

TEACHING GOAL

To study the meaning of sinfulness as it applies to mankind.

DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

- Q. Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?
- A. The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.
- Q. Wherein consists the sinfulness of the estate whereinto man fell?
- A. The sinfulness of the estate whereinto man fell consists of the guilt of Adam's first sin, the lack of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature which is commonly called Original Sin, together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.

S.C. 17-18; L.C. 25; W.C. of F. VI; Savoy 6; Young 28-30

SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Study Passage: Romans 3:1-20

Support Passages: Psalm 5:9, 10:7, 14:1-3, 36:1-4; 53:1-4, 140:3; Isaiah 59

BIBLE STORY

Numbers 13-14 (14:1-10); The sinful despising of the Lords grace at Kadesh-Barnea. With sinful natures abundantly evident this is an example of people who are wholly inclined to all evil, made doubly heinous because they had direct knowledge of the Lords mercies.

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23, ESV) "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear;" (Isaiah 59:1, ESV)

APPLICATION

Even though Isaiah speaks particularly to the people of God, nevertheless, God will pardon the sin of anyone who will repent and believe on His Christ. This is the only means whereby we may escape the wrath of God which is to be poured out upon the wicked.

SUMMARY

The ungodly person does not like the idea that he is wicked, it being quite natural to think that one is pretty good. If anyone is unfair, it is said, it is a God who willy-nilly presses the "smite" button. If anyone is unfair it is a God of wrath. In my home town of Vineland, New Jersey, someone who now knows the truth, engraved his tombstone with, "The angry wrathful Bible God is a myth." Liberal theology has long been known for its rejection of Original Sin and man's essential sinfulness. The liberal argues that there is a spark of good in everybody which simply needs to be fanned up, thus bringing reconciliation to people.

The Westminster Larger Catechism is quite plain when it states, regarding the corruption of man's nature, "Whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually" (Question 25). This is not a picture of God but of man. It is man's fault there is misery and pain in the world because he brings it upon himself by means of his sinfulness. Paul argues in Romans 3, our study passage, that God cannot be called a "Judge" if there is no wrath brought upon the wicked. "Let God be found true though every man be found a liar" (Romans 3:4). The scripture is full of descriptions of the sinfulness of mankind and the holiness of God. Notice the list of corruptions prevalent in mankind: (Romans 3:10ff)

- (1) No one is righteous or without sin.
- (2) No one understands godly things (See also I Corinthians 2:14).
- (3) No one seeks for God.
- (4) Every one has become useless in terms of the things of the Lord.
- (5) No one does any spiritual good in the sense of meriting heaven or pleasing God.
- (6) The verbal communications of people are lies, curses and bitterness. (See also James 3)
- (7) Mankind are hostile, murderous and fomenters of hatred.
- (8) No one fears God acting as if there is no God or that God is not supremely and sublimely sovereign.

What Paul speaks of is the sinfulness of the estate into which mankind fell. When a person is converted by the grace of God, this description fits him less and less. Paul speaks of one who is totally depraved and inexorably locked in the grasp of sin's power. It is true for both Jews and Greeks (the Greek is typical of all Gentiles, see Romans 2:1-16) and thus for all mankind in general, but surely the one who is genuinely converted has been set free from such dominion, for "sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Romans 6:14). That man's whole nature, all of his being, body and soul, is in bondage to sin, should be clear from Paul's list of corruptions.

Isaiah includes much more in his list of corruptions (Isaiah 59) which we shall not reproduce herein. However, even though our iniquities have made a

separation between ourselves and our God (Isaiah 59:2), "Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear." (Isaiah 59:1).