ may not be taken as synonymous with ‘body’, yet there is reflection upon the weakness associated with the physical in contrast with the willingness of the spirit as non-physical.<sup>9</sup>

These sayings of Jesus support our conclusion from other Scriptures that human nature includes both body and spirit.

We should not deny that God gave each human being these two features because we cannot understand them completely. The Bible teaches that God made us this way. So we should accept this teaching. As one author has said:

No doubt the relation between the mind and the brain is a great mystery. Mental processes and physical processes seem to be so utterly disparate [unlike each other]. But there are many mysterious things which yet must be accepted as facts. So with great confidence we can accept the teaching of the bible to the effect that man has a body and also has a soul, and that neither soul nor body is a mere semblance [appearance] but that both do most truly exist.<sup>10</sup>

#### 4. Man’s Unity

We must now see from Scripture that God created the human body and soul to form one united person. We need both features to be completely human. A man is not merely a body who has a soul. He is not a soul who has a body. A man is a body-soul unity.

We learn this when we read the Bible. Genesis 2:7 says, “The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.”

The Hebrew word for “being” or “soul” is *Nephesh*. Bible versions translate this word at the end of the verse in two ways. The NIV translates the last two words to read “living being.” The ESV follows the same path when it reads “living creature.” But older translations, such as the ASV (1901) and the KJV, read, “man became a living soul.”

We choose to accept the translation which reads, “And the man became a living being.” We have several reasons for preferring this translation.

First, in the early chapters of Genesis the word *Nephesh* refers to living creatures of all kinds. For example, Genesis 1:20 uses the word to refer to living animals. It says, “And God said, “Let the water teem with living *creatures*.” (Italics in this section show which word is the translation of *Nephesh*.) The Hebrew words which are translated,

<sup>9</sup> John Murray, *Collected Writings of John Murray*, Vol. 2 (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1977) 19.

<sup>10</sup> J. Gresham Machen, *The Christian View of Man*, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1937) 157-8.

“living *creatures*,” also appear in Genesis 2:7. In Genesis 2:7 they are translated “living *being*.” The same words appear in Genesis 1:24; 2:19, where they refer to living animals. So sometimes *Nephesh* means a creature or being.

Second, sometimes *Nephesh* refers to an animal’s or person’s life. We can find examples of this in Genesis 9. God said to Noah, “You must not eat flesh with its *life*, that is its blood” (Genesis 9:4, ESV). “From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the *life* of man” (Genesis 2:5b, ESV). In Genesis 19:17 God’s angels told Lot, “Flee for your *lives*” (NIV). These examples from Genesis show us a second way the word, *Nephesh*, is commonly used throughout the Old Testament. It can refer to a living being’s life.

Third, *Nephesh* frequently means “person”. When this is the meaning, your Bible may translate it “soul.” Genesis also gives examples of this meaning. Genesis 12:5 says that Abraham left Haran because God had told him to leave. So “He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the *people* they had acquired in Haran.” In Genesis 14:21 the king of Sodom says, “Give me the *people* and keep the goods for yourself.” In both instances the NIV translates *Nephesh* as “people.”

*Nephesh*, therefore, can refer to a living being, a creature’s life, or a human person. This summary of some of the meanings of *Nephesh* should show us that Genesis 2:7 does not teach that the man became only a living spirit or soul. Rather it means that the man became a living being. It stresses the unity of the creature which God made when He formed man from the dust of the earth and breathed into him the breath of life.

The Bible stresses a person’s unity in other ways. For example, even when Jesus mentioned soul and body in Matthew 10, He stressed a person’s unity. He said, “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” Jesus shows us that the whole person whom God punishes suffers in hell. “The very emphasis is upon the *entirety* of eternal man suffering over against partial (bodily) suffering now.”<sup>11</sup>

We should learn from this that the Bible refers to two different features: the physical and the spiritual. But these features do not normally work separately from each other. They do not live in conflict with each other. They belong to the united human whole.

John Murray summarizes this teaching by saying:

The biblical doctrine is then to the effect that there are two aspects to man. Using the word ‘entity’ to denote that which has distinctness of being, we can say that there are two entities in man’s constitution, diverse in nature and origin, the one derived from the earth, material, corporeal, phenomenal, divisible, the other derived from a distinct action of God, immaterial and ordinarily not phenomenal, indivisible, and indestructible.

<sup>11</sup> Jay E. Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979) 111.

These two entities form one organic unit without disharmony or conflict. In the integral person they are interdependent. They coact and interact. The modes of coaction and interaction are largely hid from us. The union is intimate and intricate and we are not able to define its mode, nor can we discover the relations they sustain to each other.<sup>12</sup>

## B. THE ISSUE OF TRICHOTOMY

### 1. Its Teaching

The word, trichotomy, literally means “cut” into “three.” In Christian theology, those who are trichotomists, believe that man’s nature has three parts. These parts are the body, soul, and spirit. “This view developed from Plato’s twofold division, body and soul, through Aristotle’s further division of the soul into an (1) animal soul, the breathing, organic aspect of man’s being, and a (2) rational soul, the intellectual aspect.”<sup>13</sup> This teaching of Greek philosophy influenced many early Christian writers. They taught that the invisible part of man includes both the human soul and spirit. The soul is the part of man’s invisible personality which gives life to the body. But the spirit gives man his capacity to relate to God.

From the beginning, trichotomists have believed that Scripture teaches this view of man. They believe that 1 Thessalonians 5:23 teaches the doctrine. It says, “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Trichotomists also claim that Hebrews 4:12 teaches this view. It says, “For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow.” Trichotomists also use 1 Corinthians 2:14,15 to support their view. It can be translated this way: “But a soul-man. . .receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But the ‘Spirit-man’ judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.”<sup>14</sup>

These three Scriptures form the main basis of trichotomy.

### 2. The Bible’s Teaching

We ought to look carefully at the passages which trichotomists use. We must ask whether the verses support the claims of trichotomy.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 lists words—“spirit, soul and body”—which trichotomists say refer to separate parts of man. Sometimes the Bible lists words which may seem to split up man into parts. But each word in the list often refers to the entire person. For

<sup>12</sup> Murray, *Writings*, 21-2.

<sup>13</sup> W. E. Ward, “Trichotomy,” *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984) 1111-2.

<sup>14</sup> Machen 163.

example, in Matthew 22:37 Jesus said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul and with all you mind.” We understand Jesus to refer to a person’s whole being from different perspectives. Jesus is not saying that these are separate parts of a person’s nature. Rather, Jesus teaches that a person must love the Lord with one’s whole being. He emphasizes this by repeating the idea with a variety of words. Similarly, 1 Thessalonians 5:23 promises that God will sanctify you completely. It says, “May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The verse emphasizes one’s whole being by repeating the idea with a variety of words.

Hebrews 4:12 says, “For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” Trichotomists teach that the word “dividing” means splitting apart or separating two distinct things. They say this means soul and spirit are separate parts of man. However, the word refers to taking one thing and cutting it up or analyzing it. It could be translated dividing within, investigating, or analyzing. Whenever this Greek word “dividing” appears in the New Testament:

There is no instance in which the idea of distinguishing or separating *two* things is apparent, and the thought of cleaving [cutting up] within is abundantly attested. How does this idea apply to Hebrews 4:12? The relevance is obvious. The Word penetrates to the inmost parts of our being and like a sharp sword can rend them asunder. The Word cleaves soul, spirit, joints, marrow. (italics added)<sup>15</sup>

In other words, the verse teaches that Scripture penetrates us as united beings and shows us exactly what we are like at the core of our beings. This verse does not say that our souls and spirits are separate.

Also, 1 Corinthians 2:14,15 do not teach trichotomy. Rather the verses teach that there is a great difference between the natural man (the person not changed by the Holy Spirit) and the spiritual man (the person whom the Holy Spirit has taught). Paul asked, “Who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him” (1 Corinthians 2:11). This means that no one knows what you are thinking except you. A man’s own spirit knows his own thoughts. Similarly, none of the rulers of this age have understood the thoughts of God (1 Corinthians 2:8). Only God’s own Spirit knows God’s thoughts. This Spirit teaches men and women who receive Christ what God’s thoughts are. These verses do not show a difference between a man’s soul and spirit. Rather they show a great difference between the Christian, who is not taught by the Holy Spirit (the “spirit-man”), and the person who is not (the “soul-man”).

We conclude, therefore, that Scripture does not teach that the human soul and spirit are separate parts of the human nature. Rather they are two words which refer to the same feature of our human nature. As Hoekema was quoted at the beginning of this lesson, “One of the most important aspects of the Christian view of man is that we must see him in his unity, as a whole person.”

### 3. Its Worst Error

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<sup>15</sup> Murray, *Writings*, 31.

We must still show the primary reason we believe trichotomy is a serious error. We do not agree with trichotomists when they teach that the human personality consists of three separate parts. But we disagree more strongly with how they apply their teaching to the doctrine of human sin.

This main error begins with their teaching about the human spirit. Trichotomists say that a person was right with God when God's Spirit lived in the human spirit. But the Holy Spirit departed from man's spirit when Adam fell into sin. They say a person can relate to God only if the Holy Spirit returns to the human spirit. They mean that the Holy Spirit does not return to a person's body or soul.

Trichotomists also teach that the human spirit is the place where God makes Himself known to a human person. The human spirit receives knowledge about God directly from the Holy Spirit. One does not grow in his faith primarily by learning from Scripture who God is. The ability to reason from Scripture belongs to the soul, not the human spirit. But we relate to God with our spirits. They say the knowledge of God does not always come from Scripture.<sup>16</sup> Understanding God's will comes from the Spirit's presence.

If a person is not born again, trichotomists say, the human spirit is dead because of sin. Then the human soul does not have the strength to control the body and keep it from sin. But, when God gives the new birth, a person's spirit is restored. The Holy Spirit returns to live in the human spirit.

We will explain more fully the Bible's teaching of human sin in Lessons Five and Six. But here we will show that the trichotomist's view of sin contradicts Scripture.

Scripture says that the human spirit actively opposes God. Psalm 78:8 says this about a rebellious generation: their "hearts were not loyal to God, . . . [their] spirits were not faithful to him." A literal translation of Proverbs 14:29 says, "He who is short of spirit exalts folly" (NKJV footnote). The verse refers to a human spirit which is quick to be angry. Proverbs 16:18 says, "Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall." Ecclesiastes 7:8 says, "The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit" (NKJV). Isaiah 29:24 says, "Those who are wayward in spirit will gain understanding; those who complain will accept instruction." Isaiah says that God can change the sinful spirit. He is saying that God can change the sinful human heart.

These verses disprove what trichotomists say about the human spirit which is not saved. The verses teach that the sinful human spirit opposes God. The human spirit is not merely dead. It actively takes part in sin and rebellion against God.

J Gresham Machen, one of the most prominent New Testament scholars in his day, wrote about trichotomy. He wrote,

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<sup>16</sup> Adams, note on 110

We ought to reject very firmly . . . the view that the nature of man is divided by the Bible into body, soul and spirit. The more I reflect about the matter, the more I am convinced that the view of the threefold nature of man is rather a serious error. . . .

It encourages what may be called an ‘empty-room’ view of the presence of God in the redeemed man—the notion that before a man becomes a Christian he is pretty much all right except that there is one room in him that is vacant, the room that ought to be a temple of God. It encourages, in others words, the notion that what happens when a man becomes a Christian is merely that one part of the man’s nature, the “spiritual’ part, a part previously neglected, is developed and given the place which it ought to have in human life.

Such a notion fails to do justice to the teachings of the Bible. The real state of human nature after the fall of man is not that one part of it has been cut off or can attain only a stunted growth, but that all of it is corrupt. The real thing that happens when a man becomes a Christian is not that God is set up and enthroned in a part of man’s nature which before was like an empty room, but that the whole man, corrupt before because of sin, is transformed by the regenerating power of the Spirit of God.<sup>17</sup>

Trichotomy denies the depths of human sin in the whole man. According to Scripture sin involves both body and spirit in rebelling against God. Trichotomy says that sin merely makes the human spirit inactive.

Furthermore, Scripture refers to spirit and soul as the same thing. For example, the Bible refers to man as body and soul (Matthew 6:25; 10:28). It also refers to man as flesh and spirit (1 Corinthians 7:34; 2 Corinthians 7:1). We believe that “flesh and spirit” means “body and soul.” Therefore a man’s spirit is a man’s soul. John 12:27 says that Christ’s soul was troubled. Mark 8:12 literally says His spirit sighed deeply. Both Christ’s soul and spirit experienced personal sorrow. Shouldn’t we conclude that Christ’s soul was His spirit? In Acts 17:16 Paul’s spirit was provoked by the idols of Athens. Second Peter 2:8 says that Lot’s soul was tormented by the wickedness of Sodom. Both the human soul and spirit were troubled the same way. In Acts Christians were of one soul (Acts 4:32). In Philippians they were told to stand fast in one spirit (Philippians 1:27). These examples show that the Bible says that spirit and soul do the same things. They are different words for the same feature of man.

So the Bible refers to the human soul and spirit in the same way. It also teaches that human sin involves the spirit’s energetic rebellion against God. The sinful human spirit does not merely wait to be filled by God’s Spirit. It opposes God energetically. These points of Scripture contradict the teaching of trichotomists.

### C. THE ORIGIN OF THE SOUL

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<sup>17</sup>

Machen 167-7.

We will explore briefly the origin of the soul. Theologians have asked, “Where does the soul come from?” Does it originate, like the body, from both parents? Is there another explanation of the soul’s beginnings? People seek to answer the question in three basic ways.<sup>18</sup>

First, pre-existentialism teaches that God created human souls long before a person’s body is born. Teachers of this view say that a person receives his soul either at conception or at birth. Many who hold this view also believe that the soul went through many experiences before conception. They say these earlier experiences affect the personality after a person is born. Some even say that the soul became sinful before the body was formed. We reject pre-existentialism because it is not based on Scripture.

Traducianism is another view. It teaches that the souls of men result from human reproduction just as the bodies do. It says that a person’s soul comes from both the father and mother’s souls.

Creationism teaches that God creates a new soul when a new person is conceived. We must say that the Bible does not state specifically how or when the soul of an infant begins. But we list these views here so that the student will understand when he reads on of these terms.

#### D. THE BODY AND SOUL OF JESUS CHRIST

The Bible teaches that Christ, the Son of God, became man. This means His humanity included both body and soul. When God the Son became man, He added to Himself our complete human nature—perfect as Adam’s was before he sinned.

Several views of Jesus’ two natures have misunderstood the Bible’s teaching. One very noticeable example of this was the view of Apollinarius, or Apollinaris (died shortly before AD 392). He denied the full humanity of Christ. He taught that Jesus did not have a human mind or soul. He believed that Jesus received a human body from His human mother Mary. But he said that Jesus’ spiritual feature was his divine nature. Jesus did not receive a human soul or spirit.

This view denied that Christ possessed our full humanity. Therefore, the church excommunicated Apollinarius. The church said that if Christ was not completely human then he did not redeem the whole of human nature. The false teaching of Apollinarius implies that Jesus saved only our physical elements.

Also, if Apollinarius was correct, Christ is not our perfect human example. But the book of Hebrews teaches the complete humanity of Christ. For example, Hebrews 2:17 says that Christ “had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.” Hebrews 4:15 also says, “For we do not

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<sup>18</sup> L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1938) 196-201.

have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet without sin. These verses show us that Christ’s humanity was completely like ours except for sin. He was even tempted as we are. Yet He never fell into sin. The teaching of Apollinarius does not agree with this on Jesus’ full humanity.

A teaching called docetism denied the humanity of Christ. It taught that Christ only appeared to be human. Jesus only appeared to suffer as a man. Docetists said that if Christ suffered He was not divine. The apostle John wrote against similar views when he wrote, “This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God” (1 John 4:2). We can see from John that every part of our human nature belonged to the human nature of Christ.

## SUMMARY

We began by stating that God created the human personality to be a unity. Man’s body and soul are two features which God united into one person when He created mankind. We provided the Biblical basis for this teaching.

Then we looked at the teaching of trichotomy. It teaches that human nature consists of three parts. It says, in particular, that man’s soul and spirit are separate parts of man. Furthermore, trichotomists insist that the human spirit is the home of God’s Spirit. Without God’s Spirit the sinner’s spirit is merely inactive. But we showed how Scripture teaches that the human “soul” and “spirit” are different names for the same feature in man. We also showed how trichotomists misrepresent Scripture’s teaching of sin.

After we noted three main views concerning the way the human spirit originated, we mentioned two theologies which denied the full humanity of Christ. We saw that Scripture insists that, as man, Christ came in the flesh. He was fully human—possessing body and soul.

## QUESTIONS

1. What does Genesis mean when it says that God formed man from the dust of the ground?
2. How does the Bible teach that God also gave man a soul?
3. What point does the lesson make when it refers to man’s unity?
4. What does trichotomy teach?
5. How do trichotomists defend their beliefs from the Bible?
6. How should the verses which the trichotomists use be explained?

7. What is the most serious error of trichotomy?
8. Name and explain the different views of the origin of the soul.
9. What are some mistaken views about Jesus' body and soul?
10. What was the most important teaching that you learned from this lesson?

## LESSON THREE

### THE IMAGE OF GOD

#### INTRODUCTION

The Bible teaches that God created mankind in His image. This truth proclaims one of the most important biblical teachings about the human race. It tells us why we are unique. It helps us understand why we can know God though an animal cannot. It explains why people can train animals to do work for them. Animals do not train human beings. Since God made us in His image, we should learn about this teaching to understand why God created us.

The Bible gives great importance to its teaching about God's image. It refers to the teaching repeatedly. Perhaps it presents other teachings more frequently. But the teaching concerning God's image occurs frequently enough so that we know it is an important idea of Scripture. The Bible mentions the subject especially when it tells us about the importance of the human race.

We will explore the teaching about the image of God. We will answer a variety of questions about the subject. For example, we will learn about the meaning of the words which the Bible uses when it refers to the subject. The specific words help us understand the doctrine. We will also see who was made in God's image. We will learn who still has it. Finally, we will learn what the Bible means when it says that Christ is the image of God.

#### A. THE BIBLICAL WORDS FOR GOD'S IMAGE

The Bible first mentions God's image in Genesis 1:26, 27. These verses say,

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:26, 27

These verses give us two words which refer to the way God made man. God made us in His "image" and in His "likeness." We believe these two words refer to the same basic truth.

We learn that the meanings are similar when we read other places where the words are used. Sometimes the Bible uses only one of the two words when it refers to man's creation. For example, Genesis 5:1 says, "When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God." The Hebrew word which is translated "likeness" here is the same word for "likeness" in Genesis 1:26. Genesis 9:6 uses the other word, "image," to show us how God created mankind. It says, "In the image of God has God made man." One

verse says God made man in his likeness; the other says that God made man in His image. We conclude that “image” and “likeness” refer to the same human characteristic.

