

Death in Adam, Life in Christ

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[0 : 00] As we turn to it, remember that this is God's word. Proverbs chapter 30 verse 5 tells us, Every word of God proves true.

! He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. And so that's why we read now Romans chapter 5 starting at verse 12.

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.

For sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

Verse 15. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for many.

[1 : 17] And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification.

for if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Verse 18. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.

for as by the one man's disobedience, the many were made sinners, so by the one man's, oh sorry, for as by the one man's disobedience, the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience, the many will be made righteous.

Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness, leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

[2 : 59] I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's word. Our Father in heaven, we do thank you and we praise you again this morning that you speak to us in your word.

And we confess that we need your help. We need the Holy Spirit to help us understand spiritual things. And so we ask now that you would pour out your Holy Spirit in a powerful and extra special way on us here and now, in this room, in this church, that the Spirit would use ordinary words and an ordinary man to proclaim the extraordinary grace that you offer in Jesus Christ.

That it would be clear in our minds that we would understand it. even more, we would love it. Most of all, you would show us Jesus.

That we would see his beauty and his glory and his mercy and his grace and his love. That you would use our time this morning to grow our love and affection for him.

You'd increase our reverence and our awe for him. that you would make us even more and more obedient to him. We thank you that we don't have to worry this morning about whether we have earned or deserved these things.

[4 : 31] We know that we haven't and we don't. And so we simply ask for them in the mighty name of Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. I want you to imagine with me for a second that you have a very wealthy father and your wealthy father is worth millions of dollars.

He comes to you one day and he tells you, he says, you know, I've written my will and I've decided you are not getting any of it.

I've decided that all of it is going to go to charity. There's nothing wrong relationally between you and your dad. He loves you deeply. He's just decided you're not going to get any of it.

Now this is a hypothetical but it actually happened last month. Broken the news that Simon Cowell, the TV personality, may be best known for being a judge on American Idol.

He's worth \$600 million and he recently announced he is not leaving any money to his son Eric. Instead of Eric, his money, his \$600 million is going to go to children's charities and dog charities.

[5 : 48] So, you know, I love you son. I would just rather the \$600 million go to help the dogs. They're the ones who need it. Poor Eric is 11 years old, hasn't done anything wrong.

That's you. If that's Eric, how do you feel? \$600 million belongs to your dad.

It's going to the dog charities. I think a lot of us would be outraged. A lot of the internet was outraged which is why I know about this.

But why? Why would you be so upset? It's not your money. It's your dad's money.

Do you get angry when strangers you don't know don't leave you money? Certainly hope not. Why do you think you deserve your parents' money?

[6 : 53] Why do you think you're entitled to it? Why would Eric have any right to be upset that the dogs are getting the \$600 million? The reason you're upset is this.

You know something. You understand something intuitively. Theologians use a variety of words and terms to describe it. Some people call it the concept of solidarity.

Other people call it corporate relationships. One theologian calls it the law of inheritance. Whatever word you use the idea is this.

We owe things to one another. Whatever term you like we bear the consequences of the choices of other people.

Especially people who are close to us. We know this experientially. Theologians pointed out that we love the consequences of being close to other people when they're to our benefit.

[8 : 01] We're more than happy to receive \$600 million. Your father leaves you that? No problem. I'm not going to say that's not my money.

I don't want to have that. What about when the consequences are bad? Of course, we don't want to have any of that, right? We have our own sort of double standard.

Now, I'm going to drive this. I'm going to give you a general concept. I'm going to drive it a step further. It's not just that we're connected with other people and their decisions. Sometimes, other people make decisions for us.

They bind us. There's many ways to think about this. Here's a couple. politicians make decisions on our behalf. That's why they're called representatives.

Because they represent us. Parents make choices for their children that will have consequences for the rest of their lives.

[9 : 05] In the final analysis, what I'm saying is this. We are not isolated individuals. individuals. As much as we love to think that, especially in the Western world, we are deeply tied up and connected and implicated in the things that other people do.

I'm going to take this beyond a general principle now when I give you a particular rule. This is where we get into Romans chapter 5. God chose Adam to officially represent all mankind.

God chose Adam to officially represent all of mankind. That takes us to verse 12 where Paul tells us we are guilty before God because of what Adam did.

That's where he says here, verse 12, Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man. John already read it for us this morning in Genesis chapters 2 and 3.

We saw how sin came into the world through one man. Chapter 2, verse 17, God comes to Adam and he says, Do not eat the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

[10 : 35] Chapter 2, don't eat. what happens? Chapter 3, they ate it. And in that one act, all of mankind is guilty before God.

