

Belgic Confession of Faith (1561)

Article XIV

The Creation and Fall of Man, and His Incapacity to Perform What Is Truly Good

Leader: We believe that God created man out of the dust of the earth, and made and formed him after His own image and likeness,¹ good, righteous, and holy, capable in all things to will agreeably to the will of God.²

People: **But being in honor, he understood it not, neither knew his excellency,³ but willfully subjected himself to sin and consequently to death and the curse, giving ear to the words of the devil.⁴ For the commandment of life, which he had received, he transgressed; and by sin separated himself from God, who was his true life;⁵ having corrupted his whole nature;⁶ whereby he made himself liable to corporal and spiritual death.⁷**

Leader: And being thus become wicked, perverse, and corrupt in all his ways, he has lost all his excellent gifts which he had received from God, and retained only small remains thereof, which, however, are sufficient to leave man without excuse; for all the light which is in us is changed into darkness, as the Scriptures teach us, saying: *The light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness apprehended it not*; where St. John calls men darkness.⁸

¹ Gen. 1:26-27; 9:6; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10

² Gen. 1:31; Eccl. 7:29; I Cor. 11:7

³ Psalm 8:3-9; 49:20

⁴ Gen. 3:6, 17; John 8:43-45

⁵ Gen. 2:16-17; 3:6-7; Isa. 59:2; Rom. 3:23; Eph. 2:12

⁶ Gen. 6:5; Rom. 3:10-20; Eph. 2:1; 4:17-19

⁷ Gen. 2:17; 3:19-24; Rom. 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3; Col. 2:13; Psalm 51:5

⁸ Eph. 4:18; 5:8; Matt. 6:23; John 1:5; Rom. 1:20-32