

ORIGINAL SIN

Introduction

There are many ways of classifying sins. From the catechism and public confession we can think of sins of thought, word, and deed. Besides sins of commission which we 'do', there are sins of omission as James says. For him who knows to do it and does it not it is sin. 4:17 John tells us that there are sins 'unto death' or mortal and 'not unto death'. 1 Jn. 5:16-17 And there is the division of sin into – actual and original. Actual sins are easy enough to spot as we see them and hear them. Original sin though is beneath the surface. This term 'original' is not in the Bible but used by Christians to explain that which came originally into Eden with our ancient parents when they sinned against God. This is now passed down from generation to generation within people. It is not simply a genetic defect, but a dreadful ingrown problem that we cannot get rid of until we leave this earth for heaven.

The Heart of the Problem

Original sin is within man and pushes out then the actual sin. Our Lord says that it is out of the heart that all sorts of sins proceed. Mk. 7:21-23 This is nothing new. Jeremiah said that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it? 17:9 It is as if when we look within ourselves we see a deep, dark pit the bottom of which we cannot see. We cannot understand how deep it is/how bad it is, this inborn sin. This is why we need the Word to reveal to us all we need to know about it. David also looks within himself and declares, who can discern his errors? Ps. 19:12 David's son in Ecclesiastes also pictures that which is within us when he says that the hearts of men are full of evil, and madness is in their hearts while they live. 9:3 Here we see the sinful human heart with this original sin as a cesspool of filth that overflows. As Jesus says, out of the heart proceed...

Not part of our Original Nature

Rom. 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"

Rom. 5:19, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners"

1 Cor. 15:22 "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

While this picture of how it is within us is bleak and black, we want to remember that this sinful flesh, this corruption within us was not part of our original nature. When Adam and Eve were created in Eden they did not have this. Through the devil's deceit he inveigled them. The sinful thought of not trusting God and His Word then gave birth to the actual sin of eating of the fruit forbidden to them.

When God creates faith in us He implants the new nature which hearkens back to the original which Adam and Eve had. Put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. Eph. 4:24 We have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Col. 3:10 So we have within us the old sinful flesh and the new man with a constant struggle following.

We should remember though that the old sinful flesh with our original sin is not part of our original nature nor will it be. But on this earth it is so inextricably bound up with us that we cannot separate the two until there will be the glorious release when we go to heaven. Now it is as when a vine grows around a wire fence. Over time the wire and the vine are so bound up together that you cannot separate the two without killing the vine and damaging the fence. So our sinful flesh is bound up with our new nature that we cannot separate them now so that we are holy and perfect. This is imputed to us now by Christ's death on the cross which we receive by faith. Or think about when you have clean water and

then a colored water is mixed in. You still have original water in the glass, yet the colored water is so mixed in that you cannot separate it out. So with our sinful nature and the new man. Only at the end will there be the precipitating out.

Now there is within us a mighty struggle that goes on. Will we produce the fruit of the Spirit or the works of the flesh. In Rom. 7:14-25 Paul explains this monumental daily struggle. ...For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that

do it, but sin which dwells within me... Ah, yes that which we call original sin. We need the Word and His Spirit to overcome this which we all have, indwelling sin. Without God working within us it would be a total frustration and futile effort against indwelling sin. As Paul said, Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law (or rule) of sin.

From Sire to Son the Bane Descends And Over All the Curse Impends

One old hymn has it clearly stated, from sire to son the bane descends. This original sin comes with the creation of the human nature in the womb. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Ps. 51:5 And again in Ps. 58:3 The wicked go astray from the womb, they err from their birth speaking lies. While Ps. 58 speaks of the 'wicked' we see in Ps. 51 that it applies to us all. Due to this original sin within us we see the importance of infant baptism. God gave us the sacrament of baptism that through it there is a washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit as Paul teaches. Titus 3:5 And as Peter says baptism saves us. 1 Pet. 3:21 And as Peter says it is not simply for a removal of dirt from the body, but an appeal to God for a clear conscience. It works within man against the original sin which lurks there.

