

No.9, The Results of the Fall

The consequences of man's fall into sin are summarised for us in the W.C.F. ch. 6, sections 2& 3 – “*By this sin, they fell (Adam & Eve) from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin and wholly defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin, and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation.*” In the light of these Confessional statements and in the light of Scripture itself, it could be said that everything that has ever occurred in the history of man of an evil nature is the result of the Fall. All within the realm of sin, all human sorrows & diseases, and all of the calamities and catastrophes that occur in the natural realm result from the disobedience of that first representative man, the man we know as Adam.

However, for our purposes today in this study on *The Results of the Fall* we will consider the immediate effects of the Fall as they are set before us in the verses that we have just read in Genesis 3.

1. First, man became guilty.

Our first parents lost their legal & moral innocence and became subject to real guilt.

Their guilt is seen in v.7 – “*And the eyes of them both were opened.*” The thought here is that they now felt and were conscious of the loss of their original & prior goodness and innocence; and they were also fully aware of their act of disobedience, thus that they were really guilty. There was an immediate consciousness of their awful guilt – this is the deeper sense of these words that inform us that their eyes were opened.

This awareness of guilt displayed itself as shame with respect to their physical nakedness as v.7 informs us. This shame over their physical nakedness was a reflection of the inward nakedness of their guilty consciences before God. Inwardly they felt and knew that they had lost their original righteousness. Thus, they felt naked as it were – denuded of innocence, with their consciences accusing them, so much so that this feeling of having been stripped of their original righteousness manifested itself with regard to the external sphere of things.

Incidentally, note that there is instruction here with respect to this matter of physical nakedness. See ch.2: 25 – their state prior to their Fall: in their pristine state they were physically naked but were not ashamed or embarrassed. Thus, their shame or embarrassment over their physical nakedness manifested itself after they had sinned, and their attempt to cover themselves, was a demonstration of the guilt they felt within.

In connection with these facts, let us note that no shame over public nakedness before others does not mean that such people are not sinners. Rather, it means that the perpetrators of nudity have seared their consciences; or even worse, are given over to Satanic domination, Luke 8: 27, 35.

But, as noted their awareness of their physical nakedness was a reflection of their consciousness that they had lose their innocence & righteousness. Thus, their attempt to cover themselves with the fig leaves was an attempt to relieve their shame & accordingly rid themselves of the feeling of guilt that was expressing itself in their shame over physical nakedness. Note also in v.8 their attempt to hide themselves from the Lord, a measure that sinners constantly adopt when faced with guilt, cf. Rev 6: 16, 17.

Note in v.10 that Adam attempts to confine his fear to his sense of his physical nakedness, but God does not permit him to do so. V.11 – here God is essentially compelling Adam to recognise in his physical nakedness this reflection of his sin and the consequent loss of righteousness. God is driving him back to the true ground of his fear – his disobedience.

2. Second, man became morally corrupt.

This moral corruption affected man's entire being, a fact seen in that the first transgression was then immediately followed by a series of transgressions. In other words, it became evident at once that it was now our first parents' nature to act in accordance with the sinful condition into which they had fallen. Note the evidence:

(a) They sought to cover up their guilt, v.7 again.

(b) They now had an intuitive inclination to avoid the divine presence, v.8 – note that they sought the shadow of the trees, illustrating man's proclivity toward darkness, John 3: 19, 20.

(c) They refused to acknowledge their sin & to take the blame for it, v.v.12, 13.

(d) Deviousness and deceit now marked man – see v.22: God here declares that Adam was now in such a morally corrupt state that he would actually try to devise a plan to take that which he now had no right to have. We are taught here that every ploy of man to gain eternal life is the product of his fallen nature.

These points combine to prove that man had become a sinner in his very nature. Corruption had filled his soul and entire being so that he deliberately went against the mind of God and sought his own way. This is the very essence of sin. The Hebrew word for sin means *to miss the mark*. Man cannot & will not hit God's target due to his sinful nature. See Judges 20: 16 where the word *miss* is essentially the word for sin.

3. Third, the image of God in man was distorted.

When the Lord made man it was for the purpose of having His own likeness and image revealed to the rest of creation. In that perfect creation the Lord was revealed in what He had made. This is still true even though sin has marred creation, Rom 1: 19, 20. Hence, if in creation's polluted state God is seen, how much more was He seen in its originally pure condition.

However, even in the original state of things, it was through man that the Lord was most fully revealed, simply because it was only man that was made in the divine image. Man was made in a just and holy relationship with God – this was essentially the reflection of the divine image. Thus, as man acted and behaved according to that just & holy relationship the image of God was displayed.

But when man fell the image of God in man was fractured & distorted, thus a true manifestation of that image was no longer given. Adam & Eve now became alien and hostile toward the Lord and in their attitude to each other. See v.8 – literally, the original language reads: “*the man hid himself and the woman hid herself.*” Thus, selfishness marked their attitude; further seen again in that Adam blamed Eve for his plight, and she blamed the serpent. Hence, in the behaviour of Adam & Eve there was guilt, shame, selfishness, hostility and alienation – traits that certainly did not reflect the image of God. Thank God in Christ there is restoration to that image and the grace given to live a life of godliness and set the Lord forth.

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