

112. What Did Original Sin Bring to Us?

We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. *Eph. 2, 3.*

Original sin has alienated man from the life of God, so that he is inclined to all that is evil, his mind being enmity against God. And what is the result of this enmity against God? The result is the same as that of all enmity in common life. When we are angry, our judgment becomes clouded. The person we are angry with is judged wrongly and is not treated justly. Neither, therefore, can we, being enemies of God, form a just estimate of Him. And if anyone speaks to us of God and brings us divine revelation, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Our dark understanding must first be made light by the Spirit of God before we receive the wisdom of God. Before this is done in us, we regard God's Gospel as foolishness, and we spurn it and disdain the preachers, and if they want to press it on us, we become angry also with them.

And as the judgment of man is clouded, so is his will perverted by original sin; it is wholly turned away from the holiness of God, so that a man does not want to do what is right. Out of sheer stubbornness he refuses to do it. Hence God must work in us not only to *do* a good thing, but also to *will* it.

And as the judgment of natural man is darkened and his will perverted, so also his appetites, his desires, are sinful. Natural man is the slave of sin. Even the Christians feel the sinister power of sin in a greater or less degree until death, and they must constantly be on guard against the thoughts and desires of their hearts. Even in a Christian original sin is like a sleeping lion; the least disturbance makes it rage. It is like an ember imbedded in ashes; if it is blown by the wind of temptation, it will flame up into scandalous evils. As fire is in the match, sin and all wickedness is in man's heart; it only needs an opportunity to come out. Therefore watch your heart!

Prayer.

O my God and Father, I cry from my inmost heart: Abba, my Father and Lord, have mercy on me! O my God, be gracious to me, a poor sinner, and forgive all my sins, original and actual — all thoughts, words, and deeds that, knowingly or unknowingly, were at enmity with Thy Word. There is in me, that is, in my flesh, no good thing. In sins have I been conceived and born, in sins have I lived. O Lord, do not enter into judgment with Thy servant. Be gracious unto me, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Although our sin is great indeed,
God's mercies far exceed it;
His hand can give the help we need,
However much we need it:
He is the Shepherd of the sheep
Who Israel doth guard and keep
And shall from sin redeem him.

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