

A Corruption of All Nature

Belgic Confession, Article 15

INTRODUCTION: The Reformed confessions spend so much time on the doctrine of sin for the sake of the gospel: we must understand the problem if we are going to understand the solution.

1. GETTING THE DIAGNOSIS RIGHT: We are sinners, and our sin is not just a matter of _____ we do but of _____ we are in Adam.
 - a. This understanding of human nature is _____ deeply in the Old Testament Scriptures.
 - b. Psalm 51, for example, confesses this corruption of our _____ when it says, “in sin did my mother conceive me” (v. 5)

2. EMPHASIZING THE DIAGNOSIS: There is great _____, and gospel benefit, in emphasizing this “corruption of all nature.”
 - a. Original Sin: Our sinful nature is inherited from Adam and is a sufficient _____ on which to be condemned before God (this is the main theme of Article 15).

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 (Romans 5:12)
 - b. Total Depravity: Because our very nature is corrupted by the fall, everything we do is _____ by sin, and we are entirely unable to save ourselves (this is the main theme of the second half of Article 14).

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked.... (Ephesians 2:1-2a)
A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven....” (John 3:27)

3. FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL: It is ultimately good news that we _____ save ourselves, because it means that God does not ask us to save ourselves.
 - a. The way in which we inherit Adam’s sinful nature is also the way in which we receive the _____ of Christ.

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. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. (Romans 5:17-18)
 - b. This gives us confidence in the _____: salvation is all of grace!
 - c. This gives us humility toward our fellow human beings: the plight from which we have been saved is shared with all of _____.
 - d. God _____ these things to us “to the praise of his glorious grace” (Ephesians 1:6).