Two verses later in Genesis 5, Scripture says, “When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth” (Genesis 5:3). We can see that this verse includes both words. One comes after the other to show us that Adam’s son was born in God’s image and likeness. Genesis 5 uses the words in a way that they have the same meaning. “The words ‘image’ and ‘likeness’ are used synonymously and interchangeable, and therefore do not refer to two different things.”<sup>19</sup>

Our point is not that the words always have identical meanings. Sometimes they emphasize slightly different features.

Although these words are used generally as synonyms, we may recognize a slight difference between the two. The Hebrew word for image, *tselem*, is derived from a root that means “to carve” or “to cut.” It could therefore be used to describe a carved likeness of an animal or a person. When it is applied to the creation of man in Genesis 1, the word *tselem* indicates that man images God, that is, is a representation of God. The Hebrew word for likeness, *demuth*, comes from a root that means “to be like.” One could therefore say that the word *demuth* in Genesis 1 indicates that the image is also a likeness, “an image which is like us.” The two words together tell us that man is a representation of God who is like God in certain respects.<sup>20</sup>

This summary tells us that “image” includes the idea of representation. When an artist carves an image of an animal out of wood, he carves a representation of the animal. So, as “image” man represents God on earth. He can represent God because he is like God; he is God’s likeness. So “image” includes the idea of representation; “likeness” stresses similarity.

Geoffrey Bromiley summarizes:

Even when it is said that man is the image of God it is realized that God is the true original and that “image” is here given the sense of “copy.” This statement has three important implications: (1) that man is not to create God in his own image, (2) that he is to learn his true nature from God and not vice versa, and (3) that Christ, who is the express image of God, is the true original of man, so that even apart from the fall and restoration man would still have borne the image of Christ.<sup>21</sup>

We conclude that the two Hebrew words, image and likeness, can be used to stress slightly different ideas. But when the Bible uses them to teach us about the image of God in man, they refer to the same basic thing.

<sup>19</sup> Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 203.

<sup>20</sup> Hoekema 13.

<sup>21</sup> Geoffrey W. Bromiley, “Image of God,” *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 1982.

Sometimes the Greek New Testament uses the words with slightly different associations as well. For example, “Christ is called the image of God (2 Cor. 4:4; Col 1:15), but not the likeness (*homoiosis* or *homoioima*) [of God]. But he is made in the likeness (*homoioima*) of men (Phil. 2:7) and of sinful flesh” (Rom. 8:3).<sup>22</sup> Yet these very subtle differences do not change our conclusion concerning their use in Genesis 1:26 and Genesis 5:3. As God’s “image” Christ represents the triune God to us. He so became man that He is our “likeness.” Therefore He could take our place when He died for man’s sins.

## B. THE MEANING OF THE TEACHING

Genesis 1 tells us how man was created different from God’s other creatures. It says,

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:26, 27

These verses tell us the unique job God gave to His image. The human race must rule over all the animals. God made our bodies from the dust of the earth. We learned in the last lesson that this shows us that man belongs to the earth. But mankind must take charge of the earth. So no other creature on earth is equal to man.

Genesis 2 shows us some ways that Adam began to rule. First, God placed man in the Garden of Eden “to work it and take care of it” (Genesis 2:15). God also told man to eat the food which came from the plants. Adam applied his authority over the plants when he used them for his food. Second, Adam named the animals (Genesis 2:19). In the culture of the Old Testament the name of something reflects what it is like. Adam may have had to study the animals before he named them. So Adam came to know what the animals were like. That helped him to describe them with the names he gave them. Parents name their children because they have authority over their children. Similarly, Adam named the animals because he ruled over them.

We looked at Psalm 8 in lesson one. It tells us about man’s authority over God’s creation. It does not say that man was created in God’s image. Yet its description of man matches this teaching. For example it says that God made man to rule the other creatures on earth.

You made him ruler over the works of your hands; You put everything under his feet: all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. Psalm 8:6-8.

People rule all the animals when they study them and learn how God made them. Man and women rule animals when they use animals for food or train them to serve mankind

<sup>22</sup>

Murray, *Writings*, 34.

by doing work. People even rule animals when they own them as pets. Animals do not rule people in any of these ways. Mankind rules them.

In fact, almost all work we do includes ruling God's creation. People use the knowledge they have gained about how God created metal, electricity, and fuel. With their knowledge they use parts of God's creation to make all kinds of machines. Mechanics use their knowledge about parts of God's creation to repair cars. Teachers learn about God's creation to teach students about it. Farmers learn how God made the soil and plants so they can grow the best crops possible. We all contribute to mankind's rule over the earth. We can call this general activity human culture. The different foods we eat, the different music we play, and the different ways we farm—all cultural activities—demonstrate the different ways people rule over God's creation.

Other things have been written about the meaning of the image of God. We will explain some of them in the next part of this lesson. But sometimes people say the image of God includes ideas which we do not accept.

For example, one new idea says that the image of God in man includes the fact that mankind was created male and female. They say the image of God involves the idea that people live in community. They say they find this in Genesis 1:27. It says,

So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

Yet, we believe that God's image does not refer to the fact that mankind was created to be male and female. We believe that this does not make mankind unique. Animals and even plants show female and male characteristics. Furthermore, we believe that the verse teaches that both men and women were created in God's image. God gave both men and women the job of ruling over God's creation.

So God gave mankind the task of ruling the earth. God placed the human race on the earth so that we would do this. God gave mankind the abilities to do this. God also gave us the ability to do this for God's glory. We will learn about this last part in the next section of this lesson.

### C. GOD'S IMAGE IN THE BROADER AND NARROWER SENSE

Sometimes theologians write about the image of God in a broader sense and a narrower sense. All people remain in God's image in the broader sense. People continue to reflect God's likeness even though they rebel against God and live very sinfully. This is called God's image in the broader sense. But Christ gives Christians a sense of God's image which mankind lost when people became sinful. Theologians call this part of God's image, which Christ restored, God's image in the narrower sense. We will learn a little about each sense.

#### 1. God's Image in the Broader Sense

All human beings still exist as God's image. We learn this when the Bible describes everyone as being made in God's image. This is true of people who love God and people who do not.

For example, Genesis 9:6 says, "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man." God said this after the great flood. He declared that He would protect human life. He commanded human government take the lives of murderers. We believe this verse teaches that the capital punishment of murderers should be carried out. When government punishes people who have done wrong, it makes people afraid of trying to do wrong.

Genesis 9:6 is important for this lesson. It teaches that all people still exist as God's image. It gives the reason why murder is a very wicked crime. The person who was killed was created in God's image. The verse does not say that only the murder of a Christian is wicked. God referred to all murder. Whoever murders another human being kills someone made in God's image. This truth did not change when Adam sinned. Sinners today live as God's image.

James 3 teaches the same truth about mankind. It says that we should not curse other people. It says, "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be" (James 3:9-10). It is important that James reminds us that men were made in God's likeness. In some sense each person represents God. Therefore we contradict ourselves when we praise God and curse God's image or representative. James bases this teaching on the truth that men continue to be God's image.

Theologians struggle to understand the ways all men continue to be in God's image. They find it difficult to summarize the ways all people represent God and are like Him. But we can suggest some ways. First, God created all men, the whole human race, to rule the earth. Our rule of the plants and animals resembles God's rule over the entire universe. All scientists share in the pursuit of seeking more knowledge about God's creation. They share in ruling through studying the earth. Second, human beings were created to know God, to pray to Him, to respond to God, and to live for His glory. Animals and plants cannot do this. So we resemble God because we can talk to Him and think about Him just as God can talk to Himself and think about Himself.

This second way, that we can know God, does not mean that everyone tries to learn more about God. Many people try to stay far away from God. People try to replace God. They worship idols instead of the true God. So we do not claim that everyone seeks the true God. Yet God first created the whole human race with the ability to know God and pray to Him. And that ability continues.

Romans 1 shows this. It says that God's creation clearly reveals who God is. And people somehow understand that God shows His glory through the things He has

made. Everyone also responds to God. Many turn away from God and go after other things. They treat other things as their god. It says,

what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles (Romans 1:19-23).

This says that many people resist the true God. Yet they continue to be religious. If they avoid true religion, they create their own religions. Everyone wants to follow a religion, to worship a god. This demonstrates that all men continue to be made in God's image. Everyone has the ability to think about God. Everyone responds to God. Everyone wants a god.

So far we have summarized God's image in the broader sense. It is broad because all people still have it. Everyone continues to possess the ability to develop some part of God's creation for God's glory. Everyone responds to God's revelation of Himself in creation.

## 2. God's Image in the Narrower Sense

Many people no longer have a second sense of God's image. The whole human race lost God's image in this sense when Adam fell into sin. Bromiley summarizes this point of the doctrine of the image of God.

Man is still the lord of creation and in this formal sense he represents God, the ultimate Lord. But now man is to a very large degree a selfish tyrant who rules over nature for his own ends, and in this sense he is the very opposite of God. . . . Man is basically paradoxical. He cannot cease to be man. Hence he cannot cease to be made in the image of God. But the actual content of his life is at odds with its underlying reality. God is reflected only in the structure, not in the material content of his being.<sup>23</sup>

But Christ restores God's image to people in this narrow sense back when He saves them. We learn about this sense in a couple places where the New Testament says that Christ is recreating Christians in God's image.

For example, Colossians 2:10 says that the Christian's new self (new man) "is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator." This teaches that God renews His image in those whom Christ saves. It also teaches that this image or likeness of God

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<sup>23</sup> Bromiley, "Image," 804.

includes knowledge. We believe this is true knowledge of the true God. Christ gives Christians knowledge which Adam lost when he sinned.

Ephesians 4:24 teaches something similar. It says that the new self is “created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.” This verse also describes the way Christ restores Christians to God’s image or likeness. It says that this image includes righteousness and holiness.

Romans 8:29 makes the same point. It says, “For those whom God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son.” When God planned the Christian’s salvation in Christ, He included this goal. He decided that Christ would die for sinners as the sacrifice for their sins. He also decided to restore them to His image, which is the likeness of Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:18 says, “As we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” This also shows that Christ transforms those who trust in Him. He changes Christians to become His likeness.

We should try to understand these verses together. They help us to understand the Bible’s teaching of the image of God. We learned already that mankind continues to have the capability to know God. But sinful mankind does not want to know God. Now we learn that God gives Christians the knowledge which we were created to know. Christ also gives Christians the holiness and righteousness which He gave Adam. God’s image in the broader sense was never lost. But sin destroyed God’s image in the narrower sense. So Christ restores God’s image in the narrower sense to those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ.

### 3. Summary of the Broader and Narrower Senses

We will try to summarize what we mean by the broader and narrower senses of God’s image. God created Adam with the ability to live in the world for His glory. In the beginning Adam took care of the plants and animals. At the same time he thought about God, prayed to God and loved God. Adam actually lived for God’s glory. God created Adam to be a religious creature. Adam fully lived the way God created him to live. He lived in the broader and narrower sense of God’s image.

After Adam sinned, he continued to live in the world and to manage it. He continued to be a religious creature. These abilities belong to God’s image in the broader sense. Everyone still has these abilities. But Adam stopped trying to live for God’s glory, to pray to God, and to love God. Adam still managed God’s creation. But he did not want to rule the earth for God’s glory. He lost God’s image in the narrower sense.

We could say that God created Adam with the ability of ruling the earth (the broader sense) and with the goal (narrower sense) of ruling it for God’s glory. When

Adam sinned he kept the ability, but he lost the goal. Christ makes those who trust in Him new creatures. He is giving them the goal of ruling the world for God's glory again.

Anthony Hoekema helps us summarize the difference between God's image in the broader sense and the narrower sense. He quotes Herman Bavinck, who said,

By means of their distinction between the image of God in the broader and narrower sense Reformed theologians have most clearly maintained the connection between substance and quality, nature and grace, creation and redemption.<sup>24</sup>

Hoekema also gives his own summary:

The image of God in man must therefore be seen as involving both the structure of man (his gifts, capacities, and endowments) [ability] and the functioning of man (his actions, his relationships to God and to others, and the way he uses his gifts) [goal]. To stress either of these at the expense of the other is to be one-sided. We must see both, but we need to see the structure of man as secondary and his functioning as primary. God has created us in his image so that we may carry out a task, fulfill a mission, pursue a calling [goal]. To enable us to perform that task, God has endowed us with many gifts [abilities]—gifts that reflect something of his greatness and glory. To see man as the image of God is to see both the task and the gifts. But the task is primary; the gifts are secondary. The gifts are the means for fulfilling the task.<sup>25</sup>

#### D. CHRIST AS GOD'S IMAGE

We have already referred to verses which call Christ God's image. For example, Colossians 1:15 calls Him "the image of the invisible God." 2 Corinthians 4:4 says He is "the image of God." Hebrews 1:3 says that Christ is the "exact representation of his being." We need to understand that a little more clearly.

One teaching of these verses concerns Jesus' humanity. Jesus is the perfect man. He is the second Adam (Romans 5:12, 14-18; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22). Yet Jesus is greater than Adam. After Adam was created in God's image, he disobeyed God. Though Jesus came in God's image, He obeyed His Father perfectly. Jesus is the perfect man. This means that Jesus the man was our perfect example.<sup>26</sup>

As God's image Jesus also represents God the Father to us. Again, Hebrews 1:3 says He is the "exact representation" of God's being. Verses which teach this show us that Jesus is more than man. He also represents God to us. Jesus taught this when He said, "I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). Here Jesus tells us that anyone who wants to meet God the Father should go to Christ. Christ came to us on the Father's behalf. He represents God the

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<sup>24</sup> Hoekema 70.

<sup>25</sup> Hoekema 73.

<sup>26</sup> Hoekema 20.

Father to us. So Christ is God's image as we are. But He is also God's image in a far greater way. He is man. He is also God.

The Bible also teaches that God saves sinners with a specific goal (Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthian 3:18; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10). God's goal is that those who are saved will become more and more like God. He intends to make Christians more like Christ, who is the perfect image of God. God the Holy Spirit changes Christians so they will resemble God increasingly. These changes which God creates relate especially to the image of God in the narrower sense. The Holy Spirit works in us so that we will use the abilities we have to serve God, to love God, and to give God glory. The Spirit gives the Christian the goal of ruling the earth for God's glory.

Yet the Christian must also seek to be like God. Ephesians 5:1 says, "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children" (see 1 Corinthians 11:1). We must have the mind that was in Jesus Christ (Philippians 2:5-11). 1 Peter 1:16 reminds us that we must be holy as God is holy. Again, the goal to be like God, like Christ, directs us to the image of God in the narrower sense. Usually Scripture tells us to be more like God by loving Him more, being holy, and serving Him with our whole beings. The Christian tries to imitate God in the work he does each day. Most people who become Christians do not change jobs when believe in Christ. They take part in ruling the earth as they did before. But they change the goals of their lives. They follow a different example. They work hard because they love God and want to give God glory.

Christ's part in God's image amazes us. Christ came as God's image to make those who follow Him God's complete image. He came to save a new humanity to make it what He created mankind to be. The Image of God saved those made in God's image. His goal was to make those He saved God's image entirely.

## SUMMARY

We began this lesson by defining the words "image" and "likeness." The Bible uses both words to teach us how God created mankind. We learn that the words carry the same basic meaning. We also explored what the Bible means when it says that God created mankind in His image. We learned that it teaches that God made mankind to rule the earth and to do it for God's glory.

This led us to the topic of God's image in the broader and narrower sense. There is a sense in which everyone still possesses God's image. This sense includes man's abilities to manage the earth and to discover the new possibilities which God placed in creation. There is also a sense in which everyone lost God's image when Adam sinned. Christ restores this sense of God's image within the people whom He saves. This is the image in the narrower sense. This sense includes the goal of serving Christ in everything that a person does.

Finally we looked at how Christ relates to the image of God. We learned that Christ Himself came as God's image. We also learned that He transforms Christians to

be God's image. We learned that each Christian must also seek to be like God in holiness and righteousness. These changes in the Christian—both those created by God and those which the Christian himself seeks—relate to the image of God in the narrower sense. They remind us that the Gospel does not take Christians out of the world. Rather, it gives Christians a new purpose for living in the world. The new purpose seeks to love God, to know God, and to live for God's glory.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What do "image" and "likeness" mean in Genesis 1?
2. Which of these two words does the New Testament use to describe Christ?
3. What job did God give mankind when He made us in His image?
4. What do theologians mean when they refer to the image of God in the broader sense?
5. Where does the Bible teach about the image of God in the broader sense?
6. What do theologians mean when they refer to the image of God in the narrower sense?
7. Where does the Bible teach about the image of God in the narrower sense?
8. What does it mean that God makes the Christian in Christ's likeness?
9. What teachings are included when we say that Christ is the image of God?
10. What did this lesson teach that you did not know before?

## LESSON FOUR

### THE COVENANT OF WORKS

#### INTRODUCTION

This lesson forms a transition in our course on the doctrine of man. In the first three lessons we learned that God created the human race good. God made mankind morally good, free from all sin. In future lessons we will learn about human sin. We will see that human sin is very complex. It affects every part of man's character. This lesson will explain how morally good man could become sinful. God did not make the first man sinful. But God placed Adam in a situation in the Garden of Eden where he was tested. He gave Adam a command which tested Adam's faithfulness to God. God also gave Adam a promise if Adam obeyed. As we will see, Adam decided to disobey the command of God.

Many theologians call Adam's situation of testing in the Garden of Eden the covenant of works. This lesson will study that situation. First, we will explain briefly why we call this situation the covenant of works. Next, we will see that the covenant belongs to God. He is the Giver and Master. Third, we will explain from Genesis 2 and 3 the important parts of this covenant. Finally we will show how the covenant of works helps us understand what Jesus Christ came to do for sinners.

#### A. THE NAME OF THE SITUATION IN EDEN

We believe that God placed Adam in a covenant with God.

The prophecy of Hosea gives us one reason for saying this. The prophet Hosea accused the people of Israel of great sin. The nation had treated God like an evil wife treats her husband. So God punished the people for their sins. But they still refused to repent. Therefore God promised to punish them more. Then Hosea 6:7 says, "Like Adam, they have broken the covenant—they were unfaithful to me there." We ought to study this verse carefully.

Some theologians believe that Hosea says "Like *men*, they have broken the covenant" [*italics added*] ("Adam" can mean "man."). But this interpretation says that people in general broke the covenant. We do not understand what this interpretation could mean. Furthermore, the word order in the Hebrew does not support this interpretation.<sup>27</sup> We believe the best translation says, "Like Adam."

