

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Video Lecture Series

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

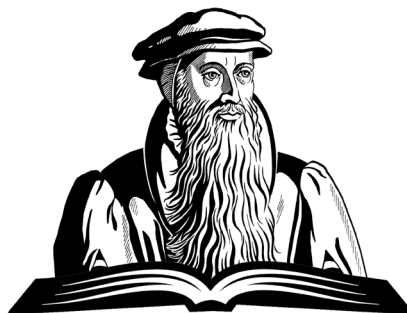
STUDY GUIDE

Module 3:

THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

Lecture 6:

THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN



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Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide

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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version.

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Module 3

The Nature of Sin

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Module 3:

THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

Lecture 6:

The Doctrine of Original Sin

Introduction

Our understanding of man's natural condition has far-reaching implications. For example, if a person believes that men are born innocent, or born as a blank slate, or that people at their core are really good people, then it will affect how they view the problems of humanity, and the solutions that they propose. Some think that education is the answer to the problems of mankind, that if you just provide people with enough information, or the right information, then all will be well. We could cite other examples of the same kind of thing. But the Bible gives us a very different perspective. It reveals the truth that the fallen state of mankind shows us that people are sinners, and the only solution for their desperate condition can be found in the gospel of Jesus Christ and God's salvation from sin.

Theme: *The doctrine of Original Sin.*

I. Scriptural Basis

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Romans 5:12–19)

1. The contrast between Adam and Christ.
 - a. The union between Adam and his posterity—all mankind—on one side;
 - b. The union between Christ and his people—the elect—on the other side.
2. Adam serves as a representative of the human race.
3. All mankind was included in Adam’s first sin.
4. Death reigned in all because of the one sin of Adam, not the sins of his posterity.
5. The judgment was from one unto condemnation.

Questions:

1. What is in us because of Adam’s first sin?

2. How do we know that believers in Christ are more blessed than Adam was before he sinned? Does knowing about the sin of Adam drive you to Christ and his kingdom?

II. Doctrinal Overview

As summarized in *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter 6, paragraph 3:

“They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed, to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation.”

1. Original sin as defined by Augustine:
 - a. We are all one in the state of sin.
 - b. Our sinful nature is derived from Adam’s first sin.
 - c. Our sinful nature is the source of all of our actual sins.
2. Adam’s first sin is passed on to his posterity.

- a. The biblical concept of “imputation.”
 - b. The guilt of Adam’s first sin is imputed to his posterity.
 - c. The sins and guilt of the elect are imputed to Christ.
 - c. Christ’s righteousness is imputed to the elect, and received by faith alone.
3. Adam served as representative head over the human race.
- a. Adam served as a legal head.
 - b. Adam’s headship was natural head.
4. The nature of imputation.
- a. Imputation is immediate, not mediate.
 - b. Implications about the imputation of the guilt of Adam’s first sin.

Questions:

1. What is “original sin” and where did it come from? What three concepts did Augustine use to describe original sin?

2. What does “imputation” mean?

3. What three types of imputation do we see taught in the Bible? At what point is each of these applied to the recipients?

4. What are the implications of Adam serving as legal and as natural head of mankind? How does this explain the connection between Adam and his posterity?

5. Is the nature of imputation in the Bible mediate or immediate? Please explain your answer.

6. How is the study of the imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin important for us to understand the Bible?

7. Are we sinners because we sin? Or do we sin because we are sinners? Please explain.

III. Polemical Exposition

Error 1: *Pelagianism.*

Error 2: *Those who object to the doctrine of original sin, they think it is not fair.*

Error 3: *Those who question why God allowed Adam to sin.*

Questions:

1. What does Pelagianism teach about original sin? Do you see similar views in the world today?

2. What actually happens to our theology if we reject the doctrine of original sin?

3. How can we answer Error #3 biblically?

IV. Practical Exposition

1. We cannot downplay the desperation of man's sinful condition.
2. We need to see that sin is the root problem of all problems in this world.
3. The inescapable necessity of Christ's redeeming work which is proclaimed in the gospel.

Questions:

1. What false notions of man's condition have you had in the past? Did you ever believe in man's inherent goodness and moral purity? How does the truth of original sin illuminate your mind?

2. What are the implications of seeing how sin is the root problem of all problems?

3. What are the benefits and blessings that flow to those who are united to Christ?

V. Self-Reflection

Do you have peace with God? Are you in Adam or in Christ? This is not a matter of your feelings, but it is about your objective standing before God. Why does the faith and hope of Christians stand or fall on the historical reality of these two persons, Adam and Christ? Read and meditate on Romans 5 again, not only on the lost state of mankind in Adam, but also on the blessings that believers have in Christ.
