

DYING YOU WILL DIE DEAD

A CORE COURSE ON:

HAMARTIOLOGY (THE STUDY OF SIN)

PROPERTY OF:



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Abstract:

An overview of the doctrine of sin. This core course will cover and discuss sin's origin, nature, scope, degrees, and wages as regards (1) the fall of man (2) original sin (3) and total depravity *in order to* properly understand, receive, value, and apply its remedy in Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES: *The Function of Doctrine*

The following is taken from Kevin Vanhoozer's *The Drama of Doctrine*, (15) and may provide a helpful way of discussing and applying systematic theology with your congregation.

- (1) **Coping** — Making sense of the vast, complex, and seemingly chaotic reality we find ourselves in and helping use to live our role.
- (2) **Celebrating** — Ascribing the worth that God is due for who he is and what he has done by truthful and Spiritual speaking about him.
- (3) **Communicating** — Explaining and making clear who the Triune God is, what he had done, and how he wills us to live before Him and to those in and outside the church.
- (4) **Criticism** — Struggling “to demarcate true from false witness to God and his work.”
- (5) **Continuing** — Guiding and impelling us to live out our place, individually and collectively, in God's redemptive mission in the world.

“Doctrine has to do with what faith seeking understanding gets when its search is successful. To be precise: Christian doctrine is the reward that faith finds at the end of its search for the meaning of the apostolic testimony to what God was doing in the event of Jesus Christ.” - Vanhoozer

(4)

Table of Contents

Session 1 - Overview & Creation	3
Session 2 - The Image of God and The Covenant of Works	11
Session 3 - The Fall of Man	16
Session 4 - Original Sin and Total Depravity	20
Session 5 - The Composition, Degrees, and Wages of Sin	25
Session 6 - The Work of Christ and the New Covenant	38
Session 7 - The Work of Killing Sin	46

Session 1 - Overview & Creation

What is the point of this course?

- (1) To understand the holiness of God and sin is what separates us from Him and our created purpose, and how the gospel is the only means by which we can be made right with Him and set free from sin, resulting in an ever greater appreciation, joy, and worship in our lives.
- (2) To grow in *spiritual discernment and wisdom* - being able to recognize sin in its various forms and temptations (internally and externally), and by the Holy Spirit flee from sin/put it to death in our lives.

What is the structure of this course?

(1) The class is modeled in __ weeks, and it's structured around a number of questions: including (but not limited to):

- How was humanity and creation made?
- What is man's chief end?
- What is sin, its nature, and origin?
- How is Adam's sin/guilt communicated to all mankind?
- What are the consequences of sin?
- What is Original Sin? What is the orientation of man's nature before and after the Fall?
- Are there varying degrees of sin? What are they?
- What is the remedy for sin?

(2) Helpful Resources:

- Horton, Michael. *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrim's on the Way* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011).
- Jones, Mark. *Knowing Sin: Seeing a Neglected Doctrine Through the Eyes of the Puritans* (Moody Publishers, 2022).
- Flavel, John *Christ and His Threefold Office* (Reformation Heritage Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2021)
- Owen, John, and Richard Rushing. *The Mortification of Sin* (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009)
- Scherer, Andrew, "What are Modern Conceptions of Sin" (2023)

What is the gospel and how does sin relate to it?

(1) God, man, Christ, response.¹ (one way you may put it below)

- **God** is the righteous Creator of all things. He made man, male and female in his image, body and soul, to represent him as priests/kings in the earth ruling and representing him “in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness; having the law of God written in their hearts” and external command to not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, ‘lest they surely die; yet while maintaining their obedience existed in happy communion with God (Gen 1:27-28; 2:16-17; LBCF 4.2²)
- **Man** in Adam willfully broke God’s commandment and by this sin “fell from their original righteousness and communion with God” and brought death to all mankind, both physical and spiritual, becoming “wholly defiled in all” our faculties (Rom 3:10-18; Rom 5:12-21; LBCF 6.2). God, thus being perfectly holy, just, and loving all goodness has placed man under sure condemnation for their sins.
- **Christ**, the eternal Son and Word of God, came into the world as a man, born of a virgin to save people from their sins (Matthew 1:18-23; John 1:1-18; Luke 1:26-38). Being born pure as the God-man, he lived a righteous and unblemished life and offered himself on the cross as a substitute, under the wrath of God and in accordance with the covenants of old (Ex 12; Lev 16), to satisfy the wrath of God. God’s wrath thus being turned away, Christ rose from the dead on the 3rd day, conquering the power of sin, and offering eternal life and his salvation to all who receive him (Luke 24) .
- **Response.** Man, recognizing the love of God displayed in Christ and their own sin, must repent (turn from sin) and believe (trust wholly) the aforementioned good news as the only means of being made right with God and they will be justified and have peace with God, no longer being under condemnation forever (Acts 2:36-41; Rom 5:1; 8:1; 10:9-13).

¹ Always try to have some copies of this to giveaway. Gilbert, Greg. *What Is the Gospel?* 9Marks Series. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 2010.

² This can be googled for free online. *London Baptist Confession of Faith* (1689)

What does GCC believe specifically about sin?

We believe that...

- **Humanity** - Mankind was created perfect in the image of God, but the first man and woman sinned intentionally which resulted not only in physical death but also spiritual and eternal death, which is separation from God. All are born with a sinful nature, and are sinners in thought, word, and deed (Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 1:18,32; 3:10-19; 5:12,19).
- **Salvation** - The Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins as a representative, substitutionary sacrifice and rose again for our justification; that all who believe in Him are justified on the basis of His shed blood and are saved by grace through faith wholly apart from human works (Acts 13:39; 16:31; Romans 3:21-28; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 3:3-8).

Where do we start with a discussion about sin?

In the beginning...with the One who was in the Beginning (John 1:1-5)

- **Why?** Simply put, we must understand why and how God made us, to understand what went wrong, where we're going, and what the solution is. That is, in **Horton's** words, creation gives us not just our origin (*protology*) but our destiny (*eschatology*).
- I would submit that today, both within and without the church, most errors regarding the issue of sin and how it ought to be addressed stems from a poor understanding of creation and man's place therein.
- **Sin** must be understood in light of (1) the utter perfection, holiness, and goodness of God in his Sovereign Majesty (2) the creational goodness/mission/ and telos (purpose) of humanity and (3) the glorious nature of grace in Christ

What is a human being?

Place in Creation - Genesis 1

- (1) **God's presence** in the void and creation out of the void (*ex nihilo*)
- (2) **Three "Realms"** (these are not "hard and fast" categories but they're one way to understand how God ordered and separated his creation)
 - (a) 1st day: Light (Day) separated from Darkness (Night)
 - (b) 2nd day: Expanse (Sky) separated from Water
 - (c) 3rd day: Dry Land (Earth) separated from Waters (Seas) and with Vegetation

(3) Three “Peoples” (God filling the realms)

- (a) 4th day: Two Lights (Sun & stars) “to rule the day/night” (1:16,18)
- (b) 5th day: Fish/Great Sea Creatures/Birds “Be fruitful and multiply” (throughout the seas/sky)
- (c) 6th day: Livestock/Mankind to rule over the earth and the seas

Creation Re-Told - Genesis 2:4–25

(1) The Creation of Man (again?) -

- (a) Man was “formed from the dust”/dirt
- (b) God breathed into his nostrils the “breath of life” (or the “spirit of life”) - Man’s life/spirit is derived from God’s own breath/Spirit

(2) The Garden of Eden & Two Special Trees

(a) The Garden generally -

- (i) four rivers flowing out of it = on a mountain/hill (Pishon, Gihon, Tigris, Euphrates)
- (ii) gold/precious stones
- (iii) “every tree pleasant to the sight and good for food” (v.9) - **relevant for later :)**
- (iv) Tree of Life (could eat and live forever v. 22)
- (v) Tree of the Knowledge of Good & Evil

(b) Man -

- (i) Placed and told to “work it and keep it” = ***not*** a preservationist! Rather an expansionist command!
- (ii) May eat of **any tree** (^^^ “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day you eat of it you shall surely die” (v.17) = **dying you will die dead** (the word is a double or emphatic negative)
 - 1) Why give this command? What was the point? (We don’t have time in this class to get into it but it’s valid to explore)
- (iii) Exercising dominion in the naming of the animals (v.19–20)

(c) Woman -

- (i) “Not good” (1st thing that is *not good*, doesn’t mean sinful, but incomplete) = Man needs a helper “fit for him”
 - 1) Caution must be taken here...this terminology does ***not*** imply inferiority/superiority
 - 2) When ‘ezer’ is used to describe a person in the Bible (rather than as an action) it tends to describe God **Ps**

33:20; 115:9-10; Hos 13:9 so this may particularly highlight how women bear “God’s image.”

- (ii) Taken out of his own rib (meaning?)
- (iii) God brought her to the man (like a Father giving his daughter to her husband!)

(d) Man and Woman - Marriage

- (i) One Flesh Unity & No shame
- (ii) Houses the Cultural Mandate - Procreation through Union
- (iii) Social institutions are fundamental to God’s mission in Genesis and his work of redemption as we’ll see in how Christ loves and fashions the church

In what does a human being consist?

- **As in....**what are the “parts” of a human being? How do these “parts” relate to one another? What is the purpose and power of these “parts?”
- **Why is this important?** To understand the purpose of humanity and how sin distorts that purpose and corrupts every part of man.

DISCUSS: Look back over Gen 1:26-31; 2:5-9; 19-20.
What do these texts say how man was made? his purpose? his characteristics? Make a list together.

Qualities of Human Creatureliness:

(1) The Image of God

(2) Dependence on God (the provision that he has given)

(3) Finite (has an end and beginning of what we are, limitations)

(4) Physical (body/material stuff) + Spiritual (soul)

(5) Relational + Individual (male *and* female)

(6) Temporal (existing in time)

(7) Created “Good” - **Original Righteousness**

(8) Addressable/Linguistic/Communicative (we are given a command = **The Cultural Mandate**, none of the other creatures are; we are ‘persons’ like the Triune God & like angels, and unlike animals)

(9) Sexually Differentiated and Procreative

(10) Possessed of Agency (competent, decision-makers, have a will)

The Human Self: Material, Spiritual, or Both?

The question of what comprises a human being in this category especially has brought out a number of different views...

- (a) **Body/Soul Hierarchy** - soul is *more essential* than the body
 - (i) **Gnosticism** - held to this dualism where matter is evil, only the spirit is good, salvation is constituted in the soul being liberated to return to the divine realm - condemned by Origen, Tertullian, Justin Martyr, etc., contra Gen 1 “it was good” and 1 Cor 15 w/ the resurrection.
- (b) **Materialism** - human person only consists of a body w/material processes, the “self” is the brain and memory
 - (i) Christian Physicalism - more recent, argues from an evolutionary understanding of human origin that there is no spirit, and therefore no “human disembodied existence” - contra Gen 2:7; 1 Thess 4
- (c) **Spiritualism** - human is the immaterial soul, the material realm is illusory
 - (i) Doceticism - Jesus’ body was either absent or illusory, late 2nd century (only God, not man) - directly contra 1 John 4:2
- (d) **Holistic Dualism** - the human person is a unified substance with two types of properties corresponding to the material body and the immaterial soul, which are intrinsically linked
 - (i) **Ex:** very sad/sorrowful we cry (even uncontrollably!), when we’re very anxious we can get a cold sweat, butterflies in our stomach.