The whole prophecy of Hosea points to at least three different covenants. First, Hosea's marriage was a covenant. His wife rebelled against it. She committed adultery with other men (Hosea 1, 3). Second, in the time of Moses God placed the nation Israel in

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<sup>27</sup> Herman Bavink, *In the Beginning; Foundations of Creation Theology*, trans. John Vriend, ed. John Bolt (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1999) 199.

a covenant with Him. Israel must be faithful to God like a faithful wife. But Israel left God and worshipped idols instead. So God compared Israel's covenant unfaithfulness to the unfaithfulness of Hosea's wife. Third, God placed Adam in a covenant with Him. Adam also rebelled against God's covenant. So God compares His covenant with Adam to His covenant with Israel. Hosea's wife, Israel, and Adam all belonged to covenants. Each one rebelled against the covenant he was in.

So, Hosea 6:7 teaches something important about Adam. In the Garden of Eden Adam belonged to a covenant with God. We may call Adam's situation a covenant.

Theologians have named Adam's situation in Eden with different names. They have called it, "the covenant of nature, the covenant of life, the Edenic covenant, and the covenant of works."<sup>28</sup> Others call it "The Adamic Administration."<sup>29</sup> Theologians have given other names as well. They may agree about what Adam's situation was before he sinned. Yet they disagree on its name. We chose to call it a *covenant* because Hosea did.

We also call Adam's situation a covenant *of works*. The covenant required Adam to perform a *work* of obedience. This lesson will explain the obedience which Adam should have performed.

## B. THE LORD OF THIS COVENANT

### 1. God Began the Relationship.

The Bible's teaching about covenants includes many truths. We will not discuss all of them. But here we must stress God's authority in the covenant.

God formed the covenant of works to create fellowship with the human race.

[T]he distance between God and his human creatures is so great that man would never have come into the full blessing of fellowship with God unless God, according to his love and goodness, had voluntarily and freely condescended to Adam and his posterity upon condition of perfect and personal obedience (see WCF, 7:1, 2; 19:1; LC *Q/A* 20,22, 91-92; FCH, 7,8,9.<sup>30</sup>)

We will explain parts of this statement.

First, it reminds us how much greater God is than we are. The Bible tells us that God is eternal. He had no beginning and will have no end. Furthermore, God created everything out of nothing. Hebrews says that "by faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was

<sup>28</sup> Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 211.

<sup>29</sup> Murray, *Writings*, 47.

<sup>30</sup> Mid-America Reformed Seminary Faculty, *Doctrinal Testimony Regarding Recent Errors*. (Mid-America Reformed Seminary, 2007) 21. (Abbreviations, in the following order, refer to: Westminster Confession of Faith (1647), Westminster Larger Catechism (1647) and Formula Consensus Helvetica (1675).

visible” (Hebrews 11:3). In other words, God created everything out of nothing. We “create” things by using other things. But God used nothing to create the universe. Hebrews 11 also tells us that God merely spoke, and everything came into being. These are only some of God’s works. We cannot imagine how God does everything. His knowledge, power, size, and wisdom are vastly greater than we are. We are too small to be able to talk to God, to understand God fully, or to know God completely. God seems so high. So God came down to Adam’s level. God used words that Adam could understand. He gave a command that Adam understood. God came to humble man with the covenant of works.

Secondly, the statement talks about God’s kindness. God could have created man and not spoken to Adam. He did not need to begin fellowship with Adam. Yet God is kind and loving. He reached down to man. He began a relationship, a friendship, with Adam.

## 2. God was Free to Set the Terms

We can say more about the idea of the covenant of works:

Man as a creature of God, even as a moral creature created in God’s own image (upright, wise, and just), does not place God under obligation to him. On the contrary, man as creature is always under obligation to God and therefore owes God obedience without any right or promise of reward.<sup>31</sup>

As we will see, in the covenant of works God promised Adam life if he obeyed God. All covenants center around solemn promises. God was not forced to do this. But God was pleased to offer Adam abundant life. He chose to treat man this way.

So God freely placed man in the covenant of works. He placed man in it to begin a friendship with man. He gave commands to man that man must obey. He kindly promised the reward of life if man obeyed Him.

We are ready to learn what the covenant of works included.

## C. ELEMENTS OF THE COVENANT

The covenant of works may still seem unclear to the student. So we will provide some details of the covenant. They will clarify Adam’s situation in the Garden of Eden.

The covenant or works has been described in many places. For example, the Westminster Confession summarizes the covenant of works very well. It says,

God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it; and endued him with power and ability to keep it.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Mid-America Reformed Seminary Faculty 8.

<sup>32</sup> “Westminster Confession of Faith,” Chapter XIX.1, 18 June 2008, <<http://www.bpc.org/resources/>

This definition stresses that Adam represented the entire human race in the covenant of works.

Charles Hodge stresses the condition placed on Adam in the covenant of works. Calling it the “covenant of life,” he wrote,

God having created man after his own image ut [sic] knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience, forbidding him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil upon the pain of death.<sup>33</sup>

We could include other sources to help us define the specific parts of the covenant of works.

However, we will rely heavily on the presentation of Geerhardus Vos in his remarkable book, *Biblical Theology*. Vos gives four “principles” which explain Adam’s situation in Eden.<sup>34</sup>

### 1. The Principle of Life

The principle of life was represented by the tree of life. Genesis 2:9 says, “In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” God placed these trees in the Garden of Eden. He also placed other trees in the garden as well. But God placed these two trees in the garden for a very specific reason. They serve God’s purpose for the garden.

So we should understand God’s purpose for the Garden of Eden.

The garden is “the garden of God,” not in the first instance an abode for man as such, but specifically a place of reception of man into fellowship with God in God’s own dwelling-place. The God-centered character of religion finds its first, but already fundamental expression in this arrangement, cpr. Gen 2:8; Ezek. 28:13 16.<sup>35</sup>

In other words, the Garden of Eden did not primarily provide a home for man. The garden provided God with a home on earth. God is present everywhere. He rules everything from heaven. Yet He also chose to live on earth in the Garden of Eden. God lived in the garden so that man could live there with God. God designed the garden so that man should live in deep fellowship with God there.

The garden showed that God is the source of eternal life. We can see this, for example, in the river that flowed from Eden. Genesis 2:10 says, “A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters.” Later the prophets described a river flowing from God’s holy mountain. Ezekiel 47, for example,

wcf/wcf\_19.html.

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<sup>33</sup> Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 20 May 2008, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/hodge/theology2.iii.vi.html?highlight=covenant,of,works>.

<sup>34</sup> Geerhardus Vos. *Biblical Theology—Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948) 37-51.

<sup>35</sup> Vos 37.

presents a river flowing from God's temple. It formed a deep river. Eventually it flowed into the Dead Sea. Nothing naturally lives in the Dead Sea. But, in the vision, this river changed that sea. It gave the sea life. Fish began to swim in it. Trees grew up near the sea, and they produced food. The river began at God's temple. This shows that God is the source of life.

At one place the river flows next to the tree of life. Revelation 22:1, 2 refers to "the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city." The tree of life stood on both sides of the river (Revelation 22:2). Ezekiel and Revelation both present visions. The things we see in Revelation picture great truths of Christ's grace. Revelation 22:2, 3 shows us the abundant life which the river supplies. It also shows the tree of life in connection to it.

Now we can understand the tree of life. It represents the highest life that God offered man. Again, Revelation opens the key to this meaning. To Christians in the New Testament it says, "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God" (Revelation 2:7). Christ holds this life before us. Christians must continue in the Christian faith.

In Genesis also, the tree of life represents eternal life. Adam sinned at the beginning of the Old Testament. So God removed Adam from the garden. He did not want sinful Adam to eat from the tree of life and live forever. The tree represented eternal friendship with God. It represented the principle of life.

## 2. The Principle of Testing

God placed a second tree in the garden. God called it the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:9). God made Adam able to live for God's glory. But God put the tree in the garden to test Adam. God commanded Adam not to eat the tree's fruit. Would Adam give God glory by obeying God?

The name of the tree tells us about it. The tree was God's test for Adam. The Hebrew in Genesis 2 really calls it the tree of the "knowledge of good-and-evil."<sup>36</sup> It means that Adam will learn about both good and evil. "Man was to attain something he had not before. He was to learn the good in its clear opposition to evil, and the evil in its clear opposition to the good."<sup>37</sup> The tree will teach him the great difference between good and evil. Adam will learn this difference in his choice concerning the fruit of the tree. Maybe Adam will disobey God. Then he will learn that sin—not obedience—brings eternal death. Or maybe Adam will obey God. Then he will learn that obedience—not sin—receives eternal life. God created Adam good. But, would Adam choose what is good? "It was precisely that purpose of the probation [test] to raise man

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<sup>36</sup> Vos 42.

<sup>37</sup> Vos 42.

for a moment from the influence of his own ethical inclination to the point of choosing for the sake of personal attachment of God alone.”<sup>38</sup>

Satan used the name of the tree to deceive Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:4, 5). His temptation contained two parts.<sup>39</sup> First, he told Eve that the tree would work like magic. It could give the knowledge of good and evil. According to Satan the tree was not a test for Adam and Eve. Rather it contained magical powers. It could open Eve’s eyes. She would understand good and evil. Second, Satan accused God of greed. God already knew good and evil. But God did not want Adam to become like Him. So, Satan said, God told Adam not to eat from the tree. Satan did not remind Adam and Eve that the tree tested whether they would obey God. If Satan had, maybe Adam and Eve would not have eaten the fruit of the tree.

We can see that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil presented the principle of testing.

### 3. The Principle of Temptation

Testing and temptation seem similar to us. But they are not alike. Testing provides the opportunity to obey or disobey. Temptation encourages someone to disobey. Both use the same situation.

According to Genesis 3:1 the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals that God had created. So Satan tempted the man and woman through the serpent. The devil used a very clever plan. First, Satan did not directly say that God had lied to man. That question should have alerted Eve. But the serpent merely made Eve doubt God’s command. He asked, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’” (Genesis 3:1)? This suggested that God was not generous. Eve answered that God permitted them to eat of all the trees. But they must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But Satan’s clever approach did affect her. She said God had told them not to eat from the tree *and not to touch it*. She implied that God had been too strict concerning the tree. She seemed eager for Satan’s comments about the tree.

Next, Satan directly contradicted God. He told Eve that the tree would not make her die. The tree would open her eyes. She would know what God knows. Satan’s lies made the fruit attractive to Eve. So she disobeyed God. She ate the forbidden fruit.

We can see how Satan used God’s test. He used the serpent to tempt Adam and Eve.

### 4. The Principle of Death

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<sup>38</sup> Vos 42.

<sup>39</sup> Vos 43.

God had told Adam not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God said, “When you eat of it you will surely die” (Genesis 2:17). Some say that God’s warning was not true. They say that Adam did not die that day.

We must understand the Bible’s view of life and death. Life consists of fellowship with God. Therefore, death involves separation from God. Adam and Eve sinned. Afterwards they wanted to hide from God. They were afraid of Him. They did not enjoy friendship with God. This distance from God is spiritual death. Physical death went with spiritual death. When Adam and Eve sinned, their bodies also became mortal. The tendency to die entered their bodies. Spiritual death caused physical death.

God’s curse on Adam included human death. God had made Adam partially from the ground. Adam would return to the ground. The ground would conquer him. God said,

Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return (Genesis 3:17-19).

Suddenly work frustrated Adam. He experienced this almost instantly. Working with the ground became a struggle for him. Years later, his body weakened. Then he died and was placed in the ground. God gave Adam a sign of spiritual death. Adam died spiritually when he sinned. At the same time Adam’s body was threatened by physical death. Eventually death took his physical life. All human death began the day of the first sin.

These four principles show us Adam’s situation in the Garden of Eden. God’s covenant was His solemn promise. He promised Adam life if he obeyed God. God promised Adam death if he disobeyed God. God created Adam to live in fellowship with Him. God also tested Adam’s desire for that fellowship. Then Satan tempted the man and woman with the clever serpent. They disobeyed God. So God carried out the treats of His solemn promise. He added death to the human condition.

#### D. CHRIST AND THE COVENANT OF WORKS

We will learn in the next lessons about the results of Adam’s sin. We will also learn about Christ’s grace for sinners. But now we will see Christ as the second Adam. Christ was like Adam in several ways.

##### 1. Christ was man.

First, both Adam and Christ were men. We know that Adam was a man. Christ also was a man. As the eternal Son of God, He added to Himself our humanity. Hebrews 2 says that Christ was made like us, his brothers, in every way (Hebrews 2:17). The Bible says that the Word, God the Son, became flesh (John 1:14). Peter preached that Jesus was a

man (Acts 2:22). Jesus Christ was much more than a man. But he was also a man. On this point He just like we are except for sin (Hebrews 4:15). So Adam and Christ shared the same humanity.

## 2. Christ was tested.

Second, both Adam and Jesus were tested. We have shown already that Adam was tested. After Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit sent Jesus into the desert. Jesus was tested there for forty days.

This reminds us of Israel's forty years in the desert. The first spies searched the promised land for forty days. Most of the spies said that Israel could not overcome the enemy. So Israel lived in the desert for the next forty years (Numbers 14:34). These forty years were a time of testing. God gave manna to humble and test Israel "so that in the end it may go well with you" (Deuteronomy 8:16). At Marah God tested the people to see if they would obey Him (Exodus 15:25). At the end of those years Moses said, "Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands" (Deuteronomy 8:2).

Similarly, after forty days in the desert, Jesus faced temptation. Satan approached Jesus with misrepresentations of God's word. He had taken this approach with Eve too. The temptations tested Jesus. But Jesus' sufferings also tested Him. "Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted" (Hebrews 2:18). But Jesus was unlike Adam on one point. Adam sinned when he was tempted. Jesus did not.

## 3. Christ represented many.

Jesus was like Adam in a third way. Both represented many people. God placed Adam under the covenant of works. In that covenant Adam represented the human race. Since Adam fell into sin, the whole human race fell into sin. Christ also represented many who believe on Him. Since Christ obeyed God perfectly, God approves of His followers too.

The Bible often teaches this when it describes both Adam and Christ. It says that Christ was the second Adam. Romans 5:19 says, "For just as through the disobedience of the one man [Adam] the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man [Christ] the many will be made righteous." 1 Corinthians 15:22 says, "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive." Adam represented us, and we all sinned. Christ represented those who trust in Him, and they all are forgiven.

So Christ repaired Adam's damage. Adam was tested and failed for all. Christ was tested and succeeded for all His own. Christ is the new Adam. He was man, tested, and our representative.

CONCLUSION

We have come to the close of a difficult lesson. We studied the covenant of works. We learned, first, why we chose this name, the covenant of works. We follow many theologians who use the same title. We learned, secondly that God is the Lord in this covenant. He decided what it would promise and require. Thirdly, we found different principles in the covenant of works. It was shaped by the promise of life, the test of the tree, the temptation of Satan, and the threat of death. Finally, we learned that Christ was like Adam. Like Adam, Christ was man, was tested, and acted as a representative.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What does the prophecy of Hosea teach about the covenant of works?
2. What other names have been used for the covenant of works?
3. Why is God the Lord of the covenant of works?
4. What purpose did God give to the Garden of Eden?
5. Explain what the two trees in the Garden of Eden represented.
6. What steps did Satan take when he tempted Eve?
7. How did Adam die on the day that he first sinned?
8. In what ways was Christ similar to Adam?
9. In what ways was Christ unlike to Adam?
10. What teaching in this lesson was most difficult for you?



## LESSON FIVE

### THE DOCTRINE OF SIN

#### INTRODUCTION

The covenant of works provided a test of the human race. In it Adam disobeyed God. But Adam did not act only for himself. He represented the entire human race. His sin created terrible results for the whole human race. We need to understand those results in order to understand our problem of sin. Therefore, we will summarize the doctrine, or teaching, of sin.

We could include many topics concerning sin. But we cannot include all that the Bible says. Therefore, we will include only some of the most important points concerning the Bible's teaching concerning sin. First, we will learn some of the results of the first sin. Next we will study the spread of sin. Third, we will uncover some of the characteristics of sin. Fourth, we will try to define the unpardonable sin. And last we will learn about Christ and our sin.

#### A. THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST SIN

Genesis three and four show us some of the results of the first sin. Anthony Hoekema has summarized some of these results very well.<sup>40</sup> We will follow much of his summary.

##### 1. Shame

The first sin gave Adam and Eve a different view of themselves. After God created the man and woman, Genesis 2:25 says, "The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame." But after the first sin Genesis 3:7 says, "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves." Satan had promised that their eyes would be opened (Genesis 3:4). His promise almost told the truth. But they came to see their shame, not greater wisdom.

They were ashamed before God more than before each other. One scholar explains.

Verse 10 tells us about man being called to account by God and there it is evident that their nakedness caused them to be afraid before God. And this must be seen as a pretext on the part of man. The consciousness of his nakedness actually caused him to be afraid before God. Thus it is clear that the awareness of Adam and Eve's nakedness was more than a consciousness of their sexuality. It was definitely a matter of their spiritual, inner sense of guilt before God that caused them to feel naked.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Anthony Hoekema 133-140.

<sup>41</sup> G. Ch.Aalders, *Bible Student's Commentary: Genesis*, Trans. William Heynen, vol. 1 (Grand

So the guilt of their sin embarrassed them before God.

## 2. Fear

God came to the Garden of Eden. So Adam and Eve hid. Adam explained, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid” (Genesis 3:10). They feared the punishment of God.

## 3. Blame-shifting

Adam and Eve’s shame and fear lead to blame-shifting. They were each guilty. Yet they did not accept their own responsibility for their sin. They accused others for their sin. Adam accused Eve, and Eve accused the serpent (Genesis 3:12, 13 ). In other words, they hid behind their lies. They did not admit their own guilt.

## 4. Punishment

God spoke to the man, the woman, and the serpent. Then He punished each one. First, God cursed the serpent. The serpent would crawl like a defeated enemy. Possibly snakes crawled before this punishment. If that is true, the serpent’s crawling became “henceforth symbolic (cf. Is. 65:25)—just as in 9:13 a new significance, not new existence, will be decreed for the rainbow.”<sup>42</sup>

God also punished Satan himself (Genesis 3:15). He had used the serpent. But Satan had tempted the human race (see Genesis 3:15 and Romans 16:20). So God created “enmity,” or opposition, between Satan and the woman. Two sides began to struggle against each other. One side includes the woman and her “seed.” The other side includes the devil and his “seed.” The “seed” on each side refers both to a single individual and a group of people. So, Christ (the seed of the woman) and Satan (the seed of the serpent) will oppose each other. Also Christians (the seed of the woman in Christ) and those who oppose Christ (the seed of the serpent) will oppose each other. But Christ will win for His side. The devil will wound Christ—crush His heal. But Christ will destroy the devil—crush his head. So God’s punishment promised Christ’s complete victory over sin and the devil.

