

THE 1689 BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH

The Fall of Man, Sin and its Punishment (2)

A. Introduction

1. Two things we are commanded to do as elders are to watch and to hold.

We are to watch what we believe, to make sure we are believing what God's Word says.

"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." (1 Timothy 4:16)

We are to hold firmly to the truths taught in God's Word.

"He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it." (Titus 1:9)

It is vital we do these two things, not just for our own sake, but also for the members of this church and in fact those who live in the community God has placed us in.

To help us to watch and to hold, we are spending our elders' meeting working through the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith a paragraph or so at a time.

2. In Chapter 6, the Confession discusses the Fall, sin, and its punishment.

Beginning with the historical event of the Fall in the first paragraph, we learn that the Fall took place because Adam did not trust and obey God but also because God allowed it to happen.

In the next paragraph the focus is on what tragic effects of the Fall are.

"Our first parents, by this sin, fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and we in them whereby death came upon all: all becoming dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body."

B. We are fallen

1. We in Adam fell from the righteousness human beings had.

"Our first parents, by this sin, fell from their original righteousness... and we in them"

Adam and Eve were righteous.

They were not just considered righteous by God.

They actually were righteous in thought, word, and deed.

But this righteousness was lost when they sinned.

And we in Adam lost that righteousness then too.

"Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." (Psalm 51:5)

"There is no-one righteous, not even one." (Romans 3:10)

2. We in Adam fell from the communion with God human beings had.

"Our first parents, by this sin, fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and we in them..."

Adam and Eve's sin caused them to hide from God.

"Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden." (Genesis 3:8)

Sin had separated them from God.

And we in Adam lost that communion with God then too.

"There is no-one who understands, no-one who seeks God." (Romans 3:11)

C. We are dead

1. Our fall in Adam means that death has come upon us all.

When God warned Adam that if disobeyed His command he would die, He wasn't joking.

From the moment of disobedience Adam and Eve died spiritually as they were cut off from God, and this began a physical death as decay entered them, meaning that they would one day become dust again.

Because in some mysterious way we were present with and in Adam when he sinned, death has come upon us as well.

"...whereby death came upon all..."

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned." (Romans 5:12)

2. Our fall in Adam means that we are dead in our sins.

We enter life dead.

"...all becoming dead in sin."

"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins..." (Ephesians 2:1)

We are dead spiritually.

We will die physically.

And then eternally.

"Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out – those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned." (John 5:28-29)

D. We are depraved

1. Every part of our lives has been corrupted by sin.

"...and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body."

This doesn't mean that we are as wicked as we could be.

This does mean that there is no part of us that is not tainted by sin.

"The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time." (Genesis 6:5)

"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9)

This is the doctrine of total depravity.

Total refers to the extent of our depravity not the degree of our depravity.

Total depravity is not utter depravity.

2. Every part of our lives shows we have been corrupted by sin.

“In which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts.” (Ephesians 2:2)

We are born following the way of this world, the flesh, and the devil.

E. How then shall we lead?

1. We need to grasp and teach the depth of our sin.

Our sin leaves us helpless and hopeless.

2. We need to grasp and teach the extent of our sin.

Our sin touches every part of our lives.