

## CFBC Doctrines of Grace- Total Inability Part 1

***G.K. Chesterton once said it is surprising that people have rejected the doctrine of original sin because it is the only doctrine that can be empirically verified.***

Timothy Beougher

***What is meant by the concept of total depravity is not that man is wicked as he could possibly be. Bad as we are, we can still conceive of ourselves doing worse things than we do. Rather, it means that sin has such a hold upon us in our natural state, that we never have a positive desire for Christ.***

R C Sproul

***There is one kind of man – the man trapped in the total depravity of his sinful nature, inherited from his father Adam (Rom. 5:18). And since there is only one kind of man, there is only one kind of salvation – faith through the second Adam, Jesus Christ.***

Tim Challies

### From CFBC's "What We Teach"...(Doctrine of Man)

We teach that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Genesis 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9).

We teach that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world (Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11).

***We teach that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence, incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death, became subject to the wrath of God, and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-19; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 1 John 1:8).***

***We teach that, because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, by***

**choice, and by divine declaration (Psalm 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9-18, 23; 5:10-12).**

## **TULIP and Reformed Theology: Total Depravity**

R C Sproul

***The doctrine of total depravity reflects the Reformed viewpoint of original sin. That term—original sin—is often misunderstood in the popular arena. Some people assume that the term original sin must refer to the first sin—the original transgression that we’ve all copied in many different ways in our own lives, that is, the first sin of Adam and Eve. But that’s not what original sin has referred to historically in the church. Rather, the doctrine of original sin defines the consequences to the human race because of that first sin.***

***Virtually every church historically that has a creed or a confession has agreed that something very serious happened to the human race as a result of the first sin—that first sin resulted in original sin. That is, as a result of the sin of Adam and Eve, the entire human race fell, and our nature as human beings since the fall has been influenced by the power of evil. As David declared in the Old Testament, “Oh, God, I was born in sin, and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Ps. 51:5). He was not saying that it was sinful for his mother to have borne children; neither was he saying that he had done something evil by being born. Rather, he was acknowledging the human condition of fallenness—that condition that was part of the experience of his parents, a condition that he himself brought into this world. Therefore, original sin has to do with the fallen nature of mankind. The idea is that we are not sinners because we sin, but that we sin because we are sinners.***

***In the Reformed tradition, total depravity does not mean utter depravity. We often use the term total as a synonym for utter or for completely, so the notion of total depravity conjures up the idea that every human being is as bad as that person could possibly be. You might think of an archfiend of history such as Adolf Hitler and say there was absolutely no redeeming virtue in the man, but I suspect that he had some affection for his mother. As wicked as Hitler was, we can still conceive of ways in which he could have been even more wicked than he actually was. So the idea of total in total depravity doesn’t mean that all human beings are as wicked as they can possibly be. It means that the fall was so serious that it affects the whole person. The fallenness that captures and grips our human nature affects our bodies; that’s why we become ill and die. It affects our minds and our thinking; we still have the capacity to think, but the Bible says the mind has become darkened and weakened. The will of man is no longer in its pristine state of moral power. The will, according to the New Testament, is now in bondage. We are enslaved to the evil impulses and desires of our hearts.***

***The body, the mind, the will, the spirit—indeed, the whole person—have been infected by the power of sin.***

***I like to replace the term total depravity with my favorite designation, which is radical corruption.*** Ironically, the word radical has its roots in the Latin word for “root,” which is radix, and it can be translated root or core. The term radical has to do with ***something that permeates to the core of a thing.*** It’s not something that is tangential or superficial, lying on the surface. ***The Reformed view is that the effects of the fall extend or penetrate to the core of our being. Even the English word core actually comes from the Latin word which means “heart.” That is, our sin is something that comes from our hearts. In biblical terms, that means it’s from the core or very center of our existence.***

***So what is required for us to be conformed to the image of Christ is not simply some small adjustments or behavioral modifications, but nothing less than renovation from the inside. We need to be regenerated, to be made over again, to be quickened by the power of the Spirit. The only way in which a person can escape this radical situation is by the Holy Spirit’s changing the core, the heart. However, even that change does not instantly vanquish sin. The complete elimination of sin awaits our glorification in heaven.***

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/tulip-and-reformed-theology-total-depravity>

### **Description of our pre-conversion condition...Ephesians 2:1-3**

**2 Corinthians 4:4...**<sup>3</sup>And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, <sup>4</sup>in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

**1 John 5:19...**<sup>9</sup>We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in *the power of* the evil one

**John 6:44,65...**<sup>44</sup>No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day...<sup>65</sup>And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.”

