

Reformed Doctrine of Predestination, Lesson #13

IV. The Fall of Man

C. Despite the ability to choose obedience, Adam willingly chose disobedience.

Adam was not tempted by Satan in a direct way. Eve was tempted by Satan and Eve was deceived. Adam, however, sinned willfully and deliberately.

1 Tim 2:13-14 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

...in the full consciousness of what he was doing, and with a perfect realization of the solemn consequences which were involved, [Adam] deliberately chose to follow his wife in her act of sinful disobedience. It was this deliberate willfulness of man's sin which constituted its heinous character. Had he been attacked by Satan, and forced to yield through some overwhelming power being brought against him, we might have tried to find some excuse for his fall. But when, with eyes wide open, and with mind perfectly conscious and fully aware of the awful nature of his act, he used his free will to respond to the claims of the creature in defiance of the Creator, no excuse can he found for his fall.

Pre-Fall Man	Post-Fall Man	Reborn Man	Glorified Man
able to sin	able to sin	able to sin	
able to not sin		able to not sin	able to not sin
	unable to not sin		
			unable to sin

- Could Adam obey God? Yes
- Can unregenerate man obey God? No
- Can born-again man obey God? Yes
- Can glorified man disobey God? No

The Scriptures declare that fallen man is a captive, a willing slave to sin, and entirely unable to deliver himself from its bondage and corruption. He is incapable of understanding, and much less of doing, the things of God...And such being the depth of man's corruption it is wholly beyond his own power to cleanse himself. His only hope of an amendment of life lies accordingly in a change of heart, which change is brought about by the sovereign re-creative power of the Holy Spirit who works when and where and how He pleases...Man does not possess the power of self-regeneration, and until this inward change takes place, he cannot be convinced of the truth of the Gospel by any amount of external testimony.

Jer 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

V. The Good News!

The lost, ruined, and helpless state of the sinner needs to be constantly set before him; for until he is brought to feel it, he will never seek help where alone it is to be found.

We need to constantly set before the sinner his lost, ruined, and helpless state so that he will seek Christ!

Rom 5:18-19 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

Christ is the representative of His people, and on this ground their sins are imputed to Him and His righteousness to them.

Adam's sin is imputed to his descendants in the same way that Christ's righteousness is imputed to those who believe in Him. Adam's descendants are, of course, no more personally guilty of his sin than Christ's redeemed are personally meritorious of His righteousness.

1 Cor 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

A survey of the fall and its extent is humiliating work. It proves to man that all his claims of goodness are unfounded, and it shows him that his only hope is in the sovereign grace of Almighty God. The "graciously restored ability" of which the Arminian talks is not consistent with the facts. The Scriptures, history, and Christian experience by no means warrant such a favorable view of the natural moral condition of man as the Arminian system teaches. On the contrary each of these gives us a very gloomy picture of a fearful corruption and universal inclination to evil, which can only be overcome by the intervention of divine grace. The Calvinistic system teaches a far deeper fall into sin and a far more glorious manifestation of redeeming grace. From these depths the Christian is led to despair of himself, to throw himself unconditionally into the arms of God, and to lay hold on unmerited grace, which alone can save him.

VI. Arminianism vs. Calvinism

Arminianism	Calvinism
Although human nature was seriously affected by the fall, man has not been left in a state of total spiritual helplessness.	Because of the fall, man is unable of himself to savingly believe the gospel.
Each sinner possesses a free will, in the sense he can completely choose anything he wants. His eternal destiny depends on how he uses this will.	Fallen man's will is free only in the sense he is free to choose according to his desires. However it is not free to make completely neutral choices or absolutely unbiased decisions.
Man's freedom consists of his ability to choose good over evil in spiritual matters; his will is not enslaved to his sinful nature. The sinner has the power to either cooperate with God's Spirit and be regenerated or resist God's grace and perish.	The sinner is dead, blind, and deaf to the things of God; his heart is deceitful and desperately corrupt. His will is in bondage to his evil nature, and therefore, he will not, and cannot, choose good over evil in the spiritual realm.
Anyone can choose to come to Christ for salvation.	No one can of his own will come to Christ for salvation.
The lost sinner needs the Spirit's assistance but he does not have to be regenerated by the Spirit before he can believe, for faith is man's act and precedes the new birth.	It takes much more than the Spirit's "assistance" to bring a sinner to Christ - it takes regeneration by which the Spirit makes the sinner alive and gives him a new nature.
Faith is the sinner's gift to God; it is man's contribution to salvation.	Faith is not something man contributes to salvation but is a part of God's gift of salvation. It is God's gift to the sinner, not the sinner's gift to God.
Faith and rebirth come first.	Regeneration must come first.