

111. All Men Have Original Sin.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh. *John 8, 6.*

Our nature is inclined to all that is evil. The carnal mind is enmity against God. This is original sin: the total depravity of our whole human nature. Original sin is indwelling, inherent in us. Though its guilt is removed by forgiveness and its power broken, it besets even believers all their days; only death will destroy it in them.

Our very natures are totally sinful. It is of the utmost importance to remember this: not only the heathen nature, the drunkard's nature, but mine, ours, everybody's, - all without exception are wanting before God's Law, lacking every good impulse, but teeming with the seeds of a thousand heinous crimes. All men are conceived and born in sin; that is, they are all, from their mother's womb, full of evil desires and propensities, and this is the fountainhead of all other, or actual, sins.

Many deny original sin; but the Bible tells us clearly: "As by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." Rom. 5,12. Every man is a reeking mass of corruption. His whole soul is by nature so debased and so depraved that no description which can be given of him can fully tell how base and vile he is.

This awful truth is no discovery of human reason, it is a ray of divine revelation enlightening our ignorance. As the Smalcald Articles say: "This hereditary sin is so deep and horrible a corruption of nature that no reason can understand it, but it must be learned and believed from the revelation of Scripture. It is the clear doctrine of our Savior, for He says: Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. It is the clear doctrine of His Apostle Paul; for he writes: 'By one man's disobedience many were made sinners,' and again: 'By the offense of one, judgment came upon *all men* to condemnation.'" All men are conceived and born in iniquity and sin.

Prayer.

O eternal, gracious, and bountiful God in heaven, who hast, out of boundless grace and fatherly care, suffered me to live to this day in good health and in good spirits, I thank Thee for this unmerited love and kindness from my whole heart. Since, alas! I did not spend my life to Thy praise and honor and to the welfare of my neighbor, my perverted nature being inclined to all evil rather than to good, grant, I beseech Thee, O faithful God, that I, who was conceived in sin, may realize my frailty and partake of Thy divine grace. Amen.

Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore!
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, like of yore;
He is able,
He is willing: doubt no more.

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