### **Paul’s description of our dire spiritual condition...Romans 3:9-18**

*(Quotes six OT sources...14 statements about fallen mankind)*

<sup>9</sup>What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; <sup>10</sup>as it is written,

“There is none righteous, not even one;  
11 There is none who understands,  
There is none who seeks for God;  
12 All have turned aside, together they have become useless;  
There is none who does good,  
There is not even one.”  
13 “Their throat is an open grave,  
With their tongues they keep deceiving,”  
“The poison of asps is under their lips”;  
14 “Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness”;  
15 “Their feet are swift to shed blood,  
16 Destruction and misery are in their paths,  
17 And the path of peace they have not known.”  
18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

### **Description of the sinful character of the fallen man...Romans 3:10-12**

10 as it is written,

“There is none righteous, not even one;  
11 There is none who understands,  
There is none who seeks for God;  
12 All have turned aside, together they have become useless;  
There is none who does good,  
There is not even one.”

- ***None are righteous***
- ***None understand***
- ***None seeks after God***
- ***All have turned aside***
- ***None does good, not even one***

### **Description of the heart of the fallen man...Romans 3:13,14**

13 “Their throat is an open grave,  
With their tongues they keep deceiving,”  
“The poison of asps is under their lips”;  
14 “Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness”;

### **Description of the sinful man’s attitude toward God...Romans 3:18**

18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

cf Psalm 14:1f...

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."  
They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds;  
There is no one who does good.  
<sup>2</sup>The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men  
To see if there are any who understand,  
Who seek after God.  
<sup>3</sup>They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt;  
There is no one who does good, not even one.

### **The Total Inability of the heart of the lost sinner**

**Genesis 6:5...**<sup>5</sup>Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually

**Jeremiah 17:9...**<sup>9</sup>"The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?

**Mark 7:14-23...**<sup>14</sup> After He called the crowd to Him again, He *began* saying to them, "Listen to Me, all of you, and understand: <sup>15</sup> there is nothing outside the man which can defile him if it goes into him; but the things which proceed out of the man are what defile the man. <sup>16</sup> [If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.]"

<sup>17</sup> When he had left the crowd *and* entered the house, His disciples questioned Him about the parable. <sup>18</sup> And He \*said to them, "Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him, <sup>19</sup> because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?" (*Thus He* declared all foods clean.) <sup>20</sup> And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. <sup>21</sup> For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, <sup>22</sup> deeds of coveting *and* wickedness, *as well as* deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride *and* foolishness. <sup>23</sup> All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."

**Acts 15:7-9...**<sup>7</sup> After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe. <sup>8</sup> And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us; <sup>9</sup> and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.

## **The fallen man's mind...unable to repent and believe unaided by God's intervention**

**2 Corinthians 4:4...**<sup>3</sup> And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, <sup>4</sup> in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

**Romans 8:5-8...**<sup>5</sup> For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, <sup>7</sup> because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*, <sup>8</sup> and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

**Ephesians 4:17,18...**<sup>17</sup> So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, <sup>18</sup> being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

**Titus 1:15...**<sup>15</sup> To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.

**1 Corinthians 2:14...**<sup>14</sup> But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

**Colossians 1:21...**<sup>21</sup> And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, *engaged* in evil deeds

## **The Total Inability of the Will of the Lost Sinner**

**Romans 8:5...**<sup>5</sup> For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

**John 8:42-47...**<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. <sup>43</sup> Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is* because you cannot hear My word. <sup>44</sup> You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies. <sup>45</sup> But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. <sup>46</sup> Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?"

<sup>47</sup> He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear *them*, because you are not of God.”

**Colossians 1:13...**<sup>43</sup> For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son

## **How does someone become a child of God?**

**John 1:12,13...**<sup>2</sup> But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Courtesy of Pastor Jerry Marshall, New Community Church

## **Total Depravity (or Total Inability)**

Joel Barnes

***When Calvinists speak of man as being totally depraved, they mean that man's nature is corrupt, perverse, and sinful throughout....The corruption extends to every part of man, his body and soul; sin has affected all (the totality) of man's faculties - his mind, his will, etc.***

***As a result of this inborn corruption, the natural man is totally unable to do anything spiritually good; thus, Calvinists speak of man's "total inability." The inability intended by this terminology is spiritual inability; it means that the sinner is so spiritually bankrupt that he can do nothing pertaining to his salvation. The natural man is enslaved to sin; he is a child of Satan, rebellious toward God, blind to truth, corrupt, and unable to save himself or to prepare himself for salvation.***

### **Spiritual Deadness**

Genesis 2:16-17; Psalm 51:5; Psalm 58:3; John 3:5-7; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3; Colossians 2:13.

