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**The Terms of Salvation**

**C0526 – 07/06/2005 – Gen 3:1-7 – Depravity: Man's Predicament**

This week we are starting a new series called “The Terms of Salvation”. By this we mean to look at the sole human requirement for salvation: faith or belief in Jesus Christ as Savior. An individual who meets this sole condition secures salvation, so far as human responsibility is concerned. Why are we studying the human requirement for salvation? Because the gospel message has been so distorted in recent years. Do we have to believe and repent? Do we have to believe and confess Christ? Do we have to believe and be baptized? Do we have to believe and surrender to God? Do we have to believe and confess sin or make restitution? Do we have to believe and implore God to save? Just what is the gospel message? Paul said,

**Galatians 1:6-9** I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; <sup>7</sup> which is *really* not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. <sup>8</sup> But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! <sup>9</sup> As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

Do not be surprised that there are different gospels, which are not really others. And there is but one gospel that has efficacy and results in eternal life. For there is but one good news.

Confusion on “The Terms of Salvation” is coming like a landslide in America. In recent years there has been a massive “Christian” departure from interest in theology. With that departure comes a lack of discernment and confusion over fundamental teachings of Scripture. Just last week the owner of Kregel Publications, one of the foremost conservative Christian publishers, announced they were closing down their used book store. Kregel’s used book store carries some of the old classic theology texts that are difficult to find. The

reason given: “People are not buying the classic theology texts anymore.” Why aren’t they buying them? Because it’s too hard to read and they aren’t interested in solid theology. Even our text for Sunday School, Major Bible Themes, which contains “52 vital doctrines of the Scriptures simplified and explained”, is too difficult for our present generation. Instead, Christians are interested in fluff. And that’s exactly what most Christians books are, fluff. Neither Christians nor Americans in general are gaining ground intellectually, they are losing ground. The books authors write today under the category “Christian” are no longer meat or milk but at best skim milk saturated with secular humanism. It’s not only the Christians that are dumbing down it’s the secularists too. In 1996 the SAT standards were lowered because the scores were getting too low for educators to bear. If you can’t increase the scores just decrease the standards. That will make us feel better about the job we’re doing. These are definite signs that the American mind, both Christian and secular, is dumbing down. Children are no longer taught how to think critically. Instead, they are taught what they ought to think and then to regurgitate it on the test next week. Therefore, it’s no surprise to me that our children do not read theology texts. Theology texts are difficult to read and they don’t entertain the way most modern books do. If there is one thing our society does excel at it is entertainment. A new generation that doesn’t like to read and hates to write has come. All it desires is a blow-em-up blockbuster. Yet we are supposedly promoting literacy? The fact is, the men that wrote solid thought-provoking theology texts are dying and no one is stepping up to fill their shoes. Where are the Ryrie’s? Where are the Walvoord’s? The L.S. Chafer’s? The Van Til’s? The Dooyewaard’s? The Berkhof’s? The Pentecost’s? Where are the Bible teachers who have a passion and zeal for the word; men who teach with charisma, boldness, and rightly divided truth? They used to be a dime a dozen. Now I am told Christians who want to get fed a hot meal in the DFW Metroplex have to drive over 1 hour to find a good Bible teaching church. So, what are the results of this dumbing down? The Christian community is losing discernment. Lack of discernment means “failure to perceive differences; failure to discriminate; failure to make necessary distinctions”. Good thinking requires the ability to make distinctions. Systematic theology, the queen of the sciences, requires astute thinking and distinctions. Frankly, Christians who are not interested in truth and theology are poor thinkers. When we have poor thinkers the Evil One creates confusion over the fundamentals of the faith. Surely, the answer to the question “what must I do to be saved?” is a fundamental of the faith. So fundamental is it that if the human condition of faith is complicated with even minor additions then the whole grace operation becomes ineffectual. So, we’re doing this for several reasons: 1) There is confusion in America over the gospel. 2) Most Christians are not able to give a clear gospel message. 3) Most Christians think Roman Catholicism is Christian. 4) Many Christians think the gospel of Lordship Salvation is the same as the

Biblical gospel. 5) To cross the semantic hurdle? 6) Isn't the gospel important? It is my observation that this confusion merits a clarification of "The Terms of Salvation".

To begin our series we will start with Depravity: Man's Problem, an issue many pastors would never teach from the pulpit because it's not a positive message. Well, we are going to teach it because it's taught in the Bible. And if you don't understand depravity then you can't understand grace. This is why Scofield said, in the Book of Romans grace does not enter, cannot enter, until the whole race without one single exception stands guilty and speechless before God. Not everyone believes in the total depravity of man.

