

Definition and Nature of Original Sin

by John Murray

Original sin is a depraved nature that extends to all aspects of human beings, including their spirit, soul, and body, and is characterized by a total lack of conformity to the holiness of God.

Duration: 51:05

Scripture: Romans 3:24, Romans 5:12, Romans 5:19, Romans 5:21, Romans 6:23, Romans 8:1, Romans 8:3

Topics: "Original Sin"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the three-fold nature of what is pleasing to God: love to God, the will of God, and the glory of God. He emphasizes that without these three elements, our actions are displeasing to God. The preacher then moves on to discuss the infutation of Adam's sin, explaining that it is the total absence of what is well pleasing to God. He urges the audience to keep the five main subdivisions of the doctrine of sin distinct in their minds and to understand the importance of each one.

Transcript

Let us pray. O Lord, we bless Thy great and holy name. That Thy sin hath reigned unto death, and even so has grace reigned through righteousness, and to eternal life.

In His name we give Thee praise and commend. As propounded by Dr. Charles Hart, That's why it was just the affairs of eternal life. I think, nevertheless, this applies, should be in the interpretation.

Now, if that we are constituted sinners, by which we all sin, we have to push our analysis a step further. Now, this is, I think, That sin of action was transgression, and it involved both gravity and perversity. Gravity, perversity, and transgression.

You remember earlier, when we were dealing with the catastrophe before we came to Ukraine, and the Oboe's Act, we were so involved in this sin of action. Gravity. Perversity.

And we can never think of the sin of action in abstraction. And so, when we think of action, sin has reckoned to posterity. We think of it as reckoned to posterity.

It is an abstraction. To conceive of the sin as anything else than that by which it was characterized in the case of Adam himself. To think of sin as anything else than that characterized by that which it was in the case of Adam himself.

And that means that in the imputation of this sin, in other words, in the involvement of posterity in this sin, we cannot abstract from this the clarity which is indispensable to a definition so that the clarity and perversity of Adam's sin are in jail for whose benefit? By their solidarity with Adam and their identification with his sin. And consequently, when each member of the human race comes to be in a womb, from the very inception of his or her existence, he or she are involved in that. The clarity belongs to the sin because it does not exist when Adam is there.

But nevertheless, they are contemplated by God. Contemplated by God. They are destined to exist.

And consequently, whenever they come to exist, in the providence of God, by natural procreation. Whenever they come to exist, they come to exist as sinful. They can never be contemplated as anything else.

And if you are thinking, the source, the reason of this solidarity is to be in that solidarity. And therefore, with thy debt, we can borrow them. No.

That puts the whole question of the infliction of the race within an entirely different person, the whole human race, with depravity. Now very often, in reformed circles especially, and by those maintaining immediate imputation, the relationship is construed as follows. There is the imputation of the sin of Adam to posterity, and that a penal consequence all are inflicted with.

There is the imputation of the sin of Adam to posterity. Now if the analysis I have presented that is not the indispensable in the very involvement, so that the imputation is not conceived of as causally antecedent to the depriving. In other words, the relationship to the involvement of his sin inflicted with depravity, included in the sin, there could be other things to do justice to the very nature of sin involving not only overtness, but the clarity and perversity of that overtness.

Now I don't think I'll say it on the basis of the imputation of our sins to the nature. Now remember, in each particular subdivision of another subdivision, we find if you have time for that, answering a question, answer it. Now the third may be seen as the dominant.

In other words, we call it theology. Some of the original three elements, namely the want of origin, stated in short, the guilt of origin, the want of origin, all three elements are included in quite a weak definition, quite natural. The guilt of Adam's birth, and that seems to be denotation, is commonly called origin.

I generally bring it in here as a percent is included in original denotation. Even in today's theology, I don't. It is, it is that which evades it in and, of course, speak of hereditary, because it's the means by which we come to be.

It's the means in the providence of God we come to be. We have all. Now, we'll come to the formulation and the capital A, if you have just a few minutes.

It is not a corruption of being, of being. Now, the older theology of being, then second, it is not the loss of a metaphysical element, not the loss of, it is not as the dichotomy, distinguished, of the recession of any metaphysical element. The feature of sin is involved in, we quote, the whole, the end, the whole, the gravity, the end, of the old personality, again.

And then, third, it is an element infused into the being. It is not a metaphysical element infused into the being. Now, the older theologians follow here, scholastic terminology, have called it an accident, an

accident in the scholastics.

And here is a, one of the older definitions of that, that which does not subsist of itself, but subsists in something else, and can be distinguished from it, which does not subsist of itself, but exists in something else, and may be distinguished from that, something else. Now I'm not, I'm not endorsing that definition here. I'm just telling you that what I want to, it is not another metaphysical element infused into the being of man.

That was it, by the older theologians, my colleagues, an accident. We cannot do that today because evidence has come to us in a fairly different meaning. And I certainly don't have a great deal of knowledge on the old scholastic method, the old scholastic terminology.

