

Belgic Confession Article 15-Sins you get and sins you do

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Some people argue that poverty, adultery, sickness, disasters and wars cause physical death. But that is not really true. These are just the “ways” in which people die. **The sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden a long time ago caused every single death.** Man would have lived forever if he had not sinned. Sin is the great enemy! **Sin also causes spiritual death** – death of the soul, a far more serious death. Sin puts each one born on the path to eternity in hell. And you add to your condemnation to death when you commit personal sins! Hear God’s Word speak to you on this matter today. It speaks the truth, but it offers a way out!

Our headings are:

The Extent of Sin

The Eradication of Sin

The Errors taught about Sin

Our goals are: **That God will impress on you the seriousness of your sin you get from your parents and sins you practice, that you will praise him for eradicating your sin, and that you will prevent common errors regarding sin to influence your life.**

Article 15: The Doctrine of Original Sin

We believe that by the disobedience of Adam and Eve original **sin has been spread through the whole human race.** It is a corruption of all human nature—**an inherited depravity** which even infects **small infants in their mother’s womb**, and the root which produces in humanity every sort of sin. **It is therefore so vile and enormous in God’s sight that it is enough to condemn the human race,** and it is **not abolished or wholly uprooted even by baptism**, seeing that sin constantly boils forth as though from a contaminated spring. Nevertheless, **it is not imputed to God’s children for their condemnation but is forgiven by his grace and mercy**—not to put them to sleep but so that the awareness of this corruption might often make believers groan as they long to be set free from the “body of this death.” Therefore we **reject the error of the Pelagians** who say that this **sin is nothing else than a matter of imitation.**

The Extent of Sin

1. Every man, woman, boy, girl, and baby has received sin from Adam, your first parent.

Adam was your federal head by nature and by covenant. Naturally=physically; Covenantally =representative head. So Children are infected with sin even in their mother’s womb. **Sins from parents touch everyone,** every single one.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, **because all sinned**—

Romans 5:18...the **result of one trespass was condemnation for all men**...

You not only receive Adam's sinful nature, but you also receive the full guilt of your sin. This means that **even if you had never sinned at all in your life, God had the right to condemn you to hell forever** on account of Adam's sin.

2. So is even a baby sinful?

Let's first define sin as God defines it. Sin is rebellion against God by **being or doing what he forbids and not being or doing what he commands**. (There are sins of commission and omission.) King David taught us that before he was born and committed his own sins, sin was present in his soul at the time of his conception in his mother's belly.

Psalm 51:5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And **in sin my mother conceived me**.

The act of conception wasn't sinful, but that which was conceived (the child) was sinful.

Psalm 58:3 The **wicked are estranged from the womb**; They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.

3. But how is sin passed on to the child?

Some believe God indeed creates a brand new soul each time. **This is called creationism**. But if a soul is evil at birth, did God make something evil?

Others argue the child's soul is a product of the souls of his parents. This may explain that even though a child may be raised away from his parents he might evidence attitudes and proclivities of his parents. **This is called Traducianism**.

4. Sin not only extends to all men, but it extends to man's whole nature – his person.

This is sometimes called "total depravity," or "total inability." Sin begins in the heart and radiates to the outside; you sin in thought, word, and actions. You sin because you are evil.

Jeremiah 17:9 "The **heart is deceitful above all things**, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?

You are like the clock that sometimes ran fast, sometimes slow, that had a sign put over it: "Don't blame my hands. The trouble lies deeper." You sin as naturally as a polluted spring gives polluted water.

5. Does this mean that all men are as sinful as they can get?

No. God would not permit men to be as sinful as they want. Some men are permitted to become really sinful, but even they are limited. Sin caused Stalin to kill 43,000,000 in Russian. Sin caused Tutsis and the Hutus to get machetes and chop each other to death. Sin causes Indian midwives to suffocate and kill baby girls and feed their bodies to crocodiles so their parents won't have to pay a dowry for their girls. **You aren't Hitler because God stops you!**

Job 14:4 Who can **bring a clean thing out of an unclean?** No one!

Ephesians 2:1-3 And you **He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins**, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the **desires of the flesh and of the mind**, and were by nature children of wrath...

6. This sinful nature (what you inherited from your parents) is enough for God to condemn you for eternity.

The payment for sin, any sin, one sin, is death. Everyone is guilty before God. Those who deny that all men are guilty and under condemnation from birth, **which is every religion and philosophy outside of Christianity, are being used by the Devil to rob men of salvation.** If you can't see the sin, you can't get the salvation. Do you see how important you are to the world? This is why you must share the Gospel...and support the sharing of the Gospel.

