

The Formula of Concord

Lesson Two

Original Sin

Introduction

“Since within the past twenty-five years a number of divisions have occurred among some of the Theologians of the Augsburg Confession on account of the Interim and for other reasons, we wanted to set forth and explain our faith and confession unequivocally, clearly, and distinctly in theses and antitheses, opposing the true doctrine to the false doctrine, so that the foundation of divine truth might be made apparent in every article and that every incorrect, dubious, suspicious, and condemned doctrine might be exposed, no matter where or in what books it might be found or who may have said it or supported it. We did this so that we might thereby faithfully forewarn everyone against the errors contained here and there in the writings of certain theologians, lest anyone be misled by the high regard in which these theologians were held. This explanation will enable the pious reader, as far as is necessary, to compare our present position with the aforementioned doctrinal writings. (Preface)

THE BIBLICAL TEACHING OF “ORIGINAL SIN” HAS NEVER BEEN POPULAR

- *Pelagianism* (Named after Pelagius – 5th Century British Monk)
 - Says man is generally _____ and possesses power to choose between what is spiritually good and what is spiritually bad. Says man is able to _____ in conversion
- *Semi-pelagianism*
 - Says God _____ grace into a person, enabling them to work out salvation through life of love and good deeds.

NOTHING MORE THAN AGE-OLD HERESY (OPINIO LEGIS) OF _____

Original Sin - What does God Say

_____ from our forefathers and has caused the loss of the _____ in spiritual things. (Genesis 5:3; Romans 5:12-14)

Exists in human nature from the _____ of life. (Psalm 51:5; John 3:6)

Is the absence of _____. (Romans 7:18)

It is _____ against God. (Romans 8:7; Colossians 1:21)

Disposes human nature toward _____ and makes it _____ to do any spiritual good. (Romans 8:8; Genesis 8:21)

Makes man spiritually _____ and worthy of _____. (Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1,3)

Caused such corruption that man's heart and mind cannot fully perceive it; it must be recognized by _____. (Jeremiah 17:9; 1 Corinthians 2:13,14).

It remains a powerful force even in the lives of the _____, in whom it is overcome only by the working of Christ and the Holy Spirit. (John 1:29; Romans 7:24,25; 1 Corinthians 12:3)

Historical Background

- Was there ever a time when you were in a situation where you exaggerated a point in order to win an argument? Did it get you in trouble?

FLACIUS	debated	STRIGEL
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Fallen man is _____ in spiritual things▪ Countered by saying "Original sin not an accident, but that original sin is a substance of man<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Saying that _____▪ _____ to take back what he said when he was shown to be wrong		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Argued _____ – said free will an essential part of man and not destroyed by fall into sin▪ Stated that original sin was a mere accident in man<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Used term to bolster his point that human beings are _____▪ Evil is something added into a person's substance _____<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Thus, original sin could be overcome and removed like a spot of dirt on one's face

The Controversy

IS ORIGINAL SIN AN ACCIDENS OR SUBSTANTIA?

- Accidens - _____
- Substantia - _____

Search the Scriptures

- What work do Job and David confess that God did for him and every human being? (Job 10:8; Psalm 139:14)
- Flacius insisted that after the fall, sin is a person's substance, that is, sin makes a person what he or she is. According to Job 10:8 & Psalm 139:14, why can't that be true?
- What does this passage tell us about Jesus? (Hebrews 2:14-17)
- If Flacius was right and flesh was the same as sin, what would that do to our justification and salvation?

"We also believe, teach, and confess that we must preserve this difference very carefully because the teaching that there is supposedly no difference between our corrupted human nature and original sin is contrary to the chief articles of our Christian faith on creation, redemption, sanctification, and the resurrection of our flesh, and it cannot coexist with them" (Epitome; 1:3).

- Creation
- Redemption
- Sanctification
- Resurrection

The Controversy

IS ORIGINAL SIN A COMPLETE LOSS OF THE IMAGE OF GOD AND SPIRITUAL POWERS?

- Why does a denial that original sin has completely corrupted us change the Bible's teaching about God's role in conversion?
 - Without this understanding...
 -
 -
 -
- How does a proper understanding of original sin serve to show God's grace all the more clearly?
 - Moves us to...
 -
 -
- Agree or Disagree? Original sin is taken away by Christ?

Application

This article...

