

Holiness and Terminology

Peter Wiseman

THE FALL

"Original sin in the human family was the wilful deviation of the Federal head of mankind from the perfect law of his Creator who placed him on probation. Through this act of disobedience he fell from original righteousness and became dead in sin, depraved in mind and corrupt in heart."

The fall of man "into sin was internal and external; the sin first of the human spirit and then of the human flesh. Separation from the supreme will was consummated within before it was exhibited in the act; the inmost principle of sin is the severance of the self from God; the entertainment, therefore, of the question, 'yea, hath God said,' was the beginning of human evil. This was the first formal sin, though not alluded to in the Scripture as such. The outward act was the look of concupiscence towards the tree, which had in itself the guilt of partaking, and was followed by partaking itself. Hence in all New Testament references to the original sin, its principle of disobedience is made prominent. The woman being deceived was in the transgression. And when Adam yielded to the enticement of Eve, he only proved that he had already consented to her act: he also was in the transgression." (I Tim. 1:14; Rom. 5:15-19; Gen. 2:19; 3:6).

INBRED SIN: INDIVIDUAL AND UNIVERSAL

Inbred sin is that hereditary moral corruption common to all men since the fall of Adam. It is a "bias of human nature toward evil" (Pope). It is our corrupt nature (Eph. 4:22). It is "the body of this death" (Rom. 7:24). It is an indwelling foe in human personality (Rom. 7:20). It is an veil heart of unbelief" (Heb. 3:2). It is "enmity against God" (Rom. 8:7), religious anarchy in the human soul, and the source of actual sin. (Jer. 17:9; Ps. 51:5; Rom. 6:6; Gal. 5:19-21).

The fall of man affected the whole man and the whole race (Isa. 1:5-6; Psa. 51:5; Rom. 5:12; 7:17).

ACTUAL SIN

Actual sin is the wilful transgression against the moral law of God, and may either be a sin of omission, i. e., failing in duty, or a sin of commission, i. e., doing something against or contrary to the Spirit and the Word of God. (I John 1:10; 5:17; 3:4; Matt. 25:40; Psa. 51:3; Rom. 14:23).

DISTINCTIONS

Original Sin belongs to Adam as the primary transgressor. Inbred Sin is Adam's fallen nature transmitted to his posterity. Actual sin is man's own which he actually commits. Wilful transgressions involve the concurrence of the will. Involuntary transgressions do not involve the concurrence of the will and therefore do not bring guilt.

SIN TWO-FOLD

Sin, then, is two-fold. It is in what we do and in what we are; in act and in principle. Thus the necessity of a two-fold cure, pardon for the act and purification for the principle. By principle is meant the unholy tendencies of the unsanctified heart.

REPENTANCE

"Repentance is a deep, godly sorrow produced in the heart of a sinful person by the Word and Spirit of God, whereby from a sense of sin as endangering to his own soul and displeasing to God, he with grief and hatred turns from all his known sins to God as his Lord and Saviour."

Repentance is a repulsing of the moral nature toward all that is unlike God, for sin is unlikeness to God. This grace of repentance must be retained in order to retain the grace of salvation and to obtain the grace of sanctification. (Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 11:18; 2:38).

SAVING FAITH

Faith is not only an assent to the whole Gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance upon the blood of Christ, a trust in the merits of His life, death, and resurrection; a recumbency upon Him as our atonement and our life, as given us and living in us. It is a sure confidence which a man hath in God that, through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven and he reconciled to the favor of God; and in consequence thereof, a closing with Him, and cleaving to Him, as our 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption,' or, in one word, our salvation."—John Wesley. (Rom. 5:1; Acts 13:39; Eph. 2:8; Heb. 11:1; Rom. 1:17).

JUSTIFICATION

"Justification is that act of God the Father, whereby for the sake of the propitiation made by the blood of His Son, He sheweth forth His righteousness (or mercy) by the remission of sins that are past."—J. Wesley. (Rom. 2:6; Luke 18:14; Rom. 3:24).

ADOPTION

The practice of adoption was common among the Romans. It was the act by which a child might be taken into another family and made a son of that family by adoption. Theologically, it is the act of God's free grace whereby one is received into the family of God, made His child and heir to the Divine inheritance. (Eph. 1:3-14; I Peter 1:2-5).

REGENERATION

"Regeneration is that great change which God works in the soul when He brings it into life; when he raises it from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. It is the change wrought in the whole soul by the Almighty Spirit of God, when it is created anew in Christ Jesus. When the love of the world is changed into the love of God, pride into humility, passion into meekness, hatred, envy, malice into a sincere disinterested love for all mankind."—John Wesley. (John 3:6; 1:12; 2 Cor. 5:17). A DISCRIMINATION—CONVERSION, PARDON, FORGIVENESS, JUSTIFICATION AND REGENERATION.

Conversion, pardon, forgiveness and justification are terms often used synonymously, yet each term carries with it a slightly different shade of meaning. Conversion, the turning from (I Thess. 1:9), usually expressive of the human act; "pardon, in strictness and as used in Scripture," says Bishop Foster in his Merrick Lectures (Third series), "is an administrative act by which the penalty of sin affixed by law is remitted, not exacted. Forgiveness is a personal act, which includes pardon, but goes further in that it not only includes the

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A Mother's Problem

A certain mother came to an evangelist after meeting and asked in a choked voice, "Won't you pray for my daughter? She's a school teacher and a bright woman but at college she got a lot of new ideas and won't even come to church with me now."

The preacher gave the mother a keen glance. "You have talked with your daughter about this?" he questioned.

"Oh yes, a good deal. And plenty strong too. Seems like I just can't stand it for her to be this way. But lately she won't listen to me at all. She says my religion hasn't done me any good and she wants nothing of it."

"Then have you apologized to her for being a poor advertisement of the sweet grace of our Lord Jesus?" probed the evangelist.

"No, of course not—why should I apologize to my daughter? She'd lord it over me the rest of my life."

"I don't think she would. You pray and see what the Lord would have you do."

A few nights later the woman again approached the revivalist and said in a much humbler tone, "I guess I shall have to apologize all right—do pray for me for I shall need it."

Several nights after this both mother and daughter came and sat in the rear of the church. And when the invitation was given, both came together to the altar. It was not long before the young school teacher was brightly converted.

"What happened?" the evangelist wanted to know afterward.

"Why, I told my girl I had something to say to her and when she declared she had no use for my religion, I just put my arm around her and begged her to forgive me for being such a bad example of a Christian. I told her I was awfully ashamed of the way I had failed. She looked at me with wide open eyes and said, 'Are you apologizing to me? Why, I've been perfectly horrid to you!' Then each of us tried to outdo the other. Finally she said of her own accord, 'I'm going to meeting with you tomorrow night.' She did come and praise God! she's saved now too."

A NEW LIFE WITHIN

The snow lay white over all the earth, hiding every scar and sign of death. "It is a symbol of purity," said a man, and he prayed, "O Lord, as Thou hast covered the earth with whiteness, cover my soul with purity." But the sun shone, the snow melted. The brown barrenness of the dead, dead earth, with all its waste and defilement, showed through again. So he who had prayed to be covered with purity amended his prayer, "Create within me a clean heart, O God." Purity is not a covering; it is a new life within."—Selected.

THE CHRISTIAN HOME

In the family of Andrew Murray, of South Africa, eleven children grew to adult life. Five of the sons became ministers and four of the daughters became ministers' wives. The next generation had a still more striking record in that ten grandsons became ministers and thirteen became missionaries. The secret of this unusual contribution to the Christian ministry was the Christian home.—John R. Mott.