Backsliding

Scripture pictures over and over the power of indwelling sin. For instance there is the sin against the Holy Spirit. Mk. 3:28-30 Man is capable of taking this horrible route because of the corrupted nature. There are two references in Hebrews that also remind us of this.

It is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the Word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they then commit apostasy, since they crucify the Son of God on their own account and hold him up to contempt...Heb.6:4-8 Think of that evil power within, original sin, and what it can wreak.

For if we sin deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful prospect of judgment, a fury of fire which will consume...How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by the man who has spurned the Son of God, and profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace?...Heb. 10:26-31 Just look what that indwelling sin can propel man into. This is very strong evidence of the evil power within.

In Revelation John was given visions of the judgments God would send upon the earth to move men to turn from their original and actual sin. But that fortress of original sin can withstand these. In 16:8-9 with the fourth bowl of God's wrath we see the physical judgments falling on this earth, but men cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues, and they did not repent and give Him the glory. With the fifth bowl of God's wrath we see spiritual judgments sent upon this earth that were to work within man to bring him to turn from his evil ways. 16:10-11 But the response from within was that they cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores and did not repent of their deeds.

Evidence Is There

It is amply proved what is within man. We look at the world itself and the Word that explains, and we see the original sin in man. Out of the heart... There is a wicked resilience to it. When you take a cork and plunge it beneath the water's surface, you know what will happen. It will bob up again. It will inevitably resurface, and so it is with original sin. It will show itself with the actual sins. These do not come from nowhere. They have an origin.

In the field we have a plant called morning glory or creeping Jenny. This is a plant that has deep roots.

You can pull out the plant, but it will grow back because it is so deeply in the soil. Thus sin is so deeply in us that no matter how often we cut off doing our actual sins, there will come forth again and again that from below.

Actual sin is clearly seen, just as the tip of an iceberg is. But most of the iceberg is below the surface. And it is against the submerged iceberg that ships will collide with and sink. This reminds us of the danger of the submerged original sin within man.

Conclusion

It is only by the Gospel that comes from without that sin can be overcome and atoned for. Praise God for His indwelling Spirit who works with our spirit. Praise God that the Christ Himself dwells within our heart and is now our heart's affection. Paul expressed his gratitude for this at the end of Romans eight. Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn?...Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? In Romans five he acknowledges that power that works within us that overcomes even the sinful flesh. ...God's love has been poured into your hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. 5:5

References

LUTHER wrote during his lecture on Psalm 51 in 1532 "The proper subject of theology is man is guilty of sin and condemned, and God is the Justifier and Saviour of man the sinner." If there is a weakness in original sin there will come a weakness in justification.

The Augsburg Confession of 1530

Article II: Of Original Sin.

1] Also they teach that since the fall of Adam all men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with 2] concupiscence; and that this disease, or vice of origin, is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Ghost.

3] They condemn the Pelagians and others who deny that original depravity is sin, and who, to obscure the glory of Christ's merit and benefits, argue that man can be justified before God by his own strength and reason.

The Brief Statement of 1932

Of Man and Sin

We teach that the first man was not brutelike nor merely capable of intellectual development, but that God created man in His own image, Gen. 1:26, 27; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10, that is, in true knowledge of God and in true righteousness and holiness and endowed with a truly scientific knowledge of nature, Gen. 2:19-23.

We furthermore teach that sin came into the world by the fall of the first man, as described [sic] Gen. 3. By this Fall not only he himself, but also his natural offspring have lost the original knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, and thus all men are sinners already by birth, dead in sins, inclined to all evil, and subject to the wrath of God, Rom. 5:12, 18; Eph. 2:1-3. We teach also that men are unable, through any efforts of their own or by the aid of culture and science, to reconcile themselves to God and thus conquer death and damnation.