- Guards against equating original sin with our _____. It makes the distinction between our flesh and the sin that has corrupted it.
 - This would imply God as Creator was _____ for fallen man
 - Or this would make _____ a creator of substance in man

This article...

- Guards the seriousness of _____. Original sin is a complete depravity of our nature. We have no spiritual powers left. We must rely on the Lord alone.
 - This is what Flacius was trying to do, but went too far
 - The Bible stresses the total depravity of man
 - Speaks of sin as "intruding" on human nature, not essential part of it
 - Stain of sin did twist body, soul and mind so that man cannot work change or even assist in that change.

- *Semi-pelagianism* - Says God infuses grace into a person, enabling them to work out salvation through life of love and good deeds.
- *Manichaeism* - Ancient religion taught that people have two natures, one good and one evil. The religion taught ways of transcending the evil nature.
- Both are present in our world. Identify them below.

John says that he made his decision for Christ and now must strive to live a good life so Christ will continue to live in him.

Mary sees all the bad in her life. “If there were only some way I could get out of this wretched state I find myself in,” she wonders. She considers enrolling in a New Age class that teaches meditation practices to transcend the badness in her body.

Bill goes to confession regularly. He partakes of the sacrament and performs the acts of penance prescribed by the priest. By doing these, he feels he earns the grace he needs to be a good Catholic person, and hopefully, when he dies, he will only have to spend a minimal amount of time in purgatory.

Jack and Faith recently had a child. They do not see a need to baptize their child because “babies don’t do anything wrong; they are so cute!”

The Issues

- The issues of Article I
 - Flacius tried to make the world speak and define terms as he used/defined
 - Held on to pet expression and refused to abandon it for a better one
- Two truths that must find acceptance
 - Man’s nature is the work of God
 - Sin is the work of the devil

God’s Word shows that all people are born in sin – original sin – and that all people live with actual sin daily. We think or say or do something God forbids and fails to think or say or do what God wants. By nature, on our own, we stand condemned – guilty! But God in his love and mercy has shown his grace in Christ. Baptized into his saving death and resurrection, we are forgiven and are holy in his sight.

During the Week

Read Article II of the Formula of Concord, Epitome.

II. OF FREE WILL.

STATUS CONTROVERSIAE.

The Principal Question in This Controversy.

1] Since the will of man is found in four unlike states, namely: 1. before the Fall; 2. since the Fall; 3. after regeneration; 4. after the resurrection of the body, the chief question is only concerning the will and ability of man in the second state, namely, what powers in spiritual things he has of himself after the fall of our first parents and before regeneration, and whether he is able by his own powers, prior to and before his regeneration by God's Spirit, to dispose and prepare himself for God's grace, and to accept [and apprehend], or not, the grace offered through the Holy Ghost in the Word and holy [divinely instituted] Sacraments.

AFFIRMATIVA.

The Pure Doctrine concerning This Article, according to God's Word.

2] 1. Concerning this subject, our doctrine, faith, and confession is, that in spiritual things the understanding and reason of man are [altogether] blind, and by their own powers understand nothing, as it is written 1 Cor. 2, 14: *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them when he is examined concerning spiritual things.*

3] 2. Likewise we believe, teach, and confess that the unregenerate will of man is not only turned away from God, but also has become an enemy of God, so that it only has an inclination and desire for that which is evil and contrary to God, as it is written Gen. 8, 21: *The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.* Also Rom. 8, 7: *The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither, indeed, can be.* Yea, as little as a dead body can quicken itself to bodily, earthly life, so little can man, who by sin is spiritually dead, raise himself to spiritual life, as it is written Eph. 2, 5: *Even when we were dead in sins, He hath quickened us together with Christ;* 2 Cor. 3, 5: *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything good as of ourselves, but that we are sufficient is of God.*

4] 3. God the Holy Ghost, however, does not effect conversion without means, but uses for this purpose the preaching and hearing of God's Word, as it is written Rom. 1, 16: *The Gospel is the power of God* 5] *unto salvation to every one that believeth.* Also Rom. 10, 17: *Faith cometh by hearing of the Word of God.* And it is God's will that His Word should be heard, and that man's ears should not be closed. Ps. 95, 8. With this Word the Holy Ghost is present, and opens hearts, so that they, as Lydia in Acts 16, 14, are attentive to it, and are thus converted alone through the grace and power of the Holy Ghost, whose 6] work alone the conversion of man is. For without His grace, and if He do not grant the increase, our

willing and running, our planting, sowing, and watering, all are nothing, as Christ says John 15, 5: *Without Me ye can do nothing*. With these brief words He denies to the free will its powers, and ascribes everything to God's grace, in order that no one may boast before God. 1 Cor. 1, 29; 2 Cor. 12, 5; Jer. 9, 23.