### **Darkened Minds and Corrupt Hearts**

Genesis 6:5; Genesis 8:21; Ecclesiastes 9:3; Jeremiah 17:9; Mark 7:21-23; John 3:19; Romans 8:7-8; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 4:17-19; Ephesians 5:8; Titus 1:15.

### **Bondage to Sin and Satan**

John 8:34; John 8:44; Romans 6:20; Ephesians 2:1-2; 2 Timothy 2:25-26; Titus 3:3; 1 John 3:10; 1 John 5:19.

### **Universal Bondage**

1 Kings 8:46; 2 Chronicles 6:36; Job 15:14-16; Psalm 130:3; Psalm 143:2; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Isaiah 53:6; Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:9-12; James 3:2; James 3:8; 1 John 1:8; 1 John 1:10.

### **Inability to Change**

Job 14:4; Jeremiah 23:13; Matthew 7:16-18; Matthew 12:33; John 6:44; John 6:65; Romans 11:35-36; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 4:7; 2 Corinthians 3:5.

## Total Depravity

by Matt Slick | Sep 22, 2016 | Doctrine and Theology, Christian Theology

Total Depravity (also known as Total Inability) – ***Man is completely touched/affected by sin in all that he is (in nature he is completely fallen)***, but is not as bad as he could be (in action, i.e., not all murder, etc.). Furthermore, this total depravity means that ***the unregenerate will not, of their own free will, choose to receive Christ because they are enslaved to sin (Rom. 6:14-20), cannot receive spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:14), and can do no good (Rom. 3:10-12). They have free will to choose but they will freely choose to do what is contrary to God.***

**Original Sin** – Original sin is the state, the condition of sinfulness that people are born into because of Adam’s sin. This means that our natures are born fallen. Adam represented all of mankind when he died.

- A. Rom. 5:19, “For as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.”
  - i. “were made sinners” is *katēstathēsan* which is the aorist indicative. This signifies a completed past action.
- B. 1 Cor. 15:22, “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.”
  - i. “in Adam” a term of Federal Headship
- C. Objection: It is not right for Adam to represent us. His sin cannot be held against us and should not affect us.
  - i. Jesus is called the last Adam in 1 Cor. 15:45, “So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.”

### Man’s Condition

It is man who is deceitful (Jer. 17:9), full of evil (Mark 7:21-23), loves darkness rather than light (John 3:19), and cannot come to God on his own (John 6:44), does not seek for God (Rom. 3:10-12), is helpless and ungodly (Rom. 5:6), is a slave of sin (Rom. 6:20; John 8:34), cannot receive spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:14), is dead in his sins (Eph. 2:1), is by nature a child of wrath (Eph. 2:3), and is at enmity with God (Eph. 2:15).

#### Verses:

- a. Jer. 17:9, “The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick. Who can understand it?”
- b. Mark 7:21-23, “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders,



- adulteries, 22 deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness.”
- c. John 3:19, “This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.”
  - d. John 6:44, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.”
  - e. Rom. 3:10-12, “as it is written, ‘ There is none righteous, not even one; 11 There is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; 12 All have turned aside, together they have become useless. There is none who does good. There is not even one.’”
  - f. Rom. 5:6, “For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.”
  - g. Rom. 6:20, “For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.”
  - h. John 8:34, “Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.”
  - i. 1 Cor. 2:14, “But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them (Gk, ginosko, know), because they are spiritually appraised.”
  - j. Eph. 2:1, “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins.”
  - k. Eph. 2:3, “Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”
  - l. Eph. 2:15, “by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace.”

***The unbeliever CAN respond to God. His response will be in accordance with his fallen, unregenerate nature which is full of evil (Mark 7:21-23), can do no good (Rom. 3:12), is a slave of sin (Rom. 6:20), is incapable of understanding spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:14), and is at enmity with God (Eph. 2:15). Therefore, we conclude that his free will is restricted by his depravity and his natural inclination is to reject God. This is in accordance with the conditions described of him by scripture***

***Question: How is it possible that an unbeliever who cannot understand spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:14), who does not seek for God (Rom. 3:10-12), and who is a slave of sin (Rom. 6:14-20), simply “chooses” God? The scriptures say he cannot. That is why God appoints***

***people to eternal life (Acts 13:48) and grants that they believe (Phil. 1:29). Otherwise, no one would be saved. Because of man's fallen state and inability to come to God of his own free will, we then find that God must act in order for anyone to be saved.***

### **God's Work**

It is God who appoints people to believe (Acts 13:48), chooses who is to be holy and blameless (Eph. 1:4), predestines us to adoption (Eph. 1:5), calls according to His purpose (2 Tim. 1:9), chooses us for salvation (2 Thess. 2:13), grants the act of believing (Phil. 1:29), works faith in the believer (John 6:28-29), grants us repentance (2 Tim. 2:24-25), causes us to be born again (1 Pet. 1:3), makes us born again not by our will but by His will (John 1:12-13), draws people to Himself (John 6:44), grants that we come to Jesus (John 6:65), predestines us to salvation (Rom. 8:29-30), and he does all of this according to His purpose (Eph. 1:11).

