



P.O. Box 66540  
Albuquerque, NM 87193  
505.890.6806  
E-mail: [irm@liferesource.org](mailto:irm@liferesource.org)  
Website: [www.liferesource.org](http://www.liferesource.org)

**Presentation Transcript**  
**Practical Parenting – What Is a Baby?**  
**By Bill Jacobs**  
**April 2, 2015**

Today's title is *What Is a Baby?* The idea is behind this presentation is the refutation of the mainstream Christian concept of the sin nature.

If you look at a newborn infant, and you see all the sweet innocence, to even have to take time to refute this idea is curious. How did the entire Christian world come to believe that an obviously innocent baby is a sinner from birth? Just look at what God has created, lying there in a crib, and leave off what Augustine thought in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and you'll have it right. And yet, when it comes to parenting, this is a vital question. We need to be clear about what a baby is or isn't if we're going to communicate God's love to them from conception. And you'll remember, in this series, the goal of parenting is to develop a loving relationship with your child. So that's what we're going to look at today.

The starting point determines the path, so that's why this is important. If we start out seeking a good outcome at the wrong starting place, the path is going to lead us to a wrong result. If we believe that your baby is evil from conception, how does that affect your approach to them? A perfect example is Gary Ezzo's book and parenting program, *Raising Kids God's Way*. He believes a baby in a crib, rather than a sinless, innocent child, is a carrier, so to speak, of the sin nature. What is that? It's the same sinful nature that Adam and Eve supposedly had – inherited from them – evil from the first breath. Because of his belief, Ezzo tells us that babies are carnal little tyrants that want everything their way by nature – using my own words here, not his. We mustn't give in to that demanding, self-centered nature. We need to cause them to adjust to *us*, rather than catering to them. We need to start working that carnality out of them from the get-go. Of course, all this flies in the face of *attachment theory*, which is evidence to the contrary. Attachment theory tells us that when a baby cries, it's not trying to control us, nor is it self-centered in a narcissistic way. It's just trying to keep itself alive and pain-free – something God built into it – something that's *very* good.

I have sleep apnea. Before it was treated, my legs would jerk during the night and wake me up. I was puzzled by this. When I went for treatment, my doctor told me that the brain senses the lack of oxygen and causes the legs to jerk to wake us up so we'll breathe deeper. When a baby cries, it's in that same way. Some physical or emotional need is not being

met, and it's wired to cry, so that caregivers will know that something needs attention. God designed it that way, so it's good.

A baby is not even capable of manipulating its environment, nor are they capable of narcissism. There isn't enough brain there, when they're born, for either of those. It's just a – please allow this term – a knee-jerk reaction to a biological or emotional need. If we think of our baby this way, then there is no judgment, but only unconditional love and a desire to care for them fully and lovingly, instead of trying to bend them to our will, which, by the way, causes us to neglect some of their needs and make them insecure.

So that's my position. What I am attempting to do in this presentation is to get the starting point right, so that we can make our goal of building a loving relationship with our children, so that it will be easier for them to have faith in God and, consequently, easier for them to come to Him when they are ready.

Let's look at some of the scriptures the sin nature people use to prove their point. By the way, did you know that this doctrine was not a part of Christianity for the first fifteen hundred years? It's true. It was not a part of Christianity until then. That means it wasn't a teaching of the original church. It was not a part of the perfect faith that Jesus delivered to the saints. Here's a popular scripture they quote. David wrote this in Psalm 51:5.

**Psalm 51:5** – *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me.* So, who was it that brought forth David in iniquity? Well, it was his parents, wasn't it? It doesn't say anything about him being rotten.

If it doesn't mean that babies are born sinners, what does it mean? It means that all people, as they grow older, become sinners. The sin nature people say that proves we have a nature that goes toward sin, but that's not the same as saying we're born for sin. If we think back to the creation, notice what God says about it in Genesis 1:31:

**Genesis 1:31** – *And God saw everything that He had made and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning the sixth day.*

Okay now, think with me. God created Adam and Eve. That means, the way they were at the first, to use God's own words, was very good. We further see that they had a good relationship with God in the beginning. They lived in a great place. They had a great mission. They loved God. They were respectful and cooperative with Him, without any effort – naturally. But then, we know what happened, don't we? The devil talked to Adam and Eve and, in just a short while, everything changed. They became suspicious of God, rebellious, they did what God told them not to do, and they felt guilty. When God came looking for them, they hid from Him – hid from the One they, just a short time before, loved and respected. What the Bible shows us, then, is not an inherent sinful nature, but a nature that was corrupted by following the devil down a wrong path.

