

Institutes of the Christian Religion by John Calvin
(Translation by Henry Beveridge)
Men's Theology Study – February 17, 2021– 6:30 pm

Book 1 – Of the knowledge of God the Redeemer, in Christ, as first manifested to the fathers, under the law, and thereafter to us under the gospel.

Chapter 1 – Through the Fall and Revolt of Adam, the Whole Human Race Made Accursed and Degenerate. Of Original Sin.

Discussion Video: <https://youtu.be/GSsSD8ptLiA>

1. What do Osteen's "I am" statements incorrectly assume about the effects of sin on us?
2. What does Osteen seem to imply about the teachings of Jesus for people outside of the church?
3. Colbert joked about guilt. Is guilt important? Why or why not?
4. What does Osteen seem to believe about what it means to be created in the image of God? What is he lacking?

Sections 1-3: The Knowledge of Ourselves

1. True Self-Knowledge is Two-Fold
 - a. First, reflecting on what God gave mankind in creation (and continues) we realize how great the excellence of our nature would have been had we not fallen into sin, that we have nothing of our own, and we hold at pleasure all God gives to us.
 - b. Second, when viewing our miserable condition since Adam's fall, confidence and boasting are overthrown, we blush for shame, and we are humbled. The consequence of Adam's sin is death.
2. Human nature is to focus on good qualities rather than to contemplate the shamefulness of sinful destitution. What happens to mankind when he only focuses on these inner good qualities?
3. Mankind needs a self-knowledge for two reasons:
 - a. So he can properly understand the end for which he was created, inspiring worship and the future life.
 - b. To consider his want of faculties, thereby annihilating all his confidence, and cover him with confusion. Thus revealing to him his inability to perform the first.

Sections 4-7: Adam and the Fall

4. God instructed Adam against eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil as a trial of obedience. If obeyed, he would prove his willing submission to the command of God.
 - a. What motivated Adam's disobedience? How could he have not fallen into sin?

5. What is original sin? Can you have an accurate definition of original sin without a component of hereditary corruption? Why or why not?
6. Pelagianism taught that Adam's sin only propagated a bad example. What is at stake if Adam's sin was only a bad example?
 - a. Romans 5:18-19, "Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, "For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."
7. If sin is passed from Adam to his offspring, why isn't righteousness passed from Christian parents to their children?

Sections 8-11: Original Sin

8. "Original sin, then, may be defined a hereditary corruption and depravity of our nature, extending to all the parts of the soul, which first makes us obnoxious to the wrath of God, and then produces in us works which in Scripture are termed works of the flesh."
 - a. Does total depravity mean that mankind is as sinful as he can possibly be?

 - b. What are two ways the Bible can use the word *sin*?
9. What would be wrong with saying that sin only affects the nature of our appetites, but not our whole person?

10-11. Why can't man attribute the guilt of his sinfulness to God?