

Inherited corruption – Article 9 of the 39 Articles -

Romans 5:12-21 6th September 2020

Canon A5 – Of the doctrine of the Church of England

“The doctrine of the Church of England is grounded in the Holy Scriptures, and in such teachings of the ancient Fathers and Councils of the Church as are agreeable to the said Scriptures.

In particular such doctrine is to be found in the Thirty-Nine articles of religion, The Book of Common Prayer and the Ordinal.”

Article 9 – Of original or birth sin

“Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk;) but it is **the fault and corruption of the Nature of every man**, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam; whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit; and therefore in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation.

And **this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated**; whereby the lust of the flesh, called in Greek *phronema sarkos* (which some do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affection, some the desire, of the flesh), is not subject to the Law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized; yet the Apostle doth confess, that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin.”

1, Introduction

“Follow your heart / follow your desires”?

Articles 9-11 – Justification - “the article of faith by which the church stands or falls.” (Martin Luther)

2, The Fault and Corruption of the nature of every (hu)man

Pelagius / Pelagians (incorrect teaching):

Every human being is “morally neutral” - not sinful in nature – and therefore can choose whether or not to sin. “Sin” describe specific actions.

The Bible's teaching:

Romans 5:12, 18-19 – Sinful nature inherited from Adam.

Psalm 51:5

Ephesians 2:3

What are we to make of this?

Put this way of thinking on as a pair of glasses to view the world:

- > Disobedient and self-centred toddlers
- > Sin found in every culture
- > “I'm only human”
- > Finding God's Word hard to accept
- > Romans 5:12-21 – We can only accept Christ's act on our behalf if we're willing to acknowledge Adam's act.

Difference this makes to life

- > Follow your heart / desires? “The heart is deceitful above all things” (Jeremiah 17:9).
- > Raising children – Needing to be taught
- > Our need for God's Word to guide us

3, This infection of nature doth remain in them that are regenerated

Romans 7: 15-20; Galatians 5:16-26

Comfort:

- > Our ongoing struggle with sin
- > Sin among the church family
- > God can use this struggle to humble us and make us dependent on him for his glory

Conclusion

The positive:

“Just as through the disobedience of the one man Adam the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man Jesus Christ, YOU can be made righteous in God's sight”! (Romans 5:19).

Further reading: “Foundations of Faith” -

(<https://churchsociety.org/product/foundations-of-faith-paper-back>)