Notice what Paul tells us in Romans 5:12:

**Romans 5:12** – *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, so death spread to all men, because all sinned.*

Sin came into the world through one man – no argument there. Adam was just the first one. But how did sin come to everyone else? From our nature? Well, for that to be true, God would have had to have created us that way. Why do I say that? Couldn't He have just made everyone with sin nature? Well, you can believe that if you want to, but what's the evidence of it? Not a single word of Genesis. After the devil talked to Adam and Eve, it says in Genesis 1:32, it says He put them to sleep again, did brain surgery on them, and installed rotten nature. Oh, no! He didn't say that. But maybe He waved a magic wand over them and cursed them with the nature of death – I'm getting a little too sarcastic here – but not a single word.

Let's look at a few more of the scriptures they quote. Ephesians 2:1.

**Ephesians 2:1** – *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins.* You were dead in trespasses and sins. We've already seen this in scripture – that *everyone* sins. The question is, "How does it happen that we all have sin?" Is it because we have a rotten nature that God gave us? Well, let's read Paul's explanation. He's going to give it to us right here – Ephesians 2:2.

**V-2** - *...in which you once walked following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air – the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.* Oh, we sin because we live our lives following the model set for us by everyone around us that we see, starting with our first breath. And that world was started when the devil talked to Adam and Eve. He just talked to them and they started thinking differently. Their new way was learned rather than an inherent part of them. And that same spirit – that way of thinking and feeling and being in the world – leads us to sin, just as the devil's talk to Adam and Eve led them there. Now, let's look at this next verse. There's more to it here. Verse 3:

**V-3** - *...among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.* Now those two words – *flesh* and *body* – are the same Greek word. That word is *sarx*. There is a lot of confusion about what it means – not so much among Greek scholars, but among Christians.

The *sarx* has nothing to do with your body at all. There's another Greek word for body. It's *soma* – you know, a *somatic* disease. Right? In the Bible, the human body – the *soma* – is a wondrous, miraculous feat of God's engineering. It's a part of God's image. It's very good. It's redeemable. But in the *sarx*, Paul tells us, dwells no good thing. So, these words – *sarx* and *soma* – don't mean the same thing at all. The *sarx* is all bad. Paul uses this word as the repository of all evil that comes from humans – sexual sins, jealousy, envy, lying, selfishness, murder, etc.

But, how could God call his creation very good, then, if it was a part of Adam and Eve from the beginning? I know I'm begging the question there. It simply isn't. The *sarx* was

*not* there at first. How could Adam and Eve have such an easy, open, loving relationship if they had the *sarx* in them? They didn't have to struggle for it like we do today. They just had a good relationship with God. The story of the devil and Adam and Eve is there to show us how it got in us. We *learn* it from them. That's how it gets passed on, I believe. Yes, that's exactly what Paul is implying, if we'll just read what he said. He said we are the way we are because we follow the devil's way in the world and *not* because we were born corrupt, but because we have been corrupted.

One more scripture used to prove the sin nature and then we'll move forward – Psalm 14:2.