God also punished the woman. Her family life will give her much difficulty. She will suffer greatly when she bears children. Also, her relationship to her husband will be difficult. God said, “Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you (Genesis 3:16). The Hebrew of this verse matches Genesis 4:7. Genesis 4:7 literally says, “its [sin’s] desire is for you [Cain], but you must master it.”<sup>43</sup> In other words, sin will desire to be the master of Cain, but Cain must resist sin’s desire to rule him. So Genesis 3:16 says that Eve will desire to be master over her husband, but Adam must

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Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981) 103.

<sup>42</sup> Derek Kidner, *Genesis*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, Gen. Ed. D. J. Wiseman (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1967) 70.

<sup>43</sup> Susan T. Foh, *Women and the Word of God* (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1980) 68.

resist her desire to rule him. Eve's punishment included a frustrating conflict with her husband.

God also punished the man. The punishment on man affects all human beings.<sup>44</sup> God created man to till the soil. But God cursed the soil for man's sake. Many dreadful results will follow. First, man will continue to rule over the earth. But this work will give him much pain. Second, the soil will produce many thorns and weeds. Man will become very frustrated in his work. Progress will come with great difficulty. Third, man will eventually die. He will return to the soil which he was supposed to rule. Man was made from the dust; he will return to the dust. Finally, God removed man from the Garden of Eden. God had placed man in the garden for fellowship. Man could have fellowship with God there. But after the first sin, this fellowship was destroyed. So God made the effects of sin clear. Sin separated man from God.

The Bible tells us that all our sins will be punished. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Galatians 6:7, 8 reaffirms this: "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life." These verses remind us that the wages of sin consist of more than physical death. This death includes the sufferings of eternal hell. The one who sows sin will reap "destruction." God's punishment on sin includes all of His wrath against our sins.

So the Bible teaches us that God is completely just. He will punish all sin as He promised Adam and Eve. All of our sins will be completely punished by God who is holy and righteous.

## B. THE SPREAD OF SIN

After the first sin, sin spread rapidly. Already in Genesis 4, one son of Adam and Eve killed another son. This proved how evil sin really is. Sin continued to emerge as a destructive part of human nature. Cain and his wife had children. In the seventh generation of Cain's family Lamech was born. Lamech was a wicked man. He wrote a poem to boast about his sins of polygamy and murder. He wrote,

Adah and Zillah, listen to me;  
                   wives of Lamech, hear my words.  
 I have killed a man for wounding me,  
                   a young man for injuring me.  
 If Cain is avenged seven times,  
                   then Lamech seventy-seven times. (Genesis 4:23,24)

Lamech illustrated the great spread of sin.

But God continued to be kind to Adam and Eve. He gave them another son, Seth. Seth and his children feared God. In the seventh generation of Seth's family, Enoch was born. Unlike Lamech, "Enoch walked with God" (Genesis 5:21). Genesis repeats this

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<sup>44</sup> Hoekema 136.

again. “Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away” (Genesis 5:24). According to Hebrews 11:4 Enoch did not die. Like Elijah much later, Enoch went to live with God. So, God was kind to one great family of sinners. Due to His kindness, they continued to love God.

But the story of sin’s spread does not end here. Eventually “the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose” (Genesis 6:2). “The sons of God” were probably the children of Seth. We say this for a couple of reasons. First Genesis 5 starts with the beginning of the human race again. It says again that Adam and Eve were created in God’s image (Genesis 5:1; see Genesis 1:26, 27). Two verses later Genesis 5 says that Adam “had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth” (Genesis 5:3). Adam was created in God’s likeness; Seth therefore was born in God’s likeness. The beginning of Genesis 5 stresses Seth’s relationship to God. Then, the rest of the chapter reports the births of future generations in Seth’s family. Genesis 6:2, telling us about “the sons of God,” follows immediately afterwards. Second, Luke 3 gives Jesus’ genealogy, or ancestors. In the end it says, “Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God” (Luke 3:37). So, we conclude that “the sons of God” refers to Seth’s family.

We return to the story of the spread of sin. Seth’s offspring married “the daughters of men.” In other words, those who feared God married those who did not. And the children from these marriages did not fear God. They were great, violent, and wicked. God “saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time” (Genesis 6:5).

So, sin spread to the whole human race. Sin had also gone into the depths the every human heart. Due to this spread of sin, the whole human race needs the Savior Jesus Christ.

God sent the flood to destroy the sinful human race. He spared only Noah and his family. Yet we learn very quickly that the flood did not put an end to sin. After the flood sin’s pride expressed itself at the Tower of Babel. The entire human race spoke the same language. So they decided together to build “a tower which reached to the heavens” (Genesis 11:4). They wanted to unite the human race around their great monument. But God put an end to this. He gave the people different languages. Therefore they could not work together any more. This caused great confusion. So the people scattered throughout the whole earth. But as they scattered, they brought their sin and sinful tendencies with them.

So sin grew in its strength, expression, and location.

### C. CHARACTERISTICS OF SIN

The English word “sin” reflects many different words in the Hebrew and Greek languages of the Bible. G. W. Bromiley lists many of the Bible’s words for sin.

Among the more important are: Heb. *hatta't*, “a missing”; *pasa'*, “rebellion,” “transgression”; *'awon*, “perversion”; *ra'*, “evil” in disposition; *resa'*, “impiety”. In the . . . NT . . . common words are Gk. *hamartia*, “missing the mark”; *parabasis*, “transgression”; *adikia*, “unrighteousness”; *asebeia*, “impiety”; *anomia*, “lawlessness”; *poneria*, “depravity”; *epithymia*, “evil desire.”<sup>45</sup>

This selection of some of the biblical words for sin shows the complexity of the biblical idea of sin.

We will not evaluate each word for sin here. Rather we will characterize sin as a general human problem. Again, we will follow Hoekema in his summary on sin.<sup>46</sup> This summary will show us the deep-rooted human problem of sin.

1. Sin belongs to man's character.

We can describe people in ways that do not tell us what the person is really like. For example, we can say that a person is short. Or, we can say the person has black hair. Or we can say that someone cannot walk. These statements may be true. But they do not tell us what the person is like. For example, they do not tell us if the person likes to read books. They do not tell us whether the person sincerely loves God.

When we talk about sin, we describe what a person is like. Sin has stained every human being. It affects what people like and how they think. If we were not sinners, we would be completely different people. Our characters would be very different.

2. Sin arises from a person's heart.

The Bible tells us that each person has a spiritual “heart.” We are not referring to the organ in a body which pumps blood. Rather, all that a person does expresses his deepest loyalty and life's goal. The heart contains a person's deepest fears and loves. The heart remains committed either to God or to some substitute.

Jesus taught about the human heart. He said

No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks. (Luke 6:43-45)

According to Jesus our words, thoughts, goals, actions, and emotions all express the goals and loyalties of our hearts.

<sup>45</sup> Geoffrey W. Bromiley, “Sin,” *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Fully Revised, 1988.

<sup>46</sup> Hoekema, 168-175.

Jesus also teaches that our sinful words, thoughts, and emotions all come from our hearts. Sin does not tempt us only outside our hearts. Temptation does not come, for example, only from what other people say. We ourselves invent new ways to sin (Romans 1:30) because our hearts are sinful. Sin lives at the place in our personalities where we make our most important decisions and hold on to our greatest commitments. Our sinful hearts produce sinful actions and thoughts.

### 3. Sin includes both thoughts and actions.

It is easy to see that sin involves actions. Adam and Eve sinned by doing something. They ate fruit from the tree which God told them not to eat. Cain also sinned when he acted in murdering his brother, Abel. David's sin with Bathsheba involved him in the act of adultery. We can easily see that sin involves evil actions.

But sin also includes thoughts which do not please God. The tenth commandment says, "You shall not covet" (Exodus 20:17). Coveting desires what one does not own. Coveting includes sinful thoughts and desires.

In fact, the Bible has much to say about sinful lusts. It Colossians 3:5, 6 says, "Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, *lust, evil desires and greed*, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming" (italics added). 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 says, "It is God's will that you should be sanctified . . . that each of you should learn to control his own body . . . not in passionate *lust* like the heathen, who do not know God" (italics added).

We learn from verses such as these that sin affects our thoughts, desires, and goals as much as our actions.

### 4. Sin includes guilt and pollution.

We should explain what these two words mean. Guilt refers to the responsibility for doing wrong. Guilt includes the fact that someone has sinned. The person who sinned is responsible for what he did. Guilt implies that a person ought to be punished. The Bible teaches us that we are guilty. Matthew 6:12 implies this when Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." Since guilt requires a person to be punished, forgiveness takes that punishment away.

Pollution is what makes a person impure. We pollute water when we put chemicals in it which will harm plants and animals. Sin makes us impure. We do not have the innocence that Adam first had. Sin makes our hearts corrupt, dishonest, and eager to commit sin. Jeremiah 14:9 teaches how sin pollutes the human heart. It says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" Ephesians 4:18 describes the blinding effects of sin. It says that those not redeemed from sin "are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardness of their hearts." This teaches that sin keeps a person from being able to understand God and His word. Sin makes people

stubborn and unwilling to love God. Sin hardens our hearts. The Bible emphasizes this when it teaches that sin deceives us. It makes us unable to notice how we sin and how we doubt God's word.

The Bible consistently shows us that sin makes us both guilty and impure.

#### 5. Sin directly opposes God.

When David committed the sin of adultery, he sinned directly against several people. He sinned against the woman Bathsheba. He did with her what he should not have done. Her life was changed by his sin with her. He also sinned against her husband. He took Uriah's wife. Later David had him killed in battle. He sinned against his generals. David ordered them to place Uriah in battle where he would be killed. He made his generals take part in this murder. Certainly David sinned against other people whose names are not mentioned in the Bible.

David confessed his sin in Psalm 51. He knew how many people he had involved in his sin. Yet David wrote to God, "Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight."

All sin against other people also sins against God. 1 John 3:4 says, "Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, in is lawlessness." It means that all sin breaks God's law. All sin disobeys God. God commands us to love our neighbors. When we harm our neighbors, we sin against them. But we sin most against God Who commands us not harm them.

#### D. THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

The Bible teaches us about a kind of sin which will not be forgiven. Jesus referred to in Mark 3:28-30. There, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin." 1 John 5:16 refers to a sin which leads to death. It seems in that verse that John means a sin that will not be forgiven. Hebrews refers twice to the sin of falling away from the Christian faith after a person has been "enlightened" and "tasted the heavenly gift" having "received the knowledge of the truth" (Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26-29). Each of these sins seems to belong to the same category. There is something which they all share.

But what do these sins really share? G. W. Bromiley helps us find an answer:

This "blasphemy against the Spirit" can hardly mean some peculiarly wicked sin. Nor can it imply a formal blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which is certainly sinful but which can hardly be distinguished from similar blasphemy against the Father or the Son. The peculiar element in the story [in Mark 3:28-30] seems to be the combination of the mighty operation of the Spirit and the presence of the kingdom in the person of Jesus Christ. The unforgivable sin is committed when there is dogmatic

[stubborn] refusal to see in Christ the work of the Spirit. . . . It is a dogmatic, obstinate, and persistent refusal carried to extreme and final lengths.

Why this sin is unforgivable can easily be seen. It is the sin of refusing forgiveness.<sup>47</sup>

In other words, this sin refuses God's forgiving grace as strongly as possible. It defends this refusal by saying things like, "Jesus must be doing the work of the devil." Even people who have taken part in church life can commit this. The sin includes refusing Christ's grace and defending this refusal.

In Hebrews, people wanted to avoid persecution. So they were tempted to walk away from the Christian faith. As some did, possibly they also defended their leaving Christ by saying that their friends were more important to them than Christ.

When people repent and turn to Christ for mercy, God forgives all kinds of sins. He forgives murder, dishonesty, adultery, idolatry, and stealing. But there is a sin God will not forgive. This sin involves a person who stubbornly, continually, and passionately refuses God's forgiving grace in Jesus Christ. At some point, God removes from them the opportunity of turning to Christ. As God did to Pharaoh, He hardens their hearts (Romans 9:17, 18).

#### E. CHRIST AND OUR SIN

The Bible teaches that Christ came to bear the punishment of our sins. He came with this purpose. Jesus Christ Himself committed no sin. His heart was not sinful. He possessed none of the characteristics of sin, none of the guilt or pollution of sin, mentioned in this lesson.

But Jesus came to suffer the consequences of our sin. When He hung on the cross, He endured God's punishment on our sin. Galatians 3:13 reminds us that the Old Testament says, "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." As Jesus hung on the cross, His Father cursed Him for sinners' sins.

As we learn about the wickedness of sin, we understand the greatness of God's grace towards sinners. The Father showed His love by punishing His only begotten Son in the sinner's place. The apostle Paul made this clear in Colossians 1:21, 22:

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.

#### SUMMARY

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<sup>47</sup> Bromiley, "Sin," 524.

We have gone over some important points in the doctrine of sin. We began by looking at some of the consequences of Adam's first sin. Adam and Eve became troubled by fear, shame, blame-shifting and death. We learned from the first chapters of Genesis how sin spread to every person and with increasing wickedness. We learned various characteristics of sin. These characteristics show how sinful thoughts and actions originate in the heart of man, the central part of his personality. These characteristics also teach us that sin includes both guilt and pollution. Sins of all kinds always rebel against God. We explored briefly the so-called unpardonable sin. This sin refuses, with all of a person's heart, God's saving grace. It will also prompt words which defend the refusal of God. Finally, we looked at Jesus Christ. He remained completely free from sin. We showed from the Bible that He came to save sinners from their dreadful sins. He did this by enduring the consequences of our sins. He endured God's complete wrath against our sins.

In following lessons we will explore more fully the great problem which sin creates for us. We will also learn what Christ needed to do to solve our problem with sin in all its complexity.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Explain what the first three consequences of sin are.
2. What punishments did God give after the first sin?
3. Explain at least three ways from Genesis how sin spread.
4. According to this lesson, what is the human heart?
5. What do we mean when we say that sin arises from the heart?
6. According to the lesson, what does sin include?
7. What is the most basic motive of sin?
8. According to the lesson what is the unpardonable sin?
9. What did Christ do for sinners?
10. What teaching in this lesson most impressed you?



## LESSON SIX

### ORIGINAL GUILT

#### INTRODUCTION

Lesson four explained the covenant of works. This covenant included God's promise of life if Adam obeyed God. Lesson five explained some Biblical teachings concerning sin. It is time, now, to connect these two lessons. Adam's sin and our sin are connected. We must learn about this relationship to understand more of our human problem of sin. We may call one part of this problem original guilt.

We will learn about original guilt in several ways. First, we will explain a topic which includes original guilt. That larger topic is called original sin. Second, we will explain an important concept which explains original guilt. That concept is called the imputation of Adam's sin. Thirdly, we will study Romans 5:12-19, which teaches the imputation of Adam's sin. We will also see where the idea of imputation shows up in the Bible and Christian theology. Finally we will learn how the imputation affects our understanding of Christ.

This lesson may present some of the most complicated material in the course. However, we believe it will provide some of the most helpful understanding of the doctrine of man.

#### A. ORIGINAL SIN

As we have just said, original sin is a larger topic than the topic of this lesson. We will study the remaining part of original sin in the next lesson.

What do we mean by original sin? The term does not appear in the Bible. Yet we believe the teaching is biblical. Original sin refers to more than Adam's first sin. The teaching covers the affect of Adam's first sin to each human being.

We will let some theologians explain original sin to us. Hoekema explains it this way:

Original sin is the sinful state and condition in which every human being is born; actual sin, however, is the sins of act, word, or thought that human beings commit. . . .

We use the expression "original sin" for two reasons: (1) because sin had its origin at the time of the origin of the human race, and (2) because the sin that we call "original" is the source of our actual sins (though not in such a way as to take away our responsibility for the sins we commit).<sup>48</sup>

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Berkhof defines original sin as “the sinful state and condition in which men are born.”<sup>49</sup> He continues to explain this sin:

This sin is called “original sin,” (1) because it is derived from the original root of the human race; (2) because it is present in the life of every individual from the time of his birth, and therefore cannot be regarded as the result of imitation; and (3) because it is the inward root of all the actual sins that defile the life of man.<sup>50</sup>

Both of these authors tell us that original sin originates in Adam’s first sin. Everyone is born with original sin. This sin prompts the actual sins which people do in daily life. Original sin includes original guilt and original pollution. We are studying the first part in this lesson.

## B. THE IMPUTATION OF ADAM’S SIN

Here again we explain a theological name. The word “imputation” comes from the word impute. Impute means to credit or attribute something to someone. A person may credit someone else with a bad motive. For example, a person may say, “He spoke kindly to me because he wanted my money.” Most probably the person does not definitely know why someone spoke kindly. Nevertheless, he *imputes* to someone else a bad motive. Or people may credit someone of stealing from a shop. When a shop is robbed, people may accuse the stranger who just moved to the village. They impute the crime to the stranger. We believe the idea of impute and imputation has become clear.

The imputation of Adam’s sin teaches that God credits Adam’s first sin to every other human being. Adam committed many sins in his lifetime. Adam’s later sins do not belong to this doctrine. We are discussing only Adam’s first sin. God imputes (credits) that sin to every human being. This means that everyone is born with Adam’s first sin on his record. Since this teaching is difficult for many to accept, we will study Romans 5:12-19 very carefully.

## C. ROMANS 5:12-19

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned—<sup>13</sup> for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.

<sup>15</sup> But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!

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<sup>49</sup> Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 244.

<sup>50</sup> Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 244.

<sup>16</sup> Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. <sup>17</sup> For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

<sup>18</sup> Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. <sup>19</sup> For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. (Romans 5:12-19)

One phrase in verse 12 will capture our attention. We will find the meaning of "because all sinned." We must explore what this means.

### 1. The flow of thought in Romans 5:12-19

As we read these verses, we need to know the main thought. These verses make many points. But we are able to reduce them to the all-important thought in verse 12.

Verse 12 does not finish its point. And verse 13 does not continue the thought of verse 12. In fact, verse 13 begins a parenthesis, a comment, which explains what we need to understand. The following verses include two extra comments: verses 13-14 and verses 15-17.

Verse 12 ends with the very important phrase, "because all sinned." Verses 13-14 help explain this phrase. But verse 14 ends with its own important phrase. That phrase says, "who was a pattern of the one to come." So verses 15-17 help explain this second phrase.<sup>51</sup>

Finally verse 18 continues the thought of verse 12.<sup>52</sup> We will rely mostly on verses 12, 18, and 19 to learn what all these verses teach. We hope to understand that phrase from verse 12: "because all sinned."

### 2. The sin discussed in Romans 5:12-19

What sin does Paul mean when he wrote, "because all sinned"?

