

# Theology of the Westminster Standards

Week 05 – The Fall, Sin, & Punishment

**6.1.** Our first parents, being seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, sinned, in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin, God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory.

- Latter development in Reformed theology – “Covenant of Works” » Probationary period in Garden

**6.2.** By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body.

- Total depravity – “defiled by sin in every aspect of their being” (Letham)

**6.3.** They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed; and the same death in sin, and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation.

Q. 22. *Did all mankind fall in that first transgression?*

A. The covenant being made with Adam as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in that first transgression.

- Imputation/Original Sin – “God made a covenant with Adam as a public person, whereby he acted not only for himself but for everyone descended from him by natural generation. The connection between Adam and the human race is established by covenant but runs along natural lines formed by ordinary generation while Adam was a public person, the relationship is not explicitly described as legal but genetic. In view of the widespread, but not universal, acceptance at the assembly of the immediate imputation of Adam’s sin this forensic relationship is clearly in view, but it is couched in language that allows for the idea the contraction of sin by Adams posterity is grounded in a realistic manner based on natural descent.” (Letham)

Romans 5:12; 15-19 – <sup>12</sup>Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned <sup>15</sup>But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. <sup>16</sup>And the free gift is not like the result of that one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. <sup>17</sup>For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. <sup>19</sup>For as by the one man’s

disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.<sup>1</sup>

**6.4.** From this 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.

- Connection between original corruption and \*actual sin\*

Q. 24. *What is sin?*

A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, any law of God, given as a rule to the reasonable creature.

**6.5.** This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated; and although it be, through Christ, pardoned, and mortified; yet both itself, and all the motions thereof, are truly and properly sin.

- Corruption remains even in the Christian. Pardoned (justification) and mortified (sanctification) yet remaining and sin. (Letham)

**6.6.** Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal.

“All sin is a transgression of the law of God and so it brings guilt upon the sinner, leading to the wrath of God, the curse of the law, death, and all spiritual, temporal, and eternal miseries for mankind in general.” (Letham)

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<sup>1</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 5:15–19.