Greetings church,

The next subject that Mr. McKim tackles is sin; how sin impacts our relationships both with God and one another. The key point to be drawn out is that sin always negatively impacts *relationships*. "... the relationship of love that humans were created to share with God and with each other has been broken. This disruption is called 'sin' … This is the paradox of human existence."[1] As discussed in the previous chapter, we who are created to be in relationship with God and with one another, to not exist only individually, can't figure out how to be in good and right relationships with one another. Even our marriages struggle from time to time. We who are created in God's image, we who bear forth God's image, have all of our relationships broken and in desperate need of mending.

Reformed theology insists that these marred relationships have become a part of our nature. It is now part of what it means to be human that we will selfishly choose ourselves over one another and over God. When we are able to work against this natural inclination, albeit infrequently, we get a brief glimpse into what eternity can look like. But more often than not, our sin nature takes over and continues to disrupt all the relationships without ceasing. Reformed theology and Presbyterians continue to insist that sin causes *all* relationships to be disrupted and not as they should be. Thus, "we sin both as individuals and corporately, as collective groups of people in society"[2]. Corporate sin looks like anytime relationships are disrupted or violated. All of the "isms" fall under the rubric of corporate sin. War, greed, politics that pit neighbor against neighbor and disrupt relationships; all of these qualify as sin as they continue to disrupt human relationships and cause undue pain and suffering. "Yet Presbyterian theology has also stressed that sin is not only actions. Sin is also a condition or a state of being."[3]

This state of being is where the concept of original sin enters in. The copious amounts of infighting and arguing about the stories of Adam and Eve often cause us to overlook the more important theological truth, which is McKim's point. "Regardless of how you interpret the Adam and Eve story - either literally or symbolically - the theological truth remains. Humanity has turned away from God, disobeyed God, rebelled against God, fractured the human/divine relationship. We find ourselves cut off, or separated from God."[4] Our condition is separation. Being separated from God and from one another leads us continually down the paths of greed and selfishness. We so often prefer things "our way" (some more stringently than others) instead of God's way. This is the condition of sin. Choosing ourselves over God and everyone else and the constant inclination to do so. Sin disrupts the very essence of our being; pushing us away from one another and God and pushing us more and more towards our individual selves. "Sin inclines us toward ourselves instead of toward God - …"[5] All of this adds up to our need for a Savior because we, clearly, cannot save ourselves.

In Christ's Service,
Pastor Eddie

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[1]McKim, Donald K. Presbyterian Beliefs: A Brief Introduction - Revised Edition. Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, KY; 2017. p45
[2]ibid, p46
[3]ibid, p47
[4]ibid, pp47-48
[5]Ibid, p49