To answer this, we need to know whose sin brought death to all. Verse 12 says that all men die "because all sinned." All die because of sin. Yet verses 15-19 refer to only one sin. Verse 15 says, "many died by the trespass of the one man." Verse 16 says "the judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation." Verse 18 repeats this idea:

<sup>51</sup> John Murray, *The Imputation of Adam's Sin* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959) 7.

<sup>52</sup> John Murray, *Imputation* 8.

“just as the result of one trespass was condemnation to all men.” In some sense all die because *all* sinned. Yet all die because of *one* man’s one sin. As we will see, Adam is that one man. His first sin brought death to all men.

So Adam’s first sin affects all of us. Verse 12 says that all sinned. Verse 18 explains this: “as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men.” Verse 19 supports verse 18: “through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners.” Adam’s sin carried a result for everyone in the human race. Due to his sin, everyone stands before God as a sinner.

This effect of Adam’s first sin comes from Adam’s relationship to each of us.

### 3. Our relation to Adam in Romans 5:12-19

As we learned before, Adam represented all of us. 1 Corinthians 15 teaches this. 1 Corinthians 15:22 says, “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.” Two representatives acted on behalf of others. God deals with everyone either according to Adam or according to Christ. “All who die die in Adam; all who are made alive are made alive in Christ.”<sup>53</sup>

1 Corinthians 15:45-49 stress representation also. These verses say,

So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

So, Adam was the first Adam. Christ is the last Adam. There is no other “Adam.” Christ’s relationship to those in Him resembles Adam’s relationship to those in him. God gave Adam’s sin and guilt to us all. Also God gave Christ’s righteousness to all in Him.

These verses teach that Adam and Christ each represented many. Adam’s sin made him guilty. Adam’s first sin also made us all guilty. He represented us in the covenant of works. Adam represented us as elected officials represent their people today. Elected officials may decide that everyone will pay more taxes. Then the whole nation pays more taxes. The decision was not made by everyone citizen. Only their representatives made the choice. Yet they represented everyone. Similarly Adam represented everyone in his first sin.

### 4. Imputation in Romans 5:12-19

Romans 5:12-19 teaches us about the imputation of Adam’s sin. God credited Adam’s sin to each of us. So verse 12 says, “all sinned.” Death comes to all men. In Adam’s first sin he represented all men.

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<sup>53</sup> Murray, *Imputation*, 39.

This explains Romans 5:14. It says, “Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam.” Sin disobeys God’s law. There was no law between the time of Adam and the time of Moses. Yet everyone in that time died. They died because of Adam’s sin. God credited everyone during that time with Adam’s first disobedience. This is the meaning of the imputation of Adam’s sin.

People have explained the effects of Adam’s sin in various ways. We call one interpretation “mediate imputation.” According to this view, Adam’s sin gave him a sinful nature. Adam gave his sinful nature to his children. Eventually we received it too. Adam’s sinful nature was mediated to us through reproduction. According to this view, God calls us guilty because we are sinful.

Theologians call another view “realism.” According to this view, God created one human nature. At first only Adam had it. At that time Adam sinned. Therefore, all human nature sinned. God calls us guilty because the human nature that we share became guilty in Adam.<sup>54</sup>

These two views resemble each other. They both say that Adam did not really represent us. According to both, Adam’s sin changed our character. (This is true, but we do not make that point in this lesson.) The first view says we inherit a sinful character. The second says we inherit a sinful general human nature.

But we call our view “immediate imputation.” According to our view, Adam immediately represented all. Adam’s guilt did not come to us through something. His connection to us did not come merely through reproduction or our shared humanity. Rather, Adam represented us. Because he sinned, God immediately regards all of us as sinners. In the perspective of God the Judge, we all ate from the forbidden tree. This also means we will each be punished for Adam’s first sin.

The imputation of Adam’s sin refers to credit. God sees us in Adam. Adam represented us in the Garden of Eden. Therefore we must pay for Adam’s first sin. God imputed Adam’s sin to us.

## D OTHER PASSAGES

God teaches us about his practice of imputation in other verses as well. These verses do not refer to the imputation of Adam’s sin. But they refer to other imputations of sin. God credits the sin of one person to another. Therefore, God will punish the second person.

He teaches this in the Old Testament. For example, the Old Testament sacrifices show imputation. A man brought his animal for sacrifice to the temple. In this case, the man offered a sin offering for his sins. “He is to lay his hand on its head and slaughter it

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<sup>54</sup> Hoekema 157-8.

before the Lord” (Leviticus 4:4). Then the priest sacrificed the animal for the man’s sins. This ceremony symbolized imputation. Certainly the man’s hands could not make the animal sinful. The animal did not die to pay for its own sins. Rather, the man’s hands on the animal’s head symbolized the animal receiving credit for the man’s guilt. The man’s sins were imputed to the animal. Then the animal was punished.

Psalm 32:2 gives another example. It says, “Blessed is the man whose sins the Lord does not count against him.” Other translations of the Bible may say, “Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord does not *impute* iniquity [italics added]” (New King James Version). This verse refers to the way God forgives sinners. He does not count their sins against them. He does not impute their sins to them. So God will not punish us if He does not credit us with our sins. This is the teaching of Romans 4:8 as well.

2 Corinthians 5:19 says, “God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them.” Again the New King James Version says, “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them.” Either God imputes sins to us, or He does not. When He does not, He forgives us.

These verses may show that imputation appears in various places in the Bible. The basic idea concerns giving credit. When God forgives, He does not credit our sins to us. In Adam’s case, God credits Adam’s sin to us all.

## E. IMPUTATION AND CHRIST

We close most lessons in this course with Christ. The truths of this course about man affect our understanding of Christ. Imputation also shapes our view of Christ.

B. B. Warfield wrote,

In the developed theology . . . brought into the possession of the Church, three . . . acts of imputation were established and expounded. These are the imputation of Adam’s sin to his posterity [descendants]; the imputation of the sins of His people to the Redeemer; the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to His people. . . . [I]t is important to bear in mind that the divine act called “imputation” is in itself precisely the same in each of the three great transactions into which it enters as a constituent part. The grounds on which it proceeds may differ; the things imputed may be different; and the consequent treatment of the person or persons to which the imputation is made may and will differ. . . . But in each and every case alike imputation itself is simply the act of setting to one’s account; and the act of setting to one’s account is in itself the same act whether the things set to his account stands on the credit or debit side of the account, and whatever may be the ground in equity on which it is set to his account.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Studies in Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1932) 302.

According to this scholar, the idea of imputation shows up in several places in theology. God credits Adam's sin to all. God also credits to Christ the sins of those who believe in Christ. And God credits Christ's righteousness to those who believe in Him.

We see some of this in 2 Corinthians 5:21. It says, "God made him [Christ] who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." This cannot mean that God made Christ sinful. Christ always remained righteous. Rather, God credited to Christ the sins of those for whom He died. Therefore, Jesus died for their sins in their place. Also, the verse does not mean that God made Christians perfectly righteous. Rather, God credits, or imputes, to the Christian the righteousness of Christ.

So salvation in Christ parallels sin in Adam. God credits Adam's sin to all except Christ. God credits Christ's righteousness to all who trust in Christ. Imputation belongs to the heart of man's problem. Imputation lies at the heart of the Christian gospel.

## SUMMARY

We began by mentioning original sin. This is the sin and sin problem that we received from Adam. One part of original sin is original guilt. All people received the guilt of Adam's through imputation. By imputation God credits all human beings with the act and guilt of Adam's first sin.

We dealt with Romans 5:12-19. This passage presents the imputation of Adam's sin most thoroughly. A careful study of these verses makes clear that Adam's one sin was credited to many. Adam represented the human race in the Garden of Eden. Adam failed as our representative. Therefore, God regards everyone descendant of Adam as guilty of the first sin. Therefore also, all will die. We call this transfer of Adam's sin to us "immediate imputation."

We also saw imputation in others passages. Sometimes God credits sin. Sometimes God does not credit sin to sinners. We learned how this explains the gospel of Christ. God credited the sins of Christians to Christ. He also credits Christ's righteousness to those who believe in Christ. Though all are made sinners in Christ, those sinners in Christ are made [credited as being] righteous.

## QUESTIONS

1. What does "original sin" mean?
2. What does imputation mean?
3. Where does the thought of Romans 5:12 get completed?
4. Which sin does Romans 5:12-19 refer to?

5. How is Adam related to us in Romans 5:12-19?
6. What does Romans 5:12-19 teach about the imputation of Adam's sin?
7. What do "mediate imputation" and "realism" teach?
8. Summarize how at least two other places in Scripture refer to the idea of imputation.
9. Explain in as many ways as you can that the work of Christ involves imputation.
10. What did you learn in this lesson that you did not know before?

## LESSON SEVEN

### ORIGINAL POLLUTION

#### INTRODUCTION

Lesson Five explained several points of the Bible’s teaching about sin. Sin includes guilt and pollution. Therefore, sin makes us guilty and wicked. “Guilty” means that God’s law blames us for our disobedience. It condemns us and our sin. “Wicked” means that sin has turned us against God. Our natural tendency, now, makes us “prone by nature to hate God and . . . [our] neighbour.”<sup>56</sup>

Near the beginning of Lesson Six, we discussed the topic of original sin. We quoted Hoekema, who defined original sin. He wrote, “Original sin is the sinful state and condition in which every human being is born.”<sup>57</sup> We all received original sin from Adam. The guilt of Adam’s first sin became our own. Also, we inherited the sinful tendency—the pollution—of Adam. In other words, we received Adam’s guilt and pollution.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism summarizes the doctrine of original sin.

**Q. 18. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?**

A. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam’s first sin, the want [absence] 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.<sup>58</sup>

Original sin, then, includes original guilt and original pollution (corruption). The last lesson covered original guilt. In this lesson we will discuss topics related to original pollution.

This lesson will explore the different parts of the doctrine of original pollution. They include both our sinful tendencies and our sinful inability. We will learn how much freedom sinners really have. We will study the actual sins which people commit. We will learn how God restrains the full expression of sin. Finally we will learn what these topics teach us about Christ and the gospel.

#### A. TOTAL DEPRAVITY

The word “depravity” refers to wickedness or corruption. Possibly we know the meanings of “wicked” or “corrupt.” These words describe evil and dishonest people. Depravity includes these qualities. In theology “depravity” describes the corruption—wickedness—of man’s heart.

<sup>56</sup> “Heidelberg Catechism,” Answer 5, 30 May 2008, <http://www.ccel.org/creeds/heidelberg-cat.html>

<sup>57</sup> Hoekema 143.

<sup>58</sup> “Westminster Shorter Catechism” Q & A 18, 18 June 2008 <[http://www.bpc.org/resources/wsc/wsc\\_018.html](http://www.bpc.org/resources/wsc/wsc_018.html)

We call this part of original sin “total depravity.” Theologians often use other names for the same teaching. The teaching says that sin affects every part of the human personality. Nothing in man remains sinless. Man’s ability to reason and choose, his ability to study God’s creation, his ability to love, and his ability to know God all remain sinful.

Hoekema summarizes the doctrine of total depravity. He calls it “pervasive depravity.”

*Pervasive [or comprehensive] depravity . . . means that (1) the corruption of original sin extends to every aspect of human nature: to one’s reason and will as well as to one’s appetites and impulse; and (2) there is not present in man by nature love to God as the motivating principle of his life.<sup>59</sup>*

This teaching does not describe merely the evil potential of people. It also refers to the actual character of all people. Sin has damaged the human heart greatly. Only God can turn us to Him and His commands.

The Bible teaches the total depravity of the human heart. Jeremiah 17:9 says, “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” Man’s heart remains inescapably corrupt. No man can repair it. Jesus said to His audience, “I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts” (John 5:42). Romans 7:18 says, “I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.” Titus teaches the same: “To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good” (Titus 1:15, 16). These verses of Scripture show the comprehensive wickedness—the total depravity—which rules the human heart.

Total depravity summarizes one part of original pollution. It teaches us the influence of Adam’s first sin on the human heart. It describes every human being without Jesus’ saving grace.

## B. TOTAL INABILITY

We must mention another part of our original pollution. Some theologians include this when they define total depravity. We call this next element of pollution “total inability.” As sinners we have lost the ability to please God. According to the doctrine of total depravity, sin completely rules us. According to total inability, we cannot overcome sin.

Again, Hoekema summarizes this truth. He calls it “spiritual inability.”

When we speak about man’s *spiritual inability*, we mean two things: (1) the unregenerate person cannot do, say, or think that which totally meets with God’s approval, and therefore totally fulfills God’s law; and (2) the

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<sup>59</sup>

Hoekema 150.

unregenerate person is unable apart from the special working of the Holy Spirit to change the basic direction of his or her life from sinful self-love to love for God. “Spiritual inability” is really only another way of describing the doctrine of . . . [total depravity], this time with the emphasis on the spiritual impotence [powerlessness] of the will. Needless to say, these two concepts overlap in meaning.<sup>60</sup>

Many verses in Scripture teach the inability of sinners. For example, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). Jesus also said,

Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:4,5).

According to Jesus, we need His grace to obey and please God. Left to our own ability, we cannot please God.

Romans 8:7, 8 also say, “The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.”

The teaching of total inability shows the spiritual weakness of sinful man. Like a man with paralyzed legs, we cannot walk towards God in our own strength. Like a blind man, we cannot find God by our own study. Like a dead man, we cannot live for God’s glory. We cannot live forever in fellowship with God. Only Christ enables people to obey God.

### C. THE QUESTION OF HUMAN FREEDOM

Man’s total inability makes us ask about human freedom. Can a man make his own decisions? Can we choose between right and wrong? How much does man’s total inability limit man?

Here we mention one theologian who wrote on this subject. Martin Luther (1483-1546) had struggled for many years over his sinfulness. He believed Romans 3:10, which says, “There is no one righteous, not even one.” Before his conversion to Christ, Luther grieved over his desire to sin. He learned about his sinful will.

In his later efforts to defend the gospel, Luther debated a man named Erasmus. Erasmus, the scholar, argued according to reason. He wrote,

If there is no freedom of will, what place is there for merit? If there is no place for merit, what place is there for reward? To what will it be ascribed, if man is justified without merit?<sup>61</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Hoekema 152.

<sup>61</sup> Quoted by Martin Luther, *The Bondage of the Will*, trans. J. I. Packer and O. R. Johnston (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1957) 292.

Luther answered Erasmus with many passages from Scripture. He cited Romans 1:18ff, 3:9ff, 4:2, 3 and other verses. They show that mankind needs God grace for salvation. In fact, Erasmus' trust in merit opposes Scripture's teaching about grace. We cannot merit God's approval because we have no free will to choose the good.<sup>62</sup> So Scripture disproves the basic assumption of Erasmus—the idea that a person can earn his reward from God.

We must defend two important truths when we discuss human freedom.<sup>63</sup>

The first truth says that people make real choices every day. After a man wakes up in the morning, he chooses either to do his work or to avoid his work. A student chooses to work hard in his studies or to do something else. At the end of a road, we choose to turn right, to turn left, or to turn around. We fill our lives with our choices.

These choices show that we *can* choose. Each person is “a creature of options, one who is constantly confronted with alternatives between which he chooses, saying yes to the one and no to the other.”<sup>64</sup> At the creation God gave mankind the ability to choose. We make some choices instantaneously. We make other choices after we think about them for a long time. Yet these different kinds of choices all demonstrate the same truth. God made us able to choose.

The Christian also believes that God planned human history and man's choices. The Bible teaches that God planned the decision of men to have Jesus crucified (Acts 4:27-28). Also Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery. But they were doing what God had planned (Genesis 50:20). God used the brothers' evil plan to save many lives. Pharaoh also chose to resist God's command to let God's people go. Yet God raised Pharaoh up to display God's power (Romans 9:17). We believe Scripture when it tells us that God chose how people would act. God chose how people would choose.

Yet God's divine choices do not destroy man's ability to choose. Here we are discussing a great mystery. We cannot understand how God's divine choice leaves room for man's choices. Yet it does. As we discuss human freedom, we may say that God gave us the ability to choose.

Yet we must add another truth concerning human freedom. Without God's saving grace we cannot choose to please God. Before Adam sinned, he was able not to sin. But after Adam's sin mankind is not able not to sin.<sup>65</sup> Sin limits man's choices. Berkhof summarizes this biblical teaching.

Man did not lose any of the constitutional faculties necessary to constitute him a responsible moral agent. He still has reason, conscience, and the freedom of choice. He has ability to acquire knowledge, and to feel and

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<sup>62</sup> Luther 273ff.

<sup>63</sup> Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 248.

<sup>64</sup> Verduin 84.

<sup>65</sup> Hoekema 231,232. This author summarizes the teaching of Augustine on this subject.

recognize moral distinctions and obligations; and his affections, tendencies, and actions are spontaneous, so that he chooses and refuses as he sees fit. Moreover, he has the ability to appreciate and do many things that are good and amiable, benevolent and just, in the relations he sustains to his fellow-beings. But man did lose his material freedom, that is, the rational power to determine his course in the direction of the highest good, in harmony with the original moral constitution of his nature. Man has by nature an irresistible bias for evil. He is not able to apprehend and love spiritual excellence, to seek and do spiritual things, the things of God that pertain to salvation.<sup>66</sup>

So, sinful man resembles a blind man in a cave. Imagine a blind man who wants to get out of a cave. Imagine, also, that he is close to the mouth of the cave. A seeing man could see light from the mouth of the cave. Imagine that the blind man tries to get out of the cave. He walks from one wall in the cave to another. He chooses to walk wherever he can. But he does not possess absolute freedom. He cannot choose to walk towards the light. His blindness limits his choices.

Berkhof makes this point. The sinful man has the “constitution faculties” to make choices. He remains a choosing person. But he has lost his “material freedom.” This means he cannot make every possible choice. He is free to make choices, but he is not absolutely free. For example, he cannot choose to love God. Sin limits his choices.

The Bible teaches this when it tells us that people are slaves to sin before they are saved (Romans 6:6, 20). Paul told the Roman Christians that they “used to be slaves to sin” (Romans 6:17). They were “in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness” (Romans 6:19). A slave lives under the limiting power of the slave master.

Ephesians 2 teaches the same truth. The Ephesians were dead in transgressions and sins (Ephesians 2:1). This spiritual death consisted of slavery to sin. So Paul wrote, “All of us also lived among . . . [those who are disobedient] gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath” (Ephesians 2:3).

So, sinful the man still possesses freedom. But sin limits his freedom. Sinful man freely makes choices. But sin blinds him from making all possible choices. In his own strength the sinner cannot choose Christ, the Light of the world.

#### D. ACTUAL SINS AND ORIGINAL POLLUTION

So far we have discussed original sin. This is the sin we received from Adam. We received his guilt and his pollution. But original sin leads to actual sin. As children of Adam we ourselves disobey God and refuse His promises. The Westminster Confession mentions the connection between original sin and our actual sins. It says,

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<sup>66</sup> Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 248.

