

When Adam Fumbled, We All Fell

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

A. Since the covenant was made not only for Adam but also for his natural descendants, all mankind sinned in him and fell with him in his first disobedience.

(Westminster Shorter Catechism Q&A #16)

“Therefore, as through one man's offense *judgment came* to all men, resulting in condemnation...For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners”

(Romans 5:18,19)

As Americans, almost every one of us has some kind of a love for the game of football. American football is the most popular game in the United States. Over one million high school students and approximately 70,000 college students play football every year in our country. Americans enjoy football for a variety of different reasons. Some enjoy the sheer power and force of the game, tuning in week after week to see the perfect mixture of ferocity and elegance as linebackers defensively pummel the opposing teams with massive force. Still others enjoy football for the traditions that go along with it. Tailgating and Super Bowl parties have become a staple part of American culture. There are many aspects of the game of football that people are drawn to. For myself (*and probably only myself*), one of my favorite parts of a football game takes place at the very beginning: the coin toss.

That may sound strange, but the reason that I enjoy the opening coin toss so much has to do with the gravity of that event. You see, whatever happens in that moment, will determine in some form or another the direction that the game will go! At the beginning of every American football game certain men from each team (*the team captains*) meet the referee at the center of the field for the coin toss in order to determine who will decide how the game will begin. The decisions made by the team captain will undoubtedly affect the rest of their team and the game that is about to be played. You see, the decisions that a team captain makes never only affects them...it affects their entire team. The team captain is the representative head of the entire group of players.

Today, our catechism asks the question, “*Did all mankind fall in Adam's first disobedience?*”. The Westminster Divines answered this question by stating, “*Since the covenant was made not only for Adam but also for his natural descendants, all mankind sinned in him and fell with him in his first disobedience.*”. It is here that we find an introduction to the doctrine of “*Original Sin*”. The doctrine of “*Original Sin*” refers to the fact that because Adam failed to fulfill the Covenant of Works, by eating of the forbidden fruit in the garden,

every single human being is born into this world guilty of Adam's sin. The doctrine of Original Sin teaches that none of us, from conception onward, are born spiritually neutral. Instead we are all born as sinners, we are all born as covenant breakers, sharing in Adam's guilt. As one writer has so famously written, "*In Adam's fall...we sinned all*".

You see, Adam was what can be described as humanities' "*Federal Head*". Adam was the human race's spiritual representative. Adam was our spiritual team captain. God entered into a covenant with Adam, and when Adam failed to keep the terms of that covenant and fell into sin and misery, it affected every one of his descendants. Adam's sinful decisions, his act of cosmic insurrection, didn't merely affect him, it affected the entire team of humanity. Every one of us is born with the stain and the guilt of original sin. As the theologian R.C. Sproul has said, "*We aren't sinners because we sin...we sin because we are sinners*". None of us are born spiritually good (Romans 3:10-12). All of us are born spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1-3), in need deliverance from our sin and misery. A deliverance that is only possible through faith in Jesus Christ.

Dig Even Deeper into God's Word!

Genesis 2:16-17

Romans 5:12-21

1 Corinthians 15:22