

The Doctrine of Hamartiology **by Christopher Warrington**

I believe that it is within the body that we reflect our fallen nature; and that it is through the union of the soul with the fallen body (Ps. 139:13-15), passed on through the male (Ro. 5:12, 1 Co. 15:21-22), that the soul becomes corrupt and depraved (Ecc. 7:20-29 Ro. 3:9-23). This means that universally, meaning all humans (Ro. 3:23), every aspect of human nature; heart (Ro. 1:21), mind (Eph. 2:3), soul (1 Tim. 4:2), will (2 Tim. 2:25-26) and desires (Ro. 6:13, 13:14) are corrupted by the fallen and sinful nature of our flesh (Ro. 13:14). This best explains the differentiation of “fleshly” desires (Ro. 13:14) from the desires of our soul (1 Pt. 2:11, Jas. 4:1, Ga. 5:17). This also explains how after being saved we continue to sin (Ro. 7:15-20). This means that we are in a constant battle within ourselves, whether unconsciously as unbelievers (1 Jn. 1:8-10) or consciously as believers (Ro. 7:14-25). And by our own strength, we are unable to continually turn away from our sinful desires and turn toward God (Jn. 6:44) to earn merit for God’s favor (Jn. 3:16). This also means that unless we recognize our fallenness and thus are covered by the redemptive work of Christ (Jn. 5:39-40), the actions of our soul are tainted by the evil of our flesh.

I believe that sin started in the Garden of Eden by the act of Adam and Eve disobeying God’s command to not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 3). It was the act of responding to the temptation to have knowledge like God (Gen. 3:6), and not responding to the will of God (Gen. 2:17), that brought sin into the world. I believe that, by this act of disobedience, there was a sinful corruption of the entire human race (Ro. 5:12) which, for humankind alone (Ro. 5:12b), brought on both physical death (Ro. 5:12), as physical death was already a part of the rest of creation (Gen. 2:15), and spiritual death (Gen. 2:17). This sinful corruption also began humankind’s conscious knowledge of sin and resulting shame (Gen. 3:7), which changed our intimate relationship with God (Gen. 2) to alienation and death apart from Him (Gen. 3:23-24, Jn. 3:16).

I believe that ultimately sin is a matter of the heart (Mt. 15:19) which is in contrast to God’s attributes (2 Sam. 12:13, Lk. 15:21) and revealed will (Dt. 29:29, Ro. 2:14-16). This is acted out both through ones actions (2 Tim. 3:2-5) and passivity (Jas. 4:17) as well as through their thoughts (Mt. 5:27-28), motivations (Mt. 6:1-5), or consciously or inadvertently causing someone else to sin (Ro. 14:14, 20). This innate nature of sin within humans may be understood as inattention (Jas. 1:22-25), rebellion (Is. 1:2, Heb. 10:26-27), transgression (Dt. 17:2), deception (Mt. 13:5-6), missing the mark (Lev. 4:22-23) or wandering astray (Lev. 4:3) and/or perversion of God’s plan (Mt. 25:14-30).