**I. Creation: The Foundation of All**

**II. Fall: The Ruin of All**

**III. Results of the Fall**

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**A. Inherited Sin**

**B. Imputed Sin**

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**I. Creation: The Foundation of All**

*"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" in six literal, twenty-four hour days (Gen 1:1; Exod 20:11). The phrase "heavens and earth" is a Hebrew idiom referring to the whole universe so that nothing was created *ex nihilo* either before or after these six days. "For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him" during those six literal, twenty-four hour days (Col 1:16). God could have created it all in the blink of an eye but by doing it in six literal, twenty-four hour days He gave mankind the work-week and a model for how work ought to be done. On the seventh day of the week God "rested" and declared of His creative handiwork that "it was good" (Gen 1:31).*

Chapter 2 of Genesis returns to day six and amplifies the account of man's creation. Gen 1 and 2 are not two contradictory creation accounts. Instead, Gen 1 describes the "creation of the universe" and Gen 2 describes in detail the "creation of man". This writing style was a common oriental style much like modern day journalism where we give an overview and then a detailed account of the most important elements.

As to man's original condition, he was created androgynous and sinless having a proclivity toward good or evil. Woman was then created out from the side (*tsela*) of androgynous Adam so that the entire human race originated from one source, the one man (*adam*) (Acts 17:26). As to man's original sinlessness we can say it was something like innocence but that he had a holiness that enabled him to enjoy fellowship with God. Ryrie thinks it best to describe man's original state as "unconfirmed creature holiness"<sup>1</sup>.

### Unconfirmed Creature Holiness

1. "unconfirmed" because he had neither passed nor failed the test
2. "creature" because his holiness was created and not identical to the uncreated holiness of the Creator
3. "holiness" because he was more than innocent.

Within Gen 1-2 Adam is given the responsibilities of labor, marriage, and family as well as a prohibition of eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil (2:17).

## **II. Fall: The Ruin of All**

*Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman,*

Now, this is the first hint that something is not right. What is an animal doing speaking? It was man who had named the animals not vice versa. Satan had indwelt a "serpent" and was speaking through the serpent in human language.

*"Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden '?"*

It would serve us well to read again what God actually said,

**Genesis 2:16-17** *"From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; <sup>17</sup> but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."*

The shrewd serpent makes God out to be extremely restrictive. The fact is, God only prohibited eating from one tree in the garden. They were free to eat from "any" of the other trees "freely". But Satan's statement makes God out to be unjustly restrictive.

*<sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat [*\*freely*]; <sup>3</sup> but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will [*\*surely*] die.'"*

\*Omitted by Eve

Eve changed three of God's words. This should show you how important of every word in Scripture. Just changing three words can change the entire message.

1. She omitted the word "*freely*". This omission indicates Eve's perception that God is "overly restrictive". God doesn't give me freedom but restriction.
2. She added the prohibition of "*touching it*". Again, this additional prohibition indicates that God is "overly restrictive". He won't even let me touch it.
3. She omitted the word "*surely*". This omission indicates that doubt in God's word had crept in. Maybe I won't die if I eat.

In response to the woman...

*<sup>4</sup> The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! <sup>5</sup> "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

The serpent capitalizes on Eve's new found perception of God and particularly on her omission of the word "surely" by saying "*You surely will not die!*" Because the serpent has already made God out to be overly restrictive he now takes liberty to openly contradict God's word. What the serpent does not tell the woman is that even though she will know good and evil she will not have the ability to carry out the good.

*<sup>6</sup> When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.*

That all of nature appeared regular, including the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we might watch Eve observe this tree in Gen 3:6. She looks at the tree. It appears to be "*good for food*". It delights her "*eyes*". The serpent's proposition tells her "*that the tree*" is "*desirable to make one wise*". "Are there any empirical characteristics of this particular tree that would lead the woman to trust God's pre-interpretation?" That it would kill her? Erroneously she concludes, "No, this tree just looks like any other tree". But in drawing this conclusion she had to say that God did not know the relationship between one temporal

fact and another and that she had within herself the power of legislating reality even though she had no experience of the course of nature. On the other hand, what would lead her to think that “the tree was desirable to make one wise?” What empirical characteristics of this particular tree lead her to trust Satan's interpretation? None, “this tree looks like any other tree.” There is nothing about the tree empirically that indicates the ability to impart *wisdom* or *death* as a result. Have the other trees that look similar produced either *wisdom* or *death*? No. But she partakes of this tasty proposal for want of wisdom. Therefore she is resting on the power of her logic alone in deciding. This is pure evil. Eve is saying “in effect that what God said would come about could not possibly come about”<sup>ii</sup>, and what Satan said would come about could *possibly* come about. Therefore, Eve has placed *possibility* back of God and set up her own mind as determinative of what is and is not *possible*.<sup>iii</sup> She was the first to set up the human mind as the source of truth about all facts and their relationships.<sup>iv</sup> Kant merely re-capitulated Eve’s fatal error. This autonomy, setting up of oneself as the final arbiter, is at the core of sin.

