



# Are We Born In Sin?

Jesus declared that we are to "become as little children" (Mt. 18:3). Yet, there are many who believe and teach that children are born into this world totally and completely depraved because of Adam's sin; i.e. we inherit sin. That men are born totally depraved having no free-moral will and unable to do any good thing or seek God, is stated in the creeds, confessions, and manuals of most denominations. (See, *The Book of Common Prayer of the Protestant Episcopal Church*; *The Westminster Confession of the Presbyterian church*; *The Philadelphia Confession found in the Hiscox Guide for Baptist churches*; and *The Confession of Faith of the Methodist Book of Discipline*). Most members of the various denominations do not realize this and many would not agree with what is stated in these creed books and manuals. Nevertheless, this doctrine underlies the teaching of many denominations. But what do the Scriptures teach concerning this subject?

The doctrine that man is born with sin denies the teaching of the Scriptures in several ways, however one is most obvious. The Bible clearly teaches that infants are sinless at birth. Sin is that which separates one from God (Isa. 59:2). It is spiritual death (Rom. 6:23). To be a sinner, separated from God is to be in danger of hell fire. "And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:15). How does one sin? Men sin when they choose to violate God's law. As John declares, "Sin is transgression of the law" (Jn. 3:4). The doctrine of inherited sin teaches that babies are born sinners. But if the Bible says that sin is "transgression of

be to enter the kingdom of heaven. When Jesus said, we are to "become as little children," certainly He was not saying that we should become as little depraved sinners, for He also said, "to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14). Heaven doesn't belong to those depraved in sin, but to those who are innocent and pure who live with total dependence and trust in their Father.

The man-made doctrine of inherited sin is false. Men are not born in sin unable to choose to do right. We are born innocent and as we grow we come to learn what is right and wrong. We sin when we by our own choosing do wrong. As Isaiah stated, "All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way" (Isa. 53:6). Praise God who has given us the ability to repent and choose what is right and a means to be born again and become as little children.

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the law," just what "law" have newborn babies transgressed? Infants cannot know the requirements of God's law, nor can they act lawlessly, as they are not mentally or physically capable. James states, "Therefore, the one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17). Here it is stated that sin is the failure to do what one "knows" to be right. An infant is not born with knowledge of what is right and wrong and thus could hardly be accounted as a sinner for not doing something.

Yet, the doctrine of inherited sin declares, "It is not the infant's sin, the infant has inherited the sin of it's parents through Adam." Is that what the Bible teaches, that we inherit sin and are held accountable for the lawlessness of others? 2 Cor. 5:10 states we shall give an account for our own deeds whether good or bad. Through the prophet Ezekiel the Lord said "The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself" (Ezk. 18:20). Does that sound like hereditary sin is possible? This passage teaches that a child will neither inherit sin nor righteousness.

All infants are born without sin; growing up till they have knowledge of right and wrong and the ability to choose between the two. In fact, the Bible tells us that it is the character of little children that exemplifies what we should

