

CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL

INTRODUCTION

We continue our study of Chapter 6 of *Biblical Doctrine* which covers both *Man and Sin*.

When we speak of sin, you have to consider both the *deed* and its *consequences*, the *misdeed* and its *punishment*.¹

We tend to separate sin and its penalty, but that is not the way the Bible speaks concerning sin.

- Sometimes it will focus on the deed, hence “sin.”
- Sometimes it will focus on the *outcome* of the misdeed, hence “punishment.”
- Sometimes it will focus on the situation between the deed and its consequence, hence “guilt.”

Expiation is probably not a term you are familiar with but “to expiate” means to extinguish guilt, to pay the penalty. When sin is expiated it is put aside, it is blotted out, it is wiped out, it is done away with.

That is man’s greatest need: to be forgiven of his sin or using this term, for God to expiate our sin. This was accomplished through the atoning work of Christ on the cross.

Men turn to themselves to blot out sin or its consequences. That is why it is important we tell the Good news of Jesus Christ. But before then, we must be faithful to proclaim the bad news. We need to understand sin and its consequences.

¹ Carl Schultz, “1577 עֲוֹן,” ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 650.

C O N T E N T

Having introduced the topic of sin, *defining it*, discussing *sin's relationship to other doctrines*, and providing an overview of *the origin of sin*, we now begin to discuss **THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL**.

1. **Personal Consequences**
2. **The Fall's Impact on Relationships**
3. Three Forms of Death
4. Transmission of Adam's Sin
5. Old Self and New Self
6. Total Depravity

CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL

This evening we will be focusing on the first two points.

PERSONAL CONSEQUENCES

Sin always *disappoints* and *never satisfies*. Adam and Eve were instantly faced with this reality. Turn back to Genesis 3 for a moment.

You are familiar with the details of this passage, but I want to draw attention to **vv. 6-7** –

⁶ Then the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, **so she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.**

⁷ And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

Paul tells us that “*the serpent deceived Eve by his **craftiness***” (2 Cor. 11:3). The LXX has this term in a positive light, as in “prudence.”

But in the *NT*, it is always negative “*ready to do anything wicked, knavish* [14th century: dishonest].”²

You see, “when he speaks a lie, he speaks out of his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44). If you lie, you are susceptible to *any* sin. Lying is a gateway to all sorts of sin. Then you become “ready to anything wicked.”

What’s more: if you are willing to cover your sin with a lie, and thereby condition your conscience to tolerate the lie, your conscience will in effect becomes useless to keep you from *any* sin.

The deception began as a small doubt concerning the character of God, grew into a doubt of her husband’s trustworthiness, flourished into the three areas of worldly lust, and bore the fruit of sinful actions.³

Well the result is that somehow that piece of fruit didn’t taste as good as promised.

Adam and Eve expected to become like God, enlightened and fulfilled. Instead, “*the eyes of both of them were opened*” (v. 7), just like the Serpent had predicted, “*your eyes will be opened*” (3:5).

Q: But *what were their eyes opened to?*

A: To the knowledge that “*they were naked.*”

Earlier they “*were both naked and were not ashamed*” (2:25), now in *urgency* and *desperation*,⁴ they “*sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings*” (3:7).

² H.G. Liddell, *A Lexicon: Abridged from Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996), 591.

³ John MacArthur, *Genesis 1-11: Creation, Sin, and the Nature of God*, MacArthur Bible Studies (Thomas Nelson, 2008), 28.

⁴ See Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1987), 76.

SHAME

Consequence or result of sin is shame.

To have their eyes “*opened*,” in particular to their nakedness was the experience of shame, the loss of innocence, and a folly attempt to alleviate the problem themselves.

Rather than seeking God, they hide themselves from God. Instead of humbling themselves, seeking God to atone, they attempt to self-atone by covering themselves. But that only hides their nakedness from one another, not their sin before God. The best that man can come out with is “*fig leaves*” (*ḥāgōrōt*) but God in grace provides the better-suited “*garments of skin*” (3:21; *kotēnôt*) for them.