*<sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.*

At this point, only after *both* of them ate, did the ruin of creation occur. Chafer says, “When both Adam and Eve sinned against God, sin entered the human race and this is referred to in the Bible as the fall of man.” Eve was *deceived* into eating the forbidden fruit (2 Cor 11:3; 1 Tim 2:14) but Adam was not deceived, he *obeyed* the voice of his wife rather than the voice of his Creator (Gen 3:17). I know that this appears to be a very simple story but I hope you realize that the implications are profound and every time you sin you do the same thing Eve did.

### **III. Results of the Fall**

#### **a. Immediate**

*Judicial Guilt.* The immediate result of judicial guilt is evidenced by operation fig-leaf where man and woman try to cover up (3:7). As a result of their guilt they became fearful. Fear is the opposite of love (1 John 4:18) and was not an original part of the garden of God (3:10).

*Re-engineered Theology.* Because of the judicial guilt of sin both the man and woman’s theology was re-engineered. Two attributes of God were radically altered. First, God’s omnipresence was denied by their hiding from God (fellowship was lost; sin breaks

fellowship). Second God's omniscience was denied by blame shifting. Sin caused a rapid re-working of their theology.

*Spiritual death.* Because of man's disobedience the curse of spiritual death took place immediately. Immediately they were separated from God (inherited sin).

*Physical death.* They immediately began to experience the decay process in their bodies, which ultimately resulted in physical death (imputed sin).

## **B. Long-Term**

*Pregnancy.* The woman would now have pain during pregnancy: the period between conception and childbirth.

*Woman's desire for her husband.* The woman would desire to rule over her husband contrary to God's established order. Yet women would be ruled by men throughout history.

*Ground cursed.* Before the fall labor was enjoyable. After the fall it would grow thorns and thistles. Work would require a large expenditure of energy to bring forth produce.

*Death.* The body which was taken from dust would return to dust at physical death.

*Excommunication.* Both man and woman were kicked out of the garden. This history of man's fall cannot be erased but lessons can be learned from it. Ryrie says, "The Fall affected all human beings, bringing depravity and death, and it will always be the darkest hour of all human history;"<sup>v</sup> With the introduction of sin into the physical realm we must define it.

## **IV. Sin**

According to 1 John 3:4 "sin is wickedness". Because God is holy He "cannot look on wickedness with favor" (Hab 1:13). Sin is so destructive that only the death of God's only begotten Son can take it away (Joh 1:29). There are three categories of sin: inherited, imputed, and personal.

### **A. Inherited Sin**

*Definition.* Inherited sin is that sinful state into which all people are born. Some people call this “inherited sin” because it is inherited from their parents. Others call this the “sin nature” because sin has corrupted our whole nature.<sup>vi</sup> Others call it “original sin” because it was Adam’s original sin that originally produced the sin nature which is passed on from generation to generation.

*Origin.* Psalm 51:5 indicates that the sin nature is possessed from “conception”. This means no one is born into the world sinless and no one is born good or even partly good. None is good but God (Mark 10:18). Eph 2:3 clearly teaches that we were all “*by nature children of wrath*”. This shows that it is not only our personal sin that condemns us but our nature itself which is sinful. Inherited sin results in every facet of man being affected by the sin nature.

1. the mind is blind (2 Cor 4:4)
2. the mind is depraved (Rom 1:28)
3. the mind is darkened in understanding (Eph 4:18)
4. the mind and conscience are defiled (Tit 1:15)
5. unbelievers are separated from the life of God (Eph 4:18)
6. the reasoning processes are vain (Rom 1:21)
7. the heart is darkened (Rom 1:21)
8. the will is enslaved to sin (Rom 6:20)

*Total Depravity.* This scriptural evidence serves as a basis for a doctrine known as “total depravity”. The word “depraved” comes from the Greek word *adokimos* which means “to fail the test”. Depravity therefore means that man “fails the test” of pleasing God. Most theologians call this “total” depravity because a) it affects all aspects of man’s being and b) it affects all people. Therefore, total depravity points out that the problem is not just personal sins but our entire being. Every facet of our nature is wicked. This, of course, does not mean that every person exhibits this depravity to the greatest degree or that every person engages in every form of sin but there is nothing in man that commends him to God.