NEGATIVA.

Contrary False Doctrine.

7] Accordingly, we reject and condemn all the following errors as contrary to the standard of God's Word:

8] 1. The delirium [insane dogma] of philosophers who are called Stoics, as also of the Manicheans, who taught that everything that happens must so happen, and cannot happen otherwise, and that everything that man does, even in outward things, he does by compulsion, and that he is coerced to evil works and deeds, as in chastity, robbery, murder, theft, and the like.

9] 2. We reject also the error of the gross Pelagians, who taught that man by his own powers, without the grace of the Holy Ghost, can turn himself to God, believe the Gospel, be obedient from the heart to God's Law, and thus merit the forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

10] 3. We reject also the error of the Semi-Pelagians, who teach that man by his own powers can make a beginning of his conversion, but without the grace of the Holy Ghost cannot complete it.

11] 4. Also, when it is taught that, although man by his free will before regeneration is too weak to make a beginning, and by his own powers to turn himself to God, and from the heart to be obedient to God, yet, if the Holy Ghost by the preaching of the Word has made a beginning, and therein offered His grace, then the will of man from its own natural powers can add something, though little and feebly, to this end, can help and cooperate, qualify and prepare itself for grace, and embrace and accept it, and believe the Gospel.

12] 5. Also, that man, after he has been born again, can perfectly observe and completely fulfill God's Law, and that this fulfilling is our righteousness before God, by which we merit eternal life.

13] 6. Also, we reject and condemn the error of the Enthusiasts, who imagine that God without means, without the hearing of God's Word, also without the use of the holy Sacraments, draws men to Himself, and enlightens, justifies, and saves them. (Enthusiasts we call those who expect the heavenly illumination of the Spirit [celestial revelations] without the preaching of God's Word.)

14] 7. Also, that in conversion and regeneration God entirely exterminates the substance and essence of the old Adam, and especially the rational soul, and in conversion and regeneration creates a new essence of the soul out of nothing.

15] 8. Also, when the following expressions are employed without explanation, namely, that the will of man before, in, and after conversion resists the Holy Ghost, and that the Holy Ghost is given to those who resist Him intentionally and persistently; for, as Augustine says, in conversion *God makes willing persons out of the unwilling and dwells in the willing*.

16] As to the expressions of ancient and modern teachers of the Church, when it is said: *Deus trahit, sed volentem trahit, i.e.,* God draws, but He draws the willing; likewise, *Hominis voluntas in conversione non est otiosa, sed agit aliquid, i.e.,* In conversion the will of man is not idle, but also effects something, we maintain that, inasmuch as these expressions have been introduced for confirming [the false opinion concerning] the powers of the natural free will in man's conversion, against the doctrine of God's grace, they do not conform to the form of sound doctrine, and therefore, when we speak of conversion to God, justly ought to be avoided.

17] But, on the other hand, it is correctly said that in conversion God, through the drawing of the Holy Ghost, makes out of stubborn and unwilling men willing ones, and that after such conversion in the daily exercise of repentance the regenerate will of man is not idle, but also cooperates in all the works of the Holy Ghost, which He performs through us.

18] 9. Also what Dr. Luther has written, namely, that man's will in his conversion is *pure passive*, that is, that it does nothing whatever, is to be understood *respectu divinae gratiae in accendendis novis motibus*, that is, when God's Spirit, through the Word heard or the use of the holy Sacraments, lays hold upon man's will, and works [in man] the new birth and conversion. For when [after] the Holy Ghost has wrought and accomplished this, and man's will has been changed and renewed by His divine power and working alone, then the new will of man is an instrument and organ of God the Holy Ghost, so that he not only accepts grace, but also cooperates with the Holy Ghost in the works which follow.

19] Therefore, before the conversion of man there are only two efficient causes, namely, the Holy Ghost and the Word of God, as the instrument of the Holy Ghost, by which He works conversion. This Word man is [indeed] to hear; however, it is not by his own powers, but only through the grace and working of the Holy Ghost that he can yield faith to it and accept it.