Shame becomes a sure token of guilt.⁵ Or as our pastor puts it: “*shame is a function of guilt.*”⁶

It is the distinguishing indicator that you have done wrong and it needs to be corrected. Only God can deal with guilt. God has to kill something.

Q: In this chapter, Genesis 3, *who does He kill?*

A: He kills an animal. It’s the first time you have death in the Bible. You can’t take the skin of an animal without killing it. God kills an innocent animal, takes the skin and covers Adam and Eve and introduces the nature of atonement.

Atonement is a covering for sinners provided by the death of an innocent substitute. *Sound familiar?* That looks to Christ as **Isaiah 53:5** declares –

⁵ But He was pierced through for our transgressions,
He was crushed for our iniquities;
The chastening for our peace *fell* upon Him,
And by His wounds we are healed.

⁵ See John Calvin and John King, *Commentary on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, vol. 1 (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010), 157.

⁶ John MacArthur, “What is Sin?” in *John MacArthur Sermon Archive* (Panorama City, CA: Grace to You, 2014). Preached on January 30, 2000.

That is the nature of atonement. “Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness” (**Heb. 9:22**).

FEAR

Another consequence of sin was *fear*. Look at **Gen. 3:8** –

⁸ Then they heard the sound of Yahweh God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife **hid themselves from the presence of Yahweh God** in the midst of the trees of the garden.

Adam says this in **v. 10** why they hid themselves:

¹⁰ And he said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, **and I was afraid** because I was naked; so I hid.”

This is what sin causes: it causes fear and hiding from God.

It is ludicrous to think you can hide from God or that God cannot see your deeds. Sinners always despise His presence. They cannot stand in the face of such holiness. **John 3:19** testifies:

¹⁹ “And 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.

Notice that it is God seeking man, not man seeking God. Look down at **v. 9** –

⁹ Yahweh God called to the man and said to him, “**Where are you?**”

It is not that God doesn’t know where he is or that he doesn’t know the state of his condition.

The psalmist declares in **Ps. 44:21** –

²¹ **...He knows** the secrets of the heart.

Going back to v. 9, “Yahweh God.” Moses reminding the reader that God is still the Covenant keeper as well as creator, judge, master, and Lord.

Yahweh God sought out man. Notice that Adam does not confess his sin. He avoids answering the real reason why he was hiding. Adam imputes his fear to the voice of God, and to his own nakedness.

Calvin writes, “he does not yet so feel his punishment, as to confess his fault.”⁷ He is not there yet.

BLAME

A third consequence/result of sin is blame. Look again at **Gen. 3:11-12** –

¹¹ And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”

¹² And the man said, “The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave to me from the tree, and I ate.”

Again, God is asking another question to which He already knew the answer. The Lord was gently trying to lead Adam to confess his sin.

Does he? No he does not.

God is seeking reconciliation with Adam, but it only comes with a confession of sin. This is man’s condition as **Rom. 8:7** explains –

⁷ 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**,

At this point in redemptive history, before Gen. 3:15, is he able to confess his sin? Does he need God to initiate? Yes, wholly.

⁷ Calvin, 162.

What does he do: blame Eve in **v. 12** –

¹² And the man said, “**The woman whom You gave to be with me**, she gave to me from the tree, and I ate.”

In fact, he is blaming God, “*the woman **whom** You gave to be with me.*”

Adam now sets the pattern of mankind for all time: blame someone else.

We live in a “culture of blame.” There is no sense of shame. Men rationalize their sin, they give explanation for their sin, they excuse why they do evil.

Listen to our pastor address this very matter of blame-shifting:

What is evident is that people in our culture are **becoming very good at blame-shifting**—making scapegoats of parents, childhood disappointments, and other dysfunctions beyond their control. No matter what problem you suffer from—whether you are a cannibalizing serial murderer or just someone struggling with emotional distress—you can easily find someone who will explain to you why your failing is not your fault, and teach you how to silence a troubled conscience.⁸

Eve did the same, blaming the serpent in **Gen. 3:13** –

¹³ Then Yahweh God said to the woman,
“What is this you have done?”
And the woman said, “**The serpent deceived me**, and I ate.”