*Penalty of Inherited Sin.* The penalty of inherited sin is “spiritual death”. Every person is born into the world spiritually dead. This means they are alienated from the life of God. If they remain alienated from the life of God until the end of their physical life then they will have a second death (Rev 20:11-15) which is eternal death.

*Transmission of Inherited Sin.* Inherited sin is transmitted from one generation to the next through the procreation, particularly through the male sperm. This inheritance goes all the way back to the one man, Adam (Acts 17:26). Therefore, anyone who has ever been or



ever will be conceived is conceived in sin and is a sinner by nature. This also means that we are all equally sinful in God's sight.

## B. Imputed Sin

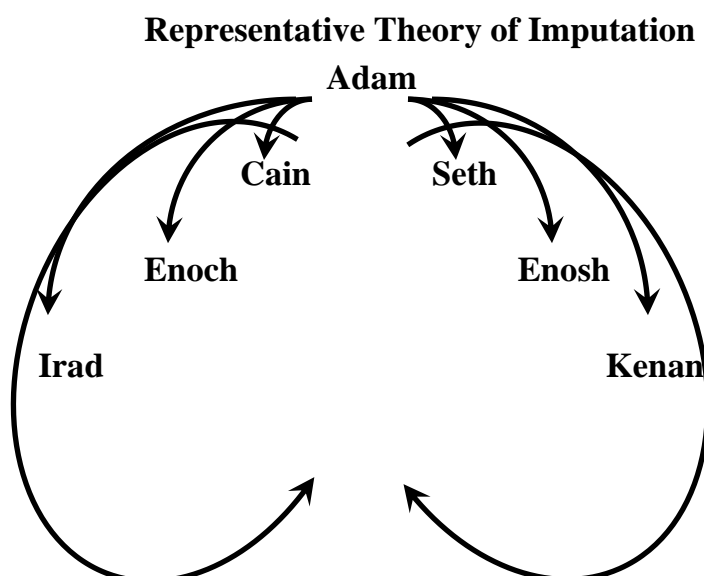
*Definition.* In addition to inherited sin there is also "imputed sin". The word "impute" means "to credit to one's account" "to reckon" something to someone. The Letter to Philemon provides a beautiful picture of imputation. Paul wrote a letter to a man named Philemon. Philemon had once had a slave named Onesimus who had escaped and become a child of God through Paul. Paul says to Philemon, "But if he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to my account;" In other words, if Onesimus owed Philemon any debt, Paul declared he would pay it.

*Imputation of Adam's Sin to the Human Race.* There are three imputations but we are only going to look at the imputation of Adam's original sin to the entire human race. The key passage on imputation is Rom 5:12.

**Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned--

The verse has been interpreted in a number of ways but the only interpretation that does justice to the grammar and context is that all men somehow sinned when Adam sinned. The verb "all sinned" is *active voice* meaning that all men somehow took active participation in the original sin of Adam. The question that must be answered is "how could this be?" Historically, there have been two answers.

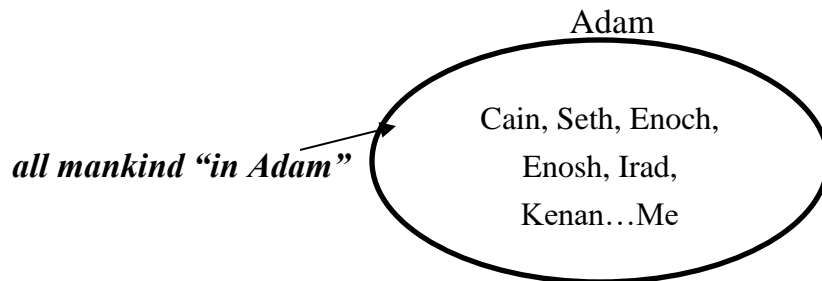
*Representative Theory.* This theory views Adam as the representative of the whole human race so that when Adam sinned his sin became the ground of condemnation of his race.



## Me

*Seminal Theory.* This theory views the whole human race *in Adam* seminally so that when he sinned, all actually sinned. All participated in the sin of Adam so that there was a “real” involvement of every individual in the original sin. Man was not just represented by Adam but actually was joined to Adam and really did sin. Support for the seminal view comes from Hebrews 7:9-10 where the author states that “*through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.*” Here Levi, still unborn, is said to be in Abraham’s loins. When Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, Levi somehow participated in paying tithes as well while yet unborn.

