

Original Sin

Genesis 3:1-19 Romans 5:12-21 John 3:5-8

March 19, 2023
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It has been called “*spiritual leprosy*.”

Other names for it include “Adam’s sin,” “person-sin,” “nature-sin,” and even “hereditary-sin.” Martin Luther called it the “**utmost evil**.”

Most of us have been taught to call it *Original Sin*. Original Sin is the sin that you are born with that separates you from God, it is the reason why you will die, and it leads to all the other sins that you commit.

Original Sin is *so much a part of us* that we cannot even see it; in fact, it deceives us so much that we consider ourselves “good” people. That’s part of the sinful pride that comes with original sin.

The Bible however says that Original Sin totally and thoroughly corrupts us; it is the root sin that leads to every other sin. We are not only **not good**, but we are **full of evil**. We can only know about this because God has revealed it to us in His Word! Here is an example:

But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.' For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. Matthew 15:18-19

All sin flows from Original Sin; your sinful nature is totally depraved and fully bent on evil. Not only is Adam’s sin passed on to you, but so is the punishment for sin: death.

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned. Romans 5:12 PHYSICAL DEATH

As for you, you are **DEAD** in your transgressions and sins Ephesians 2:1 SPIRITUAL DEATH

These verse teaches us that Adam's sin has been passed on to us, and as a result, we are born spiritually dead and will physically die¹.

One aspect of Original Sin is that it is a destructive power in our lives. Our sinful nature is terrible.

[Martin Luther said] "We are infected with the poison of original sin from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head" Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration 1.62

Original Sin is passed on to you through conception, from your father, and you inherit a thoroughly corrupt human nature. It is even called the "**Old Adam**" to signify this. Your sinful nature hates God and loves sin. It thrives on disobedience, rebellion and immorality. It makes us self-centered and bent on evil. As Conservative Lutheran Christians, here is how we confess and teach it to the world:

[Lutherans] teach that since the fall of Adam all men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, that is, **without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with [evil desires]**; and that this disease, or vice of origin, is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Ghost. Augsburg

Confession II.1-2

Original sin is not only the **entire absence of all good in spiritual, divine things**, but that, instead of the lost image of God in man, it is at the same time also **a deep, wicked, horrible, fathomless, inscrutable, and unspeakable corruption of the entire nature and all its powers** Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration 1.11

Those are some harsh words! From a Biblical viewpoint, we are not "basically good".

The Doctrine of Original Sin is important in forming and shaping our worldview, and our understanding of life.

- ⇒ First, Original Sin helps us understand the world around us; and the unspeakable evil that we see and hear about all the time. All the violence, immorality, rebellion, crime, racism, war, terrorism – **all of it** is the fruit of original sin in people's lives.
- ⇒ Second, and closer to home, we learn that we ourselves are so totally and thoroughly corrupt that we could never save ourselves.

¹ Be sure to think very carefully about this. Original sin is one of the dividing lines between denominations. If you are not totally depraved and dead in sin, but only bruised or wounded in sin, then you have some ability to cooperate with God in salvation. If you have the ability to cooperate in salvation, then it is no longer faith alone, grace alone, and Christ alone (Gal 5:4). The way you understand original sin affects how you understand salvation. The Bible says that we are dead in sin (Eph 2:1); and only made alive by God's grace in Christ (Eph 2:4-5). Be sure to take time to understand the full impact of original sin and because of it, our dire need for God's grace in His Son Jesus!

We need help! We need a Savior! We need a new start!

**If only we could be BORN AGAIN
without Original Sin! (2x)**

And that is exactly what Christ does for you. You are given a new birth through faith in Christ; you **are** “born again” by water and the Spirit --- but this time, you are born **without** Original Sin! Here is what Jesus said:

Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the Kingdom of God unless he is born again." ⁴"How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" ⁵Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. John 3:3-6

By nature, you are born into sin through your father and will die;
By faith, you are born again into righteousness through Jesus Christ and will live!

When Jesus says you need to be “born again”, He does not mean that you have to do something. Being born again is not your work, your effort, nor your accepting Jesus into your heart. Being born again is something that God does for you – it is totally His work and His mercy²!

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵He saved us, NOT because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior Titus 3:4-6

This “washing of rebirth” is the same thing as Jesus saying “you must be “born again”³.” The Bible teaches that the place where you are born again of water and the Spirit is in Holy Baptism. Baptism is the washing of rebirth and renewal of the Holy Spirit! Holy Baptism is God at work in your life giving you a new start, a new birth without Original Sin.

² You are 100% passive in this “new birth”, just as you were passive when your mother gave birth to you. Two things to note: The verbs Jesus uses are passive verbs, not active. And second, Jesus even says – two times – that this is the work of the Holy Spirit! Salvation is God's work and His gift to you – by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone!

³ Jesus’ “born again” = St. Paul’s “rebirth” --> They both have the same cognate verb in John 3:3 and in Titus 3:5. Note also, that both passages connect the work of the Holy Spirit to this. Note also that both passages connect water to this new birth. The only intersection point in the New Testament of all these things is Holy Baptism; there is no other place! In Holy Baptism, you are born again (=rebirth”) by water (=”washing”) and the Holy Spirit!

We confess this in the Small Catechism.

What does such baptizing with water mean?

Such baptizing with water means that the old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts; and that **a new man** daily come forth and arise, **who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever**

The “Old Adam” is a reference to Original Sin. In Baptism it drowns and dies --- and you are given a new start, a new birth to live a life before God in **righteousness and purity** forever! You are a “new man”; a “new creation” in Christ!

Consider your sinful nature dead. Its drowned in Baptism. It has no power over you. It does not control your life.

You are a New Creation in Christ; a new man or new woman.

- ⇒ Your sins are forgiven!
- ⇒ You have peace with God!
- ⇒ God is your Father in Heaven!
- ⇒ The Holy Spirit lives within you!
- ⇒ You have eternal life!

Live a holy and godly life of love ...

- ⇒ love God and serve your neighbor!
- ⇒ Be patient and kind with everyone you interact with
- ⇒ Obey the Ten Commandments when it comes to other people
- ⇒ You can use your gifts and resources to help other people and support the work of the Church.

Consider your old Adam dead, and drowned in Holy Baptism. You have been born again and given a new life to live.

You have been rescued from Original Sin; through Holy Baptism, you are now are a New Creation in Christ! Amen!

If you are born once,

PHYSICAL BIRTH ONLY

you will die twice.

PHYSICAL AND ETERNAL DEATH

If you are born twice,

PHYSICAL BIRTH AND HOLY BAPTISM

you will die once.

JUST PHYSICAL DEATH

Lord God Almighty,
we thank you for revealing our
sinful nature to us,
and for giving us a new birth of
water and Spirit in Holy Baptism.
Empower us to live this new life
You have given to us,
a life of love towards You
and service to our neighbor.
Help us to put to death our sinful
nature through repentance,
and to live holy and godly lives of
faith.
In Jesus' name, amen!

Genesis 3:1-19

¹ Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" ² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' " ⁴ "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. ⁸ Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" ¹⁰ He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." ¹¹ And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" ¹² The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." ¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." ¹⁴ So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. ¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring ^[a] and hers; he will crush ^[b] your head, and you will strike his heel." ¹⁶ To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." ¹⁷ To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. ¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

Romans 5:12-21

¹²Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned— ¹³for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. ¹⁴Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come. ¹⁵But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! ¹⁶Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. ¹⁷For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. ¹⁸Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. ¹⁹For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. ²⁰The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, ²¹so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

John 3:5-8

⁵Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' ⁸The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."