DISCUSS: Is there any way experientially we understand this “intrinsic connection? Any examples from the class? (ex. physical pain/injuries affects emotional/spiritual state)

What is the function of the soul?

The early church to the early modern scholastic period (11-13th centuries) generally described this using **faculty psychology**

- (e) A **faculty** is a power or ability of the soul rather than a part
- (f) **Three Traditional Faculties:**
 - (i) Intellect - Faculty of Knowledge and Reasoning
 - (ii) Will - Faculty of Choice
 - (iii) Affections - The Faculty of Desire (though some like Calvin, Edward Balvinck, and Jonathan Edwards considered affections + will to be one)
- (g) Lesser Faculties...memory, conscious, imagination, intuition, etc.

Who was Adam?

- Priest, King, and Prophet

(d) King -

- (i) “Dominion” and “Subdue” used in royal contexts; crowned with glory and honor (**Ps 8:4–5**)

(e) Priest -

- (i) Gen 3:8 we see God “walking back and forth” as he does in the tabernacle (**Lev 26:12; Deut 23:14–15; 2 Sam 7:6–7**)
- (ii) Adam charged to “work and keep” (**Gen 2:15**) often used to describe priestly functions (**Num 3:7–8; 1 Chr 23:32; Ezek 44:14**)
- (iii) The Temple is designed to recall the Garden of Eden (**1 Kings 6:18–30; 7:23–37**)
 - 1) gourds/open flowers, palm trees
 - 2) gold, precious gems in the ephod (**cf. Ex 28:21** - sardius, topaz, carbuncle, emerald, sapphire, diamond, jacinth, agate, amethyst, beryl, onyx, jasper)
 - 3) cherubim guarding the Holy of Holies and over the mercy seat (**cf. Gen 3:23–24; Ex 25:17–22** - speaking with man there just like Adam)
 - 4) animals throughout (twelve oxen under the great basin ‘sea’, lions/oxen carved into the panels of the stands of bronze)
- (iv) Priests offer sacrifices pleasing to God and to cover our sins (may see this in **Gen 4:3–4** with Cain/Abel). God sacrifices an animal to cover Adam/Eve with “garments of skin” (**Gen 3:21**).

(f) [Prophet]

- (i) this one is somewhat harder to argue just from Gen 1–3. Based on the heavily on *communicative* aspect of Adam’s relationship with God (“Where are you?” Gen 3:9 - demanded a proper response such as shown Gen 22 with Abraham’s “Here I am”; same with Moses in Ex 3:4 ; and the prophet Isaiah before being sent Isa 6:8).
- (ii) Adam is the one who speaks God’s word after him. He receives the divine commandment and passes it on to Eve.

CLOSING: The Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) summarizes what we just discussed as follows in **Section 4.2 - Of Creation**

“After God had made all other creatures, He created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness after His own image, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. Besides this law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; [while they kept this command] they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures.”

Session 2 - The Image of God and The Covenant of Works

Review

What does GCC belief specifically about sin?

What does man consist of/What qualities does he have?

What offices did Adam have?

What is the Image of God?

Three Views of the Image of God

- (1) **Substantialistic** - the image of God is found in some aspect of humanity (reason, soul, or free will) *has nothing to do with the body*, dominant in the early/medieval church (Augustine, Aquinas)
 - (a) “ Now the intellect or mind is that whereby the rational creature [man] excels other creatures; wherefore this image of God is *not found even in the rational creature except in the mind*” Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1.93.6
- (2) **Relational** - the image of God is found in humanity’s ability for personal relationality either with God or with others generally, became prominent in the 20th century (Karl Barth, Karl Rahner) , reasoning from the Trinity and the image of God as *both* male/female in Gen 1:27
- (3) **Functional** - the image of God is found in humanity’s commission to rule and steward creation, focuses on the broader Gen 1-2 and ANE context, prominent among OT scholars (Richard Middleton; Gerhard von Rad)
 - (a) “Just as powerful earthly kings, to indicate their claim to dominion erect an image of themselves in the provinces of their empire where they do not personally appear, so man is placed upon earth in God’s image as God’s sovereign emblem.”³

DISCUSS: What might be some of the pros/cons of these views?

(ex. if the image has nothing to do with the body, the resurrection/incarnation becomes meaningless c. Doceticism OR taking care of our bodies is meaningless, if its relational then people *not* in relation to others are not image-bearers and are hence devalued, if its purely in the command then its anyone who does not keep the command cannot be considered an image-bearer

³ Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (trans. John H. Marks et al.; rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 60.

(4) **Which one is it?! What can we say? - it's probably a combination**

(a) The Image of God is Multidirectional (the diagram below)

- (i) God & Humans (Dependence & Trust)
- (ii) Humans & One Another (Peace & Community)
- (iii) Humans & Themselves (God-Centered; Free; Unashamed - shame can also have a community element)
- (iv) Humans & Creation (Creation stewardship & work of cultivation = peace & flourish often capture as *shalom*)

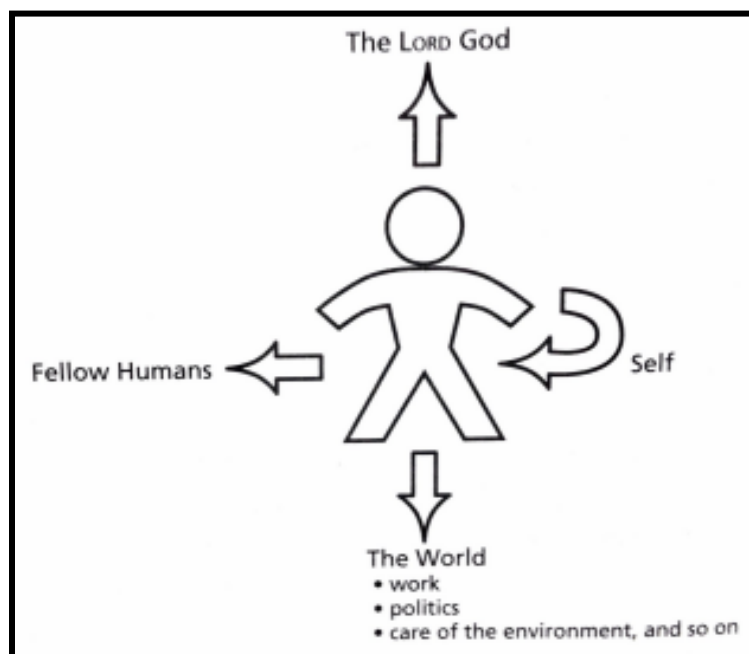
(b) The Core of the Image is reflecting God

- (i) “[Image and likeness] are relationship and referential: humans are referential creatures; their being automatically signifies God.” (Stephen Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, 58)

(c) The whole person and humanity collectively are the Image of God

(“let us make man[kind] in our image” 1:26). The Image of God is passed on through Adam to his progeny - Gen 5:3 (one of the key reasons for the ‘generations’, we’ll cover another later)

(5) Summary: “The human is not the divine self but is nevertheless a finite creature of the impression of the divine. All that is in God—his spiritual essence, his virtues and perfections, his immanent (close) self-distinctions, his self-communication and self-revelation in creation –finds its admittedly finite and limited **analogy** and likeness in humanity” (Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics* 2.561)



DEFINE: The idea of **analogy** is essential not just for this but for all theology! Everything that we understand about God is **by the way of analogy**; that is, by comparing him to something that we're actually able to understand. All our knowledge of God is **analogous**, for this is how he has revealed Himself to us in His word (shepherd, Father, Son, ruler, judge, etc), yet none of these analogies can fully capture who God is. Christian orthodoxy has affirmed this, being "**wary of speculation concerning God's inner (or true) essence, focusing instead on God's characteristics as they have been revealed to us by God in his works, especially in Scripture**" (**Horton 223**). This is one primary reason we try to stick so close to biblical language to describe God. Only the analogies he chooses to apply to himself *as he applies them to himself* in context can accurately portray things about Him. Owen says this, "**There are some truths of God that He has taught us to speak of. He has even guided us in our expressions of them. But when we have done so we do not really fully understand these things. All we can do is believe and admire.**" (94)

Why can we not know God's inner essence? Creator-creature distinction, Finite vs. Infinite, the analogy of 'dimensions' is helpful here. Knowing by Faith vs. Sight

How does God relate to man in creation?

What is a covenant?

- (1) "A covenant is God's act of love by which he establishes a relationship with creation." (Drake)
- (2) **WCF 7.1:** "The distance between God and creature is *so great*, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of him as their blessedness and reward, *but by some voluntary condescension* on God's part, which he hath been pleased to express by **way of covenant**."
- (3) **Components of a Covenant** -
 - (a) **Setting & Covenant Partners** - two parties, God is always the initiator
 - (b) **Stipulations** - an ordered relationship is established and the conditions for the continuation are given.
 - (c) **Sanctions** - blessings and curses for obedience/disobedience
 - (d) **Sign** - visible/tangible symbol of the covenant representing it
- (4) In this covenantal scheme of knowing God responsibilities are more basic than rights, namely God's claims on us as his creations (**Horton**) - contra a Western individualistic understanding of freedom/personal rights
- (5) "A covenant is a *bond in blood sovereignly administered*" the last part of which means that "No such thing as bargaining, bartering, or contracting characterizes the divine covenants of Scripture. The sovereign Lord of heaven

and earth dictates the terms of his covenant” and we are expected to obey - contributes to the responsibility idea (Robertson 4,15).

The Covenant of Works

(1) What is the evidence of a covenant in creation?

- (a) No use of the word covenant until Gen 9 with Noah...does that mean there isn't one? Recall the example of the Trinity (word doesn't have to be present for the idea to be present) and **also** David, the Davidic 'Covenant' never uses the word Covenant.
- (b) Adam broke a “covenant” (**Hos. 6:7**): What is this saying?
 - (i) God seems to be using what happened with Adam as an analogy to what is happening with Israel. So what Adam did is parallel to what Israel is doing in breaking the covenant.
 - (ii) Adam *isn't* in the Mosaic/Sinai covenant. So what covenant did he break in a 'parallel' sense? The Covenant of Works!
 - (iii) Yes 'adam' can just mean man but the context makes that reading very unlikely. Even if it does mean man we still would have to ask what covenant with all 'man' (including Gentiles) exists?
- (c) Headship of Adam that leads to Original Sin, i.e the corruption of all mankind through his sin, which we'll hit later (**Rom 5:12-21**)
 - (i) In every covenant there is a “Head” - a person on the side of man who mediates the terms of the covenant with God on behalf of everyone else (Moses, Israel's Kings; **Jesus**).
 - (ii) According to Paul, the same sense that Christ saves us (which he accomplishes through covenant), Adam has doomed all of mankind (likewise through covenant)

(2) “The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.” (WCF 7.2; LBCF agrees cf. 20:1)

(3) What are the parts of the Covenant of Works?