That's what he warned them. God warned them in chapter 2, verse 17 again, For in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die.

That's what we see. Also, here, Romans chapter 5, verse 12, sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin. So, what God said is true.

Adam represents all of us, he sinned, we're guilty, and death is the consequence. When he says there, because all sinned, we're moving there, from death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned, he is saying because all sinned in that moment when Adam sinned.

Now, that's not crystal clear if we just have verse 12 with us. Thankfully, Paul gives us a bunch of other verses that clarify this. We sinned when Adam sinned because Adam represents us.

[11:52] Track with me here, verse 15, many died through one man's trespass. verse 16, the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation.

If that wasn't clear enough, it gets even clearer in verse 18, one trespass led to condemnation for all men. And then it becomes the clearest in verse 19, for as by the one man's disobedience, the many were made sinners.

God chose Adam to officially represent all mankind.

When Adam sinned, all of us became guilty before God. When Adam sinned, death entered the world.

You'll see this on page 8 of your worship guide, talking about these two concepts that are important for us to understand original guilt and original sin. Because all humans are originally in Adam, we are guilty before God.

[13:09] That's the point of this passage. And we inherit a sinful nature, that's original sin. Now this passage is actually not getting straight at original sin, it's getting at original guilt, but those are two concepts we need to have in mind as we think about how the world works.

And the world works in this way. Death comes for all. And death comes for all because of the sin of Adam.

Now if that feels a little bit technical, that's because it is. I told you at the beginning we're going to get into a detailed technical passage and that's the point there verses 12 through really through 14 through 13 and 14 Adam represents us when Adam sinned we sinned.

Paul then goes on to prove that point in the next couple verses in verse 13 and 14 and as we come into this I'm encouraged by what the apostle Peter tells us in 2 Peter chapter 3 Peter in 2 Peter chapter 3 makes this offhanded comment about the apostle Paul and he says this there are some things in them that's in Paul's letters there are some things in Paul's letters that are hard to understand and I'm here to tell you that verses 13 and 14 of Romans chapter 5 fit that category they are in fact hard to understand I've been wrestling with them for days last night verses 13 and 14 finally clicked for me it is a brilliant argument here that Paul uses to back up his claim Paul could be a lawyer in a certain sense he is and the argument in verses 13 and 14 in one sentence is this the fact that everyone dies proves that everyone is guilty of

Adam's sin the fact that everyone dies proves that everyone is guilty of Adam's sin Paul is acknowledging an objection he's recognizing hey I've said this and someone's going to come at me and they're going to say yeah but not everyone has sinned like Adam sinned that's the point in verse 14 he says there are those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam there's all kinds of situations we can think about that meet that category all sorts of people who can say yeah Adam disobeyed here's someone who didn't here's someone who didn't have the same access to God's law that Adam did that's why in verse 13 he talks about between Adam and Moses those who existed before the Ten Commandments were given we can think of some other categories we can think of someone who has mental limitations

[16:26] They're not able to disobey in the same way that Adam did we can think of someone who's developmentally incapable of disobeying God in that way so that way it's this question are they guilty did Adam's sin affect them too that's where Paul says verse 14 death reigned from Adam to Moses and so Paul's making this point he says everyone dies which means death reigns over everyone if death reigns over everyone and everyone's guilty about him sin you may not like that it may not fit into your western mindset but to disprove that everyone is guilty about him sin you have to find someone who hasn't died you can come to me and say what about

Luther what about John they didn't sin like Adam sinned Paul would say this did they die will they die if they're not guilty of Adam's sin then they won't die because they do they are so again put this argument in verses 13 and 14 in one sentence we could say this if death reigns over everyone and it does then everyone sinned when Adam sinned the point is not that everyone sinned like Adam Paul's already acknowledged not everyone sinned like Adam the point is that everyone sinned in Adam the point is not that everyone sinned like Adam the point is that everyone sinned in Adam if everyone had to sin like Adam not everyone would die but death reigns so all are guilty of Adam's sin we're doing some heavy lifting this morning to make it verses 12 through 14 14 is where we pivot we get to turn the corner a little bit so we've done some heavy sledding here's where we've been God appointed Adam to represent all of mankind when Adam sinned we sin we have original guilt because Adam is guilty therefore we are guilty the proof of that is universal death if we weren't all guilty of Adam's sin we wouldn't all die because not everyone sins like Adam now we get to pivot

here verse 14 says even those who sinning was not like the transgression of Adam who was a type of the one who was to come the problem is that you are in Adam there's good news there's a solution and the solution is that you can switch teams he's the type of the one to come and type that word means there's something that they have in common there's something Adam and Jesus share what they share is that both of them can represent you the type what Adam and Jesus share is that both of them can represent you you are not doomed to be in Adam it's not the only option the problem is all sinned in Adam that's verses 12 through 14 the solution is that you can be in

