o   Intro:

§  The doctrine of justification was of central importance for the Lutheran Reformation of the sixteenth century. It was held to be the "first and chief article"[[1]](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.christianunity.va%2Fcontent%2Funitacristiani%2Fen%2Fdialoghi%2Fsezione-occidentale%2Fluterani%2Fdialogo%2Fdocumenti-di-dialogo%2F1999-dichiarazione-congiunta-sulla-dottrina-della-giustificazion%2Fen.html%231&data=05%7C01%7Cwebmaster.usa%40sspx.org%7Cae42cad8202047f0483408db257ae8d9%7C5f4af3ad8646414b83d8ef95a0f39e42%7C0%7C0%7C638144982038248561%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=LTecAzskZrPD%2BtlH7ugYc0%2FMFgsoE%2BxiXXCPYkBsn3s%3D&reserved=0)and at the same time the "ruler and judge over all other Christian doctrines."[[2]](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.christianunity.va%2Fcontent%2Funitacristiani%2Fen%2Fdialoghi%2Fsezione-occidentale%2Fluterani%2Fdialogo%2Fdocumenti-di-dialogo%2F1999-dichiarazione-congiunta-sulla-dottrina-della-giustificazion%2Fen.html%232&data=05%7C01%7Cwebmaster.usa%40sspx.org%7Cae42cad8202047f0483408db257ae8d9%7C5f4af3ad8646414b83d8ef95a0f39e42%7C0%7C0%7C638144982038248561%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=XFkOxcQ79h%2Bc90NhI3qOZsyjBTWiOoWvD7Tr5NgphcE%3D&reserved=0) The doctrine of justification was particularly asserted and defended in its Reformation shape and special valuation over against the Roman Catholic Church and theology of that time, which in turn asserted and defended a doctrine of justification of a different character. From the Reformation perspective, justification was the crux of all the disputes.Sola Fide is famous proposition of Protestants.  But, to understand real difference, requires that we understand Luther & Calvin’s doctrine of original sin.

§  Jonathan Edwards: The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked: his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes, than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours.

o   Review of Catholic Teaching

§  Mainly discussed by Fr McFarland

§  Review of a few relevant points

·       Loss of justice

·       Loss of integrity

o   It is not a habit by which man’s powers are inclined to sin (cf IaIIae Q82, article 1 (respondeo))

o   It is “habit” insofar as it is a disposition resulting from the various parts of the soul. “It is a certain inordinate disposition flowing from the dissolution of that harmony [of soul] in which original justice consisted” (same source).  St TA compares it to the disorder of a disease of the body.  Cf. cancer, where some cells multiply inordinately.  Different appetites seek their proper ends without reference to highest good of man.

o   Each power/appetite however remains fundamentally good and inclined to a good action.  They simply do not work together harmoniously for man’s highest good.

§  IaIIae Q82 article 4, ad 1: “with the bond of original justice dissolved, under which all the powers of the soul were contained in a certain order, every power of the soul tends to its proper movement, all the more vehemently as the power is stronger.”  This is explaining why some people are more prone to sin than others.  Their bodily complexion may render certain faculties more powerful than the same faculties in other people, and thus they are more drawn to them.

·       Wounds in principle powers

o   Powers remain ordered to their own, proper goods, but are weakened.  This means we have a hard time attaining some (intellect & will), or a hard time regulating others (concupiscible passions)

o   Protestant teaching

§  Makes man, as man, hateful to God

·       Nay, their whole nature is, as it were, a seed-bed of sin, and therefore cannot but be odious and abominable to God. Hence it follows, that it is properly deemed sinful in the sight of God; for there could be no condemnation without guilt.

·       The two things, therefore, are to be distinctly observed—viz. that being thus perverted and corrupted in all the parts of our nature, we are, merely on account of such corruption, deservedly condemned by God, to whom nothing is acceptable but righteousness, innocence, and purity.

§  Complete corruption of human nature

·       Man’s nature as such is sinful

o   Roland H. Bainton underscores this in his biography of Luther, *Here I Stand*:  “There is, according to Luther, something much more drastically wrong with man than any particular list of offenses which can be enumerated, confessed and forgiven. **The very nature of man is corrupt. The penitential system fails because it is directed to particular lapses. Luther had come to perceive that the entire man is in need of forgiveness.”11**

·       All parts of human soul fundamentally turned to evil.

o   Comment: the Protestant revolutionaries effectively taught that man’s will and reason are directed to evil objects.

§  Hence the famous saying attributed to Luther: Reason is the whore of the devil.

·       But since the devil’s bride, Reason, that pretty whore, comes in and thinks she’s wise, and what she says, what she thinks, is from the Holy Spirit, who can help us, then? Not judges, not doctors, no king or emperor, because [reason] is the Devil’s greatest whore. [Martin Luther’s Last Sermon in Wittenberg … Second Sunday in Epiphany, 17 January 1546. Dr. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe. (Weimar: Herman Boehlaus Nachfolger, 1914), Band 51:126, Line 7ff]

·       Reason is and should be drowned in baptism, and this foolish wisdom will not harm you, if you hear the beloved Son of God saying, “Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you; this bread which is administered to you, I say, is my body.” **If I hear and accept this, then I trample reason and its wisdom under foot and say, “You cursed whore, shut up! Are you trying to seduce me into committing fornication with the devil?**” That’s the way reason is purged and made free through the Word of the Son of God. So let us deal with the fanatics as the prophets dealt with the spiritual harlots, the idolaters, the wiseacres, who want to do things better than God does. We should say to them, “I have a Bridegroom, I will listen to him. **Your wisdom is utter foolishness. I destroy your wisdom and trample it under foot.”**