- (1) **Setting:** God's kingship over creation and man as His image
- (2) **Covenant Partners:** God initiates a covenant with mankind and creation as a whole through the covenant mediation of Adam
- (3) **Stipulations:** Adam in original perfection must live faithfully before God by continually (1) obeying the prohibition of the tree and (2) fulfilling the Creational Mandate (positive and negative sense - seen in every covenant)
- (4) **Sanctions:**

- (a) Curse: “dying you will die dead” (physically/spiritually)
 - (b) Blessing: Sabbath rest, walking with God, any fruit they desire, glorification (eternal life)
- (5) **Sign** (ask the class what they think it is, to be fair to is mostly a guess):
The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life

Session 3 - The Fall of Man

The Temptation and Fall of Man

DISCUSS: Read Gen 3 and answer the following questions:

- (1) What is going on in the text? What is the basic plot, Characters, Climax, and conclusion?
- (2) What is it that Adam and Eve have done?
- (3) What is the nature of sin that this text reveals?
- (4) What are the effects of the disobedience here?
- (5) How do we see Shalom breaking down?
- (6) Are there any glimmers of hope in the text? Is there anything in the text that might indicate where the story is going?

(1) What is going on?

(a) Serpent is “crafty”, he enters the garden where it seems like he doesn’t belong (Adam should kick him out!!!). He questions **and** twists God’s word (1) “Did God actually say...” (2) “You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?” - TOTALLY NOT TRUE!

(b) Eve recounts the command of God in **Gen 2:16** somewhat incorrectly? 2:16 doesn’t mention anything about dying because they “touch” the fruit (not necessarily a big deal, might’ve just been a ‘safety precaution’ they were taking).

(c) Satan directly contradicts God’s word “You will not surely die” **and** lies about the reasoning “**For** God knows” eating it will make you like him. What is he implying? He’s implying a few things:

- (i) God is holding back from you something that’s good for *selfish* reasons! Claiming that God is not good! = **Important for our conclusions about sin**
- (ii) Seems to imply that the prohibition directly contradicts the “image of God”, it’s like “Hey look, you say God made you in His image, but he’s keeping you from the things you really need to be like Him!” - a play not just on negative feelings (God is selfish) but on positive purpose (you need this to be who you were meant to be).
- (iii) Ultimately, his argument that the prohibition is pointless and invitation for Eve to be like “God” is a **temptation to usurp God’s place in creation**

- (d) Eve “saw” that it is “good for food” (nourishment), “delight to the eyes” (beauty/enjoyment), “desired to make wise” (gets her ahead) and she eats **WITH ADAM WHO IS ALREADY THERE!!!** (why didn’t he do anything!?!)

(2) God Shows Up:

- (a) They realized they’re naked and they try to cover themselves up (**also significant for sin**). They hide from God because they are “afraid” - sin has created separation/fear.
- (b) **Now**, does God not know that they disobeyed??? Of course He knows! But he’s inviting them to come forward and repent of what they’ve done...which they don’t do. They play the blame game!
- (c) The Lord curses the serpent, then Eve, then Adam (in ways respective to each of their roles and the nature of their sin)...we’ll hit this in a minute
- (d) God sends them out *so that* they can’t take from the tree of life and places a cherubim with a flaming sword to guard it (and the Garden)

What can we conclude about The Fall?

- (1) **Breaking of the Covenant:** Adam has broken the covenant stipulation and invoked the covenant curses upon himself (and all mankind by extent)
- (2) **What was the nature of Adam’s Sin? What was he guilty of?**
- (a) “**Adam’s transgression was against the whole of God’s moral law, which was written on his heart as one made in God’s Image.**”⁴
- (b) Thomas Watson goes on regarding this, enlarging our view of what constitutes a “sin” (which we’ll revisit more later):
- (i) **Watson, A Body of Divinity, 2.II.2.2** “**One sin may have many sins in it. We are apt to have slight thoughts of sin, and say "it is but a little one." How many sins were in Adam's sin! Oh take heed of any sin! As in one volume there may be many works bound up, so there may be many sins in one sin.**”
- (ii) He observes in Adam’s case he was guilty of incredulity (disbelief), unthankfulness (for God’s provision), discontentment, pride (trying to rise above God), disobedience, vain curiosity, wantonness, sacrilege, murder (of all mankind), and presumption.

⁴ Jones, *Knowing Sin*, 19

- (c) The fact that the act is so sleight, that what was required of them so small (I have given you 1000 trees don't eat of one of them) makes it much worse!

(d) What have we seen?

- (i) 1st, abdication of His created and marital role. Adam should have noticed the deceit and character of the serpent and removed the serpent from the garden *as the one who was to "work and keep" it and to "have dominion" and kept Eve from eating!*
 - (ii) 2nd, entertained the deceit and temptation of the serpent. Allowed the serpent to question, twist, and directly contradict God's word *without challenge!*
 - (iii) 3rd, accepted the serpent's reasoning concerning God's command = his accusation that God is ultimately ***not good or trustworthy.***
 - (iv) 4th, attempted to rebel/usurp God's role as the Creator/Ultimate Authority in their lives by disobeying Him and attempting to be God themselves.
- (e) **Conclusion:** The Sin of Adam and Eve was not simple disobedience but rebellion against the Creator, an utter abrogation of the human vocation as Priest/King and a violation of the Covenant.

(3) What are the consequences? What is broken?

- (a) Relationship w/ God (broken image; doubt of God's word; guilt/judgment & separation; **Ex 33:5**)
- (b) Humans & One Another (conflict & blame; "this woman you gave")
- (c) Humans & Themselves (self-centered; shame-filled)
- (d) Humans & Creation (hostile environment; work became hard; we must return to the earth as 'dust'; creation under bondage to sin **Rom 8**)

(4) What are the elements of grace (and mercy!)?

- (a) Allowed to continue to live (not immediately destroyed)
- (b) Continue on the cultural mandate (passed onto Noah in **Gen 9:1**)
- (c) The image of God is *marred* but not destroyed (seen in the *toledot* of Adam in **Gen 5**)
- (d) Clothing made by God (v.21; proto-sacrifice?)
- (e) *Protoevangelion* (the First Good News! v.15 - guides the Genesis narrative)
- (f) Remained of many creational blessings (child-birth; family; marriage; fruit from the earth; etc.)

What can we say about sin in light of this?

(1) Sin Destroys All of Man's Relationships - as we just discussed

- (a) God & Humans (Broken Image; Doubt God's Word; Guilt/Judgement; Separation)
- (b) Humans & One Another (Conflict & Blame)
- (c) Humans & Themselves (Self-Centered - Shame & Loss)
- (d) Humans & Creation (Hostile Environment; Work Became Hard; Creation under Bondage to corruption)

(2) Sin is a twisting distortion of God Himself and what He has created and said

(cf. Serpent's temptation) - sin is a 'privation' a lack of created goodness, it has no substance in itself (we'll discuss this more later)

(3) Sin is an abdication of our created roles/responsibilities (with God or others).

(4) Sin is at root a love of self (pride) that raises itself against and replaces love of God.

(5) Sin is open rebellion and rejection of God - our Creator and the King of Creation. It is acting as if we are god.

Session 4 - Original Sin and Total Depravity

What happened after the Fall?

- (1) Spread and Exhibition of Sin - The first naturally born offspring we see something terribly wrong (Cain murders Abel!), Lamech, Noah and the Flood, Tower of Babel
- (2) Continuation of the cultural mandate (but tainted)
- (3) God's judgment on human sin + his mercy and commitment to creation
- (4) Seed of the Woman vs. Seed of the Serpent

What is the human will and its orientation toward sin/world and good/God both *before* and *after* the Fall?

What is Original Sin?

- (1) **Humanity has moved from original righteousness to a place of guilt and corruption.** All human beings are alienated from God & the image is defaced.
 - (a) **Guilt** - under condemnation before God, "guilty"
 - (b) **Corruption** - inclination of the human heart towards evil (to what extent?)

(2) **Romans 5:12–21**: The 1st men of their “respective” ages, covenant heads (Adam & Christ), affect the state and status of those in their covenants.⁵

(3) Denials of Original Sin

(a) **Pelagianism** (Pelagius 4th century monk; opposed by Augustine) - human beings born neutral, able to do good or evil, humans do evil because of bad examples, but can merit salvation through moral striving and ascetic life (justification by works)

DISCUSS: What is a strong text that would disprove this view?

Examples:

- Gal 2:16 “because by works of the law no one will be justified”
- Rom 8:7 “For the mind that is set on the flesh [unbelieving] is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”

(b) **Mere Symbolism** (Existentialist Position) - Protestant Liberalism⁶, Karl Barth (maybe held to this) ; fall/sin are either purely symbolic or “The Fall” is recapitulated in every person’s life.

DEFINE: Although not as popular today, Protestant Liberalism still had a huge impact on modern culture (fathered by Frederick Schleiermacher), reduces Christianity to a “**feel of absolute dependence on God**”, true religion does not consist in redemption but the ethical life (living the life of Jesus), *all truths* not essential to this “ethic” is throw out, Bible reduced to a “library of religious experience”

View of Sin? “**Modern liberalism has lost all sense of the gulf that separates the creature from the Creator...there is really no such thing as sin. At [its] very root ...is the loss of the consciousness of sin**” (**Machen 57–58**)” = i.e. there is a “supreme confidence in human goodness.”

(4) Models of Original Sin (non-heretical)

(a) **Corruption-Only Position** - only the corrupting force of Adam’s sin is inherited by his posterity and **not** the guilt of the first sin (proponents such as Zwingli, pre-augustinian fathers, Arminius, Churches of Christ).

⁵ John Murray, *The Imputation of Adam’s Sin*

⁶ J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (1923).

- (i) **Reasoning?** Besides a lack of “explicit” confirmation in Scripture, how can we be guilty for the sins of another? Goes against justice to be held guilty for Adam’s sin? Scripture indicates that sin should not be ‘reckoned’ to another (Deut 24:16; Jer 31:29-30; Ezek 18:20)
- (b) **Realism Position** - There is some sense that we sin in Adam’s sin (physically and/or metaphysically; cf. Heb 7:10; proponents like Augustine, Jonathan Edwards?, majority view in the RCC etc.) → gets away from “bearing someone else’s guilt” by imputation
 - (i) Augustine - we are seminally in Adam. Guilt of original sin is passed via sexual generation (concupiscence; does this make sense of Jesus’ sinlessness?). “Adam’s progeny were somehow *really* present with Adam at the point of his first sin.” (Crisp, *American Augustinianism*, 42). **Where does this view run into problems?**
 - (ii) Edwards - some unity b/w Adam and his offspring “reckoned by divine will” (mysterious unity)
 - (iii) Roman Catholic Church - Council of Trent (1545-1563) stated that guilt and corruption of original sin is removed by baptism
- (c) **Federalism** - both the original corruption AND the original guilt is inherited by humanity. Adam functions as a representative (covenant head) for all his descendents. Therefore, Adam sins on our behalf and his sin is imputed (legally reckoned) to us. (proponents Traditional Lutheranism, Most Reformed Camps - Presbyterians, Reformed Baptists, John Wesley)
 - A. **Arguments Against:** Sin cannot be reckoned to another?

