

## THE 1689 BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH

### The Fall of Man, Sin and its Punishment (3)

#### 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.

The first two paragraphs cover the historical event of the Fall and what the tragic effects of that event for humans are.

In paragraph 3 we have an explanation as to why all mankind sinned when Adam sinned and what that means for us.

*"They being the root, and by God's appointment, standing in the room and stead of all mankind, the guilt of the sin was imputed, and corrupted nature conveyed, to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation, being now conceived in sin, and by nature children of wrath, the servants of sin, the subjects of death, and all other miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal, unless the Lord Jesus set them free."*

Adam had a unique role as the first human. [The Confession includes Eve in the discussion of the Fall, but the emphasis of Scripture is on Adam].

Not only, along with Eve, being the one from who all humans have descended from. *"They being the root."*

But as the one God appointed to represent all humans – the federal head. *"...by God's appointment, standing in the room and stead of all mankind."*

This meant what he did directly involved and affected all who would come from him. *"...to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation."*

So, when Adam sinned, we sinned with him and therefore have inherited his guilt and received his sinful nature. *"...the guilt of the sin was imputed and corrupted nature conveyed."*

What does this mean?

#### B. All humans are born guilty

1. Every human descendant of Adam is guilty in God's sight.

*"...the guilt of the sin was imputed..."*

Adam's descendants didn't actually sin as he did.

They weren't present in the Garden and they didn't take the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and eat it.

But because he was their representative, his guilt is imputed/credited/attributed by God to them, and therefore they are under the punishment which that sin deserved – death.

“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)

“For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.” (1 Corinthians 15:21-22)

2. There was however, one human, who did not inherit Adam's guilt.

Why was Jesus not born guilty?

Because Adam's guilt was imputed *"to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation..."* and Jesus did not descend that way.

### **C. All humans are born sinful**

1. Every human descendant of Adam has a sinful nature.

When Adam sinned, his nature was corrupted, and his offspring was made in his likeness.

“When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.” (Genesis 5:3)

Adam's corrupt nature was passed on to his descendants, not by imputation (because that doesn't change a person), but by conveying or transmitting it to them.

*"...corrupted nature conveyed..."*

“Who can bring what is pure from the impure? No-one!” (Job 14:4)

2. There was however, one human, who did not inherit Adam's sinful nature.

Why was Jesus not born a sinner?

Because Adam's sinful nature was conveyed *"to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation..."* and Jesus did not descend that way.

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.” (Luke 1:35)

3. What are the consequences of inheriting the guilt and sinful nature of Adam?

Firstly, we are sinful from the moment of conception.

*"...being now conceived in sin..."*

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

“Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies.” (Psalm 58:3)

Secondly, God is angry at us.

*"and by nature children of wrath..."*

"All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath."  
(Ephesians 2:3)

Thirdly, we are helpless to do anything about our situation.

*"the servants of sin..."*

"Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin." (John 8:34)

Fourthly, we will perish eternally in hell.

*"the subjects of death..."*

4. This is our situation unless the Lord Jesus sets us free.

*"...and all other miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal, unless the Lord Jesus set them free."*

"Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath." (1 Thessalonians 1:10)

"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil – and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death." (Hebrews 2:14-15)

#### **D. How then shall we lead?**

1. With joy in God because we have been justified by Christ.

No longer are we guilty in God's sight and under the sentence of death, because Jesus' righteousness has been imputed to us to bring us eternal life.

"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." (Romans 8:1)

2. With devotion to God because we have been sanctified by Christ.

No longer are we sinful in God's sight, because in Christ we have been made holy, and we are to strive to live righteous lives as those who have been set free from slavery to sin.

"Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness." (Romans 6:19)