

TEACHING GOAL

To study the transmittal of the sinful nature from one person to another.

DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

Q. Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?

A. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for all his posterity; all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression.

S.C. 16; L.C. 22; W.C. of F. VI; Savoy 6; Young 27

SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Study Passage: Romans 5:12-21

Support Passages: Genesis 4:23-24, 8:20-21; Job 14:1-6; Psalm 51:5; John 3:3-6; Ephesians 2:3

BIBLE STORY

Genesis 6-8; God sent the Flood upon mankind because of their great sin and sinfulness.

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT

"The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Genesis 6:5, ESV)

APPLICATION

Realizing that it is our nature to sin and that our sinful nature yet remains with us let us continually confess sin to God and ask His forgiveness. Let us pray to be holy people, living as those who have been set free by Jesus from the bondage of sin.

SUMMARY

It is perfectly obvious that everyone sins. Some who are in bondage to sin are very wicked, and every intent of the thoughts of their hearts is only evil continually. But others, like Noah, "found favor in the eyes of the LORD" (Genesis 6:8-9). Even Noah, who God said was a righteous man, blameless in his time and who walked with God, sinned. We may infer this from the fact that Noah prepared and presented a sacrifice for his sin (Genesis 8:20-21). Furthermore, God required him to carry clean animals on the Ark for sacrificial purposes.

The catechism raises the question about the involvement of everyone in Adam's sin. Since everyone does in fact sin and everyone shares in the curse for sin, which is death, it follows that all sinful human behavior and state of being is natural and inborn. We do not have to teach our children to sin because they do so naturally. It is necessary in every case to train children in the ways of the Lord, in the way they should go because the ways of the Lord are not natural to sinners. For this reason all peer teaching fails if it is not given biblical content by godly teachers. Peer teaching boils down to the blind leading the blind. That all mankind are included in the curse is seen, furthermore, in the fact that all mankind die. While scientists may extend the life-span of mankind, death will never be eradicated, and it is not man alone that dies; every living thing eventually dies. God's curse is irreversible and will never be mitigated by human means.

The clear biblical concepts in this regard are directly opposed to modern philosophical and psychological thinking. Freud would have us believe that are a product of our environment. While it is true that environment influences our lives greatly, it does not cause us to sin. No one is forced to sin, not even in the poorest of environments. That people do so is related to the sinful natures they possess and the lust of their hearts. We cannot either possibly consider that people sin because they imitate their parents sin. Scripture clearly states that we are born as sinners, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:3; Job 14:4; John 3:6; Ephesians 2:3). Sin is something original in which all people participate, and which makes them guilty before God. People are so caught up in sin and they are in such bondage to it that, as Paul says, they are "dead in trespasses and sins." And in Romans 8:7 he writes, "the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the Law of God, for it is not even able to do so." The new birth is required to release this bondage and the redemption purchased by Christ on the cross must apply to the individual who sins in order to escape from it.