DISCUSS: Are there any examples you can think of in the Scriptures where people are held accountable for the sin of someone else?

B. Response:

1. Solomon/Achan as examples of “federal heads” of families/nations (1 Kgs 9; **Josh 7:1,4-5,10-12, 24-26**) + individual guilt is not the only type of guilt! (Ex 20:5)
2. Western concepts of ‘individualism’ might be smuggled in here under the guise of “common sense” (plenty of collectivist cultures in the world!!!)
3. If imputation of Adam’s guilt is ‘unjust’ isn’t the imputation of Christ’s righteousness also ‘unjust’?
4. Regarding Ezek 18:20; Adam is a *unique* covenant case + Ezekiel’s context is pointing to how God would no longer hold

the sins of Israel's fathers against those already in exile
(because they were already punished corporately)

What is Total Depravity? (explanation of the extent of 'corruption')

(1) **Addresses the "Scope" of Sin** - man is "**wholly [totus] defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body**" (WCF 6.2)

(2) **Heart/Whole Self/Mind** (everything; the self in mind, will, affections) -

(a) "The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (**Gen 6:5**) - ONLY 6 CHAPTERS INTO THE BIBLE!!! not referring to the heart 'organ', but what drives the core of our being

(b) "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?" (**Jer 17:9**)

(c) "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked...following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience – among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind" (**Eph 2:1-3**)

(d) Paul calls us to "put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." (**Eph 4:22-24**)

(e) "And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has no reconciled in his body of flesh by his death" (**Col 1:21-22a**)

(3) **Paul's View** = Not a shred of righteousness in man, we are hostile to God and completely *unable* to do anything good (i.e anything God desires), pulling from many parts of Scripture -

READ AND DISCUSS: Rom 1:21-32, 3:9-18, 8:5-8.

Where can we see the image of God (4 relations) broken?

How bad is it? What is the extent of the corruption Paul describes?

**Why is it important to understand our "inability" as described by Rom 8?
(think of the gospel here)**

(4) **Experiential Argument** (not authoritative like Scripture but still valuable; *remember* we're sola Scriptura, not solo Scriptura) - Do we have to teach kids to sin? to be selfish? to hit and to steal? No! Also, what if someone took a video of all your

thoughts and actions and played it for all your family and friends? What would everyone see?

- (5) **Canons of Dort 3.3 (1618–19):** Total Inability* - “Therefore, all people are conceived in sin and are born children of wrath, unfit for any saving good, inclined to all evil, dead in their sins, and slaves to sin; without the grace of the regenerating Holy Spirit they are neither willing nor able to return to God, to reform their distorted nature, or even to dispose themselves to such reform.”

(6) **Distinction:**

- (a) Should not be confused with an idea that we are as bad *as we could be* (which is to be *utterly* depraved), but God’s common grace upholds human image bearing in some sense.
 - (b) This means that in some sense unbelieving people “can” do good things *in some sense* by that common grace. For example, this does ***not*** mean that there is ***nothing*** good in the love of an unbelieving mother towards her child, but that the act is still ultimately ‘unrighteous’, because it does not come from a heart/will/mind that desires to glorify God.
- (7) **Point:** makes explicit the implications of Original Sin. In this, no action of ours could be good and we in no way could merit the favor of God or right relationship with him apart from his own mercy and grace.
- (a) Other views (you’ve mentioned the first two so explain Arminianism)
 - (i) Pelagian - sin as mere miseducation and no corruption
 - (ii) RCC - Sin is the lack of original righteousness and baptism takes away original guilt and corruption
 - (iii) **Classical Arminianism** - by God’s ***prevenient grace***, the human will is restored and can choose God (no scriptural evidence for this :)

Session 5 - The Composition, Degrees, and Wages of Sin

What does GCC belief specifically about sin?

- **We believe that...**
 - Mankind was created perfect in the image of God, but the first man and woman sinned intentionally which resulted not only in physical death but also spiritual and eternal death, which is separation from God. All are born with a sinful nature, and are sinners in thought, word, and deed (**Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 1:18,32; 3:10-19; 5:12,19**).

What is sin?

(1) Review of What we've Seen:

(a) Sin Destroys All of Man's Relationships - as we just discussed

- (i) God & Humans (Broken Image; Doubt God's Word; Guilt/Judgement; Separation)
- (ii) Humans & One Another (Conflict & Blame)
- (iii) Humans & Themselves (Self-Centered - Shame & Loss)
- (iv) Humans & Creation (Hostile Environment; Work Became Hard; Creation under Bondage to corruption)

(b) Sin twists/distorts God Himself and what He has created and said (cf. Serpent's temptation)

(c) Sin as an abdication of our created roles/responsibilities (with God or others).

(d) Sin as open rebellion and rejection of God - our Creator and the King of Creation. It is acting as if we are god.

(2) Definition - Sin is:

- (a) A privation(lack) or negation of creational goods (distortion/twisting)
- (b) An inclination towards evil and unrighteousness (corruption - Original Sin)

(3) Biblical Language of Sin - erring, doing wrong, missing the mark, going astray, rebelling, trespass, treachery, faithlessness, iniquity (*which includes* the sinful act, guilt of the act, and deserved punishment)

What are the various facets of sin/the sinful nature?

(1) Root of Sin? Love/Worship of Self - we see some of this in the greatest commandment **Matt 22:34-40** - does this imply that we must love ourselves in order to love our neighbors? (which is how many Christians interpret this...)

(2) All Sins can be considered to be against or contrary to...

(a) **God** - the source and standard of all goodness and truth

- (i) God's Holy nature is the standard and exposure of all sin
- (ii) The Cross of Christ is the highest expression of sin's cost
- (iii) Isaiah before the Lord in **Isaiah 6**, necessary atonement!
- (iv) "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all..." **1 John 1:5-8** (cf. **Ps 5:4-7**)

(b) **Creation** (against the nature of things; natural law)

- (i) "[Sin] is defined more broadly as a defect of nature and actions in intelligent natures, opposing the law of God and obliging them from the order of divine justice to punishment." (Johann Heidegger, *Concise Marrow*, X.I)
- (ii) "Sin is always 'against,' since it is constituted as a refusal of some aspect of good reality, and all sins are against God, the creator, sustainer, and redeemer of all good reality." (O'Donovan, *Finding and Seeking*, 18. cited in McCall, 237)
- (iii) Sin is against the nature of things, the grain of creation, or natural law. Embedded into the substance of reality is God's will for all things to glorify Himself, creations' telos or end. Sinful abuse of self, creation, others, etc. violates this end.

(c) **Reason**

- (i) Sin is senseless, lacking explanation or rational basis.
- (ii) "Because it is futile, because it is vain, because it is unrealistic, because it spoils good things, sin is the prime form of folly" (Cornelius Platinga - former president of Calvin Theological Seminary, *Not the Way it's Supposed to Be*, 126)
- (iii) "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is none who does good." **Psalm 14:1**
- (iv) The folly of the nations/kings of the earth in **Psalm 2:1-6**

(3) **Sin against Neighbors** (not all sin is against neighbor) - can be seen as sin against **God, reason** (since the other is treated as non-personal or non-teleological <-that is, we are not treating them as someone made in the image of God with the purpose of glorifying him), **and nature** (since we are created as social and joint image bearers)

(4) **All sin is ultimately Nihilistic** - comes to nothingness for its essence is nothingness" (Dr. K.J. Drake, *ITS HT703 Lecture*)

Are there degrees or different types of sin? If so, what are they?⁷

⁷ Thomas McCall, *Against God and Nature: The Doctrine of Sin*

(1) Degrees of Sin

(a) **The idea of degrees of sin** - Read **John 19:11**

(b) Five degrees/steps we can consider:

- (i) Deliberation of sin, which is an act of the will (broadly speaking; **Gen 3:1-5** Eve considering the serpent's proposal; **Gen 37:18-22** Joseph's brothers conspiring; **2 Sam 13:1-2** Amnon's wicked desire for his sister Tamar)

1) "The deliberation of sin, understood as a disordered desire, cannot be excused even if it is not formally acted upon. It may be a lesser sin than if it had been acted upon and even subsequently enjoyed; *but* it is still sin because we are ultimately fully responsible for the inner workings of our heart, soul, mind, and strength." (cf. **1 Cor 2:16; 2 Cor 10:5**)⁸

2) *Grievous Sins and Less Grievous Sins* -

- a) The idea that all sins are completely equal is from the Roman Stoics and led to certain heretical beliefs (Aquinas).
- b) Jesus himself draws these distinctions - Pilate speaking to him about "his authority" and Jesus responds "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore, he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin." **John 19:11**
- c) All sins are equally damnable, sins cannot be better, **but** they can be worse!
- d) More grievous sins - those committed against helpless/defenseless people; sins of oppression/injustice; sins committed in full recognition of God's commands (Jesus recognizes this in **Luke 12:47-48**)

3) **WLC Q. 150** "Are all transgressions of the law of God equally heinous in themselves, and in the sight of God? **A.** All transgressions of the law are not equally heinous; but some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others."

4) **WLC Q. 152.** "What doth every sin deserve at the hands of God? **A.** Every sin, even the least, being against the sovereignty, goodness, and holiness of God, and against his righteous law,

⁸ Jones, 46

deserveth his wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come; and cannot be expiated but by the blood of Christ."

- (ii) Decision to commit an act of sin (**Gen 3:6a** Eve "When she saw..."; **Gen 11:4** decision of the people "let us build" Babel in rebellion of God;
- (iii) Act of sinning (**Gen 3:6b** Eve/Adam actually taking of the fruit and eating; **Gen 37:23–28** selling Joseph)
- (iv) Pleasure in the act (**Ex 32:5–6** wicked celebration around the golden calf **2 Pet 1:13** "They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime...eyes full of adultery, *insatiable* for sin."; **Jer 5:31** "my people love it [false prophesy] so!")
- (v) Boasting after the act (**1 Cor 5:1–2** "arrogant" about this man who has his step-mother; **Matt 27:40,42** mocking Jesus "If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross" / "He saved others..."; *all the prophets* especially against Assyria and Babylon **Isa 13–27** includes many examples like this that the nations who have sinned against Israel are judged primarily for their boasting/pride after the fact.)
- (vi) Coercing/ "Tempting" others into the act (may not be the *worst degree* but **Matt 18:5–7** surrounding tempting children)

(2) ***Sins of Commission and Omission*** -

- (a) **Commission:** to do what ought not be done
- (b) **Omission:** to *not* do what ought to be done - to not "love the Lord your God with all your heart/soul/mind/strength" (**Mark 12:30**)
- (c) Genuine sinlessness only results from *not* doing either of these.

(3) ***Sins against God , against neighbor, against self*** (all sins are ultimately against God but some harm us and our neighbors) - especially significant for believers who are members of the local church to recognize that all our sins affect the body of Christ (cf. 1 Cor 6:12–20).