·       Again, they argue: How can children believe, seeing that as yet they have no reasoning power? Thus they add reason to faith. To this Christ answers: This is exactly why children can believe better.They cannot reason.**For reason is directly opposed to faith. This is why you must let reason go. It must be killed and buried in believers.** But the Anabaptists turn reason into a light of faith so that reason may serve faith as a guiding light. I hold that it does shine forth as smudge in a lantern. Christ wants us to turn into veritable children if we desire to come into the kingdom of heaven. He means that, as all reasoning is, so to speak, still buried in children, so reason is also to be killed in all Christian believers. Otherwise faith has no place in them. For reason opposes faith.

o   The Reformed interpretation would emphasize that spirit and reason are bent away from God as well, and so a conflict between desire, spirit and reason would be meaningless as a barometer of sinfulness before God.

o   Calvin: For our nature is not only utterly devoid of goodness, but so prolific in all kinds of evil, that it can never be idle. Those who term it concupiscence use a word not very inappropriate, provided it were added, (this, however, many will by no means concede,) that everything which is in man, from the intellect to the will, from the soul even to the flesh, is defiled and pervaded with this concupiscence; or, to express it more briefly, that the whole man is in himself nothing else than concupiscence.

o   I have said, therefore, that all the parts of the soul were possessed by sin, ever since Adam revolted from the fountain of righteousness. For not only did the inferior appetites entice him, but abominable impiety seized upon the very citadel of the mind, and pride penetrated to his inmost heart (Rom. 7:12; Book 4, chap. 15, sec. 10–12), so that it is foolish and unmeaning to confine the corruption thence proceeding to what are called sensual motions, or to call it an excitement, which allures, excites, and drags the single part which they call sensuality into sin.

§  This corruption produces an active inclination to sin.

·       In this work on Romans, Luther also works out the sinfulness of believers. **One of the reasons Luther was so radical is related to his second assertion, that an active sinful nature still operates in a believer, and that therefore a person can be simultaneously saved and a sinner.**

·       **The Reformed definition of sinful nature would not be a loss of control over human desires, but rather the active sinful bend in every human desire**.

·       Luther: But what, then, is original sin? According to the Apostle it is not only the lack of a good quality in the will, nor merely the loss of man’s righteousness and ability. It is rather the loss of all his powers of body and soul, of his whole outward and inward perfections. **In addition to this, it is his inclination to all that is evil, his aversion against that which is good, his antipathy against light and wisdom, his love for error and darkness, his flight from and his loathing of good works, and his seeking after that which is sinful.**

·       Calvin: Next comes the other point—viz. that this perversity in us never ceases, but constantly produces new fruits, in other words, those works of the flesh which we formerly described; just as a lighted furnace sends forth sparks and flames, or a fountain without ceasing pours out water. Hence, those who have defined original sin as the want of the original righteousness which we ought to have had, though they substantially comprehend the whole case, do not significantly enough express its power and energy. For our nature is not only utterly devoid of goodness, but so prolific in all kinds of evil, that it can never be idle.

·       Compare St TA on habit

§  Is not removed by baptism

·       Original sin, according to the Belgic Confession, corrupts the entire nature of man:  **“As a root it produces in man all sorts of sin. It is, therefore, so vile and abominable in the sight of God that it is sufficient to condemn the human race. It is not abolished nor eradicated even by baptism, for sin continually** **streams forth like water welling up from this woeful source.”30**

·       The Belgic Confession insists the effects of sin are so radical and so widespread, especially in man prior to conversion, that it is impossible to imagine how man can take even a step towards a right relationship with God again. And it underscores Luther’s understanding that even in a believer this sinful nature will continue to produce sin, as it states:  “the awareness of this corruption may make [believers] groan as they eagerly wait to be delivered from this body of death.”

§  This means man cannot cooperate with grace

·        Luther: Thus,  the  human  will is  placed,  as  a  sort  of  packhorse,  in  the  midst  of two  contending  parties.     If  God  hath  mounted, it  wills  and  goes   whither  God  pleases;  as  the Psalmist   says,  “I   am    become    as    a  beast   of burden,  and  I  am  ever  with  thee.” (Psa.  Ixxiii. 22,  23.)     If  Satan  hath  mounted,  it  wills  and  goes whither  Satan  wills.     Nor  is  it  in  its  own  choice, to  which  of  the  two  riders  it  shall  run,  or  to  seek its  rider;  but  the  riders  themselves  contend  for  the acquisition  and  possession  of  it

·       Joint Declaration: According to Lutheran teaching, human beings are incapable of cooperating in their salvation, because as sinners they actively oppose God and his saving action. Lutherans do not deny that a person can reject the working of grace. When they emphasize that a person can only receive (mere passive) justification, they mean thereby to exclude any possibility of contributing to one's own justification, but do not deny that believers are fully involved personally in their faith, which is effected by God's Word.

·       John Piper, quoting Luther: This is my absolute opinion: he that will maintain that a man’s free-will is able to do or work anything in spiritual cases, be they never so small, denies Christ. This I have always maintained in my writings, especially in those against Erasmus. (*The Tabletalk of Martin Luther*, 206)  He doesn’t mean that the will is inactive. He means that wherever it is active in faith and obedience, God is decisively active, creating and fulfilling the acts.

·       Calvin: Hence it follows, that that part in which the dignity and excellence of the soul 219are most conspicuous, has not only been wounded, but so corrupted, that mere cure is not sufficient. There must be a new nature.

o   Conclusion

§  This doctrine regarding original sin underlies the controversy surround the question of the relationship of Faith & works.

§  It also, on some level, helps to contribute to the modern turn away from nature as a guide.