Mueller's "My Church and Others"

VII. OF SIN

WE BELIEVE (a) that sin entered into the world by the fall of our first parents; (b) that by this fall not only our first parents, but also all their natural descendants have lost their original righteousness; (c) that therefore all men are by nature dead in sin and children of wrath; (d) that men cannot, by any efforts of their own, or any good works, progress, or culture become reconciled to God and overcome death and damnation; (e) but that all men are saved by grace through faith in Christ Jesus, the divine Redeemer of the world.

a) Gen. 3, 1-7. Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the tree of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said: Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

1. I John 3, 8. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.

James 1, 13, 14. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

(Romans 5:12 By one man sin entered into the world.)

b and c) Eph. 2, 1-3 And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin, wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Gen. 8, 21. The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.

John 3: 5-7 Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

d) Rom. 7, 18. For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

James 2, 10. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

2 Cor. 3,5. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.

(Psalm 130:3 If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?)

e) Rom. 3, 28. Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Rom. 8, 1. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Rom. 5, 16-18. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all justification of life.

WE REJECT as unscriptural the following teachings:

1. That God so created man that he had to sin: Calvinistic Churches. Ps. 5, 5; John 3, 16; I John 2,16; (Deut. 32:4; Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1-3).
2. That the sin of our first parents consisted in the transgression of the command of chastity: Shakers, Christian Israelites. Gen. 3, 6.
3. That the Scriptural account of the fall of man is not an actual historical report by an allegory: Church of the New Jerusalem, Modernists. Rom 5, 12; I Cor. 15, 21, 22; I Cor. 11,3.
4. That original sin is not the total depravity of the whole human nature, but only a weakening of the free will and the loss of the additional gifts of grace: Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox Church. John 3, 5, 6; Eph. 2: 1; Rom 3, 23.
5. That there is no original sin, and that human nature has not been entirely corrupted and perverted by original sin: Unitarians, Arminians, Churches of the New Jerusalem, Campbellites, Adventists, Modernists. Rom 7, 18; Gen. 8, 21; Rom. 5, 12; (Ps. 14:1; Matt. 7:17-18; Eph. 4:22).
6. That there is no sin in the true sense of the word: Christian Scientists. See passages above.
7. That concupiscence, that is, all evil lusts and desires in the regenerate are not sin: Roman Catholic Church. Rom. 7< 7; Gal. 5< 17; James 1, 15.
8. That Mary was not conceived and born in sin: Roman Catholic Church. John 3, 6; Job. 14, 4; Luke 1, 46-47.
9. That on account of Adam's sin man has not become subject to the wrath and condemnation of God: Unitarians, Arminians, Mennonites, Quakers, Shakers, Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists, Universalist, Churches of the New Jerusalem, Modernists. Eph. 2, 3; Gen. 2, 17; Rom. 5, 12.
10. That some sins are in themselves venial while others are in themselves mortal: Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox church, Socinians, Arminians, James 2, 10; Gal. 3, 10; Matt. 5, 18,19; (Ezek. 18:20).
11. That children are without actual sin: Unitarians, Campbellites, Mormons, Adventists, free Will Baptists, Arminians, Mennonites, Modernists. Gen. 6, 5; Ps. 58, 3; (51:5); Isa. 48,8.

12. That some sins are punished only temporally and not eternally: Roman Catholic Church. Deut. 27, 26; Gal.3, 10; Matt. 12, 36.

13. That man in spite of the fall, has retained his free will and also some power to do good: Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox Church, Arminians, Methodists, Evangelical Congregational, Moravians, Campbellites, Presbyterians, Mennonites, Free Will Baptist, Unitarians, Church of the New Jerusalem, Spiritists, Quakers, Shakers, Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists. 2 Cor. 3, 5; Eph. 2, 1; Rom. 3, 11. 12; (7:18).

NOTE: Today the Scriptural doctrine of original sin is generally denied by modern Sectarian churches, which are thoroughly corrupted by rationalism. Even some Fundamentalists deny this doctrine.