(4) ***Intentional Sins and Unintentional Sins*** -

- (a) **Richard Taylor** (Wesleyan 'Holiness' Theologian) - only "sin" if it is done with a conscious decision (intentionally) to do it *as sin* and you have knowledge of the evil (known law).
- (b) **Thomas Aquinas** - sins of ignorance are sins nonetheless and the ignorance may be culpable (i.e if something is knowable and should be known but we fail to know it, it is sin of omission on our part)

- (c) “ If anyone sins, doing any of the things that by the LORD’s commandments ought not to be done, though he did not know it, then realizes his guilt, he shall bear his iniquity.” **Lev 5:17**
- (d) Ignorance *may* mitigate the grievousness of the sin and be significance in reconciliation with others (this could also be applied to deception due to false teaching)

(5) ***Mortal and Venial Sins*** (Roman Catholic Church) -

- (a) **Mortal - brings eternal punishment**, removes friendship with God, a “grave matter” (contra 10 commandments), committed with “full knowledge and deliberate consent” which leads to death/destroys “charity” (or friendship; **must be reconciled through a priest *not through Christ***) ; to die with unconfessed mortal sin is to be damned (this is why Luther was so concerned!)
- (b) **Venial - wounds a man’s “charity”** toward God but allows it to subsist (continue) still, “without full knowledge” (c. statement in **CCC 1855**), forgiven by mass/penance/purgatory
 - (i) Some non-reformed protestants have retained the distinction in a modified form, **often** confusing it with forms of “grievousness” , BUT the tradition rejects this as a whole...
 - 1) For the Reformers, all sins of the saints in Christ are forgivable and all the sin of those apart from Christ are deserving of death i.e mortal
 - 2) Unforgiveable/Forgiveableness has nothing to do with the nature of the sin or the disposition of the sinner, but with the sinner’s relation to Christ by grace through faith.
 - 3) “The question therefore comes back to this – whether all sins per se and in their own nature are mortal (not that they are always actually punished with death, but are worthy of it and can justly be so punished); whether some are mortal and some venial (not from the event and through grace, but in their own nature and according to the law). The latter our opponents hold; we maintain the former.” (Francis Turretin, *ET*, 9.4 VI.)

(6) ***Remissible vs. Irremissible Sins*** (involves the ‘**Unforgiveable’ Sin**)

- (a) “³¹Therefore I tell you, *every* sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.³² And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the

Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.” **Matt 12:31-32**

- (i) **Thomas McCall** -assumes this is apostasy (leaving the faith; supposes that people can lose their salvation; *contra* **John 6:39; 10:27-28**)
- (ii) **Best Conclusion:** “It is final and settled impenitence.” A rejection of the means of salvation offered in Christ’s atoning death and the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.
- (iii) Strictly speaking only a “reprobate person, *who has experienced...God’s means of grace through the Church*” can commit the “unpardonable sin” = people who had “genuine faith” (at one point) but were destined to reject Christ as Savior.
- (iv) *If you are worried that you have committed the unforgivable sin you HAVE NOT DONE SO!* (good to know for immature believers; also a good verse to refute universalism with - in both this age and the next there is a sin that *will not* be forgiven)

(7) Individual/Personal and Social , Structural, Systemic Sins -

- (a) **Structural Sin:** promoted largely by 20th century theologies of liberation (Latin American, black, feminist; not to be confused with ‘freedom from slavery’) , the category of structural/societal sins seeks to overcome an over individualization of understanding sin.
- (b) **Definition:** Sins perpetuated by systems/structures/cultures as corporate actions that transcends any individual will lead to further brokenness and sin
 - (i) **Latin American Liberation Theology:** “imperialism, neocolonialism, exploitation, international cartels, dictatorial governments, endemic unemployment, hunger, and disease.” Sin is a “breach of friendship” (Gustavo Gutierrez), to fight sin is to fight political, social, and economic oppression (Gonzalez Faus).
 - (ii) **Black Liberation Theology:** sin cannot be defined by “white theology”, only “black theology” informed by black experience, history, culture, revelation, and tradition and the “manifestation of Jesus as the black Christ” (James Cone from Union Theological Seminary who strongly influenced Karl Barth, MLK Jr., and Malcolm X). Whites cannot make valid judgments on sin because the true nature of sin “is perceived only in the moment of oppression and liberation.”
 - (iii) **Feminist Theology:** women’s sin is better suggested by triviality, distractibility, and diffusiveness...in short, underdevelopment or negation of the Self” (Valerie Saiving) - Makes self-actualization the goal, which is exactly the reason for the Fall.

- (c) **Clear Examples:** Jim Crow laws, red-lining, pollution/destruction of nature, authoritarian leader cultures, persecution (sin of a nation against God's people), etc.
- (d) **Biblical Examples:** Daniel's confession of Israel's sins (**Dan 9:20-23; Neh 9:26-37**), Condemnation of all Babylon (**Rev 2-3; 17:5; 18:2-10**), see Oracles against the Nations (**Isa 13-24; Amos 1:3-2:14**)
- (e) Churches can do this too (think of PCA repentance of supporting segregation; SBC 1995 apology for former stance on slavery/segregation)
- (f) **Conclusions?**
 - (i) Sin can become "institutionalized" as it perverts social structures.
 - (ii) Must be careful not to act as if the *oppressed* cannot sin also. Culture around us constantly suggests that the *oppressed* can "do no wrong" and the *oppressor* can "do no right." Even the idea of sin (systemic or individual) for people ("oppressed" groups) can be used to enact more deeper sins on other.
 - (iii) Do not repent of the sins of other people! Or of the sins of group/structures of which you have no part! (see below C.S Lewis *God in the Dock*- Dangers of National Repentance)

C.S Lewis, *God in the Dock* - Dangers of National Repentance

"The idea of national repentance seems at first sight to provide such an edifying contrast to that national self-righteousness of which England is so often accused and with which she entered the last war, that a Christian naturally turns to it with hope. Young Christians especially—last-year undergraduates and first-year curates—are turning to it in large numbers. They are ready to believe that England bears part of the guilt for the present war, and ready to admit their own share in the guilt of England... Most of these young men were children, and none of them had a vote or the experience which would enable them to use a vote wisely, when England made many of those decisions to which the present disorders could plausibly be traced. Are they, perhaps, repenting what they have in no sense done? If they are, it might be supposed that their error is very harmless: men fail so often to repent their real sins that the occasional repentance of an imaginary sin might appear almost desirable. But what actually happens to the youthful national penitent is a little more complicated than that. England is not a natural agent, but a civil society. When we speak of England's actions we mean the actions of the British Government. The young man who is called upon to repent of England's foreign policy is really being called upon to repent the acts of his neighbour; for a Foreign Secretary or a Cabinet Minister is certainly a neighbour. And repentance presupposes condemnation. The first and fatal charm of national repentance is, therefore, the encouragement it gives us to turn from the bitter task

of repenting our own sins to the congenial one of bewailing—but, first, of denouncing—the conduct of others... You can indulge in the popular vice of detraction without restraint, and yet feel all the time that you are practising contrition. A group of such young penitents will say, ‘Let us repent our national sins’; what they mean is, ‘Let us attribute to our neighbour (even our Christian neighbour) in the Cabinet, whenever we disagree with him, every abominable motive that Satan can suggest to our fancy.’ Such an escape from personal repentance into that tempting region Where passions have the privilege to work And never hear the sound of their own names,¹ would be welcome to the moral cowardice of anyone. But it is doubly attractive to the young intellectual. When a man over forty tries to repent the sins of England and to love her enemies, he is attempting something costly; for he was brought up to certain patriotic sentiments which cannot be mortified without a struggle. But an educated man who is now in his twenties usually has no such sentiment to mortify. In art, in literature, in politics, he has been, ever since he can remember, one of an angry and restless minority; he has drunk in almost with his mother’s milk a distrust of English statesmen and a contempt for the manners, pleasures, and enthusiasms of his less-educated fellow countrymen... The communal sins which they should be told to repent are those of their own age and class... Of these sins I have heard nothing among them... Is it not, then, the duty of the Church to preach national repentance? I think it is. But the office—like many others—can be profitably discharged only by those who discharge it with reluctance. We know that a man may have to ‘hate’ his mother for the Lord’s sake. The sight of a Christian rebuking his mother, though tragic, may be edifying; but only if we are quite sure that he has been a good son and that, in his rebuke, spiritual zeal is triumphing, not without agony, over strong natural affection. The moment there is reason to suspect that he enjoys rebuking her—that he believes himself to be rising above the natural level while he is still, in reality, grovelling below it in the unnatural—the spectacle becomes merely disgusting...”

(8) *The “Seven Deadly Sins”* -

- (a) **Definition:** 7 “capital” sins which “engender other sins”; although the ultimate source of all actual sins is pride.
- (b) **“Vainglory” (Pride)** - excessive and disordered desire for recognition and approval from others, easily leads into a “craven and idolatrous pursuit of flattery” (**Jn 12:43**). We exchange the glory of God for the pride of “power, knowledge, and self-righteousness.”

- (c) **Envy** - a rejection of divine providence (what God has decided we should/shouldn't have), encourages theft, destruction of property, and hatred.
- (d) **Sloth** - apathy, comfortable indifference to duty (what are our duties?! are we shirking them?), neglect of other human beings' needs (**Prov 6:6-11**)
- (e) **Avarice or Greed** - an ambition for personal gain to is completely out of kilter (there is a place for 'godly ambition'). The accumulation of financial resources itself does not meet this, but it is an excessive love of money/possession (**1 Tim 6:10**)
- (f) **Wrath** - anger is not inherently sinful (God gets angry all the time; Paul calls us to not sin in anger **Eph 4:26**), anger can be sinful when it is "wrongly motivated or wrongly directed". We may (1) be angry at the wrong object (*What?*) or (2) direct righteously motivated anger in inappropriate ways (*How?*)
- (g) **Gluttony (how real in our culture!!)** - cannot be reduced to caloric intake or our "body mass index." It is not first of all about being overweight or overeating. It obviously concerns an abuse of food, but it is generally a "inordinate desire for the pleasures of God's good creation" *above* their proper place. Degrades us into mere pleasure seekers.
- (h) **Lust** - a disordered affection specifically *sexual desire* run amok. It cares or desires the *most* important things too little and the *least* important things too much (c. Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*)
- (i) Correspond to 7 "Heavenly Virtues" (Chastity, Temperance, Charity, Diligence, Patience, Kindness, and Humility)

DISCUSS: How should the multifaceted nature of sin affect how we talk about sin with others (unbelievers)? Where might the church be missing the mark? (**Examples:** beware using the imagery least offensive to your audience and watering down the doctrine by omission, only addressing your culture's 'pet' sins, intentionally being offensive/crass)

What are the Wages of Sin?

(1) Death (Physical and Spiritual)

(a) Recall Adam and Eve:

- (i) Physically: "dying you will die dead" (Gen 2:17; death reigns Gen 5 every descendent dies/ "returns to the dust" cf. Gen 3:19)
- (ii) Spiritually: driven from the Garden (Gen 3:23-24)

(b) The Exodus and People of Israel:

(i) Physically:

- 1) Death becomes the consequence for breaking any of the 10 commandments (curses father/mother Lev 20:9; child sacrifice to an idol Lev 20:2; adultery with neighbor's wife Lev 20:10, etc.)
- 2) Consequence the wilderness generation for not believing the Lord, grumbling continually against him (**Num 14:20-30**; cf. **Ex 32** with the golden calf)
 - a) Notice that in these cases the word "pardon" does *not* mean they were "justified" before God, *for they all still died*. It simply refers to delaying the immediate outpouring of God's wrath.
- 3) The Entire Sacrificial/Ceremonial System which allowed for the sins of the people to be "atoned" (paid) for (**Lev 1-4**)
 - a) **Imputation**: transfer of guilt → the people put their hand on the head of the bull and then killed it (bull receives the punishment of sin)
 - b) **Epitomized in Yom-Kippur** - "The Day of Atonement" , high priest offers 1 sacrifice for the sins of all the people *in the Holy of Holies* (Lev 16)!

