

Catechetical Sermon, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 3, "Original Sin and Total Depravity"**

Scripture Lessons: Genesis 4, 6:1-8

<b>Lesson Aim</b>	To understand how the two narratives from Genesis teach us that mankind is so sinful that God has to take the initiative to save.
<b>Steps to Learning</b>	Read the <a href="#">Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 3</a> and <a href="#">Genesis 4, 6:1-8</a> . Discuss the sermon and the particulars of the lesson below. It may be best to work through the material over several days or sessions.
<b>Discuss</b>	<p><b>In the sermon we discussed "the fall of mankind." What does that refer to?</b> It refers to Adam's sin, which caused the entire human race to fall into sin.</p> <p><b>What is sin?</b> It is breaking and/or not living up to the demands of the Law of God.</p> <p><b>What is original sin?</b> It is the sin of Adam imputed to the entire human race. That is, because Adam is the federal head of the human race, when he sinned, God declared that all people to follow would be sinners by nature. It is a legal reality that is the root of all actual sins.</p> <p><b>What makes it evident in Genesis chapter 4 that sin has been transmitted to the human race, that original sin has been the root of actual sin?</b> Cain kills his brother Abel. When Cain leaves the presence of God, he goes on to have generations of children who are evil in their actions.</p> <p><b>In Genesis chapter 6, God states that he will blot out mankind. According to the same text, why does God judge mankind so harshly?</b> Genesis 6:5 says: "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."</p> <p><b>The harsh but fair judgment of God helps us to understand the doctrine (teaching) of "total depravity." What is that?</b> Total depravity is the biblical doctrine that people are comprehensibly sinful, which means that sin has affected our thoughts, heart and will.</p> <p><b>We can see from Genesis chapters 4 and 6 that all mankind is sinful and deserves to suffer hell for eternity. What in the context of these chapters helps us to understand that God has taken the initiative to save his people?</b> First, God made an explicit promise in <a href="#">Genesis 3:15</a> that a Messiah, a Savior (Jesus), would come in time and space to suffer death on behalf of his people. Second, there are several people in the early chapters of the Bible who are members of the faithful line pointing forward to Jesus: Abel, Seth and Noah, to mention a few.</p>
<b>Bible Reading</b>	<a href="#">Acts 5-8</a> [The story of the early church] (covering the great Bible stories)