- ii. Acts 13:48, "When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed."
- iii. Eph. 1:4, "just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love."
- iv. Eph. 1:5, "He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will."
- v. 2 Tim. 1:9, "who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity."
- vi. 2 Thess. 2:13, "But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth."
- vii. Phil. 1:29, "For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake."
- viii. John 6:28-29, "Therefore they said to Him, 'What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?' 29 Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.'"
- ix. 2 Tim. 2:24-25, "The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, 25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth."
- x. 1 Pet. 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."
- xi. John 1:12-13, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His

name, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”

- xii. John 6:44, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.”
- xiii. John 6:65, “And He was saying, ‘For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.’”
- xiv. Romans 8:29–30, “For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.”
- xv. Eph. 1:11, “also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will.”

<https://carm.org/doctrine-and-theology/total-depravity/>

## **Historic Reformed Confessions and Catechisms on Original Sin/Total Inability**

### **• Belgic Confession Article 14**

*Revised in the National Synod, held at Dordrecht, in the years 1618 and 1619.*

#### **Article 14: Of the Creation and Fall of man, and his Incapacity to perform what is truly good.**

We believe that God created man out of the dust of the earth, and made and formed him after his own image and likeness, good, righteous, and holy, capable in all things to will, agreeably to the will of God. But being in honor, he understood it not, neither knew his excellency, but willfully subjected himself to sin, and consequently to death, and the curse, giving ear to the words of the devil. For the commandment of life, which he had received, he transgressed; and by sin separated himself from God, who was his true life, having corrupted his whole nature; whereby he made himself liable to corporal and spiritual death. And being thus become wicked, perverse, and corrupt in all his ways, he hath lost all his excellent gifts, which he had received from God, and only retained a few 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 darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not: where St. John calleth men darkness. Therefore we reject all that is taught repugnant to this, concerning the free will of man, since man is but a slave to sin; and has nothing of himself, unless it is given from heaven. For who may presume to boast, that he of himself can do any good, since Christ saith, No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him? Who will glory in his own will, who understands, that to be carnally minded is enmity against God?

Who can speak of his knowledge, since the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God? In short, who dare suggest any thought, since he knows that we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but that our sufficiency is of God? And therefore what the apostle saith ought justly to be held sure and firm, that God worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. For there is no will nor understanding, conformable to the divine will and understanding, but what Christ hath wrought in man; which he teaches us, when he saith, Without me ye can do nothing.

- **Canons of Dordt Heading 3...1.2.3.4**

### **Head III/IV: Of the Corruption of Man, His Conversion to God, and the Manner Thereof**

#### **Article 1**

Man was originally formed after the image of God. His understanding was adorned with a true and saving knowledge of his Creator, and of spiritual things; his heart and will were upright; all his affections pure; and the whole man was holy; but revolting from God by the instigation of the devil, and abusing the freedom of his own will, he forfeited these excellent gifts; and on the contrary entailed on himself blindness of mind, horrible darkness, vanity and perverseness of judgment, became wicked, rebellious, and obdurate in heart and will, and impure in his affections.

#### **Article 2**

***Man after the fall begat children in his own likeness. A corrupt stock produced a corrupt offspring. Hence all the posterity of Adam, Christ only excepted, have derived corruption from their original parent, not by imitation, as the Pelagians of old asserted, but by the propagation of a vicious nature.***

#### **Article 3**

***Therefore all men are conceived in sin, and by nature children of wrath, incapable of saving good, prone to evil, dead in sin, and in bondage thereto, and without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, they are neither able nor willing to return to God, to reform the depravity of their nature, nor to dispose themselves to reformation.***

#### **Article 4**

There remain, however, in man since the fall, the glimmerings of natural light, whereby he retains some knowledge of God, of natural things, and of the

differences between good and evil, and discovers some regard for virtue, good order in society, and for maintaining an orderly external deportment. But so far is this light of nature from being sufficient to bring him to a saving knowledge of God, and to true conversion, that he is incapable of using it aright even in things natural and civil. Nay further, this light, such as it is, man in various ways renders wholly polluted, and holds it in unrighteousness, by doing which he becomes inexcusable before God.