(ii) Spiritually:

- 1) could not approach the living God, we have this with Moses in **Ex 3:5** has to remove his sandals on "holy ground"
- 2) establishment of the entire priestly class with *extensive cleansing rituals* (Aaron, his sons, and the Levites)
- 3) **Bronze Basin Ex 30:17-21** - had to wash whenever they came to the tabernacle altar "so that they may not die."
- 4) **Anointing and Consecration Ex 40:9-15; Lev 8:5-13** - the anointing allows or "admits" them to serve as priests, even the objects had to be anointed for "holy" usage to God.
- 5) **"Ring" of Holiness around the Presence of the Lord** -
 - a) entering a section of this "ring" or touching particular objects (like the ark) that signified God's presence immediately resulted in death *unless one followed the proper cleansing procedures* (spiritual separation must be maintained physically!!! **Lev 16:1-2, 23-28**).
 - i) Notice that these cases (^ ^ ^) do threaten physical death if disobeyed, but that is because of the spiritual separation between the holiness of

God and the wickedness of man. Excellent example of holistic duality in humanity's constitution and relationship with God!!

- b) Even “scapegoats” who bear guilt must be sent into the wilderness away from the presence (**v.7-10; 21-22**)
- c) Persons who are “unclean” (for leprosy, disease, touching a carcass/killing in war, bodily discharges) must be sent “outside the camp” (**Lev 13:46; 14:3; sexual relations 15:18; Miriam as an example Num 12:15; 31:13-24; Deut 23:10-11**)
 - i) There is an important distinction between uncleanness and wickedness. Uncleanness did not ‘necessarily’ relate to sin - it represented a “non-normative” state as compared to what God declared “normative” for his people (generally to set them apart from the other nations) and was only meaningful in that God’s presence was physically among manifested among his people (Ex 40:34-38)
 - ii) most of what was ‘non-normative’ was the result of sin (i.e sickness and death). Other things like animals/lawful sexual relations/Gentiles are declared “clean” explicitly or implicitly in the NT (Mark 7:18-19; Acts 10:14-16, 34-35; 1 Cor 7:1-5)
- (c) **Rom 6:23** - not just our experience passing from this world to the next but complete separation from the love and presence of God.
- (2) **Wrath and Judgment** (can also be seen as spiritual death circa the crucifixion) -
 - (a) Particularly important as we think about Paul begins to make known the gospel in Romans...this is where he starts!

DISCUSS: Read Rom 1:18–32.

- Is the wrath of God a present or a future reality? How do we usually think about it? How is the wrath of God presently manifesting itself (do we see this in our culture)?
- What sin is man foremost & primarily accused of here?
- Is this an accusation that only applies to some people or all people? *How does this help answer the question about people who have never heard the good news?*
- How might phrase “gave them up” (x3 in **v.24, 26, 28**) relate to any of our prior discussions about our sinful nature? (Total depravity & common grace).

(b) **Rom 1:18–32** - Not honoring or giving thanks to God as he deserves - any improper treatment of God, disvaluing him and in doing so “exchanging” him as God with “false gods” (ourselves or other created things; **v.23**). Present manifestations of God’s wrath are seen in how man is allowed to devolve into ever-increasing immorality (of which homosexuality is one).

(c) **Rom 2:1–5** - More specific group of people/sin, but **v.5** talks about a universal day of wrath where all men will be judged, guilty by default.

(d) **Rom 5:12–21** - Death (in this case referring to all the wages of sin) spread to all men because of their sinful covenant head, Adam.

(e) **John 3:36** - The wrath of God “remains” on any who do not obey and believe the Son (Jesus), this implies that the wrath of God is *already on/set to fall on* all men.

(f) Two Notes:

- (i) Jesus talked about God’s wrath more than any other person in the Scriptures (fires of hell **Matt 5:22; 7:19; 18:18** ; “weeping and gnashing of teeth” **Matt 8:12**; Parable of the Weeds **13:36–43**; the wicked servant **24:45–51**; for the devil **25:41** etc.)
- (ii) It is not as if God is “lashing out”, but should be seen in relation to his holiness. justice which cannot exist alongside sin. ‘Wrath’ is not an ‘inherent’ characteristic of God’s character, it is a reaction against something outside of himself.

(g) **Rev 20:11–14** - The Great White Throne Judgment

(3) Creation in Bondage -

- (a) **NOTE:** This has been the case ever since Adam, we don’t *individually* cause creation to be in bondage. It was a “wage” (judgment) paid out in the Fall.

- (b) Rom 8:19–21** - groaning, futile, can't do anything about it, the curse from Adam "cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life" (**Gen 3:17**)
- (c) John 3:16** - KOSMOS - **BDAG definitions** (compare this with how John uses 'world' in chapter 1)
- (i) that which serves to beautify through decoration, *adornment, adorning* (1 Pet 3:3)
 - (ii) condition of orderliness, *orderly arrangement, order*
 - (iii) the sum total of everything here and now, *the world, the (orderly) universe* (Matt 13:35; 25:34; Lk 11:50; Hb 3:3; 9:26; Rv 13:8; 17:8)
 - (iv) the sum total of all beings above the level of animals, *the world* (1 Cor 4:9 - world divided into angels and humans)
 - (v) planet earth as a place of inhabitation, *the world* (Mark 14:9; 16:15; Matt 4:8)
 - (vi) humanity in general, *the world* (Matt 5:14; 18:7; John 8:12; 9:5)
 - (vii) the system of human existence in its many aspects, *the world* (Matt 16:26; Mark 8:36; Lk 9:25; 1 Cor 7:31)
 - (viii) collective aspect of an entity, *totality, sum total*

Session 6 - The Work of Christ and the New Covenant

What is sin and What are its Wages? (review)

- (1) Sin and evil are not substances, but privations (lack of) and distortion of God's good creation.
- (2) **Two Primary Parts of Sin** -
 - (a) A lack of Righteousness
 - (b) Corruption of will/heart/affections
- (3) **Biblical Language of Sin** - erring, doing wrong, missing the mark, going astray, rebelling, trespass, treachery, faithlessness, iniquity (*which includes* the sinful act, guilt of the act, and deserved punishment)
- (4) **Wages: Death (Physical and Spiritual)& Wrath and Judgment** (and since Adam **Bondage of Creation**)

How does Christ remedy the Problem of Sin?

He must deal with the causes and wages of sin

...AND restore man to his original righteous standing before God.

(1) Wages or Results

- (a) Death (Physical & Spiritual)
- (b) God's Wrath
- (c) Bondage of Creation

(2) Causes

- (a) Original Sin (Adam's Headship and our Corruption)

Jesus does this through a New Covenant - The Covenant of Grace!!

DISCUSS: Read Jer 31:31-34.

- How does the Lord describe this 'new covenant'?
- What or who does it include?
- How is this covenant "not like" the covenant God made at Sinai?
- How does this passage address the problem of sin?
- **Why is it significant or important that God resolves the problem of sin through a covenant?**

- **Jer 31:31-34** - NOT like the covenant made with Israel at Sinai because God will put the law on the people's hearts (told to circumcise hearts **Deut 10:16**;

promised after exile **30:6**), law will not be external. An internal desire, affection, and ability to follow the law of the LORD (**Gal 5**). New Exodus language “I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” Personal “knowledge” of the LORD **all because their sins will be forgiven (this is the 1st step or the basis).**

- Some people would not say that every person in this “new covenant” would “know the Lord” because they interpret that as being some perfect knowledge of Him, without sin. However, in Jeremiah, knowing/forgetting the Lord is a relational term, it involves being faithful to the Lord as compared to other gods/idols.
- **Per the Last Question -**
 - Recall Adam’s identity, how did Original Sin come to all men? Through our relation to Adam not just as progeny, but foremost as covenant members with him as our covenant head. As long as we persist in the Old Covenant, we cannot be free from Original Sin and its consequences.
 - We also need a covenant head who can meet the “covenant stipulations” on our behalf so that we can be right with God and not be plunged back into corruption.
- Briefly recalls the various parts of a Covenant - Setting, Partners, Stipulations, Sanctions, and Sign.

The Forgiveness of Sins & Being Right with God

- (1) This is how the beginning of the New Testament frames the mission of Jesus, when Gabriel speaks to Joseph he declares “[Mary] will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, *for he will save his people from their sins.*” (**Matt 1:21**)
- (2) **How does Jesus do this?** (these are interconnected)
 - (a) **He pays the wages of sin Himself (consequences of sin)**
 - (b) **He obtains God’s favor for us (original creational state).**
- (3) **Jesus fulfills the *Telos* (purpose) of Mankind**
 - (a) **He comes as a New Adam** (Luke 3:23–38; of a new creation John 1)
 - (i) Why is this significant? Remember, Adam and Eve walked before God without shame in their original righteousness. Jesus must attain, recover, or as we’ll see “fulfill” that same righteousness.
 - (ii) Adam was the covenant head who corrupted/condemned all mankind, Jesus must be *like* Adam in this respect to purify and redeem all mankind.

- (iii) *****This is part of why Jesus was not born of Joseph, but of the Holy Spirit (Matt 1:20; Luke 1:35).** That he was conceived of the Holy Spirit (like Adam!) meant that he was not included in Adam's covenant (and his federal guilt), and could be head of a new creation/new covenant.
- (iv) *****The other reason he is conceived by the H.S is so that he lacks original corruption.** His natures (divine and human per Chalcedon) were pure, only desiring to please the Father.

(b) He fulfills the Law and the Prophets as a Representative Israel

- (i) He comes to lead the 2nd Exodus - New Moses (**Matt 1:17**)
- (ii) He passes through the "Red Sea" judgment of baptism to "fulfill all righteousness" (**Matt 3:15**) - [Discussed in the Baptism & L.S Course](#)

Excerpt from Baptism & L.S Course:

Three likely reasons (we can see some of here) Jesus was baptized:

- (1) To identify with Sinners (and yet be Sin-less)**
 - Jesus commits himself to the mission of saving sinners: (**Matt 1:21; Isa 42:1**) and to do so, must take their place, not only as a sacrifice, **but also** as a perfectly righteous man who earns the covenant blessings for his people (**Matt 3:15; 5:17-20**). It is Jesus alone, instead of OT Israel, who passes through John's baptism (of judgment-Red Sea) and resists temptation in the wilderness (**Matt 4:1-11; Ex. 32**)
- (2) To be identified by God**
 - In God's sovereignty, this is when Jesus is publicly identified by God as his "beloved son": **Matt 3:16-17** (cf. Ps 2:7; Gen 22:2; Isa 42:1)
- (3) Equipping and Commissioning**
 - God sends the Spirit to Christ to empower him for His ministry: **Matt 3:16; Acts 10:38**. Afterwards, he immediately is tempted by and successfully resist Satan.

