

§ v. . . . Some are so foolish as to make another objection, saying that if Adam's sin is not charged against those who actually have not sinned, then it would follow that all infants are saved. But we are willing for this supposed absurdity to be the consequence of our doctrine, rather than to accept what it seems our adversaries do not think absurd, the undoubted and unavoidable consequence of their doctrine — that many infants eternally perish,¹ not for any sin of their own, but only for Adam's iniquity. We are willing to leave this controversy there, commending both opinions to the enlightened understanding of the Christian reader. . . .

We affirm that a seed of sin is transmitted to all men from Adam (although it is not charged against anyone until by sinning they actually join with it.) In this seed he gave the possibility of sinning, and it is the origin of all evil actions and thoughts in men's hearts. . . . This seed of sin is often called "death" in the Scriptures, and the "body of death," and indeed it is a death to the life of righteousness and holiness. Therefore this seed and its product is called the "old man," the "old Adam," in which all sin lies.² For this reason we use this name to express this sin, and not the name "original" sin. The Scripture does not mention that phrase, and under that invented and unscriptural barbarism the notion of sin charged against infants took root among Christians.

¹ Latin: *innumeri infantes sempiternum crucientur*, "many infants are eternally tormented."

² Latin: *in quo omnes peccant*, "in which everyone sins."

Sources: Robert Barclay, *Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, Proposition IV § v (Glenside PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 2002) pp. 95-96 and Roberti Barclaii, *Teologiae verè Christianae apologia*, facsimile (Amsterdam: Jacob Claus, 1676) pp. 61-62.