From. . .original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.”<sup>67</sup>

We should understand the phrases, “actual transgressions” or “actual sins”. “The term ‘actual sins’ does not merely denote. . .external actions which are accomplished by means of the body, but all those conscious thoughts and volitions which spring from original sin.”<sup>68</sup> In other words, actual sins include our sinful actions, thoughts, and desires. Actual sins take place in our own lives. We commit them. Adam’s sin has this effect on us. Because of his sin we eagerly pursue our own sins.

Essentially actual sin disobeys God. John 3:4 says, “Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.”

Let us look at two examples of actual sin. God tells not to dishonor people. James says, “With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be” (James 3:9-10). So the person who speaks cruelly about someone else commits an actual sin. Also God’s word tells us not to covet the neighbor’s wife (Exodus 20:17). Therefore the man who desires to have another man’s wife commits an actual sin. Actual sins include every form of disobedience to God’s word.

The Bible shows us the connection between original pollution and actual sins. Galatians 5 tells us about the acts of the sinful nature. They include, “sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like” (Galatians 5:19-21). This list refers to actual sins which people do, think, or plan. Yet, these sins come from the “sinful nature.” We received our “sinful nature” from Adam. So our actual sins arise from our sinful hearts.

Yet sin influences us in the opposite direction too. Actual sins also influence our hearts.

Actual sin not only springs forth from the pollution involved in original sin, it also intensifies that pollution. Sinful deeds often lead to sinful habits, and sinful habits may eventually bring about a totally sinful kind of life. As Augustine put it, the pollution involved in original sin is both the mother and the daughter of sin.<sup>69</sup>

So original sin gives us a sinful nature. Our sin expresses that sinful nature. Our sin also makes more sinful.

## E. THE RESTRAINT OF SIN

<sup>67</sup> “Westminster Confession of Faith,” Chapter 6.4, 18 June 2008 <[http://www.bpc.org/resources/wcf/wcf\\_06.html](http://www.bpc.org/resources/wcf/wcf_06.html).

<sup>68</sup> Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 251.

<sup>69</sup> Hoekema 173.

This lesson presents the Bible's teaching concerning the polluting effect of sin. Due to Adam's sin every human being enters the world with a sinful heart. Adam's sin makes us totally depraved and unable to glorify God. The pollution of sin pushes people to rebel against God with all the abilities they have.

Yet, most people do not sin as badly as they could. Most people do not show their hatred for God and their neighbor as strongly as they could. God limits how much we express our sin. God does not change our hearts without the gospel of Christ. But, in almost everyone's life, He limits the expression of sin.

We can see how the Bible teaches this. In one place, the Bible describes the time before the coming of the man of lawlessness. 2 Thessalonians 2:7 says, "For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way." According to this verse, sin's power already works in human society. But God holds the influence of sin back until a future time. At a later time sin will show how wicked it really is.

According to the Bible God restrains sins in various ways. For example, God uses human languages to slow the spread of sin. In Genesis 11 people wanted a tower to reach to the heavens. They wanted to replace God with something else. So God gave the human race many languages. These languages frustrated them. People could not work together any more. The variety of languages weakens the human race. Languages cannot keep people from being sinful;. But the variety of languages restrains sin in one way.

Governments restrain sin. Romans 13 says that the ruler "is God's servant to do you good. . . . [I]f you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer" (Romans 13:4). 1 Peter gives the same teaching:

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. (1 Peter 2:13-15)

Therefore, God gave us rulers for our good. People fear punishment. So, they do good publicly. Government does not change our sinful hearts. Yet Government limits how much we express our sin.

God's creation of man restrains sin. Romans 2 says,

Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them. (Romans 2:14,15)

According to this, God will judge both the people with God's written word and those without God's law. Even people without God's law have a conscience. They know

about right and wrong. The conscience cannot make a person's heart good. But his conscience does limit his deeds of sin.

By influences like these God restrains the public expression of sin. These influences do not destroy sin's pollution of the human heart. But they slow down the progress of sin.

#### F. CHRIST AND SIN'S POLLUTION

The first sin of Adam pollutes us all with sinful desires and goals. Adam represented us. Sin changed Adam's character. It also gave every child of Adam a sinful character. But Adam's sin did not ruin the character of one of his children. Adam's sin did not pollute Christ.

The Bible teaches that Christ remained completely sinless. Jesus Christ never sinned. He never wanted to sin. The Bible tells us how Satan tempted Jesus. Jesus "was tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). He did not sin. Rather, He said, "I have come to do your will, O God" (Hebrews 10:7). Christ's *life* included not sin.

Scripture also teaches us about the sinless *heart* of Jesus Christ. 1 John 3:5 says that "in him is no sin." Isaiah 53:9 says that "he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth" (cf. 1 Peter 2:22). Hebrews 7:26 says that Christ "was holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners." 2 Corinthians 5:21 says that Christ had no sin. The New Testament repeatedly calls Jesus "holy" (Acts 3:14; 4:27, 30; Hebrews 7:26). These verses show the sinlessness of Christ's character.

So Jesus Christ did not receive the pollution of Adam's sin. He forms a new humanity. Scripture treats Him as the second Adam (Romans 5:14-17; 1 Corinthians 15:22; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Christ reverses the damage which Adam's sin created. He could do this. He was free of Adam's sin.

So Christ is able to save us from Adam's sin. He obeyed God perfectly, and He possessed a pure heart. He takes away what Adam's sin gives. Scripture often tells us about cleansing from Christ for sinners. These sinners trust in Christ for salvation from their sins. According to Scripture Jesus' blood purifies us of all sin (1 John 1:7). The blood of Christ cleanses our consciences from acts that lead to death (Hebrews 9:14). He freed us from our sins by His blood (Revelation 1:5).

The Bible calls the new birth of the Christian a "washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). So Christ washes us when we come to Him for grace. His washing removes the stubbornness of sin. He makes us eager to love Him and believe in Him. Adam's pollution makes us hate God. But Christ's cleansing makes us love Him.

The gospel of salvation proclaims Jesus Christ. As the guiltless One, He removes the guilt of those who trust in Him. As the holy One, He washes away the pollution of those who come to Him.

God blesses those who trust in Christ. God does not view Christians in Adam. He sees the believer in Christ. Adam's pollution—and our own sinfulness—should send us to Christ. Christ alone is sinless. The person without Christ remains totally depraved. But the person in Christ by faith receives Christ's forgiveness and Christ's washing.

## SUMMARY

This lesson has explained several effects of Adam's first sin on our lives. We have all inherited a sinful character from him. His sin polluted him and us.

Adam's sin has infected every part of a person's character. Our abilities to reason, to make decisions, and to pursue goals are all sinful. Because of Adam's sin we cannot love God or our neighbors. Sin stains the total personality. It makes us totally depraved.

Sin also makes us unable to choose what God loves. We cannot free ourselves from the prison of sin. We are free to choose many things. But the person without Christ cannot choose to love God or to follow Christ. We need the grace of Christ to remove the blindness and stubbornness of sin.

We also learned that sin includes acts, words, and attitudes of our own. We call these sins actual sins. Sin does not include only the effects of Adam's sin. Sin includes our own behavior and thoughts.

We learned about God's restraint of our sin. We do not sin as badly as we could. God has given the influence of government and conscience. These, and other influences, limit how much people express their sin. These limiting influences do not change the human heart. They merely limit the demonstration of sin.

Finally, we learned about Jesus Christ. He remained free from the original sin of Adam. He obeyed His heavenly Father perfectly. Both His life and thoughts remained sinless. Therefore Christ can save sinners. He cleanses the Christian's heart from the pollution of sin. His blood cleanses believers in Him from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:7).

## QUESTIONS

1. What does "original pollution" refer to?
2. What does "total depravity" mean?
3. Explain what we mean by "total inability."

4. What did Martin Luther say about the idea of human freedom?
5. In what way is human freedom limited by sin?
6. What do we mean by “actual sins?”
7. What kinds of sin are included when we refer to “actual sins?”
8. What does God use to restrain our sin?
9. Why can Christ save people who are polluted by sin?
10. What did you learn from this lesson that you did not know before?

## LESSON EIGHT

### PELAGIANISM AND ITS COPY

#### INTRODUCTION

We have seen from Scripture that God created man to be His image. Due to God's creation, man possesses honor and responsibility (Lessons 1-4). We have also learned about Adam's sinful actions. Adam rebelled against his Creator. He disobeyed God's command concerning the forbidden tree. As a result, man became guilty and polluted (Lessons 5-7). Sin's impact severely changed man's abilities and character. Now all men and women are rebellious and guilty creatures. Scripture teaches this view of man.

But some people disagree. According to them, sin has not made us rebellious and guilty. Sin disobeys God. But it does not damage the human character. They say that Adam's sin did not affect his descendants.

This lesson will look at two views concerning the human character. These views disagree with the lessons of this course. First, we will learn about Pelagius and Pelagianism, the view of his followers. Second, we will learn about Arminius and Arminianism. Sometimes Arminianism is called Semipelagianism. This means that Ariminus was at least partly a Pelagian.

#### A. PELAGIANISM

##### 1. The Life of Pelagius

We know very little about the life of Pelagius. According to some historians, he was born in Britain near the middle of the fourth century (300s).<sup>70</sup> Pelegius demonstrated great interest in the theology of the early Greek church. Beginning in his early life, he also earnestly wanted to be a moral person. But he did not seek a deeper relationship with God through faith in Christ. Rather, he pursued the external legalism, the self-righteousness of the monks.

Pelagius became a well-known teacher at Rome. When the Visigoths (people from western Germany) invaded Rome (410-411), Pelagius fled to Africa. Later, he moved to Jerusalem. We believe that Pelagius died there, near the year 420.

##### 2. The Teachings of Pelagius

In Rome Pelagius studied the writings of Augustine, a bishop in northern Africa. Augustine had written against the false religion, Manichaeism. Manichaeism originated in Persia. It spread rapidly throughout the world at that time. It denied the all-powerful

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<sup>70</sup> Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 3, § 147 2 July 2008 [http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/history/3\\_ch09.htm#\\_ednref425](http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/history/3_ch09.htm#_ednref425)

good God. Rather, Manichaeism believed in two great forces of equal power. It said that good and evil exist eternally. They will always oppose each other. Manichaeism offers no hope. It cannot because it believes that good and evil will always oppose each other. Good will never become the stronger power. According to Augustine, Manichaeism contradicted the Bible's teaching about the true God. Pelagius agreed with Augustine on this point.

But Pelagius also read other teachings of Augustine. He disagreed with some of the ideas of Augustine. One prayer of Augustine especially offended Pelagius. Augustine wrote, "Give what thou commandest—and command what thou wilt."<sup>71</sup> In this prayer, "Give what thou commandest," Augustine confessed his spiritual inability to God. The prayer reflected various passages in the Bible. For example, Psalm 51: 7 says, "Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow." Also, Psalm 80 says in three places, "Restore us, O God; make your face shine upon us, that we may be saved" (Psalm 80:3, 7, 19). Both Psalms express dependence on God for man to be changed. Sinful man cannot change himself. We cannot reconcile ourselves to God. Peace with God begins with God. Augustine's prayer expressed this biblical dependence on God. But Pelagius disliked the prayer.

According to Pelagius, God's grace does not establish a peaceful relationship between God and man.

The keystone of Pelagianism is the idea of man's unconditional free will and his moral responsibility. In creating man God did not subject him, like other creatures, to the law of nature but gave him the unique privilege of accomplishing the divine will by his own choice. This possibility of freely choosing the good entails the possibility of choosing evil.<sup>72</sup>

In other words, we should not pray, "Give what you command." We are able to do what God commands without God's help. At least, that is what Pelagius believed.

Pelagius saw three features in every human action. They include power, will and realization. Of these three, only power (the strength to act) comes from God. Will (the ability to choose) and realization (the accomplishment of what one chooses) come from man. The will is the most important thing in any human action. It decides what people do. According to Pelagius, the will behind any action is man's, not God's. This understanding of human action guarantees the freedom of man's unconditional free will.

The idea of human freedom produces two other basic beliefs of Pelagianism.<sup>73</sup> First, Adam's sin did not make us prone to do wrong. This belief denies what we learned about original sin. According to the doctrine of original sin, Adam's sin pollutes the heart of every human being. But Pelagius denied this teaching. According to Pelagius, people sin only because of outside influences. According to Pelagius, people do not naturally possess sinful passions or desires.

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<sup>71</sup> quoted by B. L. Shelley, "Pelatius, Pelagianism," *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 1984.

<sup>72</sup> Shelley.

<sup>73</sup> Shelley.

Second, along with the first belief, Pelagius denied internal grace. God's grace involves only external help. Grace, according to Pelagius, allows for human freedom. It includes God's revelation to man's mind. Grace gives man a better understanding of God's law and of Christ. God's grace does not work inside a person. According to Pelagius, grace does not change the human heart. It does not turn a rebel into a disciple. Grace only influences. "Grace on his view is . . . 'a grace of knowledge' or, as Augustine put it, a grace consisting in 'law and teaching'."<sup>74</sup>

With these ideas in mind, Pelagius believed that "a man can, if he will, observe God's commandments without sinning."<sup>75</sup> Pelagius believed that, in Scripture, many people did not sin. Scripture calls them blameless. Furthermore,

A Christian is he who is one not in word but in deed, who imitates and follows Christ in everything, who is holy, innocent, unsoiled, blameless, in whose heart there is no malice but only piety and goodness, who refuses to injure or hurt anyone, but brings succour [help, comfort] to all. . . . He is a Christian who can justly say, "I have injured no one, I have lived righteously with all".<sup>76</sup>

Christians do not become blameless easily. Rather, Pelagius said that they must use their will with all their might. Eventually they gain the ability to resist all sin.

### 3. The Impact of Pelagius

Pelagianism did not die with Pelagius. One disciple of Pelagius, Julian of Eclanum, promoted this teaching. According to Julian, man's free will makes man completely independent of God. Another disciple, Celestius, promoted the thoughts of Pelagius by his intellectual writings.<sup>77</sup>

Yet the Christian church eventually condemned the teachings of Pelagianism. In 412 the Council of Carthage condemned the teachings of Celestius. In 416 the Synod of Mileve and the Synod of Carthage condemned the teachings of Pelagius as heresy. In 431 the Council of Ephesus condemned Pelagianism.<sup>78</sup>

These church councils properly condemned Pelagian teachings. The teachings of Pelagius contradict the Bible. Scripture says, "There is no one righteous, not even one" (Romans 3:10). It also says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it" (Jeremiah 17:9)? Lessons 5-7 of this course provide other similar portions of Scripture. They disprove the teachings of Pelagianism.

### 4. Summary Concerning Pelagianism

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<sup>74</sup> J. N. D. Kelley, *Early Christian Doctrines* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1960) 359.

<sup>75</sup> Quoted by Kelley 360.

<sup>76</sup> Quoted by Kelley 360.

<sup>77</sup> Schaff.

<sup>78</sup> Louis Berkhof, *The History of Christian Doctrines* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1937) 137.

We need to understand the basic teachings of Pelagianism. So, perhaps we should listen to Berkhof's summary of its crucial points.

The most important questions in debate between Pelagius and Augustine were those of free will and original sin. According to Pelagius, Adam, as he was created by God, was not endowed with positive holiness. His original condition was one of neutrality, neither holy nor sinful, but with a capacity for both good and evil. He had a free and entirely undetermined will, which enabled him to choose with equal facility [or, ability] either of these alternatives. . . . His mortality could not depend on his choice, for he was created mortal in the sense that he was already subject to the law of death. . . . Man is still born in the same condition in which Adam was before the fall. Not only is he free from guilt but also from pollution. There are no evil tendencies and desires in his nature which inevitably result in sin. The only difference between him and Adam is that he has the evil example before him. Sin does not consist in wrong affections or desires, but only in the separate acts of the will. . . . As a matter of fact man need not sin. He is, like Adam, endowed with perfect freedom of the will, with a liberty of choice or of indifference, so that he can, at any given moment, choose either good or evil. . . . If notwithstanding this, sin is universal—and Pelagius admits that it is—this is due only to wrong education, to bad example, and to a long-established habit of sinning. In turning from evil to good, man is not dependent on the grace of God, though its operation is undoubtedly an advantage and will help him to overcome evil in his life. But the grace of which Pelagius speaks in this connection does not consist in an inward-working divine energy, or, in other words, in the influence of the Holy Spirit, inclining the will and empowering man to do that which is good, but only in external gifts and natural endowments, such as man's rational nature, the revelation of God in Scripture, and the example of Jesus Christ.<sup>79</sup>

Nearly every sentence of this summary demonstrates Pelagius' opposition to the pollution of sin. He denies the human need for God to change the heart—the character—of the sinner. According to Pelagius we need only Christ's example to do good.

Earlier lessons in this course have shown how Scripture contradicts these views of Pelagianism.

## B. ARMINIANISM

### 1. The Life of Arminius

Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) was born in the Netherlands. After extensive education he became the pastor of an Amsterdam congregation in 1588.<sup>80</sup> Early in his ministry there he preached through the book of Romans. Arminius concluded that the Calvinistic doctrine of divine election was incorrect. In 1563 Arminius became a professor at a

<sup>79</sup> Berkhof, *History* 132-3.

<sup>80</sup> "Arminianism," *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., rev. 2005.

theological school in Leiden, the Netherlands. Controversy erupted over the teachings of Arminius there. His teaching differed from the teachings of the majority of Protestant churches concerning divine election and the extent of human sin.

Over the years, the conflict concerning Arminius' teaching spread throughout the churches of the Netherlands. Many students and pastors followed Arminius. Most did not. But Arminius died before a resolution of the matter. His followers advanced his views after his death. So the Dutch Reformed churches eventually convened a synod. The Synod of Dort stated the conclusions of Reformed churches concerning the teachings of Arminius.

## 2. The Teachings of Arminians

We will limit our summary of the teachings of Arminius. He and his followers challenged several doctrines of their churches. Yet this course concerns only the doctrine of man. Therefore we will investigate what Arminians said only about the effects of human sin.

The Synod of Dort wanted to bring the conflict concerning Arminianism to a close. So it gave a command to the Arminians (also called Remonstrants). The Remonstrants must state their views to the synod. The synod gave them two weeks to present their views in written form. We provide here their views concerning human nature and human will.

The Arminian view combined beliefs of the historic Christian church with beliefs of Pelagius. Agreeing with the church, they affirmed the sinfulness of the human heart. With Pelagius they affirmed the freedom of human will. Therefore, many often call them "Semipelagians," (part-Pelagians).