## • **Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter 6**

### **VI. Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the Punishment Thereof**

I. Our first parents, being seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit.<sup>a</sup> This their sin God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory.<sup>b</sup>

a. Gen 3:13; 2 Cor 11:3. • b. Rom 11:32.

II. By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God,<sup>a</sup> and so became dead in sin,<sup>b</sup> and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.<sup>c</sup>

a. Gen 3:6-8; Ecc 7:29; Rom 3:23. • b. Gen 2:17; Eph 2:1. • c. Gen 6:5; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:10-19; Titus 1:15.

III. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed,<sup>a</sup> and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation.<sup>b</sup>

a. Gen 1:27-28 and Gen 2:16-17 and Acts 17:26 with Rom 5:12, 15-19 and 1 Cor 15:21-22; 1Cor 15:45, 49. • b. Gen 5:3; Job 14:4; 15:14; Psa 51:5.

IV. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good,<sup>a</sup> and wholly inclined to all evil,<sup>b</sup> do proceed all actual transgressions.<sup>c</sup>

a. Rom 5:6; 7:18; 8:7; Col 1:21. • b. Gen 6:5; 8:21; Rom 3:10-12. • c. Mat 15:19; Eph 2:2-3; James 1:14-15.

## • **Heidelberg Catechism Questions 5-8**

**From Question 5...I am prone by nature to hate God and my neighbor.**

Rom. 8:7.

Tit. 3:3.

- Q. 6. Did God then create man so wicked and perverse?  
A. By no means; but God created man good,<sup>1</sup> and after His own image,<sup>2</sup> in true righteousness and holiness, that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love Him, and live with Him in eternal happiness to glorify and praise Him.<sup>3</sup>
- Q. 7. Whence then proceeds this depravity of human nature?  
A. From the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise;<sup>4</sup> hence our nature is become so corrupt, that we are all conceived and born in sin.<sup>5</sup>
- **Q. 8. Are we then so corrupt that we are wholly incapable of doing any good, and inclined to all wickedness?**  
**A. Indeed we are,<sup>6</sup> except we are regenerated by the Spirit of God.<sup>7</sup>**

1. Gen. 1:31.
2. Gen. 1:26, 27. Col. 3:10. Eph. 4:24.
3. Eph. 1:6. 1 Cor. 6:20.
4. Gen. 3:6. Rom. 5:12, 18, 19.
5. Psa. 51:5. Gen. 5:3.
6. Gen. 6:5. Job 14:4. Job 15:14, 16.
7. John 3:5. Eph. 2:5.

- **Westminster Shorter Catechism Questions 18,19**

Q. 18. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?  
A. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.

Rom. 5:12, 19; Rom. 5:10-20; Eph. 2:1-3; Jas. 1:14-15; Matt. 15:19.

Q. 19. What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?  
A. All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.

Gen. 3:8, 10, 24; Eph. 2:2-3; Gal. 3:10; Lam. 3:39; Rom. 6:23; Matt. 25:41, 46.

***“No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him.”  
John 6:44***

“COMING to Christ” is a very common phrase in Holy Scripture. It is used to express those acts of the soul wherein, leaving at once our self-righteousness, and our sins, we fly unto the Lord Jesus Christ, and receive His righteousness to be our covering, and His blood to be our atonement. Coming to Christ, then, embraces in it repentance, self-negation, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and it sums within itself all those things which are the necessary attendants of these great states of heart, such as the belief of the truth, earnestness of prayer to God, the submission of the soul to the precepts of God’s Gospel, and all those things which accompany the dawn of salvation in the soul. Coming to Christ is just the one essential thing for a sinner’s salvation. He that comes not to Christ, do what he may, or think what he may, is yet in “the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity.”

Coming to Christ is the very first effect of regeneration. No sooner is the soul quickened than it at once discovers its lost estate, is horrified thereat, looks out for a refuge, and believing Christ to be a suitable one, flies to Him and reposes in Him. Where there is not this coming to Christ, it is certain that there is as yet no quickening. Where there is no quickening, the soul is dead in trespasses and sins, and being dead it cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. We have before us now an announcement very startling, some say very obnoxious. Coming to Christ, though described by some people as being the very easiest thing in all the world, is in our text declared to be a thing utterly and entirely impossible to any man, unless the Father shall draw him to Christ.

Charles Spurgeon in his sermon Human Inability (based on John 6:44)

***My text does not say, “No man will come,” but it says, “No man can come.”...There is in man, not only unwillingness to be saved, but there is a spiritual powerlessness to come to Christ***

Charles Spurgeon on John 6:44