### Seminal Theory of Imputation



Both the Representative and Seminal theories have support and both are true. Lightner states, “The issue is not that each man commits deeds of sin in the course of his lifetime. That is true, but that is not what is being taught in Romans 5:12. What is being taught is that every member of the human family who has ever been born or will ever be born was related in some way to Adam. When he sinned, the race sinned in him. When Adam sinned, we sinned. He not only represented us, but we sinned in him.”<sup>vii</sup>

*Penalty of Imputed Sin.* The penalty of imputed sin is “physical death” (Rom 5:12-14). If you recall, the penalty of inherited sin is “spiritual death”.

### C. Personal Sin

We are also under condemnation because of our personal sin. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23). There is no transmission of personal sin although our personal sin affects others.

*Penalty of Personal Sin.* The penalty of personal sin can be summed up in the words “loss of fellowship”. All unbelievers stand outside of “fellowship” with God because of their sins. Believers who knowingly sin break fellowship with God and lose the enjoyment of “fellowship”. Upon confession of sin believers are restored to fellowship (1 John 1:9)

ASPECT	SCRIPTURE	TRANSMISSION	PRINCIPAL CONSEQUENCE	REMEDY
Inherited Sin	Eph 2:3	Procreation	Spiritual death	Redemption
Imputed Sin	Rom 5:12	Direct from Adam	Physical death	Imputed righteousness
Personal Sin	Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:9	None	Loss of fellowship	Forgiveness

I teach all this to alert you to the hard fact that all men are absolutely lost and under the wrath of God. If men do not feel the real sense in which they are lost then there is no reason to spend time discussing “what they must do to be saved.” People who do not know they are sick do not seek a physician. Christians are called to alert the world to their sick condition; a condition which can be remedied only by faith in God’s Son. Those who have not believed are condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s Son” (John 3:18). About 1910 Scofield wrote that all men are condemned eight ways: “Condemned by creation, the silent testimony of the universe (Rom 1:18, 20), by willful ignorance, the loss of a knowledge of God once universal (Rom 1:21); by senseless idolatry (Rom 1:22, 23); by a manner of life worse than bestial (Rom 1:24, 27); by godless pride and cruelty (Rom 1:28, 32); by philosophical moralizings which had no fruit in life (Rom 2:1, 4); by consciences which can only “accuse” or seek to “excuse” but never justify (Rom 2:5, 16); and finally, by the very law in which those who have the law boast (Rom 2:17; 3:20), “every mouth” is “stopped, and all the world becomes guilty before God.”<sup>viii</sup> Yet it is even more than that for all men are conceived in sin and imputed sin so that there is no escape, no merit within anyone that can achieve the righteousness of God. Anyway you slice it you’re condemned from conception.

The innate wickedness of man provides the backdrop for understanding that for man to be accepted before God grace must enter. It must be God’s “grace...out from himself toward those who have deserved, not his favor, but his wrath.” As Scofield wrote, “In the Book of Romans grace does not enter, cannot enter, until the “whole race without one single exception stands guilty and speechless before God.”<sup>ix</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1999), 231.

<sup>ii</sup> Van Til, Cornelius, *Christian Apologetics* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1976), 11.

<sup>iii</sup> This is why the question “Does God exist?” is a wrong question. If there is any possibility that God does not exist then God certainly does not exist and possibility certainly does exist. Christians must claim that God is the necessary precondition for all reality. There is no possibility that God does not exist for God is the source of all possibilities.

<sup>iv</sup> This is what we call legislative logic. Eve displayed perfectly that in unbelieving thought rationality and irrationality are always co-terminous and go together in a dialectic way.

<sup>v</sup> Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1999), 236.

<sup>vi</sup> Those who think that God’s grace has been showered indiscriminately upon men in the area of salvation suppose that all men have the *ability* to believe in Christ and be saved. But if all unbelievers have a sin nature what makes us think that the sin nature could do something then that it cannot do now; namely, choose the good? Efficacious grace is the only solution as Walvoord, Ryrie, Lightner and others have suggested.

<sup>vii</sup> Robert Lightner, *Sin, the Savior, and Salvation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1991), 34-35.

<sup>viii</sup> Torrey, Feinberg, Wiersbe, *The Fundamentals* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1990), 399.

<sup>ix</sup> Torrey, Feinberg, Wiersbe, *The Fundamentals* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1990), 399.

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