The Remonstrant statement declared the sinfulness of fallen man. It said:

Man does not have saving faith of himself, nor out of the powers of his free will, since in the state of sin he is able of himself and by himself neither to think, will, or do any good. . . . It is necessary therefore that by God in Christ through His Holy Spirit he be regenerated and renewed in intellect, affections, will, and in all his powers, so that he might be able to understand, reflect upon, will and carry out the good things which pertain to salvation. . . .

The will in the fallen state, before calling, does not have the power and the freedom to will any saving good. And therefore we deny that the freedom to will saving good as well as evil is present to the will in every state.<sup>81</sup>

These statements declare how Arminians understood the effects of Adam's sin on the human race. They refer to man's spiritual inability. Without God's grace man cannot

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<sup>81</sup> Quoted in *Crisis in the Reformed Churches*, ed. Peter Y. De Jong (Grand Rapids: Reformed Fellowship, Inc. 1968) 225-6.

trust in Christ. The sinful human heart without God's grace cannot choose good. Sinful man has no freedom to please God. Yet these statements on human sin do not give the complete Arminian view.

So we continue to summarize the Remonstrants' view of man. They declared that God gives universal help. The preached gospel gives grace to all its hearers.

The efficacious grace by which anyone is converted is not irresistible; and though God so influences the will by the Word and the internal operation of His Spirit that He both confers the strength to believe or supernatural powers, and actually causes man to believe – yet man is able of himself to despise that grace and not to believe, and therefore perish through his own fault. . . .

Although according to the most free will of God the disparity of divine grace is very great, nevertheless the Holy Spirit confers, or is ready to confer, as much grace to all men and to each man to whom the Word of God is preached as is sufficient for promoting the conversion of men in its steps. Therefore sufficient grace for faith and conversion falls to the lot not only of those whom God is said to will to save according to the decree of absolute election, but also of those who are not actually converted.<sup>82</sup>

According to the Remonstrants, God influences people to believe. The preached Word reverses the influence of Adam's sin. Due to the Word's power, people are able again to choose God by themselves.

Berkhof explains these and other Arminian beliefs concerning man's sin. He clarified the Arminian explanation of man's spiritual limitation. Arminians deny that Adam's first sin makes all men guilty. They also deny that sin turns us against God. Rather, sin merely weakens our ability to choose God.

The position taken by the Arminians is practically that of Semi-Pelagianism. While they do believe that Adam's transgression had an evil effect on the spiritual condition of all his descendants, they reject the doctrine of original sin as it was taught by the Churches of the Reformation. They maintain that the guilt of Adam's sin is not imputed to his descendants, though its pollution is passed on from father to son. This pollution they do not regard as sin in the proper sense of the word but only as a disease or a weakness. It does not bring man under a sentence of condemnation, but weakens his nature, so that he is incapable of attaining to eternal life, either by re-establishing himself in the favour of God or by discovering for himself a way of salvation. They do not believe in the total depravity of human nature, though they occasionally express themselves as if they do, but leave room for the free will of man in the material sense of the word, that is, as a natural power or ability in man to

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do something that is spiritually good, so that he can also in some measure prepare himself for turning to God and doing His will.<sup>83</sup>

In other words, Arminians do not acknowledge the full seriousness of sin. They are similar to Pelagians. Pelagians deny that we received Adam's guilt and pollution. Arminians deny that we received Adam's guilt. According to Pelagians, we sin because we follow bad influences. According to Arminians we sin because we are weak. According to Pelagians we need Christ to give an example of holiness. According to Pelagians we need Christ to give strength so we will obey God.

We will conclude this lesson below with a table which summarizes the views expressed in this course.

### 3. The Impact of Arminianism

The beliefs of Arminianism continue to live in the Christian church today. Pelagius and his followers were condemned by the Christian church. As a result, genuine Pelagianism existed more outside the Christian church than inside it. But Arminianism has influenced the church since it began.

The Synod of Dort examined the views of Arminianism. It ruled against them. Its statement, the *Canons of Dort*, quoted Scripture repeatedly against the teachings of the Arminians. For example, concerning the Arminian teaching that the human will is not damaged by sin, the *Canons* say,

This is a novel idea and an error and has the effect of elevating the power of free choice, contrary to the words of Jeremiah the prophet: The heart itself is deceitful above all things and wicked (Jer. 17:9); and of the words of the apostle: All of us also lived among them (the sons of disobedience) at one time in the passions of our flesh, following the will of our flesh and thoughts (Eph. 2:3).<sup>84</sup>

In point after point, the *Canons* summarize Arminian teachings. They provide Scripture's answer to each teaching. The *Canons of Dort* give firm correction to the teachings of Arminianism.

Churches in Europe did not follow these conclusions for very long. Arminian leaders left the Netherlands after the Synod of Dort. But soon afterwards churches in the Netherlands ordained Arminian preachers again. James I of England had encouraged the synod to meet. He also endorsed the conclusions of the Synod. But, due to political considerations in England, He disregarded the Synod's decisions. The French Reformed churches initially accepted the conclusions of the Synod. But their commitment to the conclusions did not last. From time to time, groups of Reformed churches departed from their large denominations. Their reasons often included the desire to return to the

<sup>83</sup> Berkhof, *History* 150-1.

<sup>84</sup> *Canons of Dort*, Third and Fourth Heads of Doctrine, Paragraph 3, 3 July 2008 <[http://www.reformed.org/documents/index.html?mainframe=http://www.reformed.org/documents/canons\\_of\\_dordt.html](http://www.reformed.org/documents/index.html?mainframe=http://www.reformed.org/documents/canons_of_dordt.html)>

teachings of the Synod of Dort. In their view they were returning to the teachings of the Bible.

Today many Protestant churches worldwide seem to follow both the teachings of the Arminius and the Reformed leaders. Often they settle for a compromise. They do not like all the views of Arminias. According to their understanding, Arminius minimized the power of sin on the human will. But they find Reformed teachings too extreme. In their view Reformed theology minimizes the power of human will. The author of this course upholds the Reformed view as the *Canons* explain it. Scripture calls sinners apart from Christ “dead” (Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13). According to Jesus, one needs a birth from God (John 1:12, 13; 3:3). Without it one cannot believe in Christ. People who believe this will repent and turn to Christ for eternal life.

## SUMMARY

We have studied two different theologies in this lesson. Both disagree with the views of this course concerning human sin.

We provide a table to clarify the differences of three different views. It provides our summary for this lesson.

### Views of Sin and Grace

	<b>What we receive from Adam’s sin</b>	<b>Why people sin today</b>	<b>How God’s grace affects us</b>
<i>View of Pelagius</i>	<u>Neither Adam’s pollution nor his guilt.</u>	<u>Bad Influences:</u> They yield to bad influences. Adam, for example, was a bad example for his descendants.	<u>God’s grace influences.</u> Grace works as an outside influence. God gave His word so people will hopefully decide to love God and live for His glory.
<i>View of Arminius</i>	<u>Adam’s pollution but not his guilt.</u>	<u>Weakness:</u> Sin weakens them. Without God’s Word people are too weak to choose to obey God.	<u>God’s grace gives strength.</u> Grace removes the weakness so people can freely choose to love God and live for His glory.
<i>View of Scripture</i>	<u>Both Adam’s pollution and his guilt.</u>	<u>Spiritual Death:</u> Sin makes them spiritually dead. Without God’s grace, they are unable to love God or to seek God’s glory.	<u>God’s grace gives new life.</u> In Adam we have dead hearts. God gives hearts which actively trust in Christ. Like Adam before sin, this new heart actively trusts in God’s Word.

## QUESTIONS

1. What did Manichaeism teach?
2. What teaching of Augustine did Pelagius disagree with?
3. When Pelagius believed the doctrine of human freedom, what two beliefs resulted?
4. What did Pelagius say a Christian is?
5. How did the church in general respond to Pelagianism?
6. What did the Remonstrants teach about the sinfulness of the human heart?
7. What, according to the Remonstrants, causes man's inability to do good?
8. What impact has Arminianism had on the Christian church?
9. According to the chart, how do Pelagianism and Arminianism differ?
10. What did this lesson teach you that you did not know before?



## CONCLUSION

We have studied Scripture to learn its doctrine of man. This doctrine is very important to us to know. It helps us understand our created importance. It also humbles us. Scripture teaches us about our profound problem of sin.

First, we studied the creation of man. God created us more important than other creatures on earth. God does not need mankind. But we need Him. Yet He created us for His glory. God created us to be a body-soul unity. This unity marks us as distinct creatures. Many of God's creatures have bodies, but not spirits. Many of God's creatures are spirits, but do not have bodies. The human race is unique. Also God created mankind in His image. This gives us the assignment to rule the earth for God's glory. All people continue to live as God's image. Yet we lost a narrow aspect of it. We lost the ability to give our lives to God. So Christ came to restore us to God's design. In Christ His followers are being remade in God's image again, in the narrow sense.

Lesson Four studied the Covenant of Works. In this arrangement God tested Adam's faithfulness to God. Due to God's appointment, Adam represented the entire human race. When he was tempted, Adam disobeyed God. Instantly the human race fell into sin.

In Lessons Five through Seven, we learned some of the consequences of Adam's sin. The human heart became very corrupt. Like uncontrollable weeds, sin shows up everywhere in a man's life and character. Also each human being inherited sin from Adam. We call this inherited sin "original sin." We inherited Adam's guilt and pollution. Every baby comes into the world inheriting the guilt of Adam's first sin. Also everyone has inherited Adam's sinful pollution, his tendency to pursue sin.

We also noted the relevance of the first seven lessons to Jesus Christ. Concerning our created humanity, Christ entered the world as a man. He was human in every way we are except for sin. Concerning our sin, Christ provided everything we need for salvation. He replaces the Christian's guilt with His own righteousness. He washes away the Christians sinful pollution. In the place of pollution, Christ gives the Christian holiness.

Finally, we noted the views concerning sin of Pelagius and Arminius. Both men have greatly influenced human history. Both also minimize the depths of human sin. According to Pelagius sin comes from bad influences. According to Arminius sin comes from a weak will. We have shown from earlier lessons that these views of humanity and sin are unbiblical. Other MINTS courses will show that how they misrepresent what Christ did to save sinners.



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## COORDINATOR'S MANUAL

### WELCOME

We have written this brief manual to assist coordinators; they play a significant role in the teaching of a MINTS course. If you are planning to work as coordinator of this course, we welcome and thank you. You will have a crucial part in training students who want to learn God's word. We highly value your work as coordinator. We hope that you recognize how the Lord can use your service to build up the kingdom of God in the lives of students.

This manual will inform you briefly what you need to know to assist students in taking this MINTS course. Since you plan to be a coordinator, we assume you are highly responsible and capable of working independently. However, since this is a course which MINTS provides, we also must ask you to meet certain expectations so that students can fulfill the course requirements.

The topic of the course makes the work of the coordinator extremely important. This course is called, "The Doctrine of Man." It is an exceedingly important topic for two basic reasons. First, the doctrine of man helps students understand the purpose of life, of human work, of human relationships, and of religion. Perhaps no other subject can explain better how God created us. Second, the doctrine of man helps students understand sin, our need for salvation, and Christ's accomplishment for sinners on the cross. This doctrine gives meaning to the Christian faith and the gospel of Christ. Though this course presents the Bible's teaching concerning man, it helps us know how to know God.

This course also gives attention to error. It leads students to recognize error which they may have heard about or even believed themselves. We hope that this course significantly shapes students to live as individuals made in God's image and as Christians being made in Christ's image.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The task of the coordinator begins long before the course is taught. The coordinator makes sure that students are recruited and registered. Students must understand that they need access to the internet. They should come knowing what to expect.

Also, before the course begins, the coordinator should arrange for a place where the course will be given. We ask coordinators to arrange a place where the teacher will stay and eat. From the time the teacher arrives at the airport to the time he leaves, the teacher is the guest of the study center.

The course progresses in two phases. The teacher leads during the time of orientation. The instructor leads during the remaining times of follow-up. The time which the teacher and the coordinator take up is somewhat flexible, but the orientation

and follow-up combined should last a total of 15 hours. The chart on the following page helps explain the teacher's and coordinator's roles.

The instructor is present during the first phase. In the sessions which the he leads, the teacher will introduce the students to the topic of the course, present the main ideas of the course, invite discussion, make sure the students understand their assignments and requirements, and assign a project topic for each student to pursue. During the second phase, the coordinator supervises the follow-up classes. The work of the coordinator during these classes will be defined under "Plan for the Four Classes."

Once the course begins, the work of the coordinator consists primarily of the following activities:

- a. Keep record of names and attendance for sessions and classes.
- b. Receive homework when it must be completed. Give points according to Requirement 2 in the course Introduction.
- c. Lead the group in discussing the questions and answers of the lessons.
- d. Listen to oral reading reports. Give points according to Requirement 3 in the course Introduction.
- e. Lead group in listening to oral project reports. Give points according to Requirement 4 in the course Introduction
- f. Hand the exam out and grade them according to answers given in this manual. Give points according to Requirement 5 in the course Introduction
- g. Hand out evaluations for students to fill and return them to the teacher.

After the course is finished, the coordinator will complete the necessary record keeping and report grades to the teacher.

A table summarizes course activities and most of the coordinator's responsibilities:

## MINTS Plan of Course Instruction

	Attendance	Lessons	Oral Reading Reports	Essay	Final Exam
<b>Orientation</b>	1 hour	Summarize 1 & 2			
	1 hour	Summarize 3 & 4	<b>Schedule</b> Oral Reading Reports		
	2 hours	Summarize 5 & 6		<b>Assign TTTR:</b> 1) Essay Topic, 2) Title Page, 3) Table of Contents page, & 4) Page of References.	
	1 hour	Summarize 7 & 8			Give <b>information</b> about final Exam
<b>Follow-Up</b>	2 hours	Q & A of 1 & 2	25% of students give reports. 5 min. report; 5 min. group discussion for each student.	<b>Correct TTTR</b>	
	2½ hours	Q & A of 3 & 4	25% of students give reports. 5 min. report; 5 min. group discussion for each student.	Student returns with <b>completed TTTR.</b>	
	2½ hours	Q & A of 5 & 6	25% of students give reports. 5 min. report; 5 min. group discussion for each student.	Each student presents his <b>1<sup>st</sup> draft</b> to another student. Other student gives a critique.	
	3 hours	Q & A of 7 & 8	25% of students give reports. 5 min. report; 5 min. group discussion for each student.	<b>Final draft</b> handed in to coordinator.	Student takes final exam. It is graded by a fellow student.
	In last hour the coordinator <b>adds all points</b> and gives each student his <b>final grade.</b>				

## PLAN FOR THE FOUR FOLLOW-UP SESSIONS

We suggest that the sessions which the coordinator leads follow the following plan.

### Session Number 1 (2 hours)

1. Welcome and open with prayer (5 min.).
2. Take attendance. One point for every class hour attended. If missed or late, lose one point (5 min.).
3. Check homework for Lessons 1-2. Two points for completed Lessons. Lose one point for late work (10 min.).
4. Discuss the questions and answers for Lessons 1-2 (30 min.).
5. Listen to the reading oral reports of 25% of the class. 5 minutes each (30 min.).
6. Correct the **TTTR** portions of the project essay: essay topic, title page, table of contents, and page of references; coordinator gives suggestions (30 min.).
7. Prepare for next class: remind what lessons to be done and who has oral reports (5 min.).
8. Close with prayer (5 min.).

### Session Number 2 (2½ hours)

1. Welcome and open with prayer (5 min.).
2. Take attendance (5 min.).
3. Check homework for Lessons 3-4. Two points for lessons complete. Lose one point for late work (10 min.).
4. Discuss the questions and answers for Lessons 3-4 (30 min.).
5. Listen to the reading oral reports of 25% of the class. 5 minutes each (30-min.).
6. Receive corrected project **TTTR** assignment from students. Discuss first draft of essay which will be due next time (60 min.).
7. Prepare for next class: remind what lessons to be done and who will present oral reports (5 min.).
8. Close with prayer (5 min.).

### Session Number 3 (2½ hours)

1. Welcome and open with prayer (5 min.).
2. Take attendance. One point for every class hour attended. If missed, a one-page report of missed hour to be submitted next class (5 min.).
3. Check homework for Lessons 5-6. Two points for completed lessons. Lose one point for late work (10 min.).
4. Discuss the questions and answers for Lessons 5-6 (30 min.).
5. Listen to the reading oral reports of 25% of the class. 5 minutes each. (30 min.).

6. Receive first draft of project essays. Each student read his essay to another. They offer each other advice. (60 minutes).
7. Prepare for next class: remind what lessons to be done and who will present oral reports (5 min).
8. Close with prayer (5 minutes).

#### **Session Number 4 (3 hours)**

1. Welcome and open with prayer (5 min).
2. Take attendance. One point for every class hour attended. If missed, a one-page report of missed hour to be submitted next class (5 min).
3. Check homework for Lessons 7-8. Two points for completed lessons. Lose one point for late work (10 min).
4. Discuss the questions and answers for Lessons 7-8 (30 min).
5. Listen to the reading oral reports of 25% of the class. 5 minutes each. (30 min.).
6. Receive final draft of student essays (5 min.).
7. Give final exam (45 min.).
8. Enter students' final scores for all course requirements (45 min.). (While coordinator is completing student scores, students will receive and fill out evaluation the course evaluation and pedagogical evaluation.)
9. Close with prayer (5 minutes).

#### **FORMS TO GIVE TO STUDENTS**

We provide the coordinator several documents which you need to complete your work. They include the following:

1. Lesson Questions and Answers: The coordinator should lead group discussions of the lesson questions and answers. We provide the answers which the teacher suggests; hopefully, this will help the coordinator guide the discussion so students will discover whatever answers they could not get on their own.
2. Student's Test. This is the test the coordinator will copy and give to the students for the final exam.
3. Course Evaluation. The coordinator should hand it to students during the last class. Students should fill it out and return it to the coordinator before they leave.
4. Pedagogical Evaluation of the Instructor. This is the form the teacher will fill out and send to the Academic Dean.
5. Class Record. The coordinator will complete this form and send it to the teacher.

