



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

## A Systematic Study of Bible Teachings (Dogmatics) Lesson 4.6 – The Doctrine of Human Beings and Sin

### The Cause of Sin

There are many thinkers and philosophers who have accused God Himself of being the cause of sin. Since God created the devil and his angels and he created human beings, they argue that God could have made them so that they would not sin. But such thinking does not agree with the teaching of God's Word. David testifies in Psalm 5:4: **"For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, nor shall evil dwell with You."** In Isaiah's vision of God, he heard the seraphim crying out: **"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts"** (Isaiah 6:3). And Jesus said that His **"Father in heaven"** is **"perfect"** (Matthew 5:48).

When God created man and the spirits, they were able to resist evil. In their original state both angels and human beings had the power to remain holy. When Adam and Eve fell into sin, God did not accuse Himself; He accused the serpent and the two human beings He had made. We cannot fully understand the ways of God, but we dare not teach anything that does not bring glory to God. We dare not accuse Him of sin.

The Bible plainly tells us that God does not tempt anyone to sin. **"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone"** (James 1:13). Never do we read that God approves of sin or condones sin. God hates sin, as Psalm 45:7 says: **"You love righteousness and hate wickedness."** As soon as sin entered the world, God was quick to announce His plan to eradicate sin. He announced the coming of the Woman's Seed to take away the power of Satan and sin (Genesis 3:15). In His zeal to remake a world without sin, God worked out His plan of salvation. This plan involved the sacrificial death of His own Son. **"And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all"** (Isaiah 53:6). **"God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them"** (2 Corinthians 5:19). **"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him"** (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Some followers of John Calvin (supralapsarians) teach that God willed the fall of man into sin. They seem to teach that God is the cause of sin, but even they are not willing to say that God is the cause of sin. Jesus and His apostles very clearly taught that sin did not have its beginning in God but in Satan. Jesus said: **"He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it"** (John 8:44). **"The devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil"** (1 John 3:8). Notice that sin is called a work of the devil. The fall into sin, described in Genesis 3, is from the devil, who took on the form of a serpent.

In a secondary sense, Adam and Eve were the cause of evil because they had the power within themselves to withstand the temptations of Satan, but they did not use that power. For this reason, Paul says in Romans 5:12,18: **"Through one man sin entered the world...Through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation."**

## Questions

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1. Why do some people say that God is the cause of sin?
2. How does the Bible prove that God is not the cause of sin?
3. Who is the one that brought sin into the world?
4. When man fell into sin, whom did God accuse of being the cause of their fall?
5. How has God shown His hatred of sin and desire to get rid of it?
6. What kind of world does God want to restore for man?
7. What do the people in your locale consider the cause of evil or of the bad things in the world?