- (iii) He is tempted in the wilderness 40 days and nights (where Israel failed) yet without sin (**Matt 4:1-11; particularly only quoting from Deuteronomy in his answer!!!**)
- (iv) He does not abolish "the Law or the Prophets" but he "fulfills them." Only those who have a greater righteousness than the scribes/Pharisees will be able to "enter the kingdom of heaven" (**Matt 5:17,20**).
- (v) *In fulfilling the Law and the Prophets, Jesus secures the blessings (favor) promised to Israel for all His people (The*

Beattitudes Matt 5:1–12 and Deut 28:14). The Beattitudes ARE NOT moods/attitudes we “emulate” to receive the desired result, they ARE REALITIES for all who believe, for to them “**is the kingdom of heaven**” = **which is the primary blessing!** (v.2, 10).

(vi) **Why be Israel? Israel is the representative national Adam,** who inherited the creational duties of Adam through God’s covenant with Abraham to represent/glorify God in all creation (**Gen 12:1–3; 15; 17:1–14**)

(vii) **Nathan Eubank:** Jesus’ righteous deeds “**earn wages that are stored up in heavenly treasures**” that can pay our debt of sin AND give us unmerited favor before God.⁹

(c) He suffers and dies as a Spotless Lamb

(i) First see this practice in the Passover (**Ex 12**) which required a “lamb without defect, a male a year old” (v.5). This extended into the whole sacrificial system, all sacrifices whether for sin offerings, peace offerings, burnt offerings, thanks offerings, required animals “without defect” (**Lev 1:10; 3:6; 4:3, 23, 28, 32; 5:15; etc.**).

(ii) **The Day of Atonement (Leb 16)** - once a year, high priest went and...

- 1) Offered sin offerings *for himself and his house* (so he is not perfect) before the tent of meeting (v.6–10)
- 2) Present a censer full of coals from the altar (on which the sacrifice was made) and bring it inside before the mercy seat (v.11–14; *aroma of the sacrifice before the presence of the LORD*)
- 3) Sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on the mercy seat (still for himself)
- 4) DOES THE SAME with a goat (“for the people...because of the uncleanness of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions, all their sins” v.15–16).
- 5) Confess on a live goat all their sins and send it into the wilderness to die.

(iii) **Why does this matter? John 1:29** John the Baptist sees Jesus and declares “Behold, **the Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world!”

(iv) **How?** By suffering in the place of his people, “laying down” his life for his sheep (**John 10:14–18**) as the prophet **Isaiah** predicted describing the **Suffering Servant**...

⁹ Professor of Theology (Synoptic Gospels especially) at Notre Dame. Eubank, Nathan. *Wages of Cross-Bearing and Debt of Sin: The Economy of Heaven in Matthew’s Gospel* (De Gruyter, 2013), 123;129-130.

DISCUSS: Read Isaiah 52:13-53

- What are the characteristics of this servant?
- How is he treated by other men? (cf. John 1:11)
- Where do we see sacrificial language used? (he is “an offering for guilt” = **for our transgressions, peace**)
- Is this man deserving of this suffering? (no **v.9b**)
- Whose “will” was it to crush him? Man’s? (**God’s vv.10**- God planned, initiated, and carried this out!)
- What happens to this man after? How do we understand this from what we understand about Jesus?
- **What is the result of this work? He “make[s] many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities” (v.11; part 1 and 2 that we discussed!!!)**

NOTE: Some people accuse Christians who hold this belief of advocating “divine child abuse.” This is simply ludicrous and denies the fact that there is no division in the will of the Triune God. Christ, as the Son, chose to suffer willingly and gladly to save His people (**Heb 12:2**) in perfect accord with the will of the Father (**John 17:1-2**), through the strength of the Holy Spirit (**Matt 3:16**)

(v) Drank the Cup of God’s Wrath:

- 1) Spoken of in the Old Testament (**Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17, 22; Jer 25:15-17, 28; Ezek 23:31-33; Hab 2:16; Rev 14:10; 16:19**)
- 2) **Garden of Gethsemane** - Why is Jesus afraid? (is it just fear the physical crucifixion? pause; remember that most of Jesus followers went to deaths as cruel or worse than that of him with smiles/hymns on their lips) **He is afraid of the Cup of God’s Wrath, Matt 26:36-46; Luke 22:39-46.** He drinks the cup at the cross “down to the dregs”!
- 3) **“Eloi Eloi, lema sabachthani?” (Mark 15:34)** – What is happening here? (can God the Father just not stand to see His Son suffer so? pause; remember, the Father is the one crushing him under His full wrath as Christ bore our sins, which includes physical death and spiritual separation from God) **c. 2 Cor 5:21 or 1 Pet 2:24. Jesus was made “to be sin” in this sense.**
- 4) **“It is finished!” (tetelestai - middle perfect)** - What is Jesus saying is finished as he dies? The wrath of God has been satisfied! The cup is empty. (if you understand

Greek you are welcome to explain the significance of the tense here)

- (vi) **He is the Propitiation of Sins (Rom 3:21–26)** - proves that God is both 'just' and the 'justifier' of the one who has faith in Jesus, *because* he properly atoned for them and makes them righteous in God's eyes (even OT saints like Abraham **Rom 4; cf. Gen 15:6**).

(d) He Rises as the Firstborn from the Dead (Col 1:18)

- (i) Why is this so significant? Didn't Jesus say it was finished?

DISCUSS: This is an excellent question. What would've been the problem if Jesus had stayed dead? Why? What would that have said about him and his ministry? (death held him = he's a sinner! He can't give life, He wasn't God's Son he died like any other man)

- (ii) **1 Cor 15:12–22:** Paul clearly states that without the resurrection there is no forgiveness of sins and our "faith is futile." Why?

- 1) **One, he must undo the work .of Adam which resulted in death (v.21–22).** He must live to give life to those who truth in Him.
- 2) **He must be vindicated as the eternal Son of God in all His righteousness** - as a truly worthy sacrifice, it was the true sign that he was the Christ (**cf. Matt 16:4**) . This becomes the hallmark of all early evangelistic preaching, see some examples! (**Acts 2:22–36** made "Lord and Christ"; 10:34–43; 17:29–31; Rom 1:1–6)
- 3) **He must be crowned as the Davidic Son of God**, the King of Glory who will judge the world (Ps 2; 110; his ascension in Acts 1:6–11, testified to in 7:54–56; Eph 2:6; Phil 2:9–11; Rev 5).

(e) He is united with His People through faith and the Holy Spirit

- (i) This is the doctrine known as "Union with Christ", often de-lineated in the New Testament text with the phrase "in Christ." (just saw this in Rom 3:24). This is how Christ actually pays for our sins, and why are we called the "Body of Christ" (**1 Cor 12:27; Eph 4:12**)
- (ii) **Especially picture in baptism. Read Rom 6:1–11.** We are (1) united with Christ in his death (penalty for sin) and (2) raised to new life with Him (in favor with God).
- (iii) The saints are those who are "in Christ." (**1 Cor 1:2,4; 1:30; 15:18–19, 22; 2 Cor 5:17,19; etc etc. before the foundation of the world Eph 1:3–14**).

- (iv) This is effectuated by the Spirit of Christ (**Rom 8:9; cf. 1 Pet 1:11**)

How can we summarize/organize all this? His Threefold Office

- (1) Prophet (additional to Adam - a correction to our sin) - We reject God's word and set up idols; therefore, the Truth incarnates to lead us back to the Living God
- (2) Priest - We are defiled and guilty of iniquity, therefore, the Holy One of Israel incarnates in a perfect, spotless humanity to be the final/perfect sacrifice and sacrificer.
- (3) King - We have rebelled and come under the power of evil; therefore, the Eternal Sovereign incarnates to defeat our enemies and restore his rule and reign.

What is true of those in Christ?

(1) We have died to sin

- (a) Its nature, consequences, and condemnation (Rom 6, 8:1). There is no wrath of God for those who trust in Jesus.

(2) We are new creations

- (a) 'Offspring' of Jesus *instead of* 'offspring of Adam'; we have a new life *in Christ*. (2 Cor 5:17; Rom 6; Isa 53)
- (b) He recreates us through His Holy Spirit (**Ezek 36:23-37**), giving us new hearts, freeing us from the enslavement of Original Sin (**Rom 6-8**).
- (c) We continue to be transformed into his image (the true *imago dei*) once again starting from conversion until his 2nd coming (**2 Cor 3:18; 1 John 3:2**). This process is referred to a 'sanctification.'

(3) We have peace, favor, and a eternal inheritance with God

- (a) **Rom 5:1-5** - peace with God
- (b) **Rom 8:14-17; Eph 2:4-7** - co-heirs with Christ, of his glory and of the 'immeasurable riches of his kindness' in coming ages (eternity).

(4) We are continually putting off sin and putting on the likeness of Christ

- (a) **Eph 4:17-32** -
 - (i) putting off darkened understanding/ignorance (intellectual corruption), hardness of heart (affectional corruption)
 - (ii) "corrupt through deceitful desires" (**v.22**) -**How does sin deceive us? Examples?** sinful desires lie to us, twist the truth

about creation/what is right and acceptable/what leads to true happiness/what the consequences will be, etc.

- (iii) renewal in the spirit of your minds (at least intellectual cf. **Rom 12:1-2** ever gaining the ability to test/know the will of God, “what is good and acceptable and perfect”)

(b) **Gal 5:16-26** -

- (i) walking by the Spirit [of Christ] (cf. **Rom 8:9**), that is according to the desires of the Spirit which is to glorify Christ (**John 16:14**) - producing new ‘fruit’ that fulfills the law.
- (ii) refusal/turning against the “desires of the flesh” (in opposition) - those who live by these desires will “not inherit the kingdom of God” (cf. **Matt 7:15-19; 1 John 3:4-10**).

Session 7 - The Work of Killing Sin

How do we put off sin and put on Christ? - Sanctification

(1) Right Reasons -

(a) **Eternal Life** : There is a real connection us killing sin (mortification) and eternal life (as well as our regular spiritual life). “For if you live according to the flesh [sinful nature] you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.” **Rom 8:13** (this is NOT salvation by works Rom 6:23 clearly shows eternal life is a ‘gift’...*so what might this text be saying?* cf. **1 John 3**)

(b) Owen lists Six Reasons we are “Duty-Bound” to Kill Sin¹⁰ :

- (i) *Indwelling sin always abides while we are in this world* - some people wrongly think that we are able to keep the commands of God perfectly (directly contradicts **1 John 1:8–10**). But we dwell in this body of death until Christ transforms us (Rom 7:24; cf. Phil 3:21).
- (ii) *Sin is still active and laboring to bring forth the deeds of the flesh* - if we are not active, sin still is tempting and luring men away (**James 1:14**). Indeed, “*sin will not spare [us] for one day.*”
- (iii) *Unmortified sin will bring forth soul-destroying sins* - “*Every time sin rises to tempt or entice, it always seeks to express itself in the extreme. Every unclean thought or glance would be adultery if it could; every covetous desire would be oppression; and every unbelieving thought would be atheism.*” (**Owen 8**). Sin is always seeking to grow by degrees unless we drive it back!
- (iv) *The H.S and new nature are given to oppose sin* - “His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness...by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises *so that* (1) you may become partakers of the divine nature, (2) having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.” **2 Pet 1:3–4**
- (v) *Neglect of this duty makes the inner man decay instead of renewing him* - contra **2 Cor 4:16** those who neglect killing sin allow the inner man to perish and sin to harden our hearts (**Heb 3:13; Ps 38:3–5**). It deprives us of the love of the Father (**1 John 2:15; 3:17**).