## LESSON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Lesson One**

1. What did you learn from this chapter that you did not know before?  
*(Student will give his own answer.)*
2. What did the church during the Middle Ages teach about man?  
*(That God created man and that man had great meaning (importance) in the creation)*
3. Describe some of the new influences after the Middle Ages which gave people a different understanding of man's importance.  
*(The Copernican revolution said that the earth is not the center of the universe. New theories said that matter is eternal, not God. Materialism said that everything that exists is material.)*
4. Why did idol worshippers believe that mankind is important?  
*(They believed that the gods depended on man to stay alive.)*
5. Read Psalm 8 and list that things that give God glory.  
*(The words of children, the things we see in the heavens, the rule of man over creation, the animals)*
6. How does mankind rule the earth?  
*(We develop and plants seeds, invent new uses for electricity, make roads and build buildings, etc.)*
7. In what ways does Psalm 8 teach a view of man which is different from what other views teach?  
*(Psalm 8 shows man in relationship to God. Other views do not.)*
8. How does Christ's first coming show that man is important?  
*(Though we have sinned, Christ came to save mankind.)*
9. How will the Christian's future show that man is important?  
*(Christians will rule with Christ in glory.)*
10. How does the Christian's future restore to man what Adam lost?  
*(Christians will receive the good rule over God's creation that Adam lost.)*

**Lesson Two**

1. What does Genesis mean when it says that God formed man from the dust of the ground?  
*(God used the substance found in the earth to create man's body.)*

2. How does the Bible teach that God also gave man a soul?  
*(It says that God breathed into man the breath of life.)*
3. What point does the lesson make when it refers to man's unity?  
*(It says that man's body and soul form one human being, one personality. Nephesh sometimes refers merely to a united being.)*
4. What does trichotomy teach?  
*(That God made man in three parts: body, soul, and spirit.)*
5. How do trichotomists defend their beliefs from the Bible?  
*(They quote 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 4:12, and 1 Corinthians 2:14, 15 where three words are used to refer to a person.)*
6. How should the verses which the trichotomists use be explained?  
*(They do not refer to three parts of man; rather they use different words to refer to the same spiritual side of man.)*
7. What is the most serious error of trichotomy?  
*(It often says that the "spirit" is the only place where a person can relate to God. Also some say that man's spirit can become perfect in this life.)*
8. Name and explain the different views of the origin of the soul.  
*(Pre-existentism says that God created human souls long before their bodies were born. Traducianism says that a person's soul came from his parents' soul, just like the body does. Creationism teaches that God creates a new soul when a person is conceived.)*
9. What are some mistaken views about Jesus' body and soul?  
*(Apollinarius said that Jesus' divinity took the place of another man's spirit. Docetism said that Jesus only appeared to be human.)*
10. What was the most important teaching that you learned from this lesson?  
*(Each student will give his own answer.)*

### **Lesson Three**

1. What do "image" and "likeness" mean in Genesis 1?  
*(They mean almost the same thing. However "image" includes the idea of representation and "likeness" stresses similarity.)*
2. Which of these two words does the New Testament use to describe Christ?  
*(It says He came in the image of God and the likeness of man.)*
3. What job did God give mankind when He made us in His image?

*(God gave mankind the job of ruling the earth.)*

4. What do theologians mean when they refer to the image of God in the broader sense?  
*(They refer to the parts of the image of God which remained in man after Adam sinned. Everyone still has this part of God's image today. This includes the fact that we rule the earth.)*
5. Where does the Bible teach about the image of God in the broader sense?  
*(Genesis 9:6 and James 3:9, 10 are examples.)*
6. What do theologians mean when they refer to the image of God in the narrower sense?  
*(The positive goodness and holiness which Adam lost when he sinned.)*
7. Where does the Bible teach about the image of God in the narrower sense?  
*(Ephesians 4:24 and Colossians 2:10 are examples.)*
8. What does it mean that God makes the Christian in Christ's likeness?  
*(That God restores the Christian to have the true knowledge and holiness which Adam first had.)*
9. What teachings are included when we say that Christ is the image of God?  
*(Christ is perfect man. Christ came to represent His Father and He rules over everything for God's glory.)*
10. What did this lesson teach that you did not know before?  
*(Each student will give his own answer.)*

#### **Lesson Four**

1. What does the prophecy of Hosea teach about the covenant of works?  
*(Hosea refers to the covenant that Adam broke.)*
2. What other names have been used for the covenant of works?  
*(Some include: "The Covenant of Nature," "The Covenant of life," The Edenic Covenant," and The Adamic Administration.")*
3. Why is God the Lord of the covenant of works?  
*(God gave it to Adam, and God set the terms.)*
4. What purpose did God give to the Garden of Eden?  
*(He made the Garden as His home on earth. It provided a place for God to enjoy fellowship with man.)*
5. Explain what the two trees in the Garden of Eden represented.

*(The tree of life represented eternal life which God offered man. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil presented the principle of testing)*

6. What steps did Satan take when he tempted Eve?  
*(He used a clever animal, the serpent. He planted doubt in Eve's mind; then he directly contradicted God.)*
7. How did Adam die on the day that he first sinned?  
*(He died spiritually; he lost his fellowship with God.)*
8. In what ways was Christ similar to Adam?  
*(Both received testing; both represented many other people.)*
9. In what ways was Christ unlike to Adam?  
*(Christ obeyed God when He was tested. He gave life where Adam gave death.)*
10. What teaching in this lesson was most difficult for you?  
*(Each student will give his own answer.)*

### **Lesson Five**

1. Explain what the first three consequences of sin are.  
*(Adam and Eve felt ashamed of their guilt. They were afraid of God. They blamed others for the first sin.)*
2. What punishments did God give after the first sin?  
*(He cursed the serpent and the devil. He said that Christ will defeat the devil. He punished the woman with great difficulty in her family. He punished the man by making his work very painful and frustrating.)*
3. Explain at least three ways from Genesis how sin spread.  
*(Sin spread to all people, in all places, and in the depths of the human heart.)*
4. According to this lesson, what is the human heart?  
*(The heart contains a person's deepest thoughts, loves, and fears. Everything we do expresses our hearts.)*
5. What do we mean when we say that sin arises from the heart?  
*(It means that the human heart is sinful. When we sin we are following the desires of our hearts.)*
6. According to the lesson, what does sin include?  
*(Sin includes both thoughts and actions which disobey God.)*
7. What is the most basic motive of sin?  
*(Sin deeply opposes God.)*

8. According to the lesson what is the unpardonable sin?  
*(It refuses God's grace and defends refusing God's grace. People who commit this sin continue in it with great stubbornness. )*
9. What did Christ do for sinners?  
*(Christ received the punishment for sinners' sins. By receive God's curse on sin, Christ offers forgiveness to all who repent and trust in Him for forgiveness.)*
10. What teaching in this lesson most impressed you?  
*(Each student will give his own answer.)*

### **Lesson Six**

1. What does "original sin" mean?  
*(It includes the sinful state and condition which we receive from Adam and were born with.)*
2. What does imputation mean?  
*(It means credit. When God's imputes Adam's sin to us, He credits us with that sin.)*
3. Where does the thought of Romans 5:12 get completed?  
*(Verses 18 and 19)*
4. Which sin does Romans 5:12-19 refer to?  
*(It refers to Adams first sin.)*
5. How is Adam related to us in Romans 5:12-19?  
*(Adam represented us when he was tested.)*
6. What does Romans 5:12-19 teach about the imputation of Adam's sin?  
*(It teaches that God places on everyone's account the first sin that Adam committed.)*
7. What do "mediate imputation" and "realism" teach?  
*("Mediate imputation" says that we became sinful and therefore became guilty. "Realism" says that the whole human race was somehow really present when Adam sinned; therefore, his sin makes us sinful.)*
8. Summarize how at least two other places in Scripture refer to the idea of imputation.  
*(In the sacrifices in Leviticus the person's sin was imputed to the sacrificed animal. In Psalm 32 God promises to bless the person against whom He does not impute iniquity.)*
9. Explain in as many ways as you can that the work of Christ involves imputation.

*(God imputed the Christian's sin to Christ. God imputes Christ's righteousness to the Christian.)*

10. What did you learn in this lesson that you did not know before?  
*(Each student will give his own answer.)*

### **Lesson Seven**

1. What does "original pollution" refer to?  
*(It refers to the spiritual pollution—the all-present effect of sin—which everyone received from Adam.)*
2. What does "total depravity" mean?  
*(It means that sin has corrupted every part of the human personality.)*
3. Explain what we mean by "total inability."  
*(It means that every sinner is unable to please God without Jesus' grace.)*
4. What did Martin Luther say about the idea of human freedom?  
*(He said that the sinful person's will is enslaved—not free—to merit God's approval with good works.)*
5. In what way is human freedom limited by sin?  
*(People make choices, but they cannot choose to love God without the changing effects of Christ's grace)*
6. What do we mean by "actual sins?"  
*(The sins we think or do in our own lives)*
7. What kinds of sin are included when we refer to "actual sins?"  
*(They include actions, thoughts, and desires.)*
8. What does God use to restrain our sin?  
*(Some of God's restraints include human government, a person's conscience, and fear of punishment.)*
9. Why can Christ save people who are polluted by sin?  
*(Christ was never sinful. Being pure, He could save those we are not.)*
10. What did you learn from this lesson that you did not know before?  
*(Each student will give his own answer.)*

### **Lesson Eight**

1. What did Manichaeism teach?

- (It taught that good and evil are two equally strong and eternal forces. Good will never overcome evil.)*
2. What teaching of Augustine did Pelagius disagree with?  
*(Pelagius did not like the teaching that God must change a person before that person can love God.)*
  3. When Pelagius believed the doctrine of human freedom, what two beliefs resulted?  
*(He also believed that Adam's sin did not make us sinful. He also denied that God's grace works inside a person. He said that God's grace consists only of external influences.)*
  4. What did Pelagius say a Christian is?  
*(He said that a Christian is a person who follows Christ in everything. He did not believe that a Christian is a person who is changed by God's grace.)*
  5. How did the church in general respond to Pelagianism?  
*(The church rejected the teachings of Pelagius.)*
  6. What did the Remonstrants teach about the sinfulness of the human heart?  
*(They said that the human heart is sinful. But this sinfulness consists of weakness. When God helps a person choose Christ, but does not change that person, then the person will freely choose Christ.)*
  7. What, according to the Remonstrants, causes man's inability to do good?  
*(They say that man is weakened because he inherited Adams sinful tendencies. They do not believe that we inherited Adam's guilt.)*
  8. What impact has Arminianism had on the Christian church?  
*(Arminianism has continued to have a strong impact. Often churches accept contradictory ideas because they follow Arminianism part-way.)*
  9. According to the chart, how to Pelagianism and Arminianism differ?  
*(They disagree on whether or not we received Adam's sinful tendencies ("pollution"), on who people sin today and on what God's grace does for sinners. In general, Pelagius said that sin arises because of bad influences while Arminians say that sin arises because we are weak. But neither says that the sinful heart naturally opposes God.)*
  10. What did this lesson teach you that you did not know before?  
*(Each student will give his own answer.)*

## Test – The Doctrine of Man

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Why did idol worshippers believe that mankind is important?
- They believed that the gods depended on man to stay alive.
  - They said that mankind did not need the gods.
  - They said that people live longer than the gods.
  - They believed that all people are gods.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. How does mankind rule the earth?
- People have used the soil to build palaces.
  - People may destroy anything on earth that they wish.
  - People develop and plant seeds; they make inventions.
  - People do not need to work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. What does Genesis mean when it says that God formed man from the dust of the ground?
- God thought that creating man was an unpleasant job.
  - God used the substance found in the earth to create man's body.
  - God wanted man to plant crops in dusty fields.
  - When God created man, the man was very dirty.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. What does trichotomy teach?
- That God is three: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
  - That God tried three times to create man.
  - That God made man's body to have three basic parts.
  - That God made man in three parts: body, soul, and spirit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. What was the mistaken view of Docetism?
- Docetism said that Jesus' humanity included both His body and His soul.
  - Docetism said that Jesus only appeared to be God.
  - Docetism said that Jesus only appeared to be human.
  - Docetism said that Jesus was evil.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. How does the New Testament describe Christ?
- It says he came in the likeness of God and the image of man.
  - It says He came in the likeness of both God and man.
  - It says He came in the image of God and the likeness of man.
  - It says He came in the image of both God and man.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. What does it mean that God makes the Christian in Christ's likeness?
- God restores the Christian to have the true knowledge and holiness which Adam first had.
  - God makes the Christian perfect in this life like Christ was.
  - God restores complete power to the Christian.
  - God makes the Christian's body invisible.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. What other names have been used for the covenant of works?
- The Covenant of Sin and the Covenant of Life.
  - The Covenant of Love and the Adamic Joy.
  - The Garden of Eden and Eternal Life.
  - The Covenant of Nature and the Covenant of Life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Explain what the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represent?
- The principle of eternal life.
  - The principle of testing.
  - The principle of death.
  - The principle of temptation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. According to lesson 4, in what ways was Christ unlike Adam?
- Adam had a body and Christ had a soul.
  - Adam was only human and Christ was only divine.
  - Christ obeyed God when Satan tempted him, and Adam disobeyed God when Satan tempted him.
  - Christ was created and Adam lives forever.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. 4. According to lesson five, what is the human heart?
- The source of a person's thoughts, loves, and fears.
  - The part in the body which pumps the blood.
  - A person's ability to show kindness.
  - The first sin a person commits.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. According to lesson 5 what is the unpardonable sin?
- A person's refusal to forgive himself.
  - A sin which a person cannot see.
  - The only sin that Adam committed.
  - A continual refusal of God's grace.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. What does "original sin" mean?
- A person's original temptation.
  - The first sin a person notices.
  - The sinful condition and state that we receive from Adam.
  - The first sin in the New Testament.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. How is Adam related to us in Romans 5:12-19?
- Adam's sin weakened us.
  - Adam is **not** related to us.
  - Adam represented us.
  - Adam became our example.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. What does "realism" teach?
- That the whole human race was somehow present when Adam sinned.
  - That Adam really sinned.
  - That a real serpent tempted Adam and Eve.
  - That the first sin was really serious.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. What does "total depravity" mean?
- That Adam's sin was totally wrong.
  - That sin has corrupted every part of the human personality.
  - That Christ was totally innocent.
  - That sin takes a total lifetime to get over.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Why can Christ save people who are polluted by sin?
- Because many people are not as polluted as they could be.
  - Because pollution can be cleansed by someone who is eternal.
  - Because Christ was polluted too.
  - Because Christ was pure and free of sin.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. What teaching of Augustine did Pelagius disagree with?
- The teaching that good and evil are equally strong.
  - The teaching that sin only weakens a person.
  - The teaching that Christ did not rise from the dead.
  - The teaching that God must change a person before that person can love God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Why, according to the Remonstrants, is man unable to do good?
- Because everyone wants to be independent.
  - Because everyone has inherited Adam's guilt.
  - Because everyone has inherited Adam's physical body.
  - Because everyone has inherited Adam's sinful tendencies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. According to the chart in lesson 8, how do Pelagianism and Arminianism differ?
- Pelagius was wrong, and Arminianism was correct.
  - Pelagianism says sin arises from bad influences; Arminianism says sin arises because we are weak.
  - Pelagianism believes everyone is perfect; Arminianism says everyone sins.
  - Pelagianism is based on the Bible; Arminianism is not.

## COURSE EVALUATION BY THE STUDENTS

Name of the course \_\_\_\_\_ Course time/schedule \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Instructor being evaluated \_\_\_\_\_

Place where the course was given \_\_\_\_\_

Please evaluate according to the following criteria.

1. Was the Instructor prepared to teach the course?
  - not good \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
  - regular \_\_\_\_\_
  - good \_\_\_\_\_
  - excellent \_\_\_\_\_
2. The course requirements were explained:
  - not good \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
  - regular \_\_\_\_\_
  - good \_\_\_\_\_
  - excellent \_\_\_\_\_
3. How important is this course for your service to the Lord?
  - not good \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
  - regular \_\_\_\_\_
  - good \_\_\_\_\_
  - excellent \_\_\_\_\_
4. The Instructor's efforts to listen to your questions and seek to answer them were:
  - not good \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
  - regular \_\_\_\_\_
  - good \_\_\_\_\_
  - excellent \_\_\_\_\_
5. The availability of course materials was:
  - not good \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
  - regular \_\_\_\_\_
  - good \_\_\_\_\_
  - excellent \_\_\_\_\_
6. To what extent was this course taught from a Biblical and Christian perspective?
  - not good \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
  - regular \_\_\_\_\_
  - good \_\_\_\_\_
  - excellent \_\_\_\_\_
7. Was the course material relevant for your life's context?
  - Not good \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
  - in some ways \_\_\_\_\_
  - in many ways \_\_\_\_\_
  - very much so \_\_\_\_\_
8. What were the classroom conditions like?
  - not good \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
  - regular \_\_\_\_\_
  - good \_\_\_\_\_
  - excellent \_\_\_\_\_
9. The costs for the course are:
  - not good \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
  - regular \_\_\_\_\_
  - good \_\_\_\_\_
  - excellent \_\_\_\_\_
10. Is this course worth teaching to others?
  - Not good \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
  - maybe \_\_\_\_\_
  - yes \_\_\_\_\_
  - definitely so \_\_\_\_\_

## PEDAGOGICAL EVALUATION OF THE INSTRUCTOR

Name of the Instructor \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Were you able to observe that the Instructor, as well as the students, was learning?
  - Yes
  - No
  - I do not know
2. In your opinion, what did the Instructor learn during the course?
3. Did the Instructor come to the class well prepared to teach this course? In what ways was he/she prepared or not prepared?
4. Did the Instructor adjust his/her teaching method to the learning style of the students?
  - Yes
  - No
  - I do not know
5. Make a list of five things you have learned during this course
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.
6. Is the Instructor knowledgeable in the subject matter he/she is teaching about?
  - Yes
  - No
  - I do not know
7. In what way has this course caused you to become more involved in the service of Christ?
8. Did the Instructor establish good communication with the students?
  - Yes
  - No
  - I do not know
9. Identify these points of communication:
10. Has the Instructor shown that his/her teaching is not only "head knowledge" but that it has reached his/her heart?
  - Yes
  - No
  - I do not know
11. How has the Instructor shown that his/her teachings come from the heart?
12. Were the teachings motivational?
  - Yes
  - No
  - I do not know

13. What were you motivated to do as a result of taking this course?
14. Were both the Instructors and students prepared to take this course?  
 Yes  
 No  
 I do not know
15. How much time in class were spent in this course? \_\_\_\_\_ hrs.
16. How much time did it take you to do the homework? \_\_\_\_\_ hrs. (not counting special project or extra readings)
17. How much time did you spend completing the extra readings? \_\_\_\_\_ hrs. How many pages did you read? \_\_\_\_\_
18. How much time did it take to do the special project? \_\_\_\_\_ hrs.
19. At what educational level did you take the course?  
 Certificate  
 Bachelor  
 Master
20. What tuition did you pay for the course? \_\_\_\_\_ How much did books and materials cost?  
\_\_\_\_\_
21. Would you recommend this course to another student?  
 Yes  
 No  
 I do not know
22. Were you prepared to teach this course to others?  
 Yes  
 No  
 I do not know
23. Mention five ways in which you were prepared in this course to teach others.  
1.  
2.  
3.  
4.
24. What suggestions would you make to improve this course?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
25. If you were to teach this course, where and when would you do so?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you.

