

**Lecture 7-Sin & Its Results****Prayer**

*Almighty God, Thou hast in the Gospel set clearly before us with how many and how dreadful sins we are afflicted. This Thou hast done in order that we may learn to be displeased with ourselves, and so lie down, confounded and despairing, in our sins and in the guilt contracted from them. Thus we may yet know the true glory that Thou hast offered to us, and we can be made partakers of it if we embrace with true faith Thine only begotten Son, in whom perfect righteousness and salvation has been offered us. Grant we may so cleave to Christ and receive his benefits in faith that we may be able, not only before the world, but also against Satan and against death itself, to glory in Thee, for Thou alone are just and wise and strong. May Thy strength, Thy justice, Thy wisdom shine upon us in our iniquity and ignorance and weakness, until at last we may reach that fullness of glory laid up for us in heaven through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Book II Outline— “The Knowledge of God the Redeemer in Christ, First Disclosed to the Fathers Under the Law, and then to us in the Gospel”

- I. Sin and Its Results- Need for the Redeemer (2, 1–5)
- II. Salvation Through Christ- The Redeemer (2, 6–17)
  - A. Christ (2, 6)
  - B. Law (2, 7–11)
  - C. Christ (2, 12–17)

**Sin & Its Results**

- I. Two-Fold Knowledge of Ourselves (2, 1, 1–3)
  - A. Ourselves as created — our “primal worthiness” (2, 1, 1)
    - 1. What we were — the greatness of our creation (2, 1, 1)
    - 2. Purpose for which we were created — our duty (2, 1, 3)
    - 3. Response: gratitude
  - B. Ourselves as fallen — our “miserable lot” (2, 1, 3)
    - 1. What we are — the greatness of our fall (2, 1, 1)
    - 2. Our inability to carry out the purpose for which we were created (2, 1, 3)
    - 3. Response: humility
- II. Adam’s Sin
  - A. Nature of Adam’s sin (2, 1, 4)
    - 1. Not gluttony!
    - 2. But pride, disobedience, unfaithfulness: ingratitude
  - B. Reason for Adam’s sin
    - 1. “Man’s ruin is to be ascribed to man alone” (2, 1, 10)
    - 2. Why did God not prevent Adam’s sin?
      - a. “Inordinate curiosity” (2, 1, 10)
      - b. “The secret of predestination” (2, 1, 10)
  - C. Transmission of Adam’s sin
    - 1. Fact (“original sin” — “inherited corruption”) [2, 1, 5]
    - 2. Manner
      - a. Not inherited biologically (2, 1, 7)
      - b. Not “propagated by imitation” (2, 1, 6)
      - c. But inherited from Adam
        - 1) The realist view: the root of human nature (2, 1, 7; Commentary on Romans 5:12)

- 2) The representative view: the head of the human race (2, 1, 7;  
Commentary on John 3:6)

### III. Our Sin

- A. We are guilty — and so deserve punishment (2, 1, 6; 2, 1, 8)
- B. We are depraved
1. Positive depravity (2, 1, 8) [rejection of scholastic concept of the *donum superadditum*]
  2. Radical depravity (2, 1, 8) [rejection of scholastic limitation of the fall to part of man's nature — concupiscence]
    - a. Comprehensiveness — sinfulness of sins; every aspect of human existence; every stage of life
    - b. Radical—but not total—depravity
- C. We are unable to alter our condition (“Man has now been deprived of freedom of choice and bound over to miserable servitude” — title of 2, 2)
1. Supernatural gifts (“altogether abolished” — 2, 1, 12) — faith, love for God, zeal for holiness
  2. Natural gifts (“corrupted” — 2, 2, 12; but not totally destroyed, as we see “some remaining traces of the image of God” [2, 2, 17])
    - a. Reason
      - 1) “Earthly things”
        - a) Praise of human learning (2, 2, 14 & 15)
        - b) Source is the Spirit of God who is “the sole fountain of truth” (2, 2, 15)
      - 2) “Heavenly things” (2, 2, 18)
    - b. Will (2, 2, 26)
      - 1) Not all wicked traits appear in every man (2, 3, 2) — illustration of Camillus and Cataline
      - 2) Man, however, cannot do good in “heavenly things”

### IV. The History of the Doctrine of Free Will

- A. Philosophers, church fathers [Erasmus], Augustine, scholastic theologians (2, 2, 2–2, 2, 9)
- B. Calvin's doctrine
1. Since the fall, man “has not been deprived of will, but of healthy will” (2, 3, 5)
  2. His will is bound (“... it can beget nothing but evil” [2, 2, 26])
  3. His will is “free” (2, 2, 7) — man sins “willingly, not unwillingly, or by compulsion” (2, 3, 5)

### V. Need For God's Grace- “the principal point” (2, 3, 8)

- A. We need to know that we are lost before we can want to be saved
- B. There is no other message that can redeem us
- C. God is the author of our salvation — from “beginning to end” (2, 3, 6; 2, 3, 8)
- D. We respond from the heart — sincerely (2, 3, 14)

### VI. “How God Works in Men's Hearts” (2, 4)

### VII. “Refutation of the Objections Commonly Put Forward in Defense of Free Will” (2, 5)

#### **For Further Study**

I do not know of a short, accurate summary of Calvin's views on this subject, other than the treatment by R. C. Reed in his *Gospel as Taught by Calvin*. (Jackson, MI: Presbyterian Reformation Society.) There are sections, in Wendel, Dowey, and Torrance that bear upon Calvin's doctrine of the fall. T. F. Torrance's *Calvin's Doctrine of Man* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1949.) is often praised and can be useful but is sometimes obtuse and occasionally misleading.