¹⁰ Owen, John, and Richard Rushing, *The Mortification of Sin* (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), 6–10

- (vi) *Our spiritual growth is our daily duty* - similar to the 4th. We must seek to grow in grace daily (**1 Pet 2:2; 2 Pet 3:18**) and we will not be able to do so unless we are “**walking over the bellies of our lusts.**” (**Owen 10**)

(c) Reasons against God - these are the probably the hardest reasons to have motivate us, our sinful flesh is not hostile against a great many things, but it is hostile against God (**Rom 8:7**)

- (i) *Sin grieves the holy and blessed Spirit.* “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit....by whom we were sealed for the day of redemption” (**Eph 4:30**). Friends, when you consider sin, do you consider the grief it brings to the One who dwells in you? The One who daily attends your soul, who goes before the throne testifying that you are God’s child, who seals and keeps you until the end. Should we grieve this dear friend, by “harbouring His enemies” (**74**)?
- (ii) *The Lord Jesus Christ is wounded afresh by it.* His cross is mocked; His love is foiled; and His adversary is gratified. Owens says this “**If deceitful sin engulf the will, crucifies the Son of God, and puts Him to open shame (Heb 6:6), so every harbouring of sin that he came to destroy wounds and grieves Him.**” (**74–75**)
- (iii) *The Father is wearied by the sinfulness of his people.* He is the one who chose and called us for adoption as sons and daughters. Who exalted Christ and would exalt us with him, who gave His precious and very great promises since the beginning that their blessings might be enjoyed by us. Would we “weary” Him when he offers us so much (**Isa 7:13**)? Would we be taken in with other lovers, grief, and forget our first husband and all he has given us (**Hos 2:2–13**)? The list goes on...

(d) True Spiritual Contentment and Joy in Christ :

(2) Right Assumptions -

- (a) To mortify sin is *not to root it out so it has no hold or residence at all in our hearts* - this will never happen in this life, although it is our aim! (**Phil 3:12**)
- (b) To mortify sin is *not to just change some outward aspects of sin* - people often just exchange an outward sin for a hidden one. Indeed the person’s heart may be different in that it is “**more cunning**” instead of a new heart, which is more holy (**27**)

- (c) To mortify sin is *not just the improvement of our natural constitution* - some people naturally have what appear to be more tame natural temperaments and aren't as prone to outbursts as other men...such men need consider spiritual sins of unbelief, envy and self-denial as well.
- (d) To mortify sin is *not to just divert sin* - Simon the sorcerer in his lust for power simply exchanged his sorceries for the 'upcoming' faith and an attempt at gaining power over the Holy Spirit (**Acts 8:9-24**). The stream has not been stopped and dried up, but merely diverted!
- (e) To mortify sin is *not merely the occasional victory* - sometimes when sin overtakes a person they show quick and violent zeal against it so that it appears to "**lie dead before them**" like a soldier pretending amidst trouble, only to arise quickly again when such zeal departs (**29**) OR when by need of public consequence a person needs appear to have dealt with his sin yet once order returns and public disapproval recedes he returns to his vice. (**Ps 78:32-37**).
- (f) To mortify sin ***is*** *to seek to weaken sinful desires bit by bit* - oppose the desires that tempt us **Jas 1:14**, starving them so that they are not fed and become weak AND to actively feed their opposite virtue/fruit/affection that it might beat back first inklings of vice.
- (i) Sumo Metaphor Ex: Suppose you have to wrestle a sumo in 1 month, *but* you get to control his diet up until that point? What do you feed him if you want to win? Answer: A WHOLE LOT OF NOTHING! You starve him flat, until he's a twig you could knock over just by blowing on him.
- (g) To mortify sin ***is*** *to be intimately acquainted with its ways* - Even when we are not presently tempted we must be able to say "**This is our enemy; this is his way and his methods, these are his advantages, this is the way he has prevailed, and he will do this, if he is not prevented.**" (**37**) (**ex.** say we take anger as an example - how well do you understand how anger rises up in you? what types of situations? are you patient in some areas and short in others? etc.)
- (h) To mortify sin ***is*** *to seek to be obedient to the Lord from the heart in all areas!* - **Isa 58:1-14** (<-- maybe not read this all). To try to attend to obey God in one area alone while to be negligent and careless in many others we will be laboring in vain. We are not merely trying to be people who do not possess a particular sickness but people who display a particular image (**Col 3:10; 1 Cor 15:49; 2 Cor 3:18; Rom 8:29**). We cannot neglect our underlying spiritual state trying to tend a 'sore.'

- (i) To mortify sin ***is*** to hate sin and to love goodness - **Rom 12:9** we must learn to hate the things that God hates (David **Ps 26:5; 31:6; 101:3; 119:104**; God **Ps 5:4-6; Isa 61:8** ; Paul waging war against the flesh **Rom 7:13-20**) and to love the things that God loves, foremost God Himself (**Ps 1:2; 16:3; 35:27; 37:4,23-24**; etc.). Eve ‘delighted’ in the thing that was forbidden (**Gen 3:6**).

(3) Right Reliance -

(a) Vain Methods -

- (i) Owen mentions some of peoples vain methods “**vows, orders, fastings, penances, and rough garments...their outside endeavors, bodily exercises, self-performances, and mere legal duties without the least mention of Christ or his Spirit.**” (14-15). This *isn't* to say that things like praying, fasting, meditation, etc. don't have a place but many consider them “**the fountain and not the stream coming from the fountain.**” (16).

DISCUSS: What are some of the methods that people prescribe today for ‘killing sin’ that may be vain? (**ex.** exercise, medication, therapy, starting/joining a special group)

- (ii) Many of these methods really seek to address or attack the “body that we live in” and not the “body of death.” These aren't the same thing! The one must be carefully tended to, the other shown no mercy.
- (b) The Strength and Guidance of the Holy Spirit (God).
- (i) “**Men may attempt this work based on other principles, but they will come short...Mortification from a self-strength, carried on by ways of self-invention, to the end of a self-righteousness, is the soul and substance of all false religion in the world.**” Owen¹¹
- (ii) Reliance on self in regards to overcoming sin is fatal/leads to pride.
- 1) Propels a “love of self”, which the Scriptures teach us to vehemently reject (“deny himself” **Matt 16:24; Mark 8:34**)

¹¹ Owen and Rushing, *The Mortification of Sin*.

2) Cursed are those who trust in man instead of the Lord (**Jer 17:5–10**), continual theme of the prophets (cf. Ahaz **Isa 7–9**).

3) **Implication:** We can't continue to try and rely on ourselves just because we may have the '**right goal**'.

(iii) Why the Spirit?

1) The Spirit takes away our stony hearts and gives us "hearts of flesh" (change of affections; **Ezek 36:26–27**) and that causes us to walk in the God's "statutes and rules". - Affection Faculty

2) The Spirit is how Christ abides in us that we may "bear much fruit" (**John 15:5**) for him. - Will Faculty (choices)

3) The Spirit is the one who convicts us of sin, righteousness and judgment (**John 16:8–11**). Without him our consciousness and hearts are unaware and cold to the ways of God. - Intellectual Faculty

a) "The preaching of the Word brings the truth that men are sinners and guilty before God. It may communicate the nature of sin, and the fact that man is guilty..." yet "Preaching and reasoning alone cannot cause the soul *to feel these truths*, and to produce a suitable response!..." "It is the Spirit alone that can do, and does do, this work... Unless this is done [by him], all that follows is vain." (129)

4) The Spirit is the only one who gives us the wisdom from God that we need to find salvation and freedom from sin (**1 Cor 2:6–16**), particularly regarding the Word which He has inspired (**2 Pet 1:20–21**). - Intellectual Faculty

5) As we just saw in **Gal 5**, only as we actively walk according to the will and guidance of the Holy Spirit will we not gratify our sinful desires (apathy is death!!!). This is not a 'passive' "let's leave it to God!", it is an act of our obedience and faith working with God. - Will Faculty

6) The Spirit is the one who bears up our weakness in prayer, interceding "for us with groanings too deep for words" and carrying those things that we ought to pray for before the Father constantly (**Rom 8:26–27**),

especially our dear need to “be conformed to the image of his Son.” (v.29)

(c) The Work and Grace of Christ

- (i) “Set your faith upon Christ for the killing of your sin. His blood is the great sovereign remedy for sin-sick souls. Live in the lights of Christ’s great work, and you will die a conqueror. You will, through the good providence of God, live to see your lust dead at your feet.” (116)

(ii) How do we do this?

- 1) Fill your heart with a right consideration of the provision that God has made for you in the work of Christ -

- a) “Whoever abides in me and I in him he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from *me* you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)
- b) Here it is actually appropriate to refer Phil 4:13 to see Christ’s provision amidst Paul’s lacking and discontent circumstances, to be content! And further in 2 Cor 12:9 how he is told that the grace of Christ is “sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”
- c) It is through His love and present intercession that we are “more than conquerors” ; that is “completely victorious” (Rom 8:37)
- d) It is Christ in his death who “gave himself for us to redeem us *from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people* for his own possession who are zealous for good works.” (Tit 2:14)
- e) If we have “been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” *including* our present life such that we must “consider [ourselves] dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus” (Rom 6:11, 12–14)
- f) Christ is the one who “loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might *sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word*, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, *without spot or wrinkle or*

any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.” (Eph 5:25–27)

- 2) Raise your heart to a settled expectation of help from Christ
- a) It is this attitude that caused Paul to pray in **Eph 3:16-17** “that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being, *so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith...*”
 - b) Who else but Him is our great High Priest, made in every way like us, who is “merciful and faithful” and “able to help those who are being tempted.” (**Heb 2:17–18**). Therefore we draw near His throne of grace “that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (**4:16**)
 - c) Is he not the one who taught us to expectantly call upon the Father in this way: “Ask and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.” (**Matt 7:7–11**; cf. **6:7–13**) And it not in him that these words are fulfilled for all the promise of God are Yes and Amen in Christ (**2 Cor 1:20**) who will “graciously give us all things” with Christ as heirs and co-heirs (**Rom 8:32b**).
 - d) Even as in him we are called to obey and “work out [our] own salvation with fear and trembling” we are sweetly told that indeed we can because it is “*God who works* in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” (**Phil 2:12**).

CLOSING: If you have time, ask people to reflect for a minute on the overall impact, presentation, and truth of the class. Was there anything that really stood out to them? Any sanctification/conviction God brought in the midst of talking about sin? Any lingering questions?