

## Age of Innocence

- Logic and Scriptures about being born sinful.
  - If babies are born guilty of anything, then they cannot be held accountable for it
  - If babies are born inclined toward sin, they cannot be held accountable for it.
  - If babies are born “totally depraved,” adults cannot come to faith and free will disappears.
  - If we do not have free will and a level playing field, faith and love (the foundational characteristics required of all members of the Kingdom) cannot exist.
  - Ecclesiastes 7:29, “God made man upright. But they have sought out many schemes.”
  - John 7:41, “If you were blind, you would have no sin. But now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore, your sin remains.”
  - Ezekiel 18 (the whole chapter). The repeated refrain is, “Each one dies for his own sin.” The idea of inherited sin is refuted by numerous examples.
- Scriptures cited by those who support inherent sinfulness:
  - Psalm 51:5, “In sin my mother conceived me.” “In sin” modifies “my mother.” Literally, David is saying that his mother was sinful. The point of the figure of speech is that David was born into a sinful world. Also note that Psalm 22:10 expresses the opposite view, that he was “cast upon Thee from the womb.”
  - Psalm 58:3 "The wicked are estranged from the womb." The next few lines reveal that this also is hyperbole, since the "wicked" are said to *go* astray, which involves choosing, and *speak* lies, which requires the ability to speak.
  - Genesis 8:21 "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Soldiers and bridegrooms have been described as youths (the wife of thy youth, the children of thy youth). A youth is one who can make independent decisions (an adult), so a case for inherited sin cannot be made here. Those younger than a youth are called children.
  - Isaiah 48:8 "You have been called a transgressor from the womb." Verse 1 of the chapter identifies the transgressor as the nation of Judah. From Old Testament history, it is quite true that the nation was sinful at its birth. But that has no connection to inherited sin in people.
  - Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" This line is in the midst of repeated comparisons between the righteous and the wicked. This one line cannot be taken out of its context to apply to all people since God applied it to only one of two groups.
  - Romans 5:12 "So death passed upon all men." Reading the whole sentence, death passed to all men because they sinned, not because they inherited it. Secondly, the death that Adam introduced was spiritual death, not physical.
  - Exodus 20:5 "Visiting the impurity of the fathers on the children." Either this teaches inherited sin or inherited consequences, and one must have a reason to choose the figurative consequences rather than the literal sin. Ezekiel 18 (the whole chapter) specifically addresses the concept of inherited sin, denying that any such transfer of guilt from father to son or vice versa is possible with God. So, the intended meaning was inherited consequences.