

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 6.-*Of the Fall of Man, of Sin, and of the Punishment thereof.*

V. This corruption of nature during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated:¹ and although it be, through Christ, pardoned, and mortified, yet both it self, and all the motions thereof are truly and properly sin.²

Question 1.—*Does this corruption of nature, during this life, remain in those that are regenerated?*

Answer—Yes. 1 John 1:8, 10; Rom. 7:14, 17, 18, 23; Jas. 3:2; Prov. 20:9; Eccl. 7:20. The Bible repudiates the notion that man can attain perfection in this life. The believer, regenerated by the Spirit of God, is justified and this places him in an abiding state of acceptance with God, through the merits of Christ. As the believer lives in a state of grace, his sinful deeds are pardoned, and the corrupt nature itself, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, is mortified, crucified and subdued more and more, until it is finally conquered at death.

Question 2.—*Is this corrupt nature, albeit pardoned, and mortified through Christ in some measure in the regenerate, both itself, and all the motions thereof truly and properly sin?*

Answer—Yes. Rom. 7:5, 7, 8, 25; Gal. 5:17. Thus, those who teach that concupiscence or lust, and the first motions thereof, which have not gotten the consent of the will, are not properly and truly sin do greatly err. Because, 1.) They are forbidden by the moral and natural law in the tenth commandment, Ex. 20:17; Deut. 5:21; Rom. 7:7. 2.) Paul speaking of himself while unregenerate, calls concupiscence and lust often times sin and evil, Rom. 7:5, 6. 3.) It is a great part of the old man which we must lay down, and must be mortified; Col. 3:5, 6, 9; Eph. 4:22.

Question 3.—*Does sin have dominion over the godly?*

Answer—No. Though they often falter and fall into divers sins, yet doth not sin have dominion over them but battles them as an enemy, Gal. 2:20. Because, 1.) Sin hath no dominion when there is union to Christ, Rom. 8:2. Christ being the life of the soul, Col. 3:4, being thus united to life itself, death hath no dominion, but rather life however feeble. 2.) Sin hath no dominion when this union results in lively, spiritual exercises, Rom. 6:14. Such a person desires to do everything out of God, through God, for God, before God, and unto God, Phil. 4:13. They are only refreshed when all their deeds “are wrought in God,” John 3:21. This union cannot be passive, for faith “worketh by love,” Gal. 5:6, purifies the heart, Acts 15:9, “overcometh the world,” 1 John 5:4, resists the devil, 1 Pet. 5:9, and is fruitful unto good works, James 2:17. The issue here is not the measure of faith, but its genuineness, Matt. 17:20. 3.) Sin hath no dominion when this union brings forth internal opposition and hatred towards all that is sin (by virtue of its very nature) whether it be great or small, Gal. 5:17. As a result of this, those so united abhor themselves more than anyone else, “For that which I do I allow not. . . . If then I do that which I would not . . . it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me,” Rom. 7:15–17;

¹ 1 John 1:8, 10; Rom. 7:14, 17, 18, 23; Jas. 3:2; Prov. 20:9; Eccl. 7:20.

² Rom. 7:5, 7, 8, 25; Gal. 5:17.

“I hate vain thoughts . . . I hate every false way,” Ps. 119:113, 128. This will bring forth sorrow and humiliation concerning the inner condition of the heart, the sins of omission, and sinful deeds, Ps. 51:6. 4.) Sin hath no dominion when, due to said union, internal resistance and hatred towards sin translates into actual opposition and strife against sin, Gal. 5:25. Time and again, there is a new resolve to do battle against sin; there is prayer for strength, and, desiring to be strengthened, there is a receiving of Jesus by faith unto sanctification, John 17:15; 1 Cor. 6:11. The godly fear that sin may take them by surprise and thus they seek to be watchful, Mark 13:33; 1 Pet. 5:8. They seek to avoid opportunity to sin, resisting it when it does occur, Jas. 4:4; 2 Tim. 2:22. At times, there is victory and at other times, they will be overcome by one particular sin, 2 Tim. 2:26. “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would,” Gal. 5:17. 5.) Sin has no dominion when this union results in a delight, a love for, and a desire to do whatever pleases the Lord, Ps. 1:2. This opposition towards sin is all-inclusive, no sin being excluded, Matt. 7:21. Similarly, the acquiescence with the will of God is also all-inclusive. “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man,” Rom. 7:22; “O how love I Thy law!,” Ps. 119:97. Yet, not only is there a love for and acquiescence with the will of God, but also a love for all those whom one deems to be loved of God and who love God, Eph. 6:24. They are repulsed by and displeased with those that belong to the world, since at heart they are separated from the world. “In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD,” Ps. 15:4; “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren,” 1 John 3:14.

Question 4.—*Why are not the regenerated perfected in this life, but still a remainder of corruption is left in God’s people?*

Answer—To make them know from experience, the strength of sin, the necessity of mortifying grace, and of the abundance of pardoning grace, 2 Cor. 12:7-9; and to keep them exercised in prayer and humiliation, in the faith and hope of deliverance from a body of sin and death, through Christ, Rom. 7:24, 25.