Christ that's verses 15 through 21 verses 17 through 19 make this the most clear verse 17 tells us this death reigned in Adam you're in Christ you reign in life verse 18 being in Adam leads to condemnation and death being in Christ leads to justification and life verse 19 if you're in Adam you're made a sinner if you are in Christ you are made righteous death in Adam life in Christ who do you belong to this passage tells us there are only two options who do you belong to do you belong to

[21 : 57] Adam or do you belong to Christ does death still reign over you or do you reign in life sometimes I see someone who is rich or powerful or scary or beautiful and when I'm tempted to be intimidated by that when I'm tempted to worship that I remind myself one day he will die one day she will die I'm a big biography fan the last few years and sometimes I read biographies of people who were people who were rich and powerful and then

I remember why did they write a book about that person because he's dead I remember the same thing for myself no matter what great and glorious things there are in this life no matter what I might hope for or long for one day I will die death does reign in this world does and we spend an enormous amount of time trying to distract ourselves from that fact but the reign of death the reign of death is meant to push us to

Christ the reign of death is meant to remind us that unless we are in him nothing else matters who do you belong to are you in Adam or are you in Jesus Christ does death reign over you or do you reign in life that's the only question that matters I often pray before sermons you've heard me and I did it this morning that we as we look into God's word we would see the great beauty and glory of Jesus Christ we've done some tough theological work this morning some technical work talking about Adam as our representative that when he sin we sin and that Jesus is the one who can also take that away and represent us in a different way what Paul ends with here though is this what makes Jesus so beautiful what is it that makes Jesus so marvelous why should Jesus capture our attention more than anything and anyone else that's what he's getting at in verse 15 he says the free gift is not like the trespass Adam and Eve are not Adam and Christ are not a one to one comparison it's not like yeah

Adam is A and Jesus is B no verse 15 he tells us uses this phrase much more if many died through one man's trespass much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many scholars tell us that much more and abounded does not do justice to what is happening in the original Greek that the best way we can translate this is that grace super abounded that no matter what happened in Adam and sin grace is so much more same thing happens in verse 17 Paul is not satisfied to tell us that once much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man

[27 : 12] Jesus Christ Paul is saying is that grace is more powerful than sin and that Jesus is more glorious than Adam grace is more powerful than sin Jesus is more glorious than Adam why grace is more powerful and Jesus is more glorious Paul will tell us for a simple principle that every parent knows it's way easier to make a mess than it is to clean up a mess it's way easier to make a mess than it is to clean up a mess it is way easier to destroy than it is to restore it is much easier to wreck than it is to build anyone can mess things up there is nothing special about

Adam it takes no talent or skill or courage to ruin everything the one who cleans up though must be that much more powerful grace!

grace must be more powerful than sin Jesus must be so much greater than Adam that's what Paul's telling us here in verse 16 and the free gift is not like the result of that one man sin for the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification in other words Adam to make a mess Adam just needed one sin to clean up the mess Jesus had to cover many many many sins condemnation is just one thing justification is actually two things justification is not just undoing the guilt that Adam introduced justification is Jesus also

bringing the perfect life and giving that righteousness to us verse 17 death reigning does not switch to life reigning death reigning switches to you reigning in life it's not that you were under the dominion of death and now you're just not no you were under the dominion of death and now you have dominion you have dominion in life it's harder to clean a mess than to make a mess and so Jesus is greater than Adam finally verses 16 and 17 tell us the opposite of the trespass is a free gift verse 16 the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin verse 17 much more will those who receive receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness you don't have to do anything to switch teams you don't have to earn your way to be in Adam what Paul says is you do have to do one thing you do have to receive what is it that you receive you receive the free gift who do you want to represent you before

God do you want to be represented by Adam or do you want to be represented by Jesus Christ will you receive the free gift will you let Jesus clean up the mess it's much easier to make a mess than to clean a mess and so how much greater is Jesus than Adam him we might say this praise the Lord his mercy is more stronger than darkness new every morn our sins they are many his mercy is what his mercy is more much more let's pray our father in heaven we do thank you and praise you again for your word we ask that you would again open our eyes that we would see you clearly your provision for us in

[33 : 11] Jesus Christ that we would understand and embrace and receive the free gift you have for us in him that we would not be under the dominion of death we would reign with him in life we ask all of these things in his name amen I invite you to stand for our closing