Again, it is the default position of fallen man to blame someone else.

But it never works. We can never disavow our personal culpability. In fact, if you refuse to acknowledge your sin, you place yourself in bondage to your own guilt.

⁸ John MacArthur, *The Vanishing Conscience*, Electronic ed. (Dallas: Word Pub., 1994), 33.

Proverbs 28:13 reminds us –

¹³ He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper,
But he who confesses and forsakes *them* will receive compassion.

Transgression not lead to success in relationships, work, and life in general. Rather, transgression must be confessed.

You can cover other's transgressions in love (cf. **Prov. 10:12**), but you cannot cover your own and prosper, *finish well*.⁹

Let us conclude at looking at the other point for this evening...

THE FALL'S IMPACT ON RELATIONSHIPS

Man was created for relationships with God, with other people, and with the creation. The fall of man affects all three.

God

Man's relationship with God was severed. He became *spiritually dead*.

We read in **Eph. 2:1** –

¹ And you were **dead** in your transgressions and sins,

Sin brings the wrath of God, which is God's righteous displeasure toward sin. **Romans 1:18** says –

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven **against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men** who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

Against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, and Paul adds in *Ephesians 5:6*, "*the sons of disobedience*."

⁹ Wilhelm Gesenius and Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, *Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldean Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2003), 710.

One day, God will manifest His wrath, on the “*day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God*” (**Rom. 2:5**), which is the great white throne judgment, at which the wicked of all times and from all places will be cast into the lake of fire, where they will join Satan and all his other evil followers (cf. **Rev. 20:10-15**).

Sin also invites God’s punishment. God must punish sin. Jesus said that the wicked “*will go away into eternal punishment*” (**Matt. 25:46**).

Lastly sin creates enmity, which is a hostile situation between parties.

Sin has brought enmity between man and God. God hates sin. God’s wrath is manifested against sin.

Before there can be reconciliation, this enmity has to be removed.

Q: *How was that enmity removed?*

A: **Romans 5:10** tells us how –

¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God **through the death of His Son**, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Next...

PEOPLE

Sin disrupted all human relationships. If you go back to **Gen. 3:16a** –

¹⁶ To the woman He said, “**I will greatly multiply Your pain and conception**, In pain you will bear children;
[Having children would be difficult.]

Your **desire** will be for your husband, And he will rule over you.”

Then, tension between man and woman in the basic and necessary union of marriage would transpire. This would be a “desire” for control.

Then, strife between persons in general. You have the first murder of human being recorded in **Gen. 4:8** "*Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.*" That was only the beginning of hatred, strife, murders, and war.

And last of all...

CREATION

Man's sin has negatively affected his relationship to creation. Creation now works against man and frustrates his efforts. We read in **Gen. 3:17** –

¹⁷ Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; **Cursed is the ground because of you; In pain you will eat of it All the days of your life.**

Adam's sin was twofold. First, he "*listened to the voice*" of his wife; i.e. he submitted himself voluntarily to her leadership. Second, he ate the forbidden fruit.

This had consequences that reached far beyond himself....al the way down to the dust of the ground from which mankind had been created.

Notice what follows in **Gen. 3:18-19** –

¹⁸ "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field;

¹⁹ By the sweat of your face You will eat bread...

What was once a source of joy and fulfillment, Adam's work would now have hardship and frustration associated with that work.

This affected man at the innermost nerve of his life: his work, his activity, and provision for sustenance.

Man would have to get used to having thorns and thistles all the days of his life.

CONCLUSION

My beloved, you know this very well, but it is a good place to end our study for this evening. There is only *“one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus”* (1 Tim. 2:5).

Mediator refers to someone who intervenes between two parties. Christ is the only “Mediator” who can restore peace between God and sinners.

Q: *How did He do this?*

A: By the death of Christ on the cross, by the blood of His cross.

By the cross He did it! The enmity, man’s enmity against God was put on to Christ and there was taken away. The enmity has been removed!

What a wonderful Gospel! The only way to reconcile God and man, and man and God, is by the cross, by Christ’s death.

Read **Rev. 1:5b-6**.