

# Studies in the Westminster Confession of Faith

Newtownabbey Free Presbyterian Church

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Chapter 6 Part 5

*Genesis 6:5*

## Chapter 6 - The Fall, Sin, and its Punishment.

*Section II: By this sin they fell from their original righteousness, and communion with God,<sup>(3)</sup> and so became dead in sin,<sup>(4)</sup> and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.<sup>(5)</sup>*

*Scripture Proof Texts: (3) Genesis 3:6-8; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Romans 3:23. (4) Genesis 2:17; Ephesians 2:1. (5) Titus 1:15; Genesis 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-18.*

This section deals with the consequences of the Fall. The following four propositions are here taught:

1. By sinning our first parents lost their original righteousness.
2. By sinning our first parents could no longer enjoy communion with God.
3. By sinning our first parents became dead in sin.
- 4. By sinning our first parents fell into total depravity.**

We are coming the last of these this evening.

**4. By sinning our first parents fell into total depravity.** Here we come to consider that contentious term known as 'Total Depravity'. It is one of the five principles of the Doctrines of Grace. By using this term we do not mean that every individual is as sinful as they possibly can be. That is evidently not the case. The term never was intended to imply that. The use of this term simply highlights the Biblical teaching that every part of a person's constitution is affected and infected by sin. We, therefore, cannot do anything to save ourselves.

The whole of our being: body, soul and spirit, has suffered the consequences of sin. We have been totally affected by the Fall. There is depravity in every part. We have become wholly corrupted in all the faculties of our soul and members of our bodies. No part of our being has escaped untouched as a result of the Fall:

[1] Sin has alienated the mind. *Romans 8:7: Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* The mind wishes God did not exist. It forms unworthy notions of Him. It endeavours to bury Him in forgetfulness, and erase out of its mind all thoughts of Him. It is at enmity against His perfections; either denying His omniscience; or railing against His justice and faithfulness; despising His goodness, and abusing His grace and mercy. It finds fault with His decrees and purposes; quarrels with His providence, it is implacably opposed to His Word and Gospel.

[2] Sin has darkened the understanding. The understanding, once a lamp of light in mankind, is now overwhelmed in darkness, *Ephesians 4:18: Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.*

Darkness is equated with ignorance in the Scriptures. The eyes of our understanding have been put out. The natural faculty of the understanding is not entirely lost in men. We are quick enough, to do the things that are evil. In things spiritual the mind is very dark and ignorant, as about the nature and perfections of God, His holiness and righteousness; about sin and the consequences of it; about Christ, His person, office, and work, and salvation by Him; about the Spirit, and His work of grace upon the soul; and about the Scriptures, and the doctrines contained in them.

[3] Sin has made the will perverse. The will, once faithful and regulated by the divine will, has now become perverse and rebellious, *1 Peter 4:3: For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries.*

The will refuses to yield obedience, or to bow the knee before the throne of God. It seeks to be its own master. It

acts contrary to the will of God. If God says '*do not*', that is the very thing the will does. If God says '*do*' this, that it the thing which it refuses to do. This is seen in our disobedience. We are called the children of disobedience, *Ephesians 2:2,3: Wherein in time 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.*

[4] Sin has made the heart deceitful and wicked, *Jeremiah 17:9: The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?* The heart is is hardened in its deceit and wickedness.

i. It deceives us with respect to sin; it encourages us to sin under the notion of lasting pleasure; it deceives us by promises of much, but ends in bitterness and death. Sin promises impunity, peace, and security, when in reality sudden destruction comes.

ii. It deceives us regarding knowledge; it persuades us that we are very knowledgeable people, when in reality we are blind and ignorant, and know nothing as we ought to know.

iii. It deceives us in the business of religion; it makes a person believe that they are holy and righteous, and set fair for heaven, when in reality we are far from that. We are destined for hell.

[5] The affections are carnal. The affections, once pure and regular, now became distorted and disordered, *Colossians 3:5: Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.* This has to do with the passions and lusts of our sinful nature. The things that our nature loves are those which are sinful and vile, *Romans 1:26: For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature.* It is the lust of the flesh and the eyes. The lust of uncleanness. His affections are towards that which is sinful, *Romans 2:24-*.

[6] The thoughts are vain, *Psalms 94:11: The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.* The thoughts themselves are vain as well as the objects of those thoughts. Our vain thoughts seek after the riches and honours of this world, which are worthless and all is vanity and vexation of spirit. Our thoughts seek after sinful lusts and pleasures, which are vain and useless, even, pernicious and hurtful.

[7] The conscience is seared. The conscience is defiled, it is an evil conscience, *Hebrews 10:22: Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.* It has been seared by sin, *1 Timothy 4:2: Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.* It is not as alert as it ought to be. It has been dulled. It is not as sensitive to sin as it ought. Sin has destroyed its sensitivity. Men can sin and their conscience is not trouble the way it should be.

[8] The body is corrupted, *Romans 6:16: Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?* The members of the body have become instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, *Romans 6:19: I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.*

The General overview of our sinful state as a result of the Fall is given in *Isaiah 1:5,6: The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.*