**Psalm 14:2** – *The LORD looks down on the children of men to see if there are any who understand – who seek after God. They have all turned aside. Together they have become corrupt. There is no one who does good – no, not even one.*

Notice that this says, “They have all turned aside.” They have *become* corrupt, rather than they were all born corrupt. More often than not, the scriptures that they folks use to prove their point, actually proves just the opposite. The sin nature people say there has to be an explanation for why everyone has sinned and that becoming corrupt just doesn't explain it. They say, “Surely someone would have avoided sin if we weren't all born with it, right?” But that isn't proof. That's just a question to which the answer is, “No.” In Genesis, the devil just talked to Adam and Eve and they fell for it. And they learned to think like he thinks. Once they fell for the argument – that God could not be trusted – they sinned, and then they felt guilty, and became at odds with God and with each other. So the argument is, “Did we come with it or did we absorb it?” Well, here's a scripture that unravels it for me. In Ecclesiastes 7:29, it says:

**Ecclesiastes 7:29** – *See, this alone I've found – that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes. God made humans upright, but we have been corrupted.*

Let's look now at some of the consequences of this belief and parody. What happened to Adam and Eve after they sinned? Well, they lost everything. They lost their home. They lost their reason for living – their mission with God. They lost their relationship with each other. Their older child killed the younger one. And worst of all, they pulled away from their God. They lost their faith. How do you think that changed the way they lived in the world? How did it affect their children further? All the losses they incurred wounded them in the heart. All we have to do is look around and we see the results of it today. Why do you think that the first thing Jesus ever said in public was a promise to heal the brokenhearted? This worldwide, age-old wounding is very important. All the pain humans inflict on each other causes us to be as we are – wounded, broken.

I make a living helping people heal from their past wounds. And when they do, they become more forgiving, more gracious, more loving, less hateful, less insecure, less self-righteous, less judgmental, less angry and less violent. When they get past the hurts they have received, they become less like the devil and a bit more like God.

Go back to the baby in the crib. We've talked about the baby in the crib earlier in this series and in many others of our presentations. When that baby is in a crib crying, because

of an, as yet, unmet need, and we delay or deny the meeting of that need because we think she's just a carnal little bundle, we're actually teaching her that we cannot be trusted to take care of her. And that, eventually, causes profoundly negative consequences for her. It makes trusting her parents more difficult. Consequently, we are making it harder for her to trust God and easier for her to become centered on herself, her own needs, to be less trusting, more self-involved, more deceitful and manipulative, believing that life will be bad, and there is no rescue and no rescuer, so "I'll have to do what I have to do to make my way in the world." The sin nature approach in infants actually instills the *sarx* nature in them. That's why it's important to start at the right place, as we stand in for God, with our children. The most important thing we can do is to love our children and care for them. And if we do that, when it's time for them to encounter God, it can be positive.

This message of care is throughout the scripture. How many times does the scripture show desperate people crying out for help, and God hearing and taking action on their behalf? Read what Paul said to the Thessalonians – 1 Thessalonians 2, verse 7.

**1Thessalonians 2:7** – *But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God, but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.* No mention of denying their needs, teaching them lessons. No mention of bending other church members to their will. No mention of being a carnal unconverted lot, but instead, tender loving care to *draw* them into a loving relationship.

So, the question we started with was, "What is a baby?" I was recently one of the very first to hold my new grandson in my arms, just moments after his birth. As I looked into his eyes, I knew I was holding a little person who was formed in the image of God – who born for the express purpose of membership in God's very own family. I knew he was created with the law of God installed in his little heart and that his heart is like that of the Father – a perfect vessel for the Holy Spirit. And I also knew that his mother and his father and his grandparents are responsible to nurture him and care for him in God's stead, until he's old enough to encounter God for himself. Paul tells us in Hebrews the very first thing necessary to draw close to God is faith. Let's read that in Hebrews 11:6.

**Hebrews 11:6** – *Without faith, it's impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God, must believe that He exists, and that He rewards those who seek Him.*

Remember, one of our objectives in this parenting plan is to parents our children the way that we are parented by God. To God, we are all babies in a crib. Always remember that.

Okay, that's it for today. If you want a lot more concrete, biblical evidence of this position, you can look up a presentation at [liferesource.org](http://liferesource.org), called *Who Are You Really?* It was given at the Lexington Winter Family Weekend a few years ago and is geared to a youth audience. Every time I do that, adults comment on the clarity, so, there is something in it for every age. We'll continue this series in two weeks. The title is *Boundaries*. Don't miss it. So you know how drawing our children not only includes tender loving care, but also firm boundaries. Till next time, this is Bill Jacobs, for LifeResource Ministries, serving children, families and the Church of God.