Now, possibly, possibly, possibly, I have learned this, just possibly, perhaps this definition is possible, that all, means that all mankind descending from Adam, by ordinary genesis, are conceived and is born, are conceived and born, you are in, with a depraved nature, in consequence of which they are estranged from God in heart, disposition, mind, and will, are out of conformity with God, are at enmity with God, and are therefore utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and fully inclined to all evil. That part is quotation. Utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and fully inclined to all evil.

Now that's something, that's a terrific indictment, and I don't wonder if you thought it strange, and I don't wonder if you remarked, because if you have no studies, if you make a witness on these questions, you will understand how you might readily think that that definition goes on, but it doesn't allow for a great deal of the goodness which you find in even unregarded matters. We, as Christians, we are very self-sacrificed to discover, after all, how, oh, how really nice our regenerate people can be, and how helpful in society, how much they contribute to the progress of civilization. But I want you to ponder that definition, and to come to deal with the biblical data later on.

Now that's the definition, now let's have a little read. The nature, or character, or implication, nature of the original. The name forms here, in terms of the definition I just gave, is the totality of this depravity, the totality of it, and the totality of it extensively and intently.

Extensively and intently. There is a good deal of misapprehension as to what is involved in what we call total depravity, and these two adverbs, I think, will help to elucidate what is involved. First of all, extensive.

That means that it extends to all aspects of our beings, to all aspects. There is no element in man's constitution that does not come under the indictment which the definition implies. If we are thinking of man's spirit, what is frequently called man's soul, we are thinking of man on his psychical side, the proper, thinking of man on his psychical side, as we speak English from the physical aspect.

It is not proper, not proper, to say that one particular function is more rudimentary than another. One particular function is more rudimentary than another. And for example, the understanding, the understanding is more rudimentary, and that the habitus, the habitus is determined by the state of the understanding.

Others would put it the other way around, that it is the habitus that is basic, and that the understanding is determined by the direction of the habitus. Oh, another way of putting it is that the intellectual, the intellectual is primary, and the cognitive secondary. Those who have just reversed that and say, no, the cognitive is primary and the intellectual is secondary.

Well, that has often been, you've often heard the expression, primacy of the intellectual. I think when we are discussing this question, there are relationships in which it might be proper to speak about the primacy of the intellectual, but when we are dealing with a question like this, that is basic, basic. In the analysis of that which constitutes man's defiance, I don't believe the Bible gives us any warrant whatsoever to caution.

One function as primary, or as more rudimentary, or as having the primacy. The Bible expresses, by eradicating the frailties of the heart, the heart, but the heart, you know, there is belief in Hebrew or Cardinalism, the heart is used in that sense. It is not simply cognitive.

It is distinguished from the collective, and the collective is distinguished from cognitive. The heart includes the understanding, feeling, and will. I won't repeat all of this.

Understanding, feeling, and will. And it is distinctly misleading this whole discussion, and I don't believe it has any warrant to caution the primacy of one's ego. The truth simply, no one aspect, great truth, no one aspect or function of the human self is relieved of this indictment.

The understanding is gone. The will is enslaved, the feelings are perverted, and consciousness is destroyed. It is to say, to cover the whole range of those functions which belong specifically to the spirit of man, to find this fragmentation at every point, depravity.

Now we can be thinking of man from the physical aspect. You remember again what I have been emphasizing repeatedly, that although the body of man is not the source of the fountain of nothing comes of that indictment better than all denominations of the body of sin. The body of sin.

Sinful body. That is to say, therefore, that depravity extends to all. That extends to me.

Now intent, it is here that misunderstanding very frequently arises. When the term total depravity is applied, intent, what do we mean? Well, we simply mean that there is a total lack of conformity, total lack of conformity to the holiness of God. And that every propension of our being, every propension is to unholiness, unholy, unrighteous.

And this means that there is a complete destitution, a complete lack of those criteria in terms of conformity to the will of God and holiness are to be determined. What are the three criteria of that which is good? Well, this is it. Love to God, love to God as the impelling motive, the will of God as the directing principle, and the glory of God as the controlling principle.

May I just pause for a moment? Really, there probably ought to be a fourth, and that is the emphasis upon faith. Because without faith it is impossible to be God. And every action of faith in God, I think that is included in the other three, and consequently, just for convenience sake, I make it a threefold of throwing in faith, and that was three.

Love to God as the impelling motive, the will of God, and the glory of God as the controlling principle. You don't have what? And if it is not well-pleasing to God, then it is displeasing to God. And that, after all, for one point of view, the criteria, what is pleasing to God or what is not pleasing to God.

Now, if there is a complete lack, there is love to God, and so on, there is a complete lack of that, then you must speak of total depression. Total. And total depression is the total absence of that which is well-pleasing.

Total absence of that which is well-pleasing to God. And since there is no neutrality, it means the total presence of what is displeasing. And that is all we need.

And because that is what we need, there cannot be degrees of total depravity. Cannot be degrees of total. However, there are degrees of cultivation.

It is there the differentiation, degrees of cultivation and exercise. This depravity is total, does not come to expression in all to the same extent, nor does it come to expression in the same person at all times. There are endless degrees of expression.

Well, all of that content is there.

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