

“WCF 6: Sin, the Fall, and Punishment”
(Lesson One: The Fall and Its Effects)

- I. Overview: In chapter six, the *Confession* answers the following questions:
- A. What was the sin by which Adam and Eve fell?
 - 1. Why was what they did wrong?
 - 2. How did they fall?
 - 3. Was it a part of God’s plan?

 - B. What happened to Adam and Eve when they fell?
 - 1. How did it affect their spiritual condition?
 - 2. How did it affect their communion with God?
 - 3. How did it affect their whole being?

 - C. How did Adam’s sin affect his children? Did anyone escape these effects?
 - D. What is original sin and how does it affect man?
 - E. Do believers still have original sin?
 - F. What are the consequences of original sin and actual sins?
- II. The Fall and Its Effects.
- A. The Fall.
 - 1. “Our first parents, being seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin, God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to His own glory.
 - 2. What was the sin by which Adam and Eve fell?” (WCF 6.1).
 - a. They disobeyed God by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
 - b. Why was this wrong?
 - (i) Adam and Eve were placed in the garden to cultivate and guard it (Gen. 2:15).
 - (ii) As a part of their probation, God told them not to eat of this tree (2:16-17).
 - (iii) If they had passed the probation, they would have lived forever (3:22).
 - (iv) But if they failed, they would die (2:17).
 - 3. Why did they fail to obey God?
 - a. Satan deceived and tempted Eve, and she ate.
 - (i) “Then the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ And the woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate’” (Gen. 3:13).
 - (ii) “But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ” (2 Cor. 11:3).

 - b. Eve gave the fruit to her husband, and he ate (Gen. 3:6).

- c. Why didn't they obey God?
 - (i) We really don't know. Adam and Eve must have had the ability to resist Satan, but they chose not to.
 - (ii) In their original state, they also had the ability to disobey God. Why they would want to is a mystery.
 - 4. Was this a part of God's plan?
 - a. Yes. It was not merely permitted, but ordained by Him, to take place through their own free will.
 - b. His purpose, as we've seen, was to glorify His name: "For God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all" (Rom. 11:32).
- B. The Effects of the Fall.
1. "By this sin, they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body" (WCF 6.2).
 2. What happened to Adam and Eve when they sinned?
 - a. They lost their original righteousness and gained original sin.
 - (i) Originally, they were made in God's image. This image included two aspects: natural and moral.
 - (ii) The natural image consists of four things:
 - (a) Rationality: they could reason.
 - (b) Spirituality: they had a soul.
 - (c) Eternality: they would never cease to be, by God's decree.
 - (d) Morality: they had the capacity to make morally significant choices.
 - (e) These remained essentially intact after the Fall, though man uses his intellect differently.
 - (iii) The moral image consisted in their moral likeness to God.
 - (a) We call this their original righteousness: the holy disposition given by the Spirit.
 - (b) They loved righteousness and hated evil.
 - (c) This was wholly lost in the Fall and replaced by original sin.
 - (d) But it is restored in part in the new birth, "And put on the new self, which in *the likeness of God* has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth" (Eph. 4:24).
 - b. They lost their communion with God.
 - (i) While they were without sin, they had fellowship with God in His sanctuary (the Garden of Eden; Ezek. 28:13-14).
 - (ii) But after the Fall, they were cast out of the Garden (Gen. 3:24).
 - (iii) "*Your* eyes are too pure to approve evil, and You can not look on wickedness *with favor*" (Hab. 1:13).

- c. They became dead in sin.
 - (i) “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” (2:17).
 - (ii) In what sense(s) did they die?
 - (a) Physical death began in their body: they began to age, “So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died” (Gen. 5:3).
 - (b) They became spiritually dead: the absence of original righteousness (Eph. 4:24) and presence of original sin.
 - (c) They came under the sentence of eternal death, “The soul who sins will die” (Ezek. 18:4).

- d. Their whole being was affected by this sin.
 - (i) The loss of original righteousness affected every faculty.
 - (a) Their hearts were now bent on sin, “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” (Gen. 6:5).
 - (b) They would no longer use their minds to discover the knowledge of God, but hide it, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom. 1:18).
 - (c) They would no longer exercise their wills in obedience to God, but now in rebellion, “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience” (Eph. 2:1-2).

 - (ii) We call this total depravity.
 - (a) It is total with respect to its degree: the moral image of God was erased.
 - (b) It is total with respect to its extent: it affects every part of man: “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1).
 - (c) It results in total inability to do anything pleasing to God: “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*, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom. 8:7-8).
 - (d) Man is not as bad as he could be only because of the restraint of the Holy Spirit.
 - (e) In this condition, “There is none who does good, there is not even one” (Rom. 3:12).
 - (f) No one is able apart from the grace of God to trust in Christ and be saved.