7. Furthermore, this sinful nature that causes man to commit his own personal sins is called "actual sins."

Man breaks all of God's 10 laws – in thoughts, words, and actions. So you have **no reason to boast about your goodness.**

Like Adam, you willfully sin. No one was holding a gun to Adam's head; no one was twisting his arms. It was willful and free. On his own, Adam and Eve performed a reckless disobedience in the Garden. This is still true today: you willfully sin against God and commit many actual sins. **And this adds to your inherited wickedness.**

8. Even when one becomes a Christian he still has remnants of sins.

Romans 7:15 For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.

This means that throughout your life you must learn to depend upon God. There is no room for arrogance! Being Hitler can be on your horizon.

The Eradication of Sin

1. God in his grace imputes Christ's purity and holiness to some and he imputes their selfishness and impurity to Christ. "Imputes" means to count something as someone else's. God counts the death of Christ as your death...so you don't have to die.

Romans 5:15 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!** ¹⁷- For 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...

No wonder the Psalmist declared blessed is the man to whom God does not impute his sins.

2. This work of imputing your sin to Christ and imputing Christ's righteousness to you is done by the Holy Spirit.

John 3:6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

This is why you must sincerely pray for the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts of those you are evangelizing. **To think you can make someone a Christian by your cogent argumentation without the working of the Holy Spirit is self-deception** that will lead to frustration and disappointment.

3. Knowing your sins are forgiven through Christ's grace alone does not mean that you may continue in sin.

To do this is to show contempt of God.

Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

Instead, you are to sigh in disgust when you see your sins rising in your heart. You should work to suffocate those thoughts and let them die a shameful death.

4. You can see from this that Christianity is not a system of "right and wrong."

Rather, Christianity is God's plan for redeeming man through grace that comes from the Lord Jesus.

The Errors Taught about Sin

1. There are some people who believe that man only becomes sinful when he is externally influenced by sin and he starts to imitate sinners he sees.

This error was promoted by Pelagius, a British monk who lived between the 4th and 5th centuries. He challenged Augustine (who taught the Biblical truth) on this matter. Further, the truth of the Bible is evidence in the life of children. You see sinfulness in the youngest child who commits sins he has never seen before. Sinning is natural, even more natural than eating. Also, there are people who see bad behavior (sin) and do not imitate them. Pelagius was a deceiver of many. His theory is false and has been proven so.

2. Look at the danger of Pelagius' argument as it is logically worked out.

a. Sociologically: Pelagians blame the environment for sin and so excuse bad behavior - sins. When someone is violent they argue that the environment is the cause: "**Our young people need more jobs. If they have job they won't rob.**" "**We loot because we are poor.**" "**If we have after school programs our young people wouldn't be in gangs.**" "**If**

we had higher minimum wage we won't have so many teenage pregnancies and abortions.” But everyone must take personal responsibility for his actions. Never blame bad behavior on other people's bad behavior.

b. Religion: Western religions are Pelagian (Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, atheism) or semi-Pelagian (Arminians). They deny original sin. **So Arminians worship does not go for the heart but for imitation.** (Wave like we wave, close your eyes like we do, speak positively about your health, etc.) They believe if you are in the right environment you would be better. Churches need to repent of imitation evangelism!

c. Psychology: Modern psychology is based on this faulty premise man was born as a “clean sheet of paper.” So they hold that children are not responsible for their wrongs until they are older. So when a child does wrong, it is proper to blame his environment—especially his parents – since that is the child's most common environment. But the premise (children are pure) is wrong, so much of modern psychology is wrong, and would have been laughable if its consequences were not so severe. Punishing a child then become wrong as it is the society's fault, not the child's. **Pelagianism is from hell.**

3. Those who don't look to the one who created man to find out how to fix man's problems, but rather, look to themselves for answers, reflect the height of insanity.

Conclusion:

What is man's biggest problem today? Is it war, pollution, unemployment, crime, poverty, nuclear proliferation, or Muslim terrorism? No, the Bible teaches that **man's biggest problem is sin** – original sin and actual sin - which results in death—physical and spiritual death. Man is sinful from birth. Man is sinful throughout his entire being. Because of sin, man lost the ability to do good. His became corrupted in his body and soul. And because of this, man is under the condemnation of God, will die, and will spend eternity in hell.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. God made it possible for man's sin (inherited and personal) to be eradicated—erased through Jesus Christ – and he made it possible for peace to come again between man and God.

2. How? Jesus took the punishment for man's sin and removed God's anger. Jesus loved you enough to die for you so you don't have to go to hell. And even though you physically die, it is not a punishment for sin but the means by which you receive eternal life in fullness.

3. What is your response? Rejoice. Thank him. Love him. Share this with the world. Fight against falsehood all around, even falsehood from the Devil that has infiltrated every false religion and philosophy in this world.

If you are not a Christian, you are still under the crushing weight of sin. Why not ask our gracious Lord to take the